2009

American Media Portrayals of the Uighur Minority Pre and Post 9/11

Anna File
Illinois Wesleyan University

American Media Portrayals of the Uighur Minority Pre and Post 9/11

Abstract
The Muslim Uighur ethnic minority in China has long been repressed by the Chinese Central Government in a way not dissimilar from the Tibetan ethnic minority. While policy decisions, assimilation projects, and systematic restriction of freedoms support this claim, Americans with interest in the area have a more complex relationship with opinion on Uighurs. Americans have a history of supporting restive groups within Communist systems, but post 9/11 there has been a backlash against those groups that also can be identified as Muslim fundamentalists. Through observing American newspaper sources it is expected that a shift will be seen in the tone of articles related to Uighurs post 9/11.

AMERICAN MEDIA PORTRAYALS OF THE UIGHUR MINORITY PRE AND POST 9/11

Anna File

Abstract *The Muslim Uighur ethnic minority in China has long been repressed by the Chinese Central Government in a way not dissimilar from the Tibetan ethnic minority. While policy decisions, assimilation projects, and systematic restriction of freedoms support this claim, Americans with interest in the area have a more complex relationship with opinion on Uighurs. Americans have a history of supporting restive groups within Communist systems, but post 9/11 there has been a backlash against those groups that also can be identified as Muslim fundamentalists. Through observing American newspaper sources it is expected that a shift will be seen in the tone of articles related to Uighurs post 9/11.*

> "Like the Tibetans, the Uighurs have fought Chinese domination for centuries. Like the Tibetans, the Uighurs face threats from Han Chinese in-migration, communist development policies, and newly strengthened anti-terror measures. And like the Tibetans, the Uighurs resist Chinese domination with domestic and international protest that, in Beijing's eyes, makes them dangerous separatists" (Bob 2002, 36).

Over the past 60 years the Uighur population in China has faced a variety of complex issues, both domestically and internationally. In large part due to their Muslim faith, Uighurs have constantly been at odds with the Communist (as well as vestiges of Confucian) traditions imposed upon them by the central Chinese government. Not only do problems with their religion affect them nationally, but more recently with the trend towards suspicion of Muslim groups by Westerners, the Uighurs are in a seemingly helpless position. This paper suggests however, that this has not always been the case, and that the politics of 9/11 in particular have changed the tide of thought towards Uighurs in a negative way, especially for Americans.

In order to test this hypothesis the main concentration will be on the way Uighurs are portrayed in American media sources, namely in newspapers and magazines. Focusing on newspaper articles will provide factual information on the Uighurs, as well as give a feel for how Americans must perceive the ethnic group as evidenced by the way those stories are presented. Coding for the tone of each article will help to identify at what point in modern Uighur history the attitude of American media changes in a negative direction (if at all). In this study the dependent variable will be the *perception* of the Uighurs as opposed to the Uighurs as a population, and the independent variable will be the events of 9/11.

Background

Uighurs, of course, are not the only Muslim minority that can be found within China. There are a total of ten minorities in China that are characterized by their faith in Islam of which the Uighurs are the second most populous (8.4 million people). The Hui people are the largest Muslim minority group in China (9.8 million people), yet unlike their Uighur counterparts, the Hui are geographically scattered throughout China while the Uighurs are concentrated in the Western portion of Xinjiang province. Together the Hui and Uighur make up almost 90% of the total population of Muslim minority people in China, while the Kazak (1.25 million people), Dongxiang (814,000), Kyrgyz (161,000), Salar (105,000), Tajik (41,000), Uzbek (17,000), Bonan (17,000) and Tatar (5,000) people make up the remaining 10%. On the whole these minority groups reside in the

Western Chinese provinces of Gansu, Ningxia, Qinghai, Tibet (many Tibetans practice Islam as opposed to the more popularly recognized Tibetan Buddhism), and Xinjiang, an area known as the "Quran Belt". As mentioned above however, there are significant populations of several of these Muslim minorities that can be found residing in the larger cities of China including Xi'an, Chengdu, and Beijing.

Muslims in China have long been at odds with Chinese rule, especially in recent decades due to the incompatibility of Islam and Communism. In Communist China there is a firm line drawn between church and state, yet "in Islam there is no separation between the realm of the religious and that of the political, or, as commonly stated in the West, between church and state…Islam was political from the very first day, concerned with the governing of the religious community and with any and all political questions, as well as with dogma and religious problems" (Marsot 1992, 157-158).

A specific example of this inability to coexist can be found in issues of land reform. When China in the early 1950s set about redistributing land and communizing the economy, "*Waqf* (religious) land belonging to mosques was at times confiscated, and the education system thenceforth strove to emphasize Marxism-Leninism at the expense of Muslim…customs and tradition. This policy generated a strong opposition among the Muslims who remained, on the whole, dedicated to their Islamic values and to their attachment to Universal Islam" (Israeli 1981, 903).

Official policy surrounding religion in China is also not in accordance with the practices of Islam in that "The party and government point out emphatically that it is an infringement on the freedom of religious beliefs to force non-religious persons to believe in any religion and vice versa" (Liu 1988, 153) which, in essence, forbids Muslims from sharing their faith or engaging in any acts of outreach or proselytizing. In these and many other ways Muslims are set apart from their secular Han Chinese equivalents and their religious beliefs are by and large not respected within the Chinese Communist system. This then begs the question: in what ways are the Uighurs differentiated from other Muslim minorities?

