

Regime Legitimacy and Comparative Chinese Secession Movements



(PHOTO: A tattered PRC flag waves above a Beijing restaurant in the Xizhimen Wai District, 2001.)

ABSTRACT: Much of foreigners' "misunderstanding" of China is a result of its own environment of restricted information. An undeniably ideographic case, the current regime of the People's Republic of China faces an ongoing crisis of legitimacy in its post-totalitarian state, to which its primary response has been the instrumental tapping of any and all potential sources, including vestigial socialist ideology, economic development, traditional Chinese culture, and perhaps most of all, a self-proclaimed status as the protector of a civic Chinese nation which may not actually exist. While denying its imperial past and present, the PRC seeks to construct such a nation, while retaining the territories and nations in its periphery which, due largely to non-identification as members of the Chinese nation, would prefer autonomy or independence by means of "secession". Secessionist movements based on nationalist conflicts with the central government are unlikely to "succeed", and as Chinese power rises, the more important issues are transparency and the types of tactics the Chinese Communist Party employs in pursuit of national integration. What all concerned parties must be vigilant for, additionally, is any evidence of a long-term strategy to reconstruct a "Sinocentric world" which would begin with the revisionist construction of a "Greater China". China itself faces a choice of what kind of state it would prefer to be, and a primary indicator of its decision, by which the international community has judged it harshly, has been the policies toward "minority nationalities", effectively denying their rights to self-determination, in turn denying the regime its desired legitimacy.

Two of the most important requirements for the viability of any “multi-national” state, a somewhat disingenuous category for which the majority of the world’s nation-states qualify, are an “over-arching” national identity and the right for minority nations to preserve their culture¹. No country is a true “melting pot”, and those which strive for full assimilation or otherwise suppression of minorities inevitably face fierce dissent, international disapproval on human rights grounds, and numerous citizens who choose to exercise their “exit option”. An important distinction must be highlighted in this last group, in which citizens and nations exercise their “remedial right” of exit. On one hand are emigrants, who merely leave the state with their personal belongings. On the other, a far greater concern for the state and this essay, are secessionists, who, with nationalist appeals to self-determination, aim to exit in cohesive groups and take their land with them².

As the People’s Republic of China (PRC) rises economically and in military might, this essay will argue that the several secessionist movements within its internationally recognized borders are likely to continue their long declines in their likelihood of “succeeding”. Yet like nationalism itself, secessionist sentiment cannot be eliminated by making its expression costly to those who hold it, nor especially by means of overwhelming coercion. With the move away from communist totalitarianism in the late 1970’s and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) chairman Deng Xiaoping’s embrace of economic reforms, the regime newly recognized as “China” by the UN³ sacrificed its primary grounds for legitimate rule over its “multiethnic frontier”⁴.

This essay has multiple purposes, to be outlined in several sections. Given the “restricted information environment” of the PRC⁵ and the fact that secession movements do not lend themselves to empirically verifiable claims,

¹ On the matter of regime types and minority rights, Bell shows the many concessions the PRC has made to minority groups, which goes far to explain many Chinese views of PRC policies as “accommodative”. Kymlicka and others, by contrast, note that the fundamental and distinct existence of minority groups is threatened in authoritarian regimes, and well-designed democratic institutions are indeed minorities’ best protection.

² By “remedial rights” to secession, Allen Buchanan implies that secession is a right of last resort (after attempts have been made by the regime to salvage the integrity of the state by being more accommodating of minority national demands) to “remedy” irreconcilably unjust relations between nations in a single state.

³ Recognition by the U.S. in 1978 also played a role in fomenting the Republic of China’s democratization and independence movements to be recognized as Taiwan, both of which affected the PRC in terms of the legitimacy of its claims to the island, and to frame the issue of re-integration with the Mainland in new, but familiar terms (as in its western frontier) of preventing secession.

⁴ As in the title of Rossabi’s 2004 book.

⁵ “Restricted information environment” will be a recurring term used to describe the difficulty of conducting research on China. It refers specifically to any situation in which fear and coercion are used to prevent sensitive information from being disseminated or even sought in a formal research project. The consequences of such restrictions are likely to be self-censorship for self-preservation as well as competing and unverifiable claims which are asserted to be factual. Shared by all countries to a certain extent, it can be summed up in the axiom “trust but verify” with the latter portion removed due to the impossibility of conducting responsible research. Such a proposition is, of course,

a methodology section could be seen either as superfluous or all the more vital. Taking the latter position but confronting inevitable inconsistencies in the reliability of data, an attempt will be made to offer evidence in each case which is broadly comprehensive rather than minutely detailed or authoritative. Using official, scholarly, and separatist internet sources, this essay seeks to serve as a “plausibility probe” of a number of propositions regarding secession movements in China and elsewhere. The several appendices seek to illuminate what empirical evidence exists and also how the PRC and its secessionist opponents interpret, wield, and often distort information to further their agendas. Drawing from these sources as well as mass media, assessments will be made as to these movements’ nature and prospects for “success”, and a typology which is hoped to have wider application beyond the case of China will be offered as a framework for comparing them. The fundamental hypothesis of this essay is that nationalist credibility is vital to the popular legitimacy of regimes which are neither upheld by totalitarian ideology nor consolidated, liberal democracy. In a multinational state of this kind, however, multiple nationalisms are bound to conflict.

As a wealth of accounts is available to provide background on the cases in question, most of our attention will be focused on supporting the primary hypothesis, while connecting it to related subjects such as imperialism, secession, and the role that coercion plays in creating, framing, and *denying* both. The first section will consider the evolving concept of “China” and the PRC regime’s claims to legitimacy. The concept of regime legitimacy itself will be explored in the second section, with particular regard for how some classic works in the social sciences have attempted to measure and compare particular regimes and regime types against each other. Next, the aforementioned typology will be offered for categorizing nationalist secession movements in China and the many other states facing internal threats to sovereign territory and national unity. Finally, the most pressing cases of secessionism in China—Taiwan, Tibet, and East Turkestan—will be examined individually with an eye toward why these nations have expressed strong, empirically verifiable claims to self-determination, while the majority of the PRC’s 55 minority nationalities have not. A conclusion will be drawn that a lessening of the PRC’s reliance on Han nationalist legitimacy would simultaneously reduce ethnic tensions, ease the creation of a civic nation, allow for greater integration with the international community, and eliminate the recitation of patently false statements intended to protect national pride and project strength, thus also building trust which is clearly lacking among those not “in the bubble” of the PRC.

highly problematic in that governments which expect to be trusted but do not allow for verification of their official information, likely to be propaganda or at least rosier than reality, have in effect free reign to claim whatever is most advantageous. Speculation, while considerably less than scholarly form a social scientist’s perspective, is still worthwhile and indeed necessary in such a vital case study as China.

Before launching into the arguments of this essay, it should be noted that most studies of nationalist secession movements focus on the legitimacy of claims individual nations make to secede. China is unique in this regard, not only for enduring several comparable secessionist movements at once, but also for categorically refusing to recognize rights to self-determination. This is done largely through a dynamic rhetoric of mixed Marxism and definitional “lawfare”, by which the groups staking these claims are not nations but rather mere “nationalities” entitled to equal but not preferential protection under the Chinese constitution⁶.

Like many authoritarian regimes operating in environments of restricted information, the declarations of the PRC both carry more weight yet also tend to be less true than they themselves realize. Most crucially, the assertion that China *is* one nation made of many nationalities should be taken as an indication of the Party’s long-term goal, which it has great capacity and near impunity to pursue, rather than as an ontological fact. Also contrarily, and not without evidence, the PRC paints its separatists as venal, even evil individuals under the vile influence of imperialist foreign powers⁷, a throwback to its more ideological and isolationist era, loudly proclaimed to have passed. For many reasons, Chinese exceptionalism being far from the least, it is necessary to begin with a consideration of what is meant by the deceptively simple term “China”.

What is China? It might be taken as the very illustration of imperialism to define “China” in opposition to what its own leaders have proclaimed, yet China’s own definition of imperialism is one of few remnants of Marxism still given official credence, as it shields the PRC from being labeled an empire. Since at least the founding of the PRC 1949, Mao Zedong declared China to be a “multinational state” consisting of a Han majority and a highly variegated set of “Chinese

⁶ As Millward (2007) notes on pg. 348, official documents since 2005 have downgraded nationality status even further, to “ethnic groups” like those in the United States. These subtle yet strategic changes are possible because the Chinese word 民族 *minzu* can encompass each of these disparate meanings and more.

⁷ It is indeed undeniable that tenuously Chinese territories and nations have attracted the attention of foreign powers with explicit intentions of expanding their “spheres of influence” and civilizing empires. The Soviet Union held great interest (and tracts of land) in Central Asia (including what is now Xinjiang) throughout its existence, Britain and the U.S. often encouraged and supported Tibetan independence, and few would deny that the current quasi-sovereign status of the former Japanese colony of Taiwan owes much to both Japan and the USA.

minority nationalities”⁸. Such a designation was an explicit denial of China’s own, imperial past, and to date many Han citizens shy away from describing China’s many dynasties as “empires”⁹.

Most scholars are less hesitant to do so. The esteemed Suisheng Zhao, in his examination of the constructed Chinese nation-state, calls China “the last great multi-ethnic trans-continental empire left in the world”¹⁰, and Ross Terrill’s often overtly hostile book, *The New Chinese Empire*, notes that China’s imperial legacy is especially hard to deny or reconcile because the PRC essentially inherited—through violent re-conquest rather than “peaceful liberation”—the very same territories of the openly imperial Qing. The terms “nation-state” and “empire” are ideally mutually exclusive, as the former assumes the existence of a single, over-arching national identity to which the population owes its loyalty, while the latter implies an imposition of one nation over others which are explicitly inferior to the imperialist nation¹¹. The citizens of a nation-state are legally equal, while an empire’s dominant nation makes “subjects” of those who are not within it and cannot join as full members. Yet these idealized lines blur in almost all states, and perhaps nowhere more contentiously than in China.

The ontological dispute between China as a nation-state or empire is reflected in the schizophrenic perspectives of the Chinese nation: depending on the context, it can be great and proud, or weak and ashamed—the indignant victims of exploitative “foreign devils”. While the latter guise is still often worn both when China is seen to have been slighted internationally and when it asserts itself, I would argue that Chinese national strength has been far more continuous than the recent “rising China” narrative allows¹². Indeed, most have long been proud of their ability to absorb other nations

⁸ Suisheng Zhao (pg. 68-9) and others note that it was the father of modern China, Dr. Sun Yatsen, who initially formalized the multinational concept of China, claiming that since ancient times the lands of China had been populated by the “five great nations” of the Han, Manchu, Mongolian, Hui (sometimes including all Muslims such as Uyghurs), and Tibetan. Gries’ book suggests that the PRC’s foundation was based on a “victory narrative” in which the people of China had “stood up” against the forces of imperialism. He contrasts this with the “victim narrative” of recent decades, used instrumentally by “Chinese patriots” (爱国者 *aiguo zhe*, literally “lovers of the country” and what most outside observers refer to as nationalists) to justify any nationalist actions intended to avenge China’s “century of humiliation”.

