



Xinjiang or
East
Turkestan?

The Uygur
Issue as seen
from Turkey

Map games

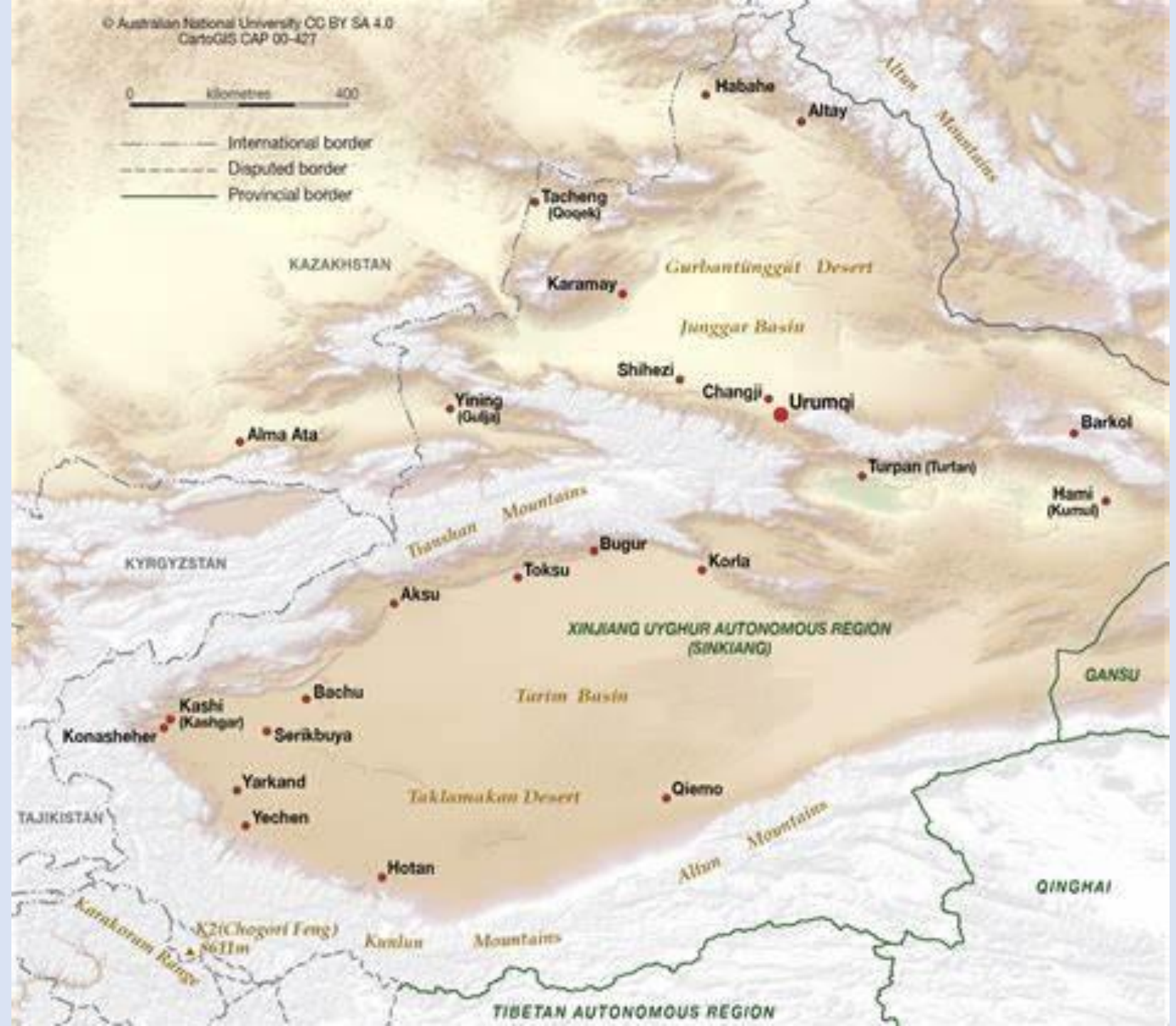
(This map claims to represent 16th c. Asia)

Historically the Uighurs a Turkic confederation of tribes, it was an independent empire in the 700-800s, but more often part of a shifting constellation of tribes allied with different partners.