Differentiating Uighurs from Other Chinese Muslims

The Uighurs geographic placement in Western Xinjiang has been a major factor in distinguishing them from their Muslim brothers within China. "Rich in minerals and estimated to hold one-third of China's oil resources," (Fennell 2000, 1) Xinjiang is becoming an increasingly important area for a country whose voracious appetite for energy sources will soon force the nation to look into domestic supplies rather than importation from unstable areas. The "dangerous separatist" tendencies of the Uighur leave the Chinese Communist leadership nervous about the possibility of losing such a vital resource if the province of Xinjiang were to successfully break away from China.

Another importance aspect of Uighurs concentration in Western Xinjiang is the fact that the Xinjiang region borders many "dangerous areas", mainly Central Asian countries containing large diasporas of Chinese Muslim minorities:

> Indeed, the CCP in power soon realized that the major minority groups dwelled in border areas of the PRC, thus posing a serious problem to its territorial integrity should separatist movements be allowed to voice their grievances against Beijing. This message gained more urgency when the Tibetan Revolt broke out in 1958, followed by the exodus of thousands of Muslim Kazakhs from Xinjiang across the border into the Soviet Union. Thus, the vulnerability of China's borders in the north and the south came to the fore as a critical issue of Chinese policy. China's schism with the Soviet Union, far from

> closing the ranks of the Chinese with their minorities, on the contrary brought into focus the
> realization that the problem of national minorities in general, and in the northwest in particular, was
> inexorably linked with China's national defense. Thus ensuring loyalty to, or at least the passive
> acceptance of, CCP rule within the minority areas became one of the primary concerns of the
> communist regime…The specter of any unrest among the…Uighurs of Xinjiang…is enough to raise
> grave concerns in Beijing (Israeli 1981, 912).

These border tensions force Beijing to keep a constant watch over the Uighurs, especially in light of their separatist successes in the late 1940's-mid 1950's. The fear of a repeat of these uprisings puts the Uighurs at the top of the list for increased surveillance and oppression.

Yet another reason for there to be increased importance placed on the Uighurs is the volatility of the region as created by nuclear testing in Xinjiang. Resentment of Chinese authority was greatly amplified due to "serious environmental pollution as a result of 20 years of testing of nuclear weapons in the Turfan-Kuerla region and contamination of Lake Bositeng, China's third largest lake" which has become "yet another cause for indigenous resentment and protest again Chinese authority" (Harris 1993, 117).

The list of grievances from the Uighur people is long, but some of farthest reaching problems have stemmed from the push by Beijing of in-migration of Han people into Uighur dominated areas. In order to encourage "unity" there was "governmental encouragement of Han migration and settlement into the minority zones. Although immediate assimilation of the minorities was not at hand, the Chinese central administration in this way could reinforce its grip on the peripheral minority areas" (Israeli 1981, 911). This call for Han migration was been met with astounding success: "The Han population rose from roughly two hundred thousand in the mid-1940s to some six and a half million in 1995- an increase from 5% to 38% of the region's population" (Bovingdon 2001, 45). This influx of Han Chinese has created a myriad of problems for the Uighur people that are not experienced to the same degree by other Muslim minorities.

In terms of farming, Uighurs are now constantly faced with scarcities in resources which one researcher observed "in every rural township I visited around Korla, Aksu, Kashgar, Yecheng, Hetian and Qiemo…Uighur farmers complained bitterly about the increased scarcity of water created by the influx of Han farmers…Numerous Uighurs from this area share the view that the Han take their limited resources. The allocation of water resources very often leads to conflicts between the two communities" (Becquelin 2000, 84). In this way, Han in-migration has presented a direct threat to their way of life as well as to the livelihood of their families.

Education has also suffered with the arrival of Han migrants:

> …the education system has had to accommodate a growing number of the newcomers' offspring,
> often at the expense of ethnic-minority students and classes…Degradation of the ethnic-minority
> educational facilities, increased political pressure on teachers and students, and fewer job prospects
> make them feel increasingly discriminated against. Only "*minkaohan*" (minority students educated
> within the regular system) are said to have a reasonable chance of escaping discrimination (Becquelin
> 2000, 85).

In the same vein, "new restrictions forbid meetings between Muslim clerics and foreigners and prohibit the teaching of sensitive subjects such as Uighur history and the doctrine of *jihad* ("holy war")" (Harris 1993, 121). Limitations and controls over the practice of Islam and the celebration of Muslim holy days have long been a point of contention between the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the Uighur people.

All of these issues combine to make for a very bitter relationship between Uighur people and Han Chinese. The problems stated above have long been fomenting so that "Uyghurs are painfully

aware that Hans look down on them as ill-educated, boorish, violent, and backward" (Bovingdon 2001, 51). This extreme tension between not only regular Han Chinese migrants and Uighurs, but between Uighurs and the central government in Beijing as well, is yet another factor that sets Uighurs somewhat apart from the other Muslim minorities in China.

Research Design

While much of the above information references Uighur opinion specifically, we must now turn our focus to American perceptions of this minority group. In attempting to pinpoint tone changes in media representation of Uighurs, we must identify three specific episodes in modern Uighur history that will serve as observation points. When precise events are being examined it will become easier to identify marked shifts in opinion and tone.