⁹ This unease stems likely from the official adoption of Marxist interpretations and shared Chinese characters of the terms “imperialism” 帝国主义 *diguo zhuyi* and “empire” 帝国 *diguo*. Marxists, and the ruling CCP, define imperialism as a stage of capitalism (that being its most advanced, global stage) at which great powers force their exploitative economic system on poorer countries while competing amongst each other for markets and resources. While remaining firmly in the camp of those in the global South who denounce “the West’s” economic relations with the developing world as imperialist or “neo-colonial”, the PRC treads on very thin ice both domestically and abroad to characterize its current economic system as “socialism with Chinese characteristics” and its skyrocketing involvement in Africa and other areas as “win-win” transactions based on special South-South understandings.

¹⁰ Zhao, pg. 34.

¹¹ Some working definitions are perhaps by now overdue. This essay firstly draws a clear distinction between a nation (a group of people of considerable size who share a culture and consider themselves as a nation) and a state (a bounded territory with a stable population which is recognized internationally, as designated by a seat in the United Nations). Gellner’s minimalist, modernist definition of nationalism (a belief that the national and territorial units should be identical) will provide a foundation for many of this essay’s conclusions, and China is perhaps an ideal country to illustrate how nations are constructed by elites for instrumental purposes, as in the title of Suisheng Zhao’s indispensable *A Nation-State by Construction*.

¹² By this, I mean to say that the (Han) Chinese nation has always been strong, yet the strength of its endeavors has either been divided among many divergent goals or to rather ill-advised and unachievable ones (such as not one but *two* totalitarian campaigns to realize a Chinese socialist utopia).

into their own, even as other nations—most especially the Mongolian Yuan and Manchurian Qing¹³—ruled the Chinese empire. Thus, it will be useful for this essay—though at best partially pleasing to those who value the strength of Chinese civilization—to consider the PRC as equivalent to China¹⁴, and therefore to consider China as an integrative empire which seeks to construct a single nation¹⁵.

China faces many obstacles which prevent this construction, and at first they might be lumped together as evidence that nations cannot be constructed “out of thin air”. Such would be the position of perennialists such as Anthony Smith, who claim that nations rest upon and can be constructed by the careful combination of “cultural raw materials” which are either truly primordial or the intangible substance of deeply believed national myths. Yet it is the position of this essay that China is engaged in a long and wrenching process of attempting a transition from an empire to a nation-state, an ethnic nation of the Han to a civic nation of all 56 officially recognized nationalities. Fervent denial as well as membership in the developing world and UN virtually mask the first transition. The latter transition is proving less successful on account of widely-held beliefs of what it means to be Chinese and the sheer enormity of its ambition.

“Chineseness” is firstly inextricable from the Han ethnicity and the Chinese language, both its standard characters and its daunting diversity of dialects¹⁶. In order to construct an over-arching, civic nation, it must first dispel these connotations, and this has proven extremely difficult to do, not least because there are a great many Han Chinese nationalists who oppose such a controversial endeavor. Secondly, there must be a clearer conceptualization of what basis on which a civic Chinese nation would rest. Without a communist ideology or elective method of national leadership

¹³ Interestingly, both of these dynasties were responsible for the acquisition of Tibet and Xinjiang. The ethnically Han Ming Dynasty held differing territories not now under Chinese control, and scholars have often shown the Ming era as particularly weak in terms of claims to those western lands. Terrill (2003) especially shows that the PRC essentially inherited the Qing Empire, while skirting the imperial issue with a magic Marxist/Maoist wand.

¹⁴ This is not a great stretch, as the terms are increasingly interchangeable in the popular discourse, and as the legal occupants of the UN’s China seat, it has widespread international support. Even holdouts of the “Republic of China” might gain something from accepting such a definition, if the portion of the Taiwanese population identifying themselves exclusively as such continues to grow.

¹⁵ As the PRC practices state-led global capitalism, euphemized unconvincingly as “socialism with Chinese characteristics”, it meets the Marxist definition of imperialism by which China still occasionally judges foreign powers. By the traditional definition, exercising political power over extra-territorial nations, China also qualifies or asserts its right to do so, as the bulk of this essay will assess. Key to this argument is the existence of the Taiwanese, Tibetan, and Uyghur nations, and while the CCP makes a difficult but vehement argument that they do not exist, a vast body of empirical studies suggests the opposite.

¹⁶ Despite progress in promoting Mandarin as the official dialect of spoken Chinese, the “normal speech” of 普通话 *putonghua*, most Chinese citizens, especially of nationalities other than the Han, use the terms 中文 *zhongwen* and 汉语 *hanyu* (literally, language of the Han) interchangeably when referring to spoken Chinese in general, and a similarly interchangeable dichotomy exists for the written language (but with a raging debate between the “simplified” and “traditional” characters and few signs of universal standardization between them). Short of a linguistic consociational arrangement which would give far more autonomy to far more groups than the PRC could allow, it is difficult to imagine a civic Chinese nation using a language bereft of ethnic connections to the Han. Given the obstreperous denunciation of all things imperialist, one hesitates to speculate what use English might have been, had the British colonized all of China, leaving India a vestigial and instrumental imperial tool of unification. Few other counterfactuals could so quickly lead to fisticuffs in the contemporary PRC.

selection to unify its nationalities, only economic development, a constructed sense of developing world solidarity (an end to victimization by the great powers), or pan-Asianism remain as options of debatable resonance and viability¹⁷.

China appears to be pursuing a strategy of national integration based on the absorptive strength of the Chinese nation itself, one which worked quite well, despite not being well-controlled, in its own past. Yet it finds that the rules of the game have changed. Ideological purity cannot be maintained, brute force is no longer acceptable, and plentiful nationalist competitors have arisen to challenge its aims. To make a civic Chinese nation possible, the Chinese regime must make itself more attractive domestically and more legitimate in the eyes of its own citizens and an international community which is highly skeptical of single-party dictatorships, no matter how effective and benevolent they claim to be. It is through the dual lenses of building legitimacy and a single nation that China's contemporary struggles must be viewed. It is on these grounds which nationalist secession movements challenge the regime.

Before continuing, it is also helpful to ground these claims with a consideration of Chinese demographics—just how multinational is China, compared to most states? Again, the work of Suisheng Zhao is most illustrative in answering this question. While China as a whole meets the ethnic requirement of a nation state with an overwhelmingly dominant Han majority of over 90%, this masks the fact that over 100 million Chinese minority citizens are spread throughout the country, often residing in ethnically homogenous, contiguous areas with historical claims to nationhood¹⁸. Zhao notes that when the CCP placed an open request for applications seeking official recognition as “minority nationality” status, it received over 400 applications but capped the total at 55, leaving some 750,000 citizens to be members of “rejected” nationality claims¹⁹. Such a well-documented exercise has important but mixed implications for secession movements worldwide, both in their denial for potentially splitting the world endlessly into millions of microstates, and the assertion that divisions cannot avoid horrible violence in the absence of a legitimate, deliberative authority.

¹⁷ Japan, of course, tried this last option in its imperial era, to rather catastrophically unsuccessful consequences. If memory serves, however, it did not declare its new imperial subjects to be Japanese themselves, despite, like all empires, imposing nearly all aspects of its culture upon them. They were rather “strongly encouraged” to unite as Asians. China, by contrast, has attempted to detach the ethnic requirement for Chineseness, and declared all Chinese citizens to be Chinese.

¹⁸ APPENDIX C makes a provocative comparison of Chinese “nationalities” based on their populations and those of internationally recognized nation-states. In further justification of this essay on an important, understudied topic, the total of all non-Han populations in the PRC is just under that of Mexico and would rank as the 12th most populous state in the world. This claim is made provocatively not to suggest that such minorities themselves could form such a unified state, but rather to highlight implications of the fact that many of this number self-identify primarily as members of a non-Chinese nation (and some not of “China” at all). A Chinese map of minority distribution is also included in APPENDIX C.

¹⁹ Zhao, pg. 180-1. One of Zhao's own, most provocative conclusions is that the Zhuang nationality, which populates the Guangxi Autonomous Region and whose population exceeds that of Kazakhstan (the 62nd most populous state in the world), was constructed as an amalgamation of many, many disparate groups, virtually “out of thin air” (making perennialists and primordialists bristle) and instrumentally to dampen nationalist claims of strong nations such as the Tibetans, Uyghurs, and Mongols.

In effect, China must celebrate its diversity while building a single nation and keeping its state territory intact. As long as “Chinese” remains engraved in the international consciousness as a primarily ethnic term, the international community must be forgiven its skepticism that that China can be a cohesive, civic nation.

Juggling legitimacies in the PRC. Having made the requisite attempt to define the primary unit of analysis—an integrative empire both masquerading as and earnestly aspiring to be a nation-state—it is also necessary to examine how the PRC regime has justified the continued rule of the CCP in a decidedly post-communist era. As mentioned in the introduction, the PRC, like most authoritarian states, derives its right to rule pragmatically and by fiat. Unlike most such states, however, the PRC can make a stronger claim to legitimacy than most, based on its recent governing record—delivering the crucial “goods” of security and economic development²⁰. Many informed observers have even claimed that if an election were held on any day in the last decade, the CCP would win in a landslide²¹.

Yet little comfort can be taken within the Party for its current popularity, as the evolved authoritarianism of the PRC exemplifies what Seymour Martin Lipset would have called a highly *effective* regime with tenuous legitimacy²². If dissident citizens challenge or seek to change the regime even in relatively good times, as they surely do, it becomes clear that the single-party’s “mandate of heaven”²³ is reliant on performance, rather than intrinsic legitimacy²⁴. Should the Party’s vaunted delivery falter, one would expect domestic calls for regime change far sooner than in a consolidated democracy.

²⁰ Huntington (1968) claimed that regime type was of relatively minor importance compared to its ability to govern the population effectively. In an era of increasingly weak and failed states, such a claim remains resonant today. Scholars of modernization and development especially, such as Ghani and Lockhart in 2008, claim that the foremost modern imperative of governments is to raise economic standards of living. By growing the economy, a case is made that accountability to the people (which the philosopher John Dewey called the most important source of legitimacy in the modern era) can be assumed and needn’t be electorally validated.

²¹ See Gilley, though Shirk has serious reservations about such a claim, and many have suggested that the CCP would find itself much less popular if viable alternatives were offered.

²² Implied in this is that no amount or extended period of high performance can guarantee the survival of a regime without an institutionalized source of legitimacy. Intrinsic legitimacy virtually requires a consolidated democracy, by this standard, as these are thought to be much better able to weather hard economic times and other challenges. Borrowing from Max Weber, a more sino-centric contrast can be offered in comparing the revolutionary and post-Deng PRC. Under Mao, especially during disastrous experiments as the Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution, the totalitarian ideology of communism and supremely charismatic Mao buoyed a regime which by all accounts attacked traditional culture itself (and thereby sources of legitimacy) and fell catastrophically short of performing its duties to the population. The Deng era of reform maintained a charismatic leader and is regarded as the foundation for the Chinese “economic miracle”—in other words, a much greater reliance on performance than ideology. It should not be surprising, then, that some authors have noted a return to traditional values, as espoused by Confucius, in the past decade, as neither Jiang Zemin or Hu Jintao could hold a candle to the charisma of their predecessors.