Topographic map of Xinjiang Region

you can see the caravan cities along the edges of the desert.



**Bezeklik,
showing
Greek
influence in
Buddhist Art**

We think of the region as a hinterland now, but it was a main cultural corridor.



Painting
from
Bezeklik
Caves



Bezeklik Buddhist Monastery Complex



Tashkurgan (stone fortress). The word is a Turkic word



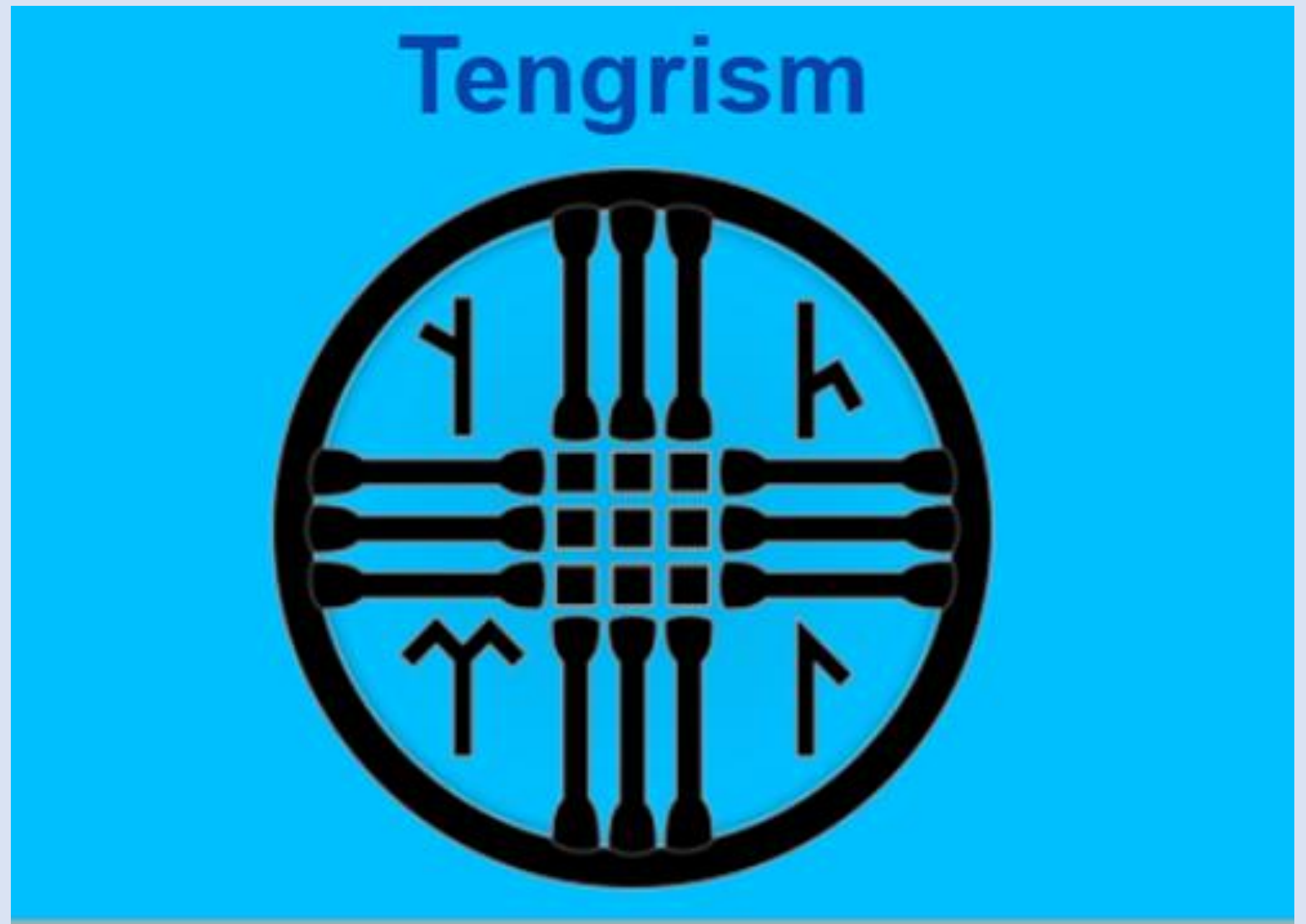


Caravanserai near Tashkurgan

Orkhon Stele Inscriptions
(Mongolia, 700s) History of the
Turks conveyed in old Turkic and
Chinese scripts



Tengrism, the
Turkic and
Mongolian
religion,
described in the
Stele



- Mongol movie <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2rErXfsPnes> (2:00-16:00) The movie about the rise to power of Genghis Khan not only shows the current Central Asian vision of him as a founder of empire and restorer of dignity, but many of the cultural practices in the movie were shared with the other Turkic tribes.

Tourism arrives in the Taklimakan desert, 2010s

But it is tourism that substitutes one heritage (Han) for the Turkic. This is state-sponsored tourism that is part of the ethnic/cultural heritage cleansing underway in Xinjiang (and Tibet)





Thread



Cern

@FantomeVivere

I wonder, has the minecraft "activist" stans, trying to police people about their "awareness" ever talked about the genocide of Uyгур Turks in China? The racism Kurdish people go through in Turkey? Anything in Asia at all? Your americentrism shows and it isn't pretty