The three periods were chosen based on two criteria: 1) Salience of events to an international audience (as measured by the number and frequency of articles available for a certain time period) and 2) times periods that can be marked on each end by a significant event (i.e. for the period2001-2008, 2001 marks the events of 9/11 which this paper proposes will cause a shift in tone of article about Uighurs, and 2008 is important because of several violent protests leading up to the Olympics as well as the release of Uighur detainees from Guantanamo) with several months before and after so as to be able to mess measure shifts once the event takes place. In the three periods chosen, the years spanned between the two significant events almost must contain similarly noteworthy episodes.

The first period of history that will be focused on is the period from 1944-1955. In 1944 the Uighurs were able to successfully declare independence from China through the help of a Soviet backed operation, yet in 1949 the area then known as Turkestan was reabsorbed into China. In 1955 the area was reclassified as an autonomous region, a status that it still holds today. Briefly after this period,

> In 1962, following attempts to organize communes in Xinjiang, perhaps as many as 80,000 Uighurs and representatives of other nationalities fled the region after mass riots and sought refuge across the border in the Soviet Union. Since the mid-1980s, resistance to Chinese authority has increased, a phenomenon reflected in more careful attention paid to Xinjiang by central Chinese authorities (Harris 1993, 115).

It was during those years from the early 1960s to mid 1980s that resentment and unrest was building within Xinjiang until it erupted again in the 1990s.

The second period that will be focused on then will span from 1990-1998, a time when "the dissatisfaction of the ethnic population, echoed by local cadres, was reflected in a growing number of small-scale, isolated 'sudden incidents' (*tufa shijian*)" (Becquelin 2000, 69). Beginning this period of observation in 1990 is important not only because of the heightened media attention towards China following the Tian'anmen Square Massacre, but also because the unrest mentioned earlier "came to a head in an insurrection at Baren, a small township near Kashgar in April 1990…The uprising took three days to quell and resulted in more than 30 deaths and numerous casualties. It constituted a turning point in Beijing's suspicions that it faced an ethno-nationalist separatist threat" (Becquelin 2000, 69). Significant instances of violence also occurred in 1995 following a political assassination and in 1997 due to mounting tension surrounding the hand over of Hong Kong as well as the mourning of economic reformer Deng Xiaoping's passing. "The provincial governor, Abdulahat Abdurixit, admitted publicly in March 1999 that 'Since the start of the 1990s, if you count explosions, assassinations and other terrorist activities, it comes to a few thousand incidents'. In

1998 alone, internal Party sources indicated that over 70 serious incidents occurred, causing more than 380 fatalities; and in the first three months of 1999, 27 incidents were reported with more than a hundred victims" (Becquelin 2000, 86-87). Implied in several of these violent activities was the CIA whom some suggest funded a number of the attacks. This covert connection may influence the tone of the pieces written about Uighurs during this period.

The final, and possibly most important period, will cover 2001-2008. It is during this time that we expect to find a drastic shift in the general attitude of Americans towards Uighurs as reflected by American newspaper articles. During this time period the main events to highlight will include the 2002 labeling and placement of the East Turkestan Islamic Movement on the international terrorist watch list (the result of a deal made with the United States which would vilify the group in exchange for support from China to enter into the Iraq War), and the protests and riots (including several fatal attacks by and on Uighurs) during the spring of 2008 leading up to the Beijing Olympics. It is hypothesized in this paper that the importance of this period lies in the drastic attitude changes towards fundamentalist Muslim groups following 9/11. This conjecture will theoretically be identifiable in news reports as a shift in the negative direction with regards to Uighurs.

Research Method-News Sources

In order to begin understanding the articles pulled from the three aforementioned periods, newspaper choices will have to be narrowed so as to condense the sample. The five newspapers that will be observed in this study were selected on the basis of three criteria: 1) national importance, as measured by circulation figures; 2) representation of the spectrum of ideological points of view, and 3) coverage extending throughout the periods of history mentioned above (1944-1955, 1990-1998, and 2001-2008). Using these standards, the following papers were chosen:

- *The New York Times*- With a circulation of 1,000,665 daily and 1,438,585 on Sundays, this left leaning publication has a long history of reporting from within China as far back as the mid 1800s. The New York Times is also an "elite daily newspaper to which both Washington and Beijing pay close attention (Li 1998, 531).
- *The Wall Street Journal*- With a circulation of 2,069,463 daily, this newspaper will offer a more conservative viewpoint when gathering articles. Like *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal* has been reporting from within China since the late 1800s.
- *The Washington Post*- With a circulation of 673,180 daily and 890,163 on Sundays, *The Washington Post* is an important publication because of its focus on international affairs despite its status as a local newspaper. Founded in 1877, the liberal *Washington Post* began reporting from China in the early 1900s.
- *The Chicago Tribune*- With a circulation of 541,663 daily and 898,703 on Sundays, this newspaper is unique in its libertarian/conservative political stance. Like the above mentioned papers, *The Chicago Tribune* has been in operation since the mid 1800s and has reported extensively on Chinese affairs.
- *Time Magazine*- With a circulation of 3,400,000 per week within the United States, this magazine had its first issue in 1923, yet has closely followed Chinese politics and brought many issues in China to light through their "Person of the Year" issues which highlighted Chiang Kai-shek and Soong May-ling in 1937 as well as Deng Xiaoping who was featured in both 1978 and 1985.