²³ A “mandate of heaven” is the traditional and tautological Chinese indicator of a regime’s legitimacy, dating to the dynastic period and arguably still held among a population which has seen its traditions demolished and revived in dramatic cycles over the last century. The people have a virtuous obligation to overthrow a dynasty (or regime) which has lost the mandate, and the successful establishment and consolidation of a successor shows that the mandate has been passed to a new dynasty. In Weberian terms of “legitimate domination”, this would constitute the traditional form. It should be noted that the PRC has strived actively to establish a more stable *legal* dominion, following the death of its most charismatic leader, Mao. Most scholars emphasizing the modern imperatives of economic development would say that legitimate domination based on charisma alone, like Mao himself, has been discredited.

²⁴ Burnell (pg. 273) draws a clear line between performance and intrinsic legitimacy, both of which bestow upon the regime the “right to rule the population”. This implies that even extended periods of high performance will not make a political system stable in and of itself.

Since the tumult of the reform era, culminating in the Tiananmen protests of 1989, leaders took heed of the fragility and chaos which results from a perceptible difference in performance between the Party and the population. Through the educational system, an intrinsic legitimacy has been built based on Chinese nationalism, as exemplified in the oft-heard (and emblazoned) slogan “without the Communist Party there would be no new China”. This reflects an effort not only to highlight the CCP’s performance in growing the economy, but also to equate the regime with China and make it inseparable from the beloved Chinese state. A sustaining status as protector of the Chinese nation and state is well-coordinated by framing recent events such as the retrocession of Hong Kong and the goal of reintegrating Taiwan as righting past wrongs imposed upon China by foreign powers. As will be outlined in the next section, this has been largely effective in stabilizing the regime after many wrenching challenges. However, it may have the opposite effect among peoples who do not self-identify as members of the Chinese nation.

Past CCP administrations relied on ideology and coercion to rule “frontier peoples” in the vast, peripheral territories, and the penultimate section on cases will argue that these remain fundamental strategies today. Advocates of self-determination and secession among these peoples argue that the Chinese regime’s awkward pairing of socialist ideology with modernization, both of which are antagonistic to their traditional cultures, combined with a strong military presence, do much to *decrease* Beijing’s legitimacy in these regions. The long-term strategies of nation-building—i.e. self-identification as part of the Chinese nation—and economic development are also compromised by the ongoing influx of Han immigrants encouraged by the government. With the aid of scholarly texts, the conflicted legitimizing tactics of the CCP will be discussed in the individual contexts of Taiwan, Tibet, and Xinjiang, with supplemental evidence from Inner Mongolia and territories with strong Chinese connections lying outside the PRC’s current borders.

In summary, the authoritarian PRC currently stakes its legitimacy on an extremely wide variety of grounds, and those emphasized differ by the target demographic. To the general population, including the growing middle and upper classes, economic performance is the key legitimization factor, as a majority have indeed benefitted from decades of reform. To a younger generation educated to believe in China’s victimization by foreigners, the Party projects a strong national image and seeks to reverse the modern era’s many transgressions against the Chinese nation. Poorer regions are fed a combination of socialist and traditional guarantees such as Hu Jintao’s calls to build a “harmonious society” which

respects its benevolent guardians in the social hierarchy²⁵, and these are increasingly supported by policies such as the recent elimination of agricultural taxes and initiatives to improve rural health care. The effectiveness of these efforts remains to be seen, though the Party, like most of its population, appears optimistic and willing to continue the great experiment. In peripheral regions, however, each of these is essentially “thrown against the wall to see what sticks”, while heavy supplements of coercion, “ethnic swamping” or “cultural genocide” are essential not only to insure these regions follow the leaders but also remain within the country.

Legitimacy, Secession, and Annexation. Even in the age of high imperialism, conquest of indigenous peoples had to be justified, and this was usually done by asserting that the colonialists were “civilizing” the natives²⁶. Such a mindset is by no means absent in the Chinese case. Han Chinese nationalists, as the work of Dru Gladney claims, are effectively playing a dual role of national protectors and imperial expansionists with a paternalistic obligation to bring the PRC’s “backward” minorities into modernity²⁷. The claim is often made by the CCP and its most ardent supporters that economic development, modernization (still officially toward a socialist utopia), and integration with Han Chinese society (most especially by learning the language) go hand in hand. Without the guiding hands and investment of the central government, these poor regions and their people would simply be economically unviable and likely to fall prey to foreign influences which do not have their best interests at heart.

For Han Chinese nationalists, any wavering in the protection of secessionist nations’ territory by the CCP is tantamount to illegitimacy, and many authors have claimed that the regime is now beholden to China’s most fervent, even feverish “愤青 *fenqing*” nationalists²⁸. Indeed, in the most extreme cases, the real issue is not secession, but to show the

²⁵ These guardians, like poorer regions themselves, are well aware of China’s burgeoning inequality, and they continue to promise that such conditions are temporary and soon to be alleviated. Again a return to Confucian cultural values lends such high decrees the benefit of the doubt while legitimizing social stratification.

²⁶ Some fundamental contentions in the “subaltern” are that their real purpose was pure exploitation, and while some building of infrastructure, education, and other “modern” institutions almost universally occurred, the problem remains that these people did not ask the imperialists to do so. Imperialism is fundamentally about imposition, the partial or complete denial of the universal right to self-determination. Allegiance is demanded by an illegitimate “other” in a manner which resembles slavery at a higher “level of analysis”, that of a political system and nation (although slavery at the individual level may be prevalent as well).

²⁷ Most Chinese historians note that non-Chinese peoples were often seen as “barbarians”, and Gladney notes that the removal of the insect radical from the Chinese characters denoting some minority nationalities’ names is a relatively recent development, suggesting a shift in the perception of them from unassimilable to welcoming with the obligation to integrate them into the Chinese nation. One extreme remnant of the bygone era, Gladney argues, is the eroticization of the primitive nationalities and their portrayal as feminine and weak. Gladney makes this latter claim based on the prevalence of male Han “sex tourism” to minority areas as well as popular depiction of minorities as women (in colorful, traditional dress and occasionally in nude paintings). The source for the “Chinese Nationality Distribution Map” in APPENDIX A, an official map for students, also shows a picture of each of the 56 nationalities in traditional dress and customs, with slightly more women than men portrayed. Interestingly, the Han, Tibetan, Uyghur, and Mongolian nationalities are all portrayed with male figures.

²⁸ See especially Shirk, who paints the Taiwan issue as an intractable “question of regime survival”. Bueno de Mesquita would say that Chinese nationalists are part of the “selectorate” whose interests need to be represented and advanced for the CCP to remain in power. 愤青 *fenqing* can be translated as “angry young men” who fulminate (or commit acts of cyberterror) against anti-Chinese forces online and

strength of the Chinese nation by reclaiming all the territory ever held by Chinese dynasties. For extremists, the concept of “Great Ming” revivalism is an alluring justification for revisionist irredentism in the pursuit of a “Greater China”, and like other movements around the world, the mere facts that territories were once Chinese or have sizeable “co-ethnic” populations are enough to establish a legitimate claim²⁹.

There is much debate on the little empirical evidence of how salient these issues are among the general population. Again in the restrictive information environment of the PRC, the safest assumption may be that nationalist sentiment is popular and real. However, the CCP is effectively able to manage it, using nationalism to its advantage when possible, but also cracking down on its extreme manifestations when they may turn against the regime or affect China’s international image. Indeed, if the CCP is as wise as many claim, it would do well to consolidate a single nation within its current, internationally recognized borders before even considering expansion, let alone revealing itself in fully revisionist colors.

Once more illustrative of the conflicted nature of our case and the instrumental pragmatism of the CCP, the Chinese state and perhaps civilization are both weak and vulnerable to the power of other nations (foreign and domestic) while able to claim great strength for its history and global influence. This contradiction can be summed up, with special attention to the regime, nations, and territory in the typology of nationalist secession and annexation/expansion movements, presented as this essay’s theoretical contribution in APPENDIX A. Power is always an intervening factor, but in the long term a better predictor of territorial fluctuation is the salience of competing nationalist claims to legitimacy over particular lands and peoples.

Taking nationalism and legitimacy as central departure points, movements to secede from the PRC may be framed in terms of competing claims to sovereignty over territories and populations. In what must be familiar to scholars of the field, both sides attempt to burnish their own claims while denigrating the opposing side. The Chinese government, with a largely consistent position both domestically and internationally, claims that sovereignty is sacrosanct under international law. Secession movements, especially China’s own, are universally illegitimate and likely the result of

constitute the first citizens who take to the streets to defend Chinese national pride, to boycott Japanese and French goods, and generally aspire to make the voice of China one to be reckoned with.

²⁹ As mentioned previously, the current PRC borders largely coincide with those of the last dynasty, the Manchu Qing. A map of “Great Ming” borders can be found in APPENDIX D. The Qing, while actually more expansive than the Ming excepting into Vietnam, is apparently tarnished by not having been ethnically Han and also by the ignominy of losing much territory to imperialists during its long decline (with Han Chinese nationalism playing a major role in its final overthrow). At the farthest extreme, Chinese irredentism might even have implications for the world’s “Chinatowns”, readily acknowledged as parts of the Chinese diaspora and rarely fully integrated into their states.

collusion between selfish “splittists” and foreign imperialists. Leaders of the movements, for their part, claim near-universal representation of the nations in question, their independently motivated desires for national self-determination within autonomous or independent state territories. A regime which is perceived to be illegitimate, or worse, a threat to the nation’s existence, makes secessionist claims considerably more credible in the eyes of the nation and the international community. Apartheid, imperialist, and otherwise exploitative regimes simply have no place in the 21st century.

The next section seeks to summarize how both sides of Chinese legitimacy conflicts are currently presented and often mediated by advocates, global media, scholars, and the international community.

Taiwan, Tibet, East Turkestan, Inner Mongolia, Manchuria. The Chinese “nightmare scenario” traditionally goes in this order, with one territory seceding after the next. It is the opinion of this essay, however, that as China develops economically and as a global power, the movements delineated on the spectrum in APPENDIX A will shift—albeit in fits and starts which the regime will attempt to portray as conscientious gradualism—to the right³⁰. This is to say that integration, rather than secession, will be the key issue, and the focus of scholarly attention must remain fixed on the legitimacy of the single-party regime led by the Communist Party. Expansionist claims based on irredentist nationalism are also likely to grow in strength, and the Party again will have to treat these issues delicately to maintain their nationalist credibility while reassuring its neighbors and the international community.