3:37 AM · Jul 17, 2021 · Twitter for Android

24 Retweets

1 Quote Tweet

182 Likes

Today's Urban dictionary: "Stans"

“Stans” (according to my children)

1. Stalker + Fan = “Stan” (Taken from an Eminem song featuring an obsessed fan)
2. The “Dark Underbelly of the Internet” or voices from the same. Its interesting to me that metaphors from Eurasia (“stans”) have replaced metaphors from the tropics (deeest darkest jungles, etc) to indicate the absence of civilization.

A brief history of Xingiang under the PRC

- 1980s -90s – Tibet model applied to Xinjiang. Encourage emigration of Han Chinese to the region.
- 2000 The Great Western Development Initiative to exploit fuel and ore for industrialization drive
- 2001-2010s Growing interest in monitoring potential Islamic extremism. Active Chinese monitoring of Uygurs in Central Asia abroad as well.
- 2008-9 Explosive protests in Urumqui and Tibet prompt new approach. High Tech Surveillance and use of reeducation camp model
- 2013 Belt and Road Initiative begins, Xinjiang a priority for integration.
- 2017 International Human Rights condemnation of Xinjiang policies begins
- 2018 PRC defense of “reeducation” camps as vocational centers

2013 Chinese government moved from monitoring/arresting activists to widespread detention.

Diaspora concerns in 2017 led to internet sleuthing of GPS data, traffic notices, construction tenders and employment notices to trace the camps.

2019 estimates – up to 10% of the population (more than 1 million) incarcerated in some areas

