

Against the backdrop of Khalid's masterful analysis of national identity in the five post-Soviet republics, other territories with a claim to inclusion in Central Asia and Central Asian studies seem, still, in need of further explanation. For instance, what Khalid calls Eastern Turkestan—the territories of the Uyghurs and other Muslim and Turkic groups in what is now the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region—has a more obscure relationship to questions of the nation. Nonetheless, its inclusion in this book is persuasive, serving as an example of what can happen when a centralized state views minority nationalities as an inherent threat rather than as an organizing principle, as the Soviet Union often did.

The penultimate chapter, "A Twenty-First-Century Gulag," is powerful testimony of the violence currently visited on Xinjiang's Uyghur population by the Chinese government. This story is undeniably part of Central Asia, and of its modern legacy. I am less convinced by the exclusion of Afghanistan. True, Afghanistan's historical trajectory does not fit the imperialism-socialism-capitalism arc as precisely as the other territories discussed in Khalid's *Central Asia*. But Afghanistan today bears the marks of the complex interactions of communism, Islam, and capitalism as much as any other Central Asian state.

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## Eurasian Crossroads: A History of Xinjiang, Revised and Updated Edition

By James A. Millward. New York: Columbia University Press, 2021. ISBN: 9780231204545 (cloth).

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First published in 2007, James A. Millward's *Eurasian Crossroads* is the definitive general history of Xinjiang. The first three chapters survey the earliest times to the nineteenth century; the next two chapters discuss modern transitions, from the late nineteenth century to the 1940s. The next two chapters cover the Mao and the post-Mao eras up to the early twenty-first century. The 2021 edition has a new chapter, "Colonialism, Assimilationism and Ethnocide," bringing readers to current developments.

Much of the recent writing on Xinjiang history has been shaped by contemporary nationalistic agendas, as Millward notes. The stated goal of his book is not to weigh in on political issues besetting Xinjiang today, but it certainly provides the essential historical context to understand them. Most importantly, the continental, racial, and national categories that we take for granted today do not readily apply to historical times. A dispassionate and balanced account, Millward's history of Xinjiang is one of interacting peoples, cultures, and polities, not a single nation or identity.

Several historical patterns emerge from his well-documented narrative, with compelling contemporary relevance. One was the recurring rulers from different outsiders. Because of its geography, Xinjiang was embroiled in an enduring rivalry between nomadic powers based in Mongolia (via northern Xinjiang) and dynastic states based in North China. Throughout much of the history of southern Xinjiang, where Uyghurs have been concentrated since the mid-800s, the frequent pattern of rule was one set of outside rulers replacing another, notwithstanding the local ruling families that reigned in other times. China was but one of the major players in Xinjiang's history, notably during the Han, Tang, Yuan, and Qing dynasties.

Another pattern was Xinjiang as a frontier security matter for North China-based states. When these states expanded westward to Xinjiang, they were primarily driven by campaigns against nomadic powers further north. Indirect rule, rather than incorporation, followed each conquest. After the final conquest in the 1870s, the Qing court established provincehood in 1884, introducing for the first time Chinese-style administration and other nation-building reforms. Yet the prevailing rationale was not

new land, but cheaper rule ensuing from tighter integration. Governance varied locally and remained in the hands of local Muslim elites, leaving autonomy for local society.

The “in-between” nature of Xinjiang cumulated in nationalistic wrangling by rival parties during the Republican period. In contrast with Chinese historiography, which downplays Uyghur political agency and overstates foreign interference, Millward shows that while Soviet influences gave rise to the East Turkestan movements, they assisted rather than created Uyghur ethno-nationalism. Weak central governments allowed de facto local rule, this time by Chinese warlords, leaving room for the Uyghurs’ modernizing reforms, characterized by Millward as both Islamizing and secular.

The last three chapters chronicle a progression of ethnic autonomy reduced and lost. For the Mao era, Millward details the new state’s disruption of Uyghur society through a variety of imposed policies. But the chapter would be more forceful if key contrasts were drawn between the indirect and differentiated rule of the past and the direct and centralized rule of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Millward also neglects to discuss the key role that Mao’s social class ideology played in rallying the ethnic proletariat and serving as the party’s social base.

This is an important point because in the early post-Mao era, when the CCP abandoned its class ideology, identity politics took its place in Xinjiang (and Tibet). Failure to consider this development results in Millward’s weak hold on the resurgence of Islam and the rise of ethnic violence after the 1990s. In fact, when Millward uses the Uyghur script change in 1984 to illustrate China’s capricious impositions, he seems to be unaware that it was a Uyghur official who initiated the change, enabled by the identity politics of the day. This new politics also prompted the CCP to sponsor religious revival in Xinjiang (and Tibet) in the 1980s, until it evolved in uncontrollable ways by the early 1990s.

Another causal development missed by Millward is the unintended consequences of economic liberalization. The end of the socialist contract afflicted special pain on Uyghurs, as it was compounded by entry barriers in the new market economy and competition from migrants. As Uyghur communities disintegrated, uneducated and unemployed youths turned to private madrasas while their graduates aspired ethnic rejuvenation or, sometimes, led violent outbursts. Millward seems to take, at surface value, China’s characterization of Uyghur separatism and American conspiracy behind it. The threshold for labeling “separatism” is so low in Xinjiang that it is mostly meaningless. “American conspiracy,” likewise, is a pretext employed by local officials to shirk off their responsibilities for social instability.

Millward ends his book with a critique of China’s efforts to eliminate diversity. One wishes that he had ended it instead with a critique of China’s efforts to eliminate ethnic autonomy. The state’s developmentalism contributed to Uyghurs’ plight during economic liberalization. It also justifies extreme measures in recent years to assimilate Uyghurs into the secular, “advanced,” Han-centered Chinese nation. For these to occur in a place called the Uyghur Autonomous Region is utterly ironic.

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## Anime’s Identity: Performativity and Form beyond Japan

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In *Anime’s Identity*, Stevie Suan proposes a methodology for analyzing a media form that is predominantly associated with Japan and Japanese culture. Through an incisive review of Japan’s actual role in production and marketing of anime, including both popular and academic perspectives, the