There are many studies already in existence that have focused on media comparisons and the importance of the media in forming the opinions of those that regularly use specific sources (television, newspaper, online blogging, etc.). Some studies focus on linguistic issues such as Ron Scollon's "Generic variability in news stories in Chinese and English: A contrastive discourse study of five days' newspapers" which primarily highlights subtle differences in how English names are translated into Chinese as well as how quotation formulas are used and what the textual frame means for how and why different word choices might be used (Scollon 2000, 777).

Another way that these studies are structured is through frame analysis. Framing news stories is an important way of categorizing the "take home message" of different pieces of news and how that frame might appeal to different audiences and how it would translate to those readers. Specific to the aims of this paper are studies that are related to "China specific" frames and how those might alter the overall tone of a piece. "Research on the U.S. newspaper coverage of China has shown the presence of a clear China frame, which has been modified occasionally to fit changes in the elite ideology…the predominant frame in covering China has been that of 'anti-communism'" (Akhavan-Majid 1998, 135). The anti-communist frame is an important one to understand for this paper since it is hypothesized that an anti-Muslim fundamentalist frame may in fact be strong enough to override the anti-communist frame in the case of post 9/11 attitudes towards both communism and Muslim fundamentalism. Along the same lines, "anti-communism remains an important principle for US media, which use it, in part, to arrive at the distinction between good and evil" (Li 1998, 533).

Human rights frames will also be essential when taking into account news stories on the Uighurs, considering that the vast majority of those articles will mention human rights violations since examples of those abuses are so readily available in China. "Both the US   government and US media marginalize dissent in friendly countries and play up human rights violations in unfriendly and communist countries" (Li 1998, 533). Again, it is assumed from this information that human rights violations would be readily highlighted because of their occurrence in a communist country for which we have multiple examples of an anti-communist frame.

A final frame that will be important to keep in mind during the study of the articles presented for this research is the sensationalist frame. "In each society, the political system is a paramount structural apparatus for building its media narrative. The media always favor an unusual event full of drama, suspense, emotion and vivid images" (Pan 1999, 100). In the case of the articles chosen for this research, they will most generally report on incidences of violence and emotional pain which will surely be picked up on through this frame.

The research discussed above is only a small portion of the larger discourse surrounding the framing of news. Those China-specific frames mentioned above will be helpful in deciphering subtle meanings and tones when analyzing articles, but for our purposes the focus will be more on specific news categories, direction (tone), quote sources, and prominence of the piece within the newspaper.

Research Method-Article Coding

After the articles have been gathered from the five newspapers previously discussed, each story will be coded for several different variables. First, the individual piece will be placed into its specific news category:
- Politics- Topics relating to diplomatic relations between countries, party meetings, actions by political leaders, government decisions, and legislation related to ethnic minorities
- Economics- Topics relating to the "Go West!" campaign, foreign direct investment, industrial projects, agricultural output, factory matters, wage disputes, railroads built in Western China, and migrant labor

- Culture- Topics relating to cultural festivals and celebrations, music, and the arts
- Crime/Justice- Topics relating to non-political and political crime, police brutality, law enforcement corruption, and executions
- Unrest- Topics relating to observable tensions that, while not resulting in direct violence, are still significant and highlight strains between ethnicities, religions, etc.
- Tourism/travel- Topics relating to travel to Xinjiang and Uighur dominated areas
- Religion- Topics relating to issues surrounding observance of religious holidays, activities in mosques, reports of those allowed to go on *hajj*, and restrictions on religious activity and movements
- Human Rights- Topics relating to questions about human rights as well as violation of human rights, human rights activists and significant achievements in the realm of human rights
- Military/defense- Topics relating to peace and democracy movements, negotiations and settlements
- Other- Topics relating to issues not covered in the above mentioned categories-These including book reviews, art reviews, editorials, advertisements, obituaries, wedding and announcements and dining

(Yu 1997, 179-180)

Once the articles are each placed in their specific category, they will then each be coded for news direction, or tone. "News direction in content analysis refers to the attitude expressed toward any symbol by its user. Expressions of attitude are usually categorized as favorable (positive, supportive), unfavorable (negative, critical), or neutral" (Yu 1997, 180). For the purposes of this study we will code each story as supportive, critical, or neutral:

- Supportive- News stories that show stability and strength in either politics or the economy, as well as unity of society and cooperation among people. "For example, events and incidents which depicted China, or any group or individual as progressive, successful, peace-loving, moral, intelligent, lawful, unified or as exercising leadership" (Song 1989, 1973)
- Critical- News stories that highlights instability in the political or economic realm as well as weakness, social conflict and disorganization. "For example, events and incidents which depicted China, or any group or individual as backward, domineering, immoral, impractical, unlawful, disunified or lacking in leadership" (Yu 1997, 180)
- Neutral- News stories that were neither supportive or critical due to lack of controversial material

If there are any sources quoted within the article those too will need to be coded in a specific way. Quotes will first be categorized as either coming from a Chinese, American, Uighur or "Other" source. If the quote comes from a Chinese, American, or Other source, that quote will be coded as coming from either:

- Government/military officials
- Academics/experts in the field
- Business professionals
- Participants/activists/first hand witnesses
- Others

Lastly, the articles will be coded for factual information that can help identify the prominence of the article within the publication which can then be used to recognize how important that news was

deemed to be to share with the American public. The aspects of the article that will be coded include:

- Article title
- Name of newspaper/magazine
- Year
- Date
- Number of paragraphs in article
- Word count (if possible)
- Article placement (front page, back page, etc.)