In the interest of focusing on integration and the predicted spectrum shift, it is useful to begin by considering well-integrated territories of Inner Mongolia and Manchuria, which the authors in Rossabi’s *Governing China’s Multiethnic Frontier* claim to be the path-dependent models and evidence of PRC strategies. Since the fall of the Qing Empire, which in its early years proliferated and enforced the Manchurian language and customs throughout China, what is striking about modern Manchuria is the extent of its national people’s integration with Han Chinese culture. By the time the Japanese puppet-state of Manchukuo was created, in one of history’s most obvious examples of imperialist construction of a nation-state, few Manchus remained monolingual native speakers of their own language, and almost

³⁰ While Sautman’s magisterial review of Western media’s coverage of Tibet conclusively shows an exaggeration of the secessionist threat, neither his nor other rather soothing accounts of Sino-Tibetan relations (such as Zhu and Blanchford, Dreyer’s articles written around the same period in the middle of the 00’s) foresaw the riots and protests of 2008. Rather, it seems that the thesis of Karmel’s 1995 piece remains valid, also consistent with the conclusions of Liew and Wayne, that China’s policies of economic integration and harsh crackdowns of any ethnic nationalism have had little and perhaps the opposite of the intended effect, that of increasing stability in these regions.

needless to say, little nationalist sentiment followed or remains today.³¹ That an openly imperial power attempted to revive Manchurian nationalism might support the CCP charge that its current secession threats are similarly motivated, were the attempt not an abject failure with no contemporary resonance whatsoever. The Manchurian case is important for illustrating that the end points for any processes of integration and assimilation, and especially within China, may be *indistinguishable*. Close integration with the irresistible Han Chinese nation has effectively made hundreds of years of official Chinese imperial archives all but indecipherable, a problem which the PRC's higher educational system is slowly working to remedy. Little wonder, then, that other minority nationalities are somewhat apprehensive about wholeheartedly joining the Chinese nation, as many claim the official state policy veers past integration and into veiled assimilation³².

Inner Mongolia can be considered an intermediate stage in the process of China's modern imperial integration, though complicated somewhat by the existence of an independent Mongolian state. Inner Mongolian nationalism certainly exists, and a separatist movement dating to the Cultural Revolution, when a dispute among elites apparently delegitimized the CCP in many Inner Mongolian minds, continues to seek its own state while based in Japan³³. Like other movements in the PRC's periphery, Inner Mongolian nationalism, as outlined in Bulag's chapter of Rossabi's book, faces enemies on all sides and from within. The sorrow the author feels for the fate of his nation is evident in descriptions of a recent return to his homeland: traditional pastoral lifestyle has been undermined by official policies strongly encouraging settlement and unsustainable Chinese-style agriculture, the banning of old revolutionary songs which expressed Mongolian socialist pride, pitched battles with Hui entrepreneurs for medicinal mosses, and even a divide within the Mongolian nation as to whether the "real Mongolians" live in Mongolia or the PRC. Already, he laments, Mongolians in the province, whose population is more than twice that of the entire Mongolian state, are vastly outnumbered by Han immigrants whose increasing numbers in the cities justify the continuing Sinicization of local and provincial governments. Like Tibet and Xinjiang, the local language appears beside Chinese on storefronts, but there is little else to distinguish Inner Mongolian cities from those in the Han heartland.

³¹ The Manchurian language has even been declared "endangered", with fewer than 100 native speakers, by the questionable authority of Wikipedia. But see also Lague's 2007 article in the *New York Times*.

³² See Yagcioglu for a discussion of the spectrum of policies toward national minorities by the state, ranging in the extremes from genocide to allowing the creation of a new, independent nation-state (secession). Bell (2004) implies that most Chinese would place PRC policies closer to accommodation than integration, though minority nationalists almost universally make assimilation claims with the practice of "ethnic swamping", which Yagcioglu neglects to mention due likely to its uniqueness to the Chinese case. His discussion of "unassimilable" groups is also pertinent to the discussion of China, as this was the argument used by U.S. legislators to create the "Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882", effectively ushering in the modern era of worldwide immigration restriction.

³³ See APPENDIX F for vital statistics on the Inner Mongolian People's Party; their website is both relatively well-maintained and the only known Inner Mongolian secessionist site which remains, from among a population which once generated several more.

Inner Mongolia contrasts with Manchuria in that there is still palpable nationalist resistance to these changes, and some go so far as to say that the CCP regime is illegitimate for forcing rural Mongolians to adapt their traditional lifestyles to a foreign one which exacerbates the desertification of their homeland. We will return to these themes of culture and ethnicity in the cases of Tibet and Xinjiang, but first, we should visit the almost polar opposite case of Taiwan, which the PRC sees as dangerously close to a path-dependent point of no return, beyond which the goal of national integration may be no more than a nationalist pipe dream. Besides currently residing near the non-integration extreme, Taiwan also differs from all other movements in being fully autonomous from the CCP, while its government denies the PRC regime's legitimacy on primarily civic nationalist terms.

Taiwan is, for many reasons, the most widely studied case which the CCP frames as a secession threat³⁴. Literally hundreds of articles are available to summarize the PRC's construction of the issue as a secession from China or as Taiwanese nationalists and some Guomindang (KMT) members prefer, a movement for global recognition of sovereignty as an effectively governed state. Taiwan's current president, Ma Yingjeou of the KMT, has pursued much closer relations with the PRC on the platform of opening the economy. Both the CCP, which maintains its "One China" policy as a requirement for any diplomatic relations with the PRC, and Taiwanese nationalists see President Ma's policies as steps toward (re-)integration with the Mainland, though with diametrically opposed normative assessments. Ma's term thus far stands in stark contrast with his predecessor Chen Shui-bian, of the Democratic Progressive Party³⁵, who was rebuked by Taiwan's hegemonic ally, the USA, for unnecessarily provocative actions such as changing the names of ministries from the "Republic of China" to "Taiwan". The PRC's widely reviled "Anti-Secession Act" of 2005, which explicitly threatened the use of force if the island should declare its independence, was partial justification for Chen's 2006 dissolution of the official terms for "re-integration" set in 1991, which had stated Taiwan would join the PRC when the latter had completed democratic reforms³⁶. Only then would the PRC become legitimate in Taiwanese eyes, and while such formal terms are now an open question, most analysts concur that a democratic PRC would be a boon to national integration in general. Lest one succumb to optimism, however, it is worth noting that each time Chen was elected, media

³⁴ Two particularly prominent reasons for the scholarly and other attention it has received are the real potential for its "secession" to spark international war and the relative ease of conducting research there, outside the restrictive environment of the PRC.

³⁵ The DPP's base of support comes from independence-minded Taiwanese, though the party itself, especially while in power, is kept under tight rhetorical control to prevent provocation of the PRC. According to its website, it advocates the recognition of "facts" that Taiwan already is independent, sovereign, and does not belong to the PRC. The PRC and Taiwan's allies, by contrast, were vigilant under Chen's administration for "moves toward formal independence". Most of the authors in Chow's edited 2008 volume seem to anticipate greater separation between Taiwan and the Mainland, rather than integration, despite the "One China" requirement and decidedly bellicose "Anti-secession Act".

³⁶ See Paltiel (pg. 197) for a discussion of these events.

in the PRC claimed that its democratic regime was illegitimate in vitriolic news articles noting the chaos of Taiwanese society and the harmony of the PRC under its more legitimate “socialist democracy”³⁷. Chen and his family’s recent legal troubles have also given him far more coverage in PRC media than in the eight years of his presidential term.

Scholars such as Liew and Kastner examine the potential for economic integration between Taiwan and the Mainland to establish formal political ties and ultimately reunite them, the former being more optimistic than the latter. Major obstacles which seem to be trending in the opposite direction, and with the thesis of this essay, are the matters of rising Taiwanese identity and civic nationalism based on democratic institutions. While less certain to continue under President Ma, under the leadership of independence-minded Lee Teng-hui in the 1990’s and Chen Shui-bian since the beginning of this century, the portion of the population self-identifying as “Taiwanese only” has been gradually rising, while that identifying themselves as “Chinese only” declined.

Taiwanese identity may a greater threat to the PRC than its government, and even some Western scholars, are ready to acknowledge. Reunification is fundamentally premised on the idea that the people on both sides of the Taiwanese Strait are Chinese, and as evidenced in restless minority areas, those who do not see themselves as Chinese are unlikely to submit to CCP rule. Nor can Chinese nation-building, which the CCP views as “corrective” and much of the West as “reactionary”, be assumed as even a fraction of efforts on the Mainland. Most Taiwanese educational curricula not surprisingly seek to build a Taiwanese identity which is antagonistic to an over-arching Chineseness. Adding further to identity-issues is the differing classification of minorities between the two territories—by the PRC’s designation, native Taiwanese can be divided into just *two* of the 56 nationalities, while the Taiwanese government recognizes more than ten indigenous nationalities.

The other challenge lies in the largely consolidated authoritarian and democratic regimes of both nations. No civic Chinese nationalism is likely to resonate with Taiwanese unless the regime which governs its pan-Chinese nation is democratic, or at least respectful of the painstakingly established institutions currently in place. More concretely, many scholars have noted that the retrocession of Hong Kong in 1997, on which the “One Country, Two Systems” model was based, was conducted under intense international scrutiny and based on formalized legal agreements which promised no

³⁷ In another essay, I offer empirical evidence that this concept of “socialist democracy” features prominently in PRC news media. Interestingly, and related to this essay’s thesis, such articles most directly resemble the propaganda of decades past and occupy a greater portion of newspaper articles in Tibet, Xinjiang, and Inner Mongolia than in other provinces. For an example of PRC media’s negative treatment of Taiwanese democracy, see Yu (2004). Su Chi’s 2009 book also gives evidence that even the Taiwanese people have serious reservations about the fairness of the 2004 elections.

changes to its political institutions for 50 years. Taiwan and the PRC, having almost no official political relations, have not negotiated any such terms, and as Paltiel notes, Taiwan has no guarantee that a similar model would be enforced. Meanwhile, nationalist Taiwanese media sources such as the English-language *Taipei Times* seize upon any evidence that the PRC is restructuring its former colony to bow to the CCP while consistently portraying the recent promises by Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao for expanding democracy in the PRC as distant, insincere platitudes. In summary, while the independence movement appears to have stalled, the obstacles to integration are far greater than most in the CCP and Chinese nationalists choose to recognize. Indeed, even Ma Yingjeou has made an ostensible step toward international recognition by gaining “observer status” in an official UN body, the WHO³⁸.

Tibet, like the 2008 olympic games themselves, captured the attention of the world in the previous year, and with the 50th anniversary of the Dalai Lama’s exile to India this past March³⁹, the nature of Sino-Tibetan relations continues to face insurmountable ontological and epistemological challenges. There can be no eschewing the challenge of presenting an objective summary in an essay such as this, but this most contentious and centuries-long of conflicts assures that neither side will be satisfied by our assessment. Recent scholarship, which nonetheless preceded the 2008 riots throughout “Greater Tibet”, has tended to focus on the “Middle Way” strategy of the 14th Dalai Lama, with the stated goal of establishing real autonomy throughout Tibet⁴⁰. Both sides of the conflict offer empirical evidence portraying the CCP as either benevolent liberators or oppressive overlords of Tibetans: economic development and modernization are usually cited by government sources, while nationalists and human rights groups outside the PRC cite statistics such as the unyielding flow of refugees out of Tibet⁴¹ and general denial of human rights. Warren Smith’s book has argued that, facing such challenges of ascertaining the reality of the situation, independence should be the stated goal of all Tibetans, as the Dalai Lama’s strategy of progressive concessions has generated only international support which has been useless to the Tibetans in the PRC living with the inscrutable regime. Fundamental distrust on both sides accounts for the

³⁸ See Bradsher’s April 30, 2009, article in the *New York Times*.

