

кваліфікований. Як зауважив колишній керівник контррозвідки ЦРУ Пол Редмонд, «на культурному рівні китайці живуть зовсім в іншому середовищі та інших часових рамках. Китайці не мислять в категоріях годин, днів або тижнів, а десятиліть. Вони – давня цивілізація, і вміють планувати на довгі роки» [6, с. 87].

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CHINESE NATIONALISM AND MUSLIM IDENTITY IN CHINA IN THE XI JINPING ERA

Key words: Chinese nationalism, ethnic nationalism, Muslims, Xi Jinping era, sinicization.

The 20th Party Congress, a defining moment for China and for the world, determined the supreme power of Xi Jinping for the next five years. In his wide-ranging speech that was decoded by all leading media platforms and Chinese studies scholars, he described his party's achievements and announced the

direction for years to come. Among the key priorities, Xi Jinping stressed the importance of a strong «socialist» culture in China, to promote the «China story» to the rest of the world. Beijing plans to deep the patriotic education and ideology rhetoric that will lead to the strengthening of Chinese nationalism. The national security narratives shaped a new wave of it. Right after the 20th Party Congress, a new propaganda chief was named; Li Shulei (李书磊) will spearhead China's future global image [The China project].

Chinese nationalism (中国民族主义) has a long history of development and has had many different definitions. The simplest one can be found in Wikipedia as «a form of nationalism in the People's Republic of China (Mainland China) and the Republic of China (Taiwan) which asserts that the Chinese people are a nation and promotes the cultural and national unity of all Chinese people.»

China experts like Peter Hays Gries and Minxin Pei determined that China's nationalism was shaped by its pride in its history, economic progress, and that it was partly a creation of Western imperialism [Council on Foreign Relations]. The century of humiliation from the West and Japan has been in the center of nationalism rhetoric the last decades.

Beijing's top priority is to maintain peace and stability at home while pursuing its national development plans and taking a leading role in the global arena. Nationalism serves as an effective tool for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to maintain control over the people and processes in China as well as to drive progress. From the outside, Chinese nationalism is certainly an impediment to China's attempt to maintain the image of a responsible global player. Therefore, it is essential that scholars study the cultural, historical, and political factors that influence the development of Chinese nationalism. If international researchers can view China's actions through the lens of Chinese conceptions of nationalism and Chinese national doctrines, then the world community will better understand China's current policies with pragmatic cooperation objectives and will put less stress on perennial apprehension or threats. The independent expertise of Ukrainian scholars would lead to a better understanding of Chinese nationalism for Ukrainian society.

The second consideration of this thesis is an analysis of China's present policies toward Muslim minorities – a topic often discussed by the international community regarding contemporary China. The evaluation of this issue through the lens of Chinese nationalism will facilitate a greater understanding of Chinese actions and their potential impact on Chinese Muslims' identity.

Chinese nationalism has promoted the forced assimilation of Muslim minorities, as well as any other minorities, which began much earlier than Xi Jinping's leadership. During the Xi Jinping era, the sinicization scenario was

seriously condemned by international human rights organizations. Chinese and international scholars have investigated the purposes and consequences of this assimilation.

As we look into the subject of Muslim Chinese integration into Chinese Society, some facts cannot be ignored. The Muslims are not concentrated in any particular province, but in Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region (Ningxia), Qinghai Province, Gansu Province, Yunnan Province, Tianjin Municipality, Beijing Municipality, Henan Province, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region (XUAR), Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region and others. Today, there are about 28 million Muslims living in China, accounting for 1.73% of the total population. The total Muslim population is rising [Statista] and includes Hui, Uyghur, Kazakh, Dongxiang, Kyrgyz, Salar, Tajik, Uzbek, Bonan and Tatar ethnicities. Every minority has its own history and challenges regarding integration into Chinese society. According to Raphael Israeli, all efforts of Beijing of «crash integration» or «lax liberalization» have historically brought the rise of Muslim separatism in China [Israeli]. Numerous rebellions, protests and acts of terrorism in Kashgar, Urumqi, Yining, and Beijing have led to an East Turkistan independent terrorist group movement and to the strengthening of all types of control in Xinjiang and other areas in the name of anti-terrorism. Xi Jinping's «China dream» focuses on national prosperity, unity and stability. The Chinese leader has advocated for the «sinicization» of Islam, and has called his policy toward Muslims «a totally correct success» during his speech in 2020 [Xinhua], citing that there have been no terrorist incidents in China since 2019 [Wikipedia].