By coding for all of the different aspects of the articles as mentioned above, we will hopefully notice a marked shift in tone as well as sources consulted and prominence of the story within the newspaper. Hypothesized here is the idea that post 9/11 there may be more mention within the articles of religion, more articles categorized as military and political (as opposed to cultural or tourism), more articles that fall into the critical grouping rather than supportive or neutral, and greater prominence in placement in the newspaper due to the increased interest in Muslim fundamentalism.

Data Analysis

Due to time constraints, for this paper only *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal* were observed. Between the two papers, however, 270 articles were read and coded providing a wide sample from which to draw inferences about tone change in the articles.

In terms of the attitudes of the articles observed, there was a higher percentage of negatively coded articles in *The Wall Street Journal* than in *The New York Times*, a possible reflection of the more conservative viewpoint towards Muslim fundamentalism

New York Times			*Wall Street Journal*		
Attitude	# of Articles	% of Total	Attitude	# of Articles	% of Total
Supportive (1)	66	32%	1	15	21%
Critical (2)	9	4%	2	9	13%
Neutral (3)	126	62%	3	45	65%

Table 1: Article Attitude and Percentages of Total

In each case there was a high percentage of neutral news articles. For this neutral category, while many stories did simply use unbiased language, there was a surprisingly high amount of pieces that would alternately use very negative language in reference to the Uighurs, but then in an effort to present the opposing view, would also present a great deal of supportive language. In the cases where both supportive and negative word choices were used the article was coded as neutral.

More important than the total percentage of negative and supportive news articles, however, is where those negative news articles were found within the overall narrative of newspaper articles. A major finding of this study was that, in both cases, an overwhelming majority of the negative news pieces were found immediately following 9/11/2001. In both newspapers the articles in the month of September were almost all negative, but once October began the articles published had more or less settled back into a more neutral area. Again, many of these neutrally coded articles did tend to outline both negative and supportive viewpoints rather than simple facts that would allow the reader to form their own opinion.

The New York Times

Wang Enmao 87, Who Ruled A Rebellious Chinese Province	2001	23-Apr	3
Discover China In the New Century	2001	10-Jun	1
World Briefing	2001	29-Jun	3
Being the Host Keeps the Pressure on China	2001	14-Jul	3
United States Backs Plan to Help Chinese Evade Government Censorship of Web	2001	30-Aug	3
Waiting Nervously for Response	**2001**	**16-Sep**	**2**
Taliban Enlisting Eager Recruits of Many Lands	**2001**	**28-Sep**	**2**
Fearing Unrest, China Presses Muslim Group	2001	5-Oct	1
China Seeks World Support in Fight With Its Muslim Separatists	2001	12-Oct	1
The War, The Press and Bin Laden	2001	12-Oct	1
Bush Meets Jiang	2001	20-Oct	1
Feverish Protests Against the West Trace to Grievances Ancient and Modern	2001	22-Oct	3
UN Official Fears China Uses Terror War as Front for Abuses	2001	10-Nov	1
China Wary on Middle East, Criticizing Both Palestinians and Israelis	2001	5-Dec	3
Eons of Tension Crowd a Remote Chinese Tomb	2001	6-Dec	3
US Official Praises China for Its Cooperation in Rooting Out bin Laden's Terror Network	2001	7-Dec	1

Table 2: *The New York Times* Article Titles and Attitudes from April 23, 2001- Dec. 7, 2001

Although only two of the articles are negatively coded, this still represents a large shift considering that before this point only four articles had been coded negatively from 1944-1998. It also seems that the events of 9/11 could be a direct cause for this shift.
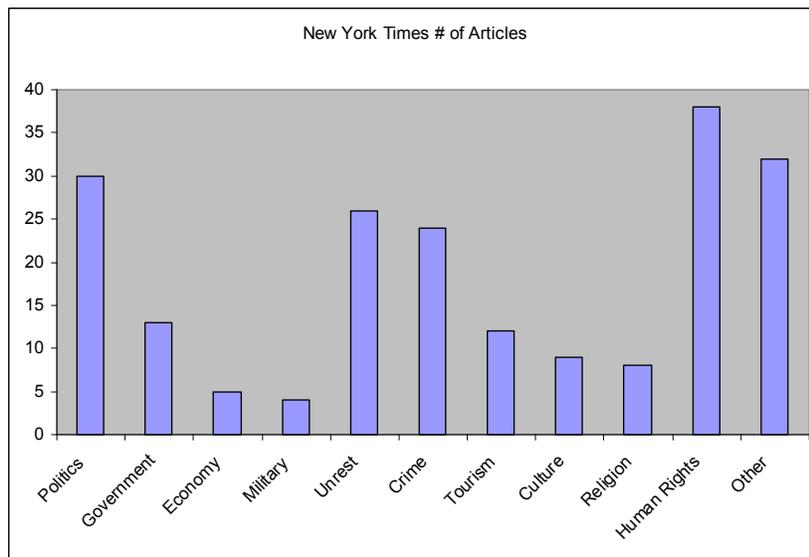
The Wall Street Journal