Satellite Imagery of Xinjiang “Re-education Camp” №91

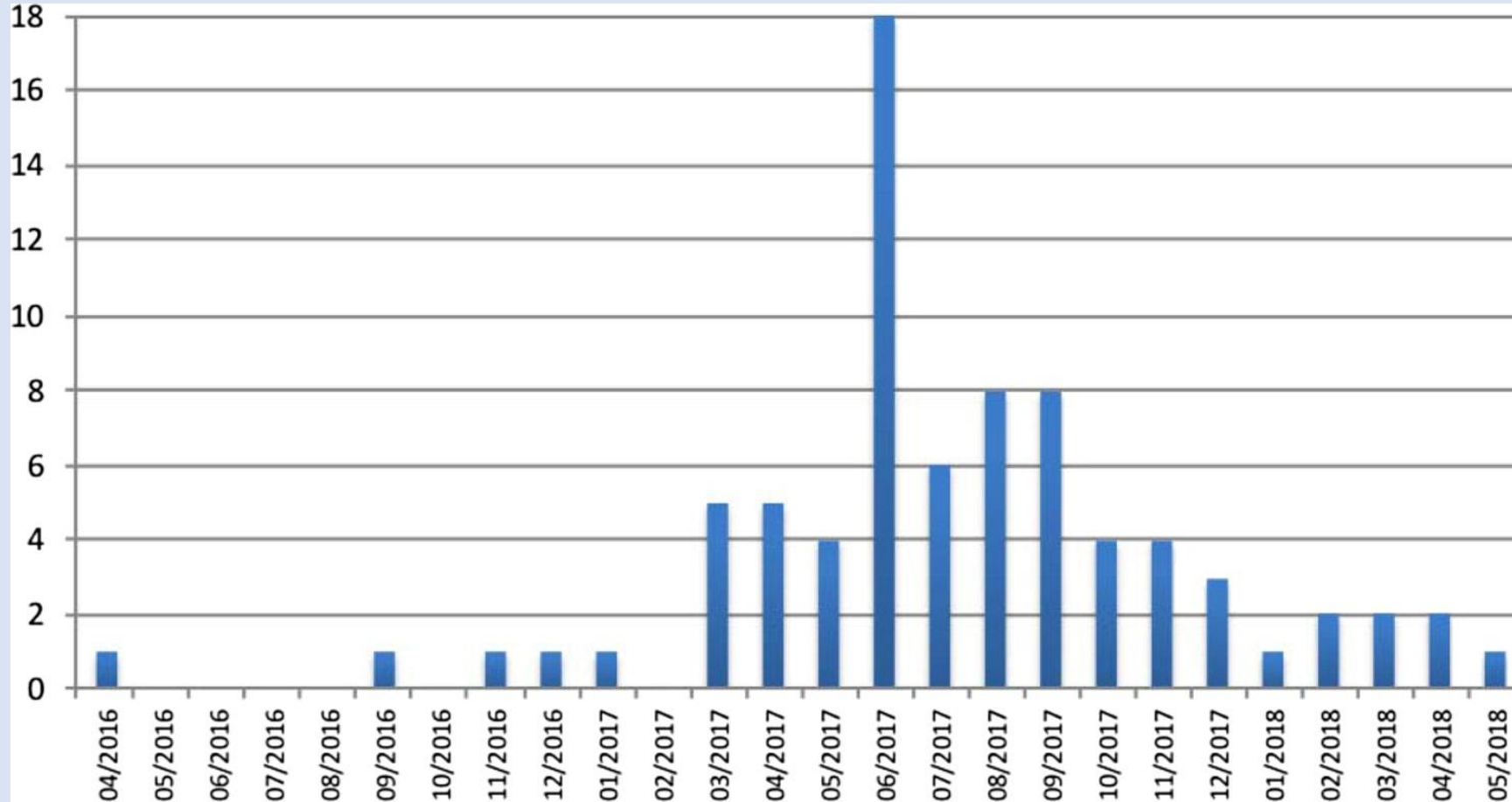
Usu/ Wusu City re-education camp

44.374058, 84.762705



A tender notice suggests there is a camp to the south of Zhujiang East Road, west of Nanning Road.

Tenders for prison construction surged in 2017



Contracts for labor, construction bids, etc, are one way digital sleuths try to use open resources to track the growth of this secret program.

‘Thoroughly reforming them towards a healthy heart attitude’: China’s political re-education campaign in Xinjiang

Adrian Zenz <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-8648-8363>

<https://doi.org/10.1080/02634937.2018.1507997>

PUBLISHED ONLINE:
05 September 2018

Eric Prince's Hong Kong-based Frontier Services Group contracted to provide security training in Xinjiang 2019

Prince says he had “no knowledge of camp allegations.”