³⁹ Western media has widely covered the increased military presence in the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) since the 2008 riots. Also noteworthy is the CCP’s rather insensitive timing of “Serf-Liberation Day” in the same month as the anniversary.

⁴⁰ CCP claims that Tibet and other ethnically homogenous areas already have autonomy are rather credulous, as are the assertions that minority nationalities are in fact disproportionately *favoured* in the National People’s Congress, that all minority nationalities are entitled to and receive equal but not preferential treatment, and countless others which differ from Western perspectives in their most basic assumptions. For a sample of CCP claims and minority nationalist counterclaims, see APPENDIX F and any number of internet sites and forums. Peerenboom is one of few Western scholars to come to the defense of the CCP, at least in the sense of showing that international pressure on human rights is disproportionate, and the PRC actually compares well with peers in its income group on many indicators of socio-economic rights and good governance.

⁴¹ According to a recent BBC documentary, 2-3,000 Tibetans flee on foot for Nepal and India each year, and some are shot by Chinese border police. This number may seem insignificant if not for the fact that the journey takes between 1 to 1.5 months through the highest mountain range in the world, and amputations due to frostbite are often necessary upon arrival in refugee processing sites. As mentioned in the introduction, there may be no better indicator of hardship, suffering, and popular views of one’s government as illegitimate than sustained emigration and refugee flows.

longstanding impasse, as even despite recent violence, the PRC believes its policies are both justified and succeeding, and time remains on its side.

Again, the goals and legitimacy of the PRC regime are central to the Tibetan case. In a comparison of secession movements in China and Canada, Wayne Bert suggests that these two “parent countries” both see their “separatist territor[ies] as legitimately under [their] control”, but unlike the “virtual state” of Canada, China remains close to the ideal type of a “traditional” state “still obsessed with the ‘historical atavism’ of territory” and willing “to use all means including force to ensure the territory remains part of the parent country”. Such a classification would explain why, according to the BBC, the ratio of soldiers to citizens in the PRC as a whole is estimated to be 1:1400, while Tibet’s PLA and “special police” presence in the TAR is a highly visible 1:20⁴². Such prominent instruments of coercion might be understandable, even justifiable given the recent instability of the region, but they raise the issues of two important thresholds pertinent to regime legitimacy.

Max Weber’s gold standard for statehood has remained in the social sciences for more than a century: a state consists of a bounded territory with a permanent population, governed by a regime with a monopoly on the legitimate use of force. The legitimacy of such force, however, cannot be bestowed easily, unconditionally, or permanently. One threshold to consider is that of the ratio of those who wield such a force to and over the general population. At such a high level, one must be forgiven the concern that the relationship between the government and the governed resembles less one of citizen and state than of occupier and occupied, empire and subaltern, or other such unappealing imposition. Secondly, since the founding of the PRC sixty years ago, the region has undergone what must be seen as a cycle of diminished coercive presence and policies, popular uprising and dissent, followed by a crackdown and return to *de facto* martial law until local officials can convince the central government that the situation is again “safe” to withdraw forces. If legitimate force must be repeatedly used to keep the state intact, it is only natural to question the legitimacy of such forces, and more to the point, the regime which deploys them⁴³.

Put another way, a regime which stakes its legitimacy on nationalism will be seen as a legitimate protector by those who self-identify as members of the nation and an illegitimate oppressor by those who do not. Misuse of a state’s

⁴² Based on a cyclist survey, the author, for one, would characterize Lhasa in 2006 as a Tibetan ghetto with pilgrimage and tourist sites, surrounded by a Chinese city, itself ringed by military bases and a few closely supervised monasteries which are dilapidated shadows of their former selves.

⁴³ It is difficult, yet the official position of the PRC, to maintain that each of the 1949 “liberation”, 1959 uprising, 1989 protests, and 2009 riots were enacted or counteracted with the deployment of the PLA only to “restore order” to Tibet.

legitimate force on other nations within its borders provides evidence on which the international community may judge the PRC negatively, extending to illegitimacy. As a side proposal for measuring the legitimacy of a regime, many human rights advocates, including myself, would offer coercive force as a viable indicative variable to gauge a term which, being based on the values of a society, is inseparable from normative judgments.

East Turkestan, as much as the PRC would like to deny its existence, was the name of the declared but unrecognized Uyghur state whose borders the separatist groups now claim to align with the “so-called Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region”. Like Tibet, it has been part of and separated from China throughout history, annexed during the Qing dynasty. Though more contentiously and for a much shorter period, East *Turkestans* have declared their independence and functioned as their own states during one of the weakest periods in China’s 5000-year history, spanning from the last years of the decrepit Qing to the end of the Chinese civil war between Mao Zedong’s Communists and Chiang Kai Shek’s Nationalists⁴⁴. Now owing much to intra-provincial gerrymandering by the account of Gardner Bovingdon⁴⁵, there is precious little evidence that the diasporic groups advocating secession can claim any unified support within the vast territory they claim. Millward (2007) injects some welcome empiricism into the discussion by noting an informal opinion poll which found that more Han than Uyghurs in Xinjiang now believe separatism to be a problem. Again, this could have much to do with Uyghurs’ perception of the PRC regime. While almost all recent, Western scholarship on Xinjiang notes the “resentment” felt by Uyghurs toward the government for encouraging Han immigration, coercive education and religion policies, and equating any resistance with terrorism to be extinguished by the “strike hard” program of the 1990’s⁴⁶, Millward’s detailed account has the greatest implications for Uyghurs’ acceptance of the PRC regime’s legitimacy.

Millward claims that the Uyghur demonstrations of the 1990’s were less about secession than anger at the government for, among other complaints, suppression of cultural gatherings called “mäshräps”. These gatherings, initially organized to give young Uyghurs an alternative activity to drinking alcohol (a foreign, sinful Chinese contamination of Muslim culture), consisted of musical and dramatic performances which, while ostensibly celebrating

⁴⁴ Between 1933 and 1949, two “East Turkestan Republics” existed, the first being short-lived but more independent and the second involving strong Soviet guidance of the Chinese warlord Sheng Shicai who severed ties with the Communists in 1944. A fine summary of this era can be found in the fifth chapter, entitled “Between China and the Soviet Union” of Millward’s 2007 history of Xinjiang.

⁴⁵ In the fourth chapter of Rossabi’s book, Bovingdon notes that while the Xinjiang Autonomous Region as a whole claims to give autonomy to the Uyghurs, still Xinjiang’s most populous group, they actually face “a condominium of nested autonomies”. By this, he uses the PRC’s own official documents to show the CCP’s strategy of balancing Xinjiang’s 13 minority nationalities against the Uyghurs by giving “sub-autonomies” to Mongols, Kazakhs, Hui, and other groups which are actually outnumbered by both Uyghurs and Han.

⁴⁶ See, for discussions of the Chinese conflation of Uyghur nationalism and terrorism, two very recent articles by Davis and Wayne, who concur that there is “no single Uyghur agenda”. Wayne’s article questions whether China now faces a terrorist threat at all.

Uyghur cultural traditions, did not often portray Chinese communist rule in a favorable light. Combined with the persistence of rife unemployment and drug abuse, Uyghurs had several grounds for questioning the regime's legitimacy and claiming adverse effects on the Uyghur nation. Sensing a real threat of Uyghur unity, the resulting increase in police presence as part of the CCP's "strike hard" campaign against ethnic separatism is widely credited, by Millward at least, with preventing political violence and demonstrations between 1997-2005⁴⁷ yet deepening ethnic tensions.

Today, there is speculation that Uyghur dissidents may finally have a leader who can unite the nation and leverage its complaints for real change in Xinjiang. That leader is the newly exiled former Party member and millionaire Uyghur entrepreneur Rebiya Kadeer, whose autobiography was published this year and who is now the president of the Uyghur American Association. Widely seen as betraying the country which allowed her to amass a fortune by Han Chinese and as a hero to her fellow Uyghurs, it remains to be seen whether a group whose own name contains the "imperialist hegemon" itself can be influential within the PRC, or whether it will only bolster the CCP's defiance of foreign interference in China's "internal affairs".

On a number of counts, the cases of Tibet and Xinjiang are quite comparable. For better or worse, religion plays an extremely important role in the lives of traditional Tibetans and Uyghurs. If the official atheism of the CCP were not enough to drive a wedge between the values of these societies and their government—the primary measurement of legitimacy for Lipset—well documented and ongoing cases of repression appear to accomplish nearly the same result. What is done as a result of such internalized, aggravated alterity must be increasingly tempered by reality, however, as the Chinese military poses a nearly irresistible force preventing the formation of any united, secessionist momentum.

Diasporic groups, as well as those in Taiwan, which advocate independence share views of the PRC regime and methods of achieving goals which are far more modest, if one is to judge by their websites. They first and foremost claim that CCP rule over their territories, to the extent that it exists, is illegitimate and either maintained or threatened by coercion. There is, however, surprisingly little coordination among the groups. Another evident trend is that many websites which were noted by internet link sites are now defunct, leading the curious browser to conclude that the groups have disbanded, lost funding, been arrested, or perhaps been grossly overestimated. That so many of them have or had

⁴⁷ See Millward's final chapter, "Between China and the World", especially pg. 324-34.

sites in English suggests both the importance of “the West” for support and also makes for an easy target of PRC claims that such groups are simply anti-China and do not represent the populations as they claim.

The fractious nature of secessionist groups is ultimately one of the primary guarantors of their failure. In the realm of revisionist non-state actors, there is often little to agree upon except the illegitimacy of a particular state’s regime. Thus, while Chinese nationalists would likely accuse this essay of legitimizing or even reifying movements which do not exist, a more apt criticism is that describing “movements” per se and placing them on a spectrum according to their strength assumes much greater unity (and uniformity across cases) than is justified⁴⁸. To which the authors response must be the usual defense of ideal types for their usefulness in conceptualization and comparison. Even if no unified movement exists which is actually likely to secede from the PRC with nation and territory intact, only the most credulous of PRC citizens accept that these nations would not prefer to be independent, absent coercive Chinese consequences. Thus, where genuine nationalist sentiment exists among the populations but actions are preempted by force and the reluctance to sacrifice one’s life, it would be incorrect to dismiss the importance and representativeness of diasporic groups who advocate what the domestic nations dare not.

Furthermore, and most germane to this essay, such diasporic groups receive aid in the form of information from their claimed constituencies, human rights groups operating domestically (sometimes clandestinely), and even official government documents which they use to accomplish a goal which substitutes for actual secession: questioning the legitimacy of the state regime. APPENDICES E through G offer a sampling and links to more comprehensive examples of the tactics and information used by the CCP and groups making demands of its territory to defend or contest the PRC’s legitimacy.