|			
China Pursues a Great Games of Its Own- Seeking Political Stability And Energy, Beijing Courts Central Asia	2001	14-Jun	1
Bloc Including China, Russia, Challenges U.S. in Central Asia- Members Agree to Combat Militant Islamic Groups and Share Intelligence	2001	18-Jun	1
China, in Strategy to Fight Separatists, Cultivates Taliban	**2001**	**13-Sep**	**2**
Where Do the Critical Players in an Afghan Attack Stand? From the UAE to China, Nations in the Region Have Range of Interests	**2001**	**18-Sep**	**2**
War Aims	**2001**	**20-Sep**	**2**
Trade is China's Carrot to Muslim Separatists- Beijing Paris Commerce, Political Crackdown In Restive Xinjiang	**2001**	**21-Sep**	**2**
Beijing to Get Still Tougher on Separatists- For US, China's Help In Fighting Terrorism Carries Its Own Price	2001	12-Oct	3
Pacific Nations Will Seek US Leadership in Shanghai	2001	16-Oct	1
China Sees More Extremists Being Trained by bin Laden- Beijing Raises Its Estimate Of Domestic Separatists With Afghan Link to 1,000	2001	12-Nov	3
China Provides Extensive Briefing on Separatists in Xinjiang Province	2001	15-Nov	2
China Monitors Muslims to Avert Protests- But Beijing Adds Efforts to Explain Support For War in Afghanistan	2001	23-Nov	3

Table 3: *The Wall Street Journal* Article Titles and Attitudes from June 14, 2001- Nov. 3, 2001

The example set by *The New York Times* is made even more apparent when observations are made of *The Wall Street Journal*. Again, all of the articles immediately following 9/11 were negatively coded and only after the initial hysteria of that month died down did the articles again seem to assume a more neutral stance. Also, it is important to note that these four negative articles make up 50% of the total negative articles coded over the years 2001-2008 and all four are found within this one month. These findings seem to indicate that the events of 9/11 did have a strong impact on the initial reporting of Uighurs, and that the anti-Muslim fundamentalist frame did in fact trump the anti-Communist frame during this episode.

As for news categories, *The New York Times* generally gave a broader overview of topics related to Uighurs with many articles related to travel and food as opposed to unrest and human rights. *The Wall Street Journal* on the other hand focused almost solely on issues of unrest, human rights, and politics.

Graph 1: *New York Times* Number of Articles
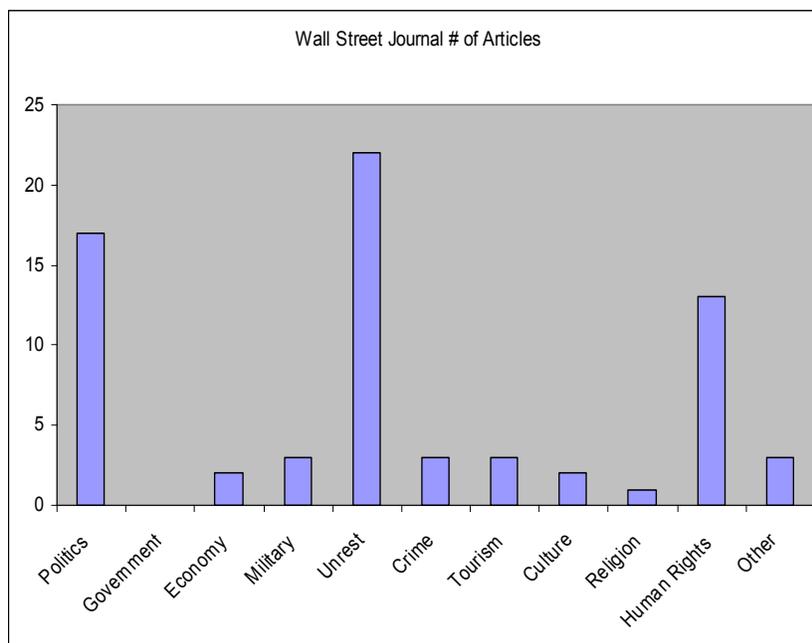
Graph 2: *Wall Street Journal* Number of Articles

Prevalence of stories in the actual newspaper was also indicative of a shift in trends of perceptions towards Uighurs following 9/11. In *The New York Times* a total of 63% of stories fell into Section A, and of those 39% were found in pages 1-5 of A. Many of the articles that were not published in Section A were found instead in human interest sections such as Travel, Dining, Weekend, etc. This can be compared to 2001 alone when 55% of the articles were in Section A.

Conversely, *The Wall Street Journal* actually did very limited reporting of Uighurs pre-9/11. What stories were published only briefly mentioned Uighurs as part of a broader narrative about economy in Central Asia, political relationships with Russia, etc. So, between 2001 and 2008 coverage of Uighurs virtually exploded with 94% of stories found in Section A. Of those only 36% were in pages 1-5. In 2001, a full 100% of articles related to Uighurs were in Section A.

As for length of the articles in each newspaper, there was a large variance in number of paragraphs. In *The New York Times* some stories ran as long as 78 paragraphs, but those lengthier articles were generally attached to special sub sections of the newspaper that read more like magazine feature stories. The shortest articles were only one line (coded as one paragraph). These were mostly found in the "Corrections" sections of the newspaper. Overall the average paragraphs length in *The New York Times* was 17.2 paragraphs while the median was 15.