- <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-xinjiang-idUSKCN1PP169>



China: the Electronic Surveillance Influencer

- “Skynet” cameras with facial recognition
- Purchases marked with ids
- Digital reading of phone histories
- Internet monitoring – foreign company data centers required to have China base



- <https://www.engadget.com/2018-02-22-china-xinjiang-surveillance-tech-spread.html>
- <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/22/world/asia/china-surveillance-xinjiang.html>

2022 memoir of engineer Gulbahar Haitiwaji reveals international monitoring



She was arrested after her daughter, studying in France, was photographed at a protest against the camps. FB posts used to then track down family members, essentially holding them hostage for good behavior of children abroad.

Cultural Heritage sites also targeted

Below: Tomb of Uyghur poet Lutpulia Mutellip, before and after photos



- <https://culturalpropertynews.org/bulldozing-culture-chinas-systematic-destruction-of-uyghur-heritage-reveals-genocidal-intent>

The Guardian estimated 2/3 of historic religious sites had been razed, with the worst destruction in the rural areas.



Ordam Mazar, pre 2013



<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/sep/25/thousands-of-xinjiang-mosques-destroyed-damaged-china-report-finds>

Refurbished “Old Kashgar” a popular tourist site since 2015

Relocation of residents to distant high rises

Destruction of mosques, shrines and graveyards

Construction of new Tourist infrastructure

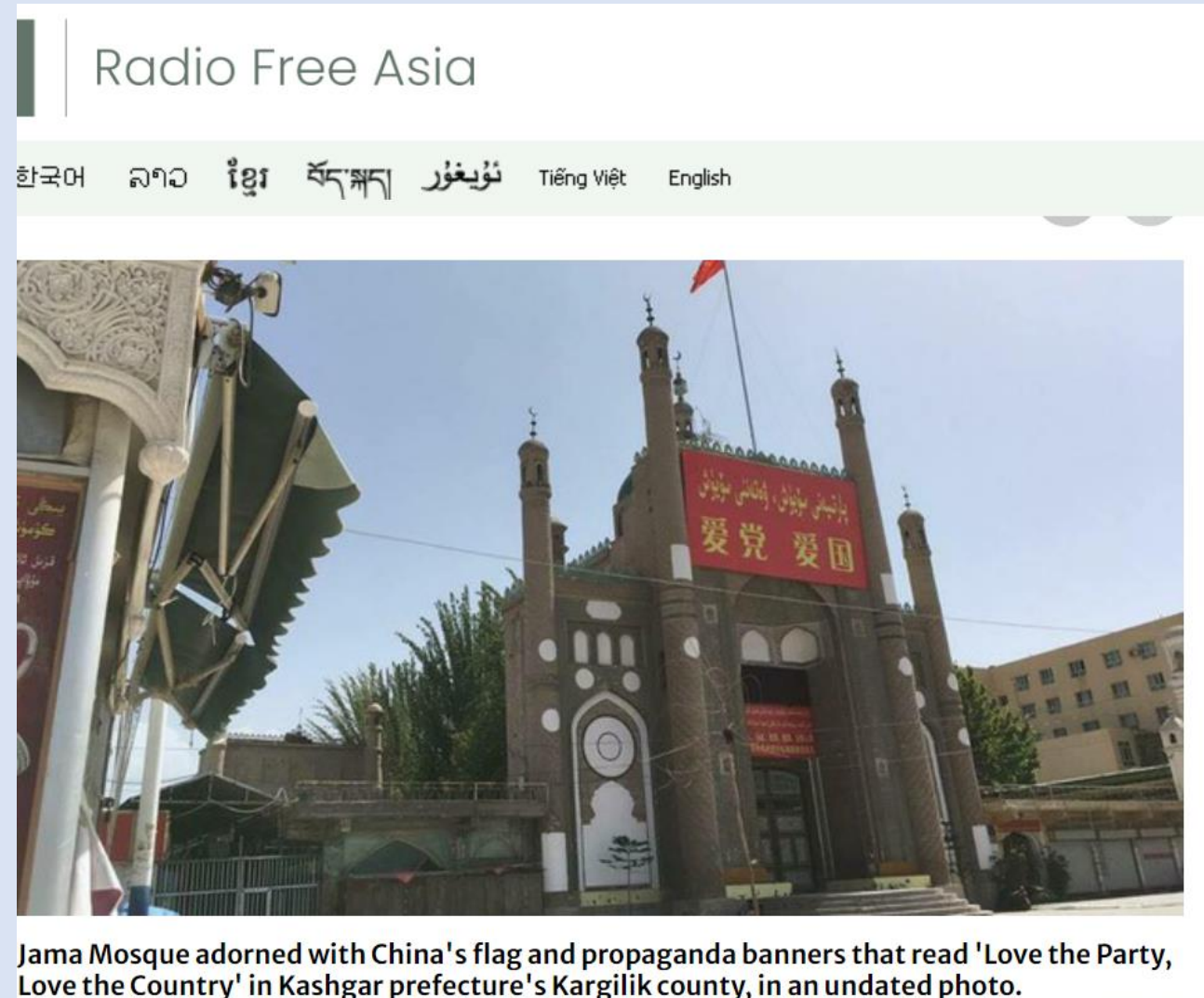
Han “little brothers and sisters” encouraged to do ‘homestays.’