The final point this essay will make with regard to such competing claims relates to the modern construction of nationalist movements in China based on concepts with which the Chinese should be quite familiar: victimhood, unequal treaties, and policies which claim to present minorities with choices which in reality are impositions insulting to human dignity and the CCP’s credibility. A nation which must adopt the ways of another to advance economically faces a real existential threat, one which every developing nation undergoing modernization must confront. If modernization itself is the threat, China’s economic development strategy in its ethnic minority regions is again doubly misconceived. Even if

⁴⁸ The Uyghurs are a case in point in there does not even appear to be unity in terms of English spellings of their homeland or their nation. Both East Turkestan and East Turkistan appear acceptable, while the nation remains in orthographic flux between Uyghur, Uygur, Uighur, and Uighar (this last being Peerenboom’s odd addition, possibly the UK standard?).

groups opposed to the building of a single Chinese nation did not exist, Ernest Gellner observed that the “victims” of modernization often use their victimhood as a foundation for nationalism—a gathering of everyone opposed to cultural change in the formation of an oppositional, civic nation of victims:

Industrialization [and with it, “economic development”] inevitably comes to different places and groups at different times. This ensures that the explosive blend of early industrialism (dislocation, mobility, acute inequality *not* hallowed by time and custom) seeks out, as it were, all the available nooks and crannies of cultural differentiation, wherever they be. Few of those that can be effectively activated for nationalism, by coinciding however loosely with the septic inequalities of the time, and defining viable potential industrial states, fail so to be activated. As the tidal wave of modernization sweeps the world, it makes sure that almost everyone, at some time or another, has cause to feel unjustly treated, and that he can identify the culprits as being of another ‘nation’. If he can also identify enough of the victims as being of the same ‘nation’ as himself, a nationalism is born...(Gellner, pg. 112)

Conclusion. Thirty years of reform and economic development in the PRC have done little to increase the CCP’s legitimacy in the eyes of its peripheral citizens. While foreign influences have undoubtedly played a part in this stalemate, as the CCP claims, it would be impossible to sustain externally-led separatist movements without considerable resonance within the internal populations. Indeed, much of these nations’ desire to secede (or remain separate) from the PRC stems from the use and denial of imperialist tactics since 1949. Lacking intrinsic legitimacy in its ethnic frontier, the regime will not be given the benefit of the doubt that such tactics are for both the construction and the benefit of the whole, civic Chinese nation to which the PRC aspires. Whether such a construction is an end or a means to legitimized exploitation may never be settled conclusively.

My own experiences support the more nuanced studies which note that many members of the purportedly separatist nations are quite appreciative of the CCP’s economic accomplishments. These more integrated citizens, however, seem to be those who are fluent in Mandarin. Yet to ask even these citizens if they would not prefer autonomous, democratic rule by members of their own nation would currently be irresponsible for outsiders and unthinkable for the CCP. Education which indoctrinates a unified national identity is indeed key to any strategy of national integration, but legitimacy can only be ascertained in an environment in which both the interlocutor and respondent feel safe to ask and answer such questions⁴⁹.

⁴⁹ Specifically, but in a vain attempt to avoid personal rambling, I assert that if a foreigner asked a representative sample of these nations, “Are you Chinese? 你是中国人吗? *Ni shi Zhongguo ren ma?*” some would first state their minority nationality status or say “no”, some would say “yes” but still note their minority status, a few would say “yes” without qualification (especially if a Han were within earshot), and a sizable portion would not understand the question or prefer not to answer. A translator would still occasionally be required if a Han Chinese person asked, but an affirmative answer would be far more likely, if not in fact required by law or threat of punishment. National identity, in the Chinese case, is highly situational. A 2006 *New York Times* article by Jim Yardley on the Dongxiang nationality aside (in which an elderly Dongxiang man declared his knowledge of “China” as “a country run by people who are supposed to be helping us”), I can’t resist a pair of personal anecdotes from travels in Xinjiang in 2001 and Tibet in 2006. Without leaving urban areas, one encounters many a Uyghur or Tibetan whose Mandarin is limited or nonexistent. Among a group of Uyghurs who spoke passably, there was unanimity that life was better

Just as the foci of Chinese nationalism and secessionist movements can be expected to shift to the right on the spectrum in APPENDIX A, so can the goals of the movements. Faced with decreasing likelihood of actually seceding, groups may be expected to be a supervising force on the PRC, a conscience to insure that any action resembling the totalitarian days of yore reaches the international community. In synergy with INGO's, one might argue that such groups are already resigned to such roles, as the chances for organized, armed resistance within the PRC are next to none. Hope must be placed on the reform of the Chinese regime itself, and there is some evidence that policies, if not yet the regime, may be shifting in encouraging directions more considerate of its domestic victims.

Martin Wayne's 2009 article on China's "war on terrorism" notes that Chinese counter-insurgency efforts were more effective "as the brutality was reduced". This can be applied equally well to all of the PRC's separatist territories: coercive prevention, stemming from a strong military presence, may be effective in maintaining *short-term* calm and signaling the consequences of secession, but it does damage to the regime's legitimacy in the medium to long-term. Tibet's 2008 riots, like those in 1989 and the armed resistance of 1959, show that the CCP's legitimacy in these lands has never been established. A less overwhelmingly powerful empire might have given up such territories long ago, yet it seems plausible that China's own experience at the mercy of Western and Japanese imperialists has actually made the Chinese nation and government *more* resolute in maintaining their own empire and denying its existence. Attempts to solve a secession problem like a nation-state might only illustrate PRC imperialism in both the Marxist and traditional meanings of the term.

Recent decades have made it abundantly clear that China will not give up its resource rich, sparsely populated territory. An alternative which must be viable is for the PRC be more accommodative in reality, rather than in domestic propaganda which cannot be persuasive indefinitely. Paths to such accommodation have been conceptually suggested by the Dalai Lama and practically by scholars such as Michael Davis, which use the PRC's own "17-Point Agreement" as a starting point for reconciliation and practical steps to meet domestic and international obligations. Such actions may be framed by some Han as unacceptable concessions, incompatible with nationalist imperatives to be strong and unyielding.

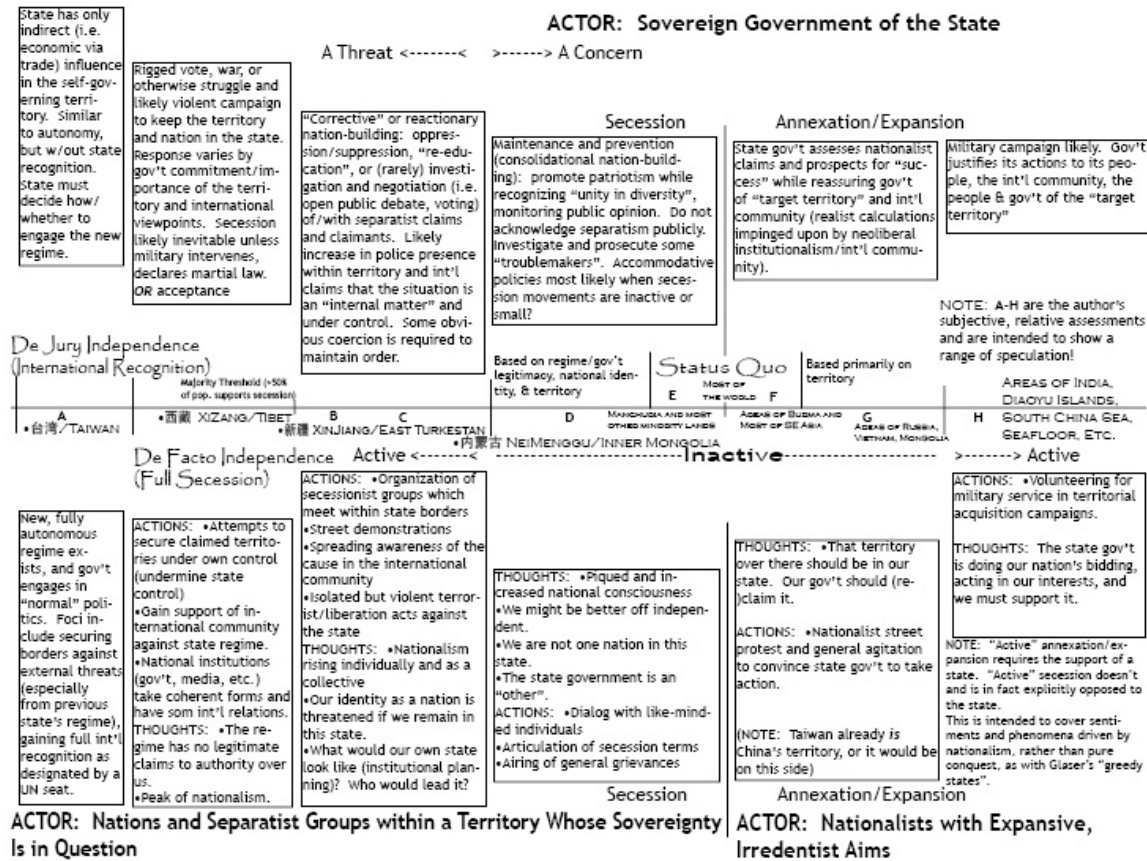
than ten years ago. An encounter which at the time struck me as odd was with a Uyghur motor-taxi driver who spoke almost no Chinese. After dropping me off rather far from where I'd asked to go, he made an unsolicited declaration in stern English, "I am *Uyghur*." Similarly, a large and talkative Tibetan family selling traditional crafts on the street near a large tourist hotel assured me that their lives were good and comfortable compared to the past. Peeking into a Barkhor (the Tibetan enclave) movie room playing a Tibetan music video on VCD, I asked a few adolescents in monk's robes some questions about the music and was not well understood, then asked what they thought of Chinese people. With a stilted, heavy accent, one answered, "中国人。。。不好! *Zhongguo ren...bu hao!*" (Chinese people are bad/not good!). I told them to be careful saying things like that and left, not wanting to cause any trouble and realizing that any conversation would be rather brief anyway.

As these extremists might prefer, the PRC can continue to charge unheedingly ahead, reliant exclusively on its rising power, but China must then discard its hopes to be loved or even respected as a legitimate state in the int'l community. Repetition of untrue assertions about its domestic situation will only deepen the mistrust between China and the West, ultimately dooming the Chinese state to perpetual ostracism and domestic conflict.

It is not difficult to imagine the construction of an ethnic group, nationality, or even an over-arching national identity. A primary national identity, however, entails that the individual owes loyalty to a nation, to protect it from enemies which potentially include the over-arching identity itself. In pursuing a policy of integration which sometimes veers toward assimilation, China must realize not only that these resistant nations exist, but also that they will not submit to ostensibly inclusive nation building at the expense of their own. National construction and destruction are both quite possible, but coercive methods are ineffective except in extremes which the contemporary global climate no longer permits. There are kinder, gentler ways of achieving the China's exceptional goals, and all but extreme nationalists can hope that the PRC discovers them, as such means will make the same goals—assuming they are being pursued earnestly for the noble reasons it claims—far more acceptable and possibly even appealing across other nations and states.