The Wall Street Journal ran slightly shorter stories in general with none exceeding 52 paragraphs. Again, one line (coded as one paragraph) articles were common in "Corrections" or "World-Wide" portions of the newspaper. The average number of paragraphs for stories related to Uighurs in *The Wall Street Journal* was 13.2 paragraphs and the median was 10.

Numbers and statistics aside, there was also a great deal of interesting variation in general word choice between the two newspapers when covering the Uighur minority. *The Wall Street Journal* was much more likely to use language such as "violent separatism", "assassinations", "jihadis" and "Muslim fundamentalism" when describing Uighurs. The newspaper also commonly made connections between the Uighurs and Al-Qaeda and often commented on how Uighurs were in direct contact with Osama bin-Laden. These kinds of inferences are sure to raise negative images

in the minds of readers thus swaying them to formulate a more negative overall viewpoint of Uighurs. However, *The Wall Street Journal* did provide several very supportive articles, especially when they were in reference to human rights abuses or protests prior to the Olympics.

The New York Times seemed to take a softer approach and appeared careful not to make hasty connections between Uighurs and terrorist groups and other violent insurgencies. In fact, the largest difference found between the two newspapers was the careful attention paid by *The New York Times* towards differentiating between the Uighur ethnic minority, and the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM). When violence in Uighur dominated areas is discussed it is almost always in reference to the actions of the ETIM which, while made up of Uighurs, does not by any means involve *all* Uighurs. *The Wall Street Journal* rarely made any such distinction, but in most articles *The New York Times* made sure to articulate the difference. By choosing not to highlight this difference, *The Wall Street Journal* created needless negative opinions about Uighurs as an entire minority rather than dividing it into its component parts. Because of this, Uighurs were seen as negative and the articles were coded accordingly.

Conclusion

The evidence gathered from newspaper articles in *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal* proved conclusive towards substantiating the hypothesis that media perceptions of Uighurs did change following the events of 9/11. While these opinions were not sustained over time, there was still an obvious shift immediately following 9/11. What was sustained, however, was interest in the Uighur minority. Following 9/11 there were regularly published articles and consistent coverage whereas in the years before 2001 there had only been sporadically appearing news related to the Uighurs.

What was most important in developing observable trends was not necessarily numbers however, but rather the subtleties of language and word choice found in the articles. As discussed above, negative sounding word choices and connections made to terrorist organizations made a great deal of difference in the overall feeling of the perceptions and attitudes presented about the Uighur minority. These word choices were influenced by political climate as well as popular public opinion at the time, but ideology also seemed to play a role.

Additional research is needed to verify these claims further. Coding articles from more newspapers will provide additional information to authenticate the findings of this paper. With the evidence available however, the data does point to a shift, albeit a small one, in the attitudes presented in Western media due to the events of 9/11.

Codebook

Article Page Number

*1= Section A (for early newspaper articles with no sections, pages 1-5)

2= Section B (for early newspaper articles with no sections, pages 6-15)

3= Section C (for early newspaper articles with no sections, pages 16-25)

4= Section D (for early newspaper articles with no sections, pages 24 and up)

5= Section E

6= Other (including special supplemental sections with no letter section labeling)

*For articles in Section A, the page number within Section A was also recorded

Category

1= Politics	7= Tourism
2= Government	8= Culture
3= Economy	9= Religion
4= Military	10= Human Rights
5= Unrest	11= Other
6= Crime	

Attitude

1= Supportive

2= Critical

3= Neutral

Quote

1= Yes

2= No

Quote Source

1= Chinese

2= American

3= Uighur

4= Other

5= Quotes from Multiple Sources

If 1 (Chinese), 2 (American) or 4 (Other):

1= Government Official

2= Military Official

3= Expert/Academic

4= Activist

5= Other

If 3 (Uighur):

1=Witness

2= Activist

3= Other

References

Akhavan-Majid, R., & Ramaprasad, J. (1998). Framing and ideology: A comparative analysis of U.S. and Chinese newspaper coverage of the Fourth United Nations Conference on Women and the NGO Forum. Mass Communication and Society, 1, 131-138.

Barnett, A. D. (1979). The communication system in China: Some generalizations. In G. C. Chu, & F. L. K. Hsu (Eds.), Moving a mountain: Cultural changes in China (pp. 386-395). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Becquelin, Nicolas. (2000) "Xinjiang in the Nineties" *The China Journal.* No. 44 (pp. 65-90)

Bob, Clifford. (2002) "Merchants of Morality" *Foreign Policy.* No. 129 (pp. 36-45)

Bovingdon, Gardner. (2001) "The Not-So-Silent Majority: Uyghur Resistance to Han Rule in Xinjiang" *Modern China.* Vol. 28, No. 1 (pp. 39-78)

Brayne, M. (1992). Reporting the news from China: The problem of distance. In R. Porter (Ed.), Reporting the news from China (pp. 53-63). London: Royal Institute of International Affairs

Cao, Q. (2000). Journalism as politics: Reporting Hong Kong's handover in the Chinese press. *Journalism Studies, 1,* 665-678.

Chaffee, S.H., Pan, Z.. & Chu, G.C. (1997) Western Media in China: Audience and influence. Mass Comm Review, 24, 19-39

Chan, J. M. (1994). Media internationalization in China: Processes and tensions. Journal of Communication, 44(3), 70-88.