<https://www.chinafile.com/reporting-opinion/postcard/million-citizens-occupy-uyghur-homes-xinjiang>

Kashgar Mosque converted to Hotel

“Recently, video and photos depicting Han Chinese tourists drinking tea in the courtyard of a mosque decorated in the Uyghur style and dancing Uyghur-style folk dances along with ethnic Uyghur dancers in the mosque’s prayer hall spread among Uyghur diaspora users of Facebook and Twitter, where they caused an uproar.”



2018 PR offensive from the PRC to respond to critics. “Vocational Centers” open for highly curated tours (ABC Nightline tour photo below)



<https://abcnews.go.com/International/nightline-granted-rare-tour-chinese-vocational-centers-muslim/story?id=65248173>



Uyghur Diaspora in Turkey

- Up to 200,000 in Turkey? Figures vary from 50K to 200K, most living without documents. Largest concentration of Uyghurs after Central Asia, but less visible than European groups.
- Turkey has facilitated some “East Turkestan” units in Syria. These train Uyghurs and other Central Asians to fight with the anti-Assad forces in Syria. China is not happy with this.
- Turkey supports education, social services of Uyghurs, but also closely monitors refugees for Islamic extremist affiliations.

December 24, 2019 Istanbul rally to protest Chinese abuse of Uyghurs

(part of worldwide protests planned
by the World Uyghur Congress -
human rights groups)

- <https://twitter.com/rihlandofficial/status/1209460615229652992>
- <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=2670138906386580>





2021- Why did Turkey begin limiting Uyghur protests?

Concern with Turkish-Chinese relations?

Concern with “genocide” labeling by Canada, Germany, US Congress and others

Concern with protests in general?

A community living in Turkey hold a placard with pictures of Uighurs they say they fear are being kept in detention in Istanbul, Feb. 10, 2021.

In 2013 Turkey became a “dialogue member” of the *Shanghai Cooperation Organization*.

Balancing out its frustrations with the EU and NATO?

(also an important market for the growing Turkish military industry)



■ Members ■ Observers ■ Dialogue partners

Turkey and the Uighyur Future?

Although Turkey has allowed Uighyur refugees in Turkey during the last 20 years, the government is more careful with monitoring all groups these days, and Uighyurs are no exception. There is greater control over protests, journalism of all groups.

Also, it seems that Turkey is more conscious of the potential of China to serve as a counterweight to the West, especially in times of financial stress and growing Western opposition to Erdogan.