China is potentially a paradigmatic case of an integrative empire attempting a long-term transition to a nation-state with a single, civic identity as Chinese. Were such an event taking place in this hemisphere, we might justify such an undertaking with a grand claim such as a “manifest destiny”, or in contemporary terms, by claiming such a herculean enterprise as “too big to fail”. As Chinese national strength continues to rise, a more accurate description might be “too big to resist” without a catastrophic war. If containment at this point is both counterproductive and all but impossible, the international community must work in coordination with liberal Chinese citizens to ensure that “China”, however it is defined, is governed by a regime which uses less coercive means to build its legitimacy as the protector of a truly civic nation.

APPENDIX A: The Secession-Annexation/Expansion Spectrum



APPENDIX B: Explanation of Cases' Placement on the Secession-Annexation/Expansion Spectrum

Territory/Nation Summary of Case(s) for Spectrum Placement

- A. 台湾 *Taiwan* -> DEFACTO INDEPENDENT. Self-governing democratic "renegade province" which has never recognized the CCP's sovereignty over the island. PRC does not meet civic Taiwanese nation's legitimacy criteria. PRC making inroads in terms of international recognition as "China", explicit threat of int'l war if *de jure* independence is declared.
- B. 西藏 *Xizang/Tibet* -> ACTIVE MOVEMENT. Head of state and int'l support present, yet despite 2008 riots throughout Western China, it is doubtful that secession was the primary goal. Difficult or impossible to ascertain the extent of secessionist sentiment within the territory, though again much global support, despite Dalai Lama's claims of only seeking autonomy. General non-identification as Chinese, debatable economic development.
- C. 新疆 *Xinjiang/East Turkestan* -> ACTIVE MOVEMENT. Widespread resentment of Chinese rule but fragmented support for secession (no visible leader, little int'l awareness of movement, etc.). General non-identification as Chinese, debatable economic development.
- D. 内蒙古 *Nei Menggu/Inner Mongolia* -> INACTIVE/LATENT. A model for ethnic integration in the PRC, and minimal secessionist support domestically and abroad. General non-identification as Chinese remains, but now vastly outnumbered by Han Chinese.
- E. Manchuria and Most Other Minority Lands -> INACTIVE. Wider self-identification as Chinese (in Manchuria, at least), cultural integration, no prospects for secession combine to make nationalism near non-existent.
- F. Burma and Most of SE Asia -> INACTIVE. Large, ethnically Chinese populations integrate to various degrees in SE Asian states and are a "market-dominant" minority. No known claims on territory by PRC nationalists.
- G. Areas of Russia, Vietnam, Mongolia -> INACTIVE. Claims made by extreme nationalists on territories as part of "Great Ming" revivalism.
- H. Areas of India, Diaoyu Islands, South China Sea, Seafloor, Etc. -> ACTIVE. The CCP has used military means to support claims to these territories.

APPENDIX C: Which nations get a state? Chinese “nationality” populations (numbering greater than one million) compared to internationally recognized states.

Rank	Population	Nation	Chinese Minority Populations in the PRC
	1,335,962,132	China	
2	1,144,810,000	India	1,230,117,207 Han
	305,862,000	USA	
	229,550,810	Indonesia	
	190,769,000	Brazil	
	165,704,000	Pakistan	
	158,665,000	Bangladesh	
	148,093,000	Nigeria	
	141,853,580	Russia	
10	127,704,000	Japan	
	106,682,500	Mexico	105,000,000 Wikipedia estimate for non-Han in PRC
	90,457,200	Philippines	
	87,375,000	Vietnam	
	82,062,200	Germany	
	79,221,000	Ethiopia	
	75,934,307	Egypt	
	71,517,100	Turkey	
	70,495,782	Iran	
	65,073,482	France	
	63,389,730	Thailand	
	62,636,000	Dem. Rep. of Congo	
	61,612,300	UK	
	60,090,400	Italy	
	48,798,000	Burma (Myanmar)	
25	48,224,000	South Korea	
	47,850,700	South Africa	
	46,191,022		
	45,853,000		
	44,793,551		
	40,454,000		
	39,745,613		
	38,560,000		
	38,130,300		
	37,538,000		
	33,858,000		
	33,563,000		
	31,394,044		
	30,884,000		
	28,993,000		
	28,750,770		
	28,196,000		
	28,674,100		
	27,757,000		
	27,372,000		
	27,145,000		
	24,735,000		
	23,790,000		
	23,478,000		
	23,027,672	Taiwan	
50	22,389,000	Yemen	
	21,597,121	Australia	
	21,496,700		
	21,397,000		

	19,929,000		
	19,683,000		
	19,299,000		
	19,262,000		
	18,549,000		
	17,024,000		
	16,871,000		
	16,494,300		16,178,811 Zhuang
62	15,571,506	Kazakhstan	
	14,784,000		
	14,226,000		
	13,925,000		
	13,867,761		
	13,388,910		
	13,354,000		
	13,349,000		
	12,379,000		
	12,337,000		
	11,922,000		
	11,268,000		
	11,262,500	Greece	
75	10,781,000	Chad	
	10,741,000	Belgium	
	10,631,800		
	10,474,600		
	10,327,800		
	10,029,900		10,682,263 Manchu
	9,858,000		9,816,802 Hui
	9,760,000		
	9,725,000		
	9,690,000		
	9,598,000		
	9,525,000		
	9,370,000		
	9,259,000		
	9,033,000		8,940,116 Miao/Hmong
	8,699,000		
	8,508,000		
	8,629,900		
	8,356,700		8,399,393 Uyghur
	7,667,700		8,028,133 Tuja
	7,602,100		7,762,286 Yi
	7,356,100	Israel	
	7,106,000		
	6,857,000		
	6,736,000	Tajikistan	
100	6,585,000	Togo	
	6,331,000	Papua New Guinea	
	6,160,000		
	6,127,000		
	5,924,000		
	5,866,000		
	5,859,000		5,813,947 Mongolian

	5,603,000		
	5,519,300		
	5,411,100		5,416,021 Tibetan
	5,329,243	Finland	
	5,317,000		
	4,965,000		
	4,851,000		
	4,839,400	Singapore	
	4,808,050		
	4,517,800		
	4,432,000		
	4,468,000		
	4,382,100		
	4,380,000		
	4,343,000		
	4,297,537		
	4,099,000		
	3,991,000	Puerto Rico	
125	3,935,000	Bosnia and Herzegovina	
	3,572,700	Moldova	
	3,768,000		
	3,761,646		
	3,750,000		
	3,350,400		
	3,343,000		
	3,340,000		
	3,230,100		
	3,170,000		
	3,124,000		2,971,460 Buyei
	2,851,000		2,960,293 Dong
	2,714,000		
	2,629,000	Mongolia	2,637,421 Yao
	2,595,000		
	2,261,100		
	2,074,000		
	2,048,900		
	2,040,725		
	2,008,000		1,923,842 Korean
	1,882,000		1,858,063 Bai
	1,709,000		
	1,695,000		1,439,673 Hani
	1,340,300		
	1,333,000	Trinidad and Tobago	
150	1,331,000	Gabon	
	1,262,000	Mauritius	1,250,458 Kazakh
	1,155,000		1,247,814 Li
	1,141,000	Swaziland	1,158,989 Dai
154	841,000	Qatar	
	837,271		
	833,000		
	801,600		
	753,000		
	738,000		

	658,000		
	637,500		
	620,000		
	530,000		
	507,000		
	506,992		
	491,700		
	491,700		
	458,000		
	412,600		
	390,000		
	331,000		
	320,500	Iceland	
	306,000		
	294,000	Barbados	
175	288,000	Belize	
	226,000	Vanuatu	
	192,000		
	188,359		
	173,000		
	165,000		
	158,000		
	120,000		
	111,000		
	111,000		
	106,000		
	104,000		
	100,000		
	95,000		
	89,300		
	87,000		
	85,000		
	84,000		
	83,137		
	80,058		
	67,000		
	67,000		
	65,000		
	61,811		
	59,000	Marshall Islands	
200	58,000	Greenland	
	50,000	St. Kitts and Nevis	
	48,731		
	47,000		
	35,700		
	33,000		
	30,800		
	29,257		
	26,000		
	23,000		
	20,200		
	20,000		
	13,000		
	11,000		
	10,000		
	6,600		
	5,900		
	3,000		

	1,600		
	1,400		
	800	Vatican City	
221	50	Pitcairn Islands	
	30,186,627	Mean State/Territory Population	
	5,329,243	Median Populated State (Finland #110)	
	43,503,563	Mean State/Territory above 1 million	
		Median Populated State above 1 million (Belgium #76)	
	10,741,000		SOURCE: Wikipedia

HIGHLIGHTED COMPARISONS: The populations of 7 minorities, the Zhuang, Manchu, Hui, Miao/Hmong, Uyghur, Tujia, and Yi, are each greater than Israel's. 18 PRC minority nations would be among the world's most populous 150 states.

Additional, provocative questions: why don't we know about these nations unless they try to secede from the PRC? If "microstates" aren't economically viable, why do so many exist?

Officially-Recognized Minorities with Internationally-Recognized States Outside the PRC:

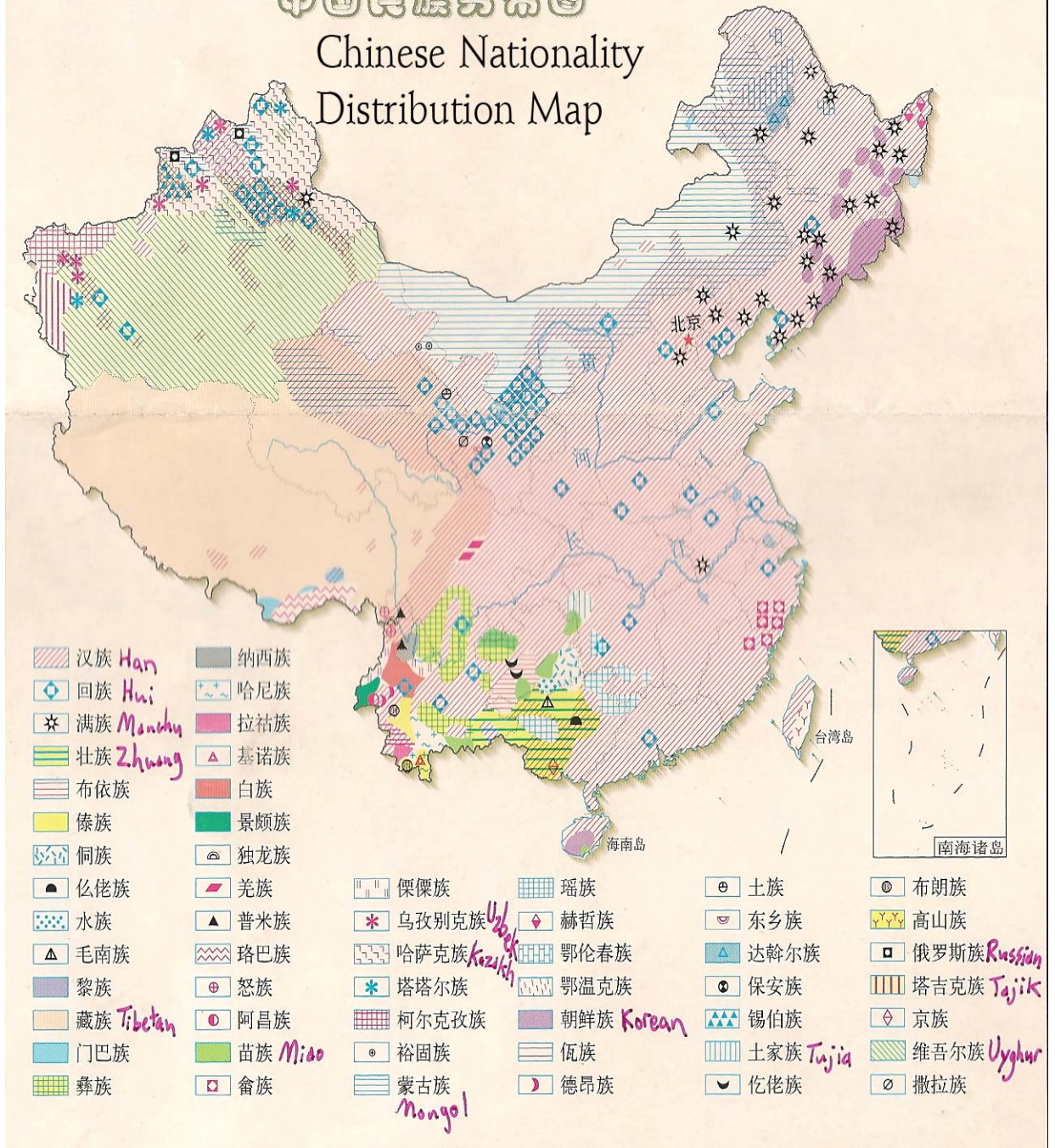
- Mongols
- Koreans
- Kyrgyz
- Kazakhs
- Russians
- Uzbeks

(In declining order of population within the PRC)

(Several SE Asian groups, such as the Dai and Hmong are found in other states.)

中国民族分布图

Chinese Nationality Distribution Map



(Source: Student's Knowledge Map of China, Xinhua)

APPENDIX D: Current PRC borders compared with Qing and Ming empires.

http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/china_re101.jpg



(Wikipedia's caption: Ming China at its greatest extent under the reign of the Yongle Emperor)

APPENDIX E: Chinese nationalist slogans. Well cognizant of the importance of power, nationalist elites (and sometimes CCP members) have concocted the following axioms for mass recitation. As with most grossly oversimplified and often false claims, they are intentionally provocative and handy whenever one is unable to address an opposing argument on its own terms. They are frequently found in online forums and bbs sites such as those at Global Voices, The Economist, Youtube, etc. Should a civil discussion ever sink to these levels, the exit option is recommended for all participants, but questioning the sincerity of their beliefs may also be counterproductive. (The second is more of a translated manifesto...in content as well as grammar and CapitAlizatiOn.)

*Tibet is, was, and always will be a part of China.

*When We were called Sick man of Asia, We were called The Peril.
 When We are billed to be the next Superpower, We are called The threat.
 When We were closed our doors, You smuggled Drugs to Open Markets.
 When We Embrace Freed Trade, You blame us for Taking away your jobs.
 When We were falling apart, You marched in your troops and wanted your "fair share".
 When We were putting the broken peices together again, "Free Tibet" you screamed, "it was an invasion!"
 (When Woodrow Wilson Couldn't give back Birth Place of Confucius back to Us, But He did bought a ticket for the Famine Relief Ball for us.)
 So, We Tried Communism, You hated us for being Communists
 When We embrace Capitalism, You hate us for being Capitalist.
 When We have a Billion People, you said we were destroying the planet.
 When We are tried limited our numbers, you said It was human rights abuse.
 When We were Poor, You think we are dogs.
 When We Loan you cash, You blame us for your debts.
 When We build our industries, You called us Polluters.

When we sell you goods, You blame us for global warming.
 When We buy oil, You called that exploitation and Genocide.
 When You fight for oil, You called that Liberation.
 When We were lost in Chaos and rampage, You wanted Rules of Law for us.
 When We uphold law and order against Violence, You called that Violating Human Rights.
 When We were silent, You said you want us to have Free Speech.
 When We were silent no more, You say we were Brainwashed-Xenophobes.
 Why do you hate us so much? We asked.
 "No," You Answered, "We don't hate You."
 We don't Hate You either,
 But Do you understand us?
 "Of course We do," You said,
 "We have AFP, CNN and BBCs..."
 What do you really want from us?
 Think Hard first, then Answer...
 Because you only get so many chances,
 Enough is Enough, Enough Hypocrisy for this one world.
 We want One World, One Dream, And Peace On Earth.
 Think Hard first, then Answer...
 Because you only get so many chances,
 Enough is Enough, Enough Hypocrisy for this one world.
 We want One World, One Dream, And Peace On Earth.
 - This Big Blue Earth is Big Enough for all of Us.

APPENDIX F: Vital statistics of groups staking claims to Chinese territories and nations/nationalities.

Active Group Name	Territorial Claim	National Ties	Stated Goals	Leader	Website
World United Formosans for Independence	Taiwan	Formosans	Independence	?	wufi.org.tw
Democratic Progressive Party	Taiwan	Taiwanese	Sovereignty/Int'l recognition	Chairperson Ing-Wen Tsai	dpp.org.tw
Tibetan Government in Exile	Greater Tibet	Tibetans	Autonomy	14th Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso	tibet.com
Tibetan Youth Congress	Greater Tibet	Tibetans	Independence	delegated, recognizes D.Lama	several regional chapters
World Uyghur Congress	Xinjiang	mostly Uyghurs	Freedom, Independence, Democracy	?	uygur.org, uyghurcongress.org
Uyghur American Association	Xinjiang	Uyghurs	Cultural preservation, peaceful self-determination	President Rebiya Kadeer	uyghuramerican.org
Inner Mongolia People's Party	Inner Mongolia	Inner Mongolians	Freedom for Mongols under CCP rule (?)	Chairman Temsiltu Shobtsood	innermongolia.org

APPENDIX G: Contested Legitimacy – Claims and counterclaims made by the CCP and nationalist groups, NGO's, and scholars writing in English.

CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY CLAIM	TAIWAN/TIBET/TURKESTAN/MONGOLIAN NATIONALIST COUNTERCLAIM
China is a multinational state which respects and celebrates the diversity of its population.	China is an empire exercising/threatening military rule and coercion.
The "Western Development Plan" is helping to ease the regional economic disparities in China.	Its Chinese name means "exploitation", and its results are colonization and resource extraction.
China has made great investments in infrastructure in its Western region which have opened their economies and provided jobs.	The vast majority of jobs go to Han Chinese, while a policy of "permanent poverty" is in play for minorities.
While an officially atheist country, the PRC respects freedom of religion, including freedom not to believe.	Religious persecution remains widespread, and faith must be renounced to join the CCP.
Learning Mandarin will benefit minorities' employability, modern lifestyle, and aid in national integration.	Forced language learning/"choosing" to learn for livelihood = cultural genocide
Minority language education is provided for and protected. Minority languages lack modern vocabulary.	Even qualified minority teachers are being forced to teach in Mandarin. Many schools lack any bilingual programs.
Tibet was liberated peacefully by the PLA from serfdom and the influence of imperial powers.	Tibetans have consistently resisted the Chinese occupation, and millions have died fighting against it.
Authoritarian regimes also protect minority rights, i.e. cultural preservation aid, exceptions to 1-child policy, etc. (Bell, 2004)	Authoritarian regimes do not protect minorities' right to exist as distinct nations (Kymlicka).
Taiwan is a Chinese province, and its people are Chinese. Its so-called democracy and nationalism are illegitimate.	Taiwan is an effectively governed, sovereign territory with a distinct national identity.
Sovereignty is fundamental, and relations between our nationalities are an internal affair.	As the PRC regime's rule over us is illegitimate for lacking the support of indigenous populations, the international community must intervene on our behalf.
These territories have historically been an integral part of China.	Each territory has had extended periods of separation and independence from China.
TAIWAN/TIBET/TURKESTAN/MONGOLIAN NATIONALIST CLAIM	CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY COUNTERCLAIM
Han immigration threatens to make indigenous majorities into second-class minorities in their homelands.	Migration of skilled workers is necessary for development and will aid in national integration
Religion is a fundamental requirement for legitimate leadership for Tibetans and Uyghurs, so the CCP can't be legitimate.	Religious leaders have poor records as politicians. Religion is the opiate of the masses (Marx).

Han are forming the rich, business class, while the native population remains impoverished.	This is an illusion caused by the tendency of Han to live in urban areas and minorities to be rural.
The CCP is destroying nomadic culture by confiscating livestock and imprisoning nomads in miserable reservations which they aren't allowed to leave.	Nomads have been compensated, and their new residences are more modern.
The CCP is stealing the natural resources of the Western nations' territories.	Resources belong to the whole of the Chinese people, and all benefits from them are shared.
Our movements are for independence, based on legitimate rights of national self-determination.	They are self-interested splittists which don't represent the wishes of their ethnic groups but rather of foreign imperialists.
Tibetan, Uyghur, and Mongolian nations and cultures consider Chinese to be foreign.	Chinese history and the cultures in question are inseparable, having long been part of China.
As distinct nations and cultures we deserve autonomy if we are to remain in the PRC, we feel threatened.	Many autonomous regions already exist within the PRC; China will protect you from the real threat of Westernization.
The CCP and its occupation forces continue to commit systematic, graphic, and well-documented atrocities against our people.	A) ignore and prevent the spread of information (preferred response) B) deny and claim sovereignty intrusion C) they were criminals who broke Chinese law D) claim that individuals responsible have been duly punished. (least preferred)
Any legitimacy the CCP may have had over us was forfeited by the disastrous communist experiments of the GLF and CR.	All of China suffered during these times, and blame must be shared (I am unsure what China would say to Taiwanese about this).

The author confesses a greater familiarity with minority claims, as they usually coincide with “Western” positions. A more civil and scholarly discussion on Tibet which nonetheless portrays the CCP position as propagandistic (though of a more sophisticated sort) can be found in Blondeau and Buffetrille’s 2008 volume on “China’s 100 Questions”. It should be kept in mind that in highly contentious topics as this, each side of the debate will accuse any and all assessments and presentations by the other of being biased, likely using such accusations as a pretext for their own non-objective accounts which are justified to balance against the gross distortions of the other. Much actual, respectable scholarship and accurate information are lost, however, if all one’s content is dismissed as fabricated propaganda when inevitable policy bias is evident in one’s account.

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