Chang, T.-K. (1988). The news and U.S.-China policy: Symbols in newspapers and documents. Journalism Quarterly, 65, 320-327.

Chang, T.-K., Wang, J., & Chen, C.-H. (1994). News as social knowledge in China: The changing worldview of Chinese national media. Journal of Communication, 44(3), 52-69.

Chang, T.-K., Wang, J., & Chen, C.-H. (1998). The social construction of international imagery in the Post-Cold War era: A comparative analysis of U.S. and Chinese national TV news. Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media, 42, 277-290.

Dreyer, June Teufel. (1977) "Ethnic Relations in China" *Annals of the Americans Academy of Political and Social Science.* Vol. 433 (pp. 100-111)

Elliott, C. W. (2000). Flows of news from the Middle Kingdom: An analysis of international news release from Xinhua. In A. Malek & A. P. Kavoori (Eds.), *The global dynamics of news:*

Studies in international news coverage and news agenda (pp. 343-388). Stamford, CT: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Harris, Lillian Craig. (1993) "Xinjiang, Central Asia and the Implications for China's Policy in The Islamic World" *The China Quarterly.* No. 133 (pp. 111-129)

Huang, L. N. & McAdams, K. C. (2000). Ideological manipulation via newspaper accounts of political conflict: A cross-national news analysis of the 1991 Moscow coup. In A. Malek & A. P. Kavoori (Eds.), *The global dynamics of news: Studies in international news coverage and news agenda* (pp. 57-73). Stamford, CT: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Israeli, Raphael. (1977) "Muslims in China: The Incompatability between Islam and the Chinese Order" *T'oung Pao.* Vol. 63, Livr. 4/5 (pp. 296-323)

Israeli, Raphael. (1981) "The Muslim Minority in the People's Republic of China" Asian Survey. Vol. 21, No. 8 (pp. 901-919)

Kwong, Julia and Hong Xiao. (1989) "Educational Equality among China's Minorities" *Comparative Education.* Vol. 25, No. 2 (pp. 229-243)

Lee, C. C.; Chan, J. M.; Pan, Z., & and So, C. Y. K. (2002). *Global media spectacle: News war Over Hong Kong.* Buffalo: New York State University Press.

Lee, C. C. (1981). The United States as seen through the *People's Daily*. Journal of Communication, 31, (pp. 92-101)

Li, X., & St Cyr, C. (1998). Human rights in China: A pawn of a political agenda? A content analysis of *The New York Times* (1987-96). Gazette, 60, (pp. 531-547)

Liu, Xingwu. (1988) "China's Policy towards Her Minority Nationalities" *Social Scientist.* Vol. 16, No. 1 (pp. 136-159)

Marsot, Alain-Gerard. (1992) "Political Islam in Asia: A Case Study" *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science.* Vol. 524, (pp. 156-169)

Mickiewicz, Ellen and Gregory Haley. (1987) "Soviet and American News: Week of Intensive Interaction" *Slavic Review.* Vol. 46, No. 2 (pp. 214-228)

Mikesell, Marvin W. and Alexander B. Murphy. (1991) "A Framework for Comparative Study Of Minority-Group Aspirations" *Annals of the Association of American Geographers.* Vol. 81, No. 4 (pp. 581-604)

Narang, A. S. (2002) "Ethnic Conflicts and Minority Rights" *Economic and Political Weekly.* Vol. 37, No. 27 (pp. 2696-2700)

Pan, Z., Lee, C.-C., Chan, J. M., & So, C. Y. K. (1999). One event, three stories: Media narratives of the handover of Hong Kong in cultural China. Gazette, 61, 99-112.

Schwarz, Henry G. (1962) "Communist Language Policies for China's Ethnic Minorities: The First Decade" *The China Quarterly*. No. 12 (pp. 170-182)

Schwarz, Henry G. (1973) "The Treatment of Minorities" Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science. Vol. 31, No. 1, China's Developmental Experience (pp. 193-207)

Scollon, R. (2000). Generic variability in news stories in Chinese and English: A contrastive discourse study of five days' newspapers. Journal of Pragmatics, 32, (pp. 761-791)

Stone, R. (1994). Speaking to the foreign audience: Chinese foreign policy concerns as expressed in *China Daily*, January 1989-June 1993. Gazette, 53, (pp. 43-52)

Wang, M.-L. (1991). Who is dominating whose ideology? *New York Times* reporting on China. Asian Journal of Communication, 2, (pp. 51-69)

Yang, J. (2003). Framing the NATO air strikes on Kosovo across countries: Comparison of Chinese and US newspaper coverage. *Gazette, 65,* (pp. 231-249)

Yu, X. (1997). What does China want the world to know: A content analysis of CNN World Report sent by the People's Republic of China. Gazette, 58, (pp. 173-187)

Zhong, M. (1999). Same language, yet different: News coverage of Clinton's China visit by two prominent newspapers. In R. Kluver, & J. H. Powers (Eds.), Civic discourse, civil society, and Chinese communities (pp. 153-166). Stamford, CT: Ablex.

Zhu, J.-H., Weaver, D., Lo, V.-H. C. C., & Wu, W. (1997). Individual, organizational, and societal influences on media role perceptions: A comparative study of journalists in China, Taiwan, and the United States. Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly, 74, (pp. 84-96)