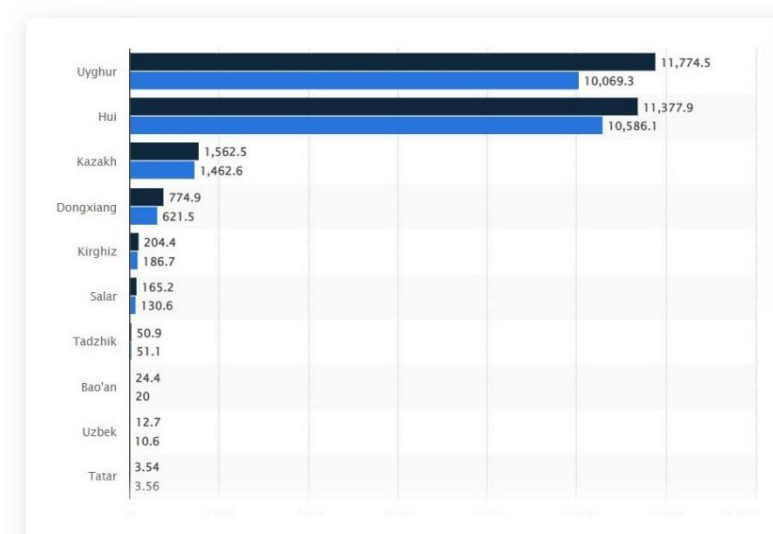
The ethnic heterogeneity, combined with the large territory, poses a potentially destabilizing threat for the CCP. The remoteness of Xinjiang and the fact that Uyghurs are one of the largest Muslim minority groups, elevate the importance of its successful integration into China. This topic is of big scientific interest. The Uyghur's identity in contemporary China is a part of my research project.

The Uyghurs are Sunni Muslims, speak Uyghur (which belongs to the Turkic language family), and have been practicing Islam for centuries. The Uyghur ethnic community in XUAR is a good example of ethno-nationalism, a form of political consciousness along the lines of nationality. By tracing the process of its identity formation, scholars explore the dynamic between CCP policy toward Uyghurs and their social assimilation. Uyghur nationalism has been shaped by a millennium of conflict, self-determination, outside influence, war, and peace. The process has created a unique balance of nationalism and Islamic identity. The religious factor played a significant role in the formation of ethno-nationalism of Uyghurs and in their desire to take social actions. Their religion, influenced by Buddhism, Confucianism, and even Christianity has produced a unique Sufi Islam. Sinicization by Xi Jinping

introduced strict rules and control into the region. Islamic fundamentalism has not taken root in modern Xinjiang.

Muslim population in China 2010 and 2020, by ethnicity

(in 1,000s)



Source: Statista, 2022

Uyghur identity is comprised of its history, religion, and traditions. Economic factors are also important in Uyghur modern life. Historically Uyghurs have been farmers, specifically involved in cotton growing. «The Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act», that went into effect on June 21, 2022, badly affected the industry and the whole region [MFA]. The acceleration of economic development in XUAR put Uyghurs in inequitable competitive conditions with higher-skilled Han Chinese, who immigrated into Xinjiang, but created a demand on the labor force in the different industries. The rising leadership of China in Central Asia will bring additional benefits to Xinjiang. Xinjiang's economy is developing more rapidly than the economies of the neighboring countries (with the exception of Kazakhstan). The current CCP strategy toward Uyghurs focuses on increasing wealth and a rising standard of living for the middle class in Xinjiang. This means that the young Uyghur middle class have better jobs than older generations, and get a better education. Muslim youth have the privileged condition of education, according to Yu Mingtao, the Chinese student, who is currently living and studying in Ukraine. Yu Mingtao