

# What are the causes and consequences of the tension between the Central government and Uyghurs in Xinjiang?

Course Code: CCCH9027  
 Course Name: China's Ethnic Minorities: Assimilation or Cultural Pluralism?  
 Group Name: 2c  
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## What are the discrepancies between the Central government's portrayal of Uyghurs and who they actually are?



### Uyghurs in Real

- Ethnically Turkic; rich heritage (Silk Road) (Kamberi, 2005)
- Most Speak Turkic language (Vandenbrink, 2012)
- Sunni Muslims (Islam - centre of culture)
- Relaxed form of Islam (Previously Shaman/Buddhist) (Human Rights Watch, 2005)



VS



### Uygurs in Portrayal

- "Not Han enough" (Radio Free Asia, 2017)
- Potential Separatists (Davis, 2008)
- Should be subordinate to the State (Radio Free Asia, 2017)
- Potential Extremists (Islam - source of extremism) (Human Rights Watch, 2005)

(Chida, 2015; Chunshan, 2014; Joshua, 2018; Hoffer, 2013)

## How do government policies contradict the official constitutional rights of Uyghurs?

**Ban on Ramadan Fasting (2016)**

(Radio Free Asia, 2016)

**Banning long beard and veils (2017 April)**

(BBC, 2017)

### Promised Autonomy

Right to enjoy freedom of religious belief  
 (article 36 – Constitution of the PRC )  
 (Hong Kong Human Rights Monitor, n.d.)

Schools in ethnic areas should, whenever use textbooks in their own languages and use these languages as the media of instruction  
 (article 37 – Law on regional autonomy)

(Hillman & Tuttle, 2016)

**Banning Muslim names (2017)**

(Uyghurs Human Rights Project, 2017)

**Banning the use and teaching of Uyghur language in Xinjiang schools (2017 Sep)**

(Radio Free Asia, 2009)

## Project Beauty (2011)

(Ghosh, 2013)

No citizen suffers discrimination or unfair treatment for believing in, or not believing in, any religion (White Paper)

(Radio Free Asia, 2016)

## Strike Hard Campaign (1997)

(Branigan, 2009)

# How has political oppression impacted Uyghur Islamic identity and resistance towards the Central government?

“INDEED MANY UYGHURS ARE BEGINNING TO VIEW A MAJOR COMPONENT OF THEIR IDENTITY AS “BEING NON HAN”

-The Diplomat (Torrey, 2017)

• Individually Distinct Identity

Tension

- Mistrust (Davis, 2008)
- Antagony

Cause of Oppression

- Strengthened Identity
- Riots
- Increased Militancy

Cause of more Oppression

2009

### Urumqi Riots

- Western Media: Han-Uyghur Conflicts
- State media and Govt. officials: Foreign instigators (Uyghur diaspora/ activists)

(Wee, 2013)

2013

### Shanshan Riots

- Western media: discontent with religious suppression
- Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying and state media: terrorist attack

(Wong, 2009)

2014

### Terrorist Attack in Kunming, Yunnan

- China's "9-11"
- Beyond Xinjiang Borders

(Chunshan, 2014)



No single Uyghur Agenda:  
-Separate Uyghur State/ Cultural Distinction/Assimilation (Davis, 2008)

“UYGHURS HAVE REINFORCED THEIR RELIGIOUS IDENTITY AS A WAY OF RESISTANCE EITHER PEACEFULLY OR VIOLENTLY”

- The Jamestown Foundation (Ma & Chang, 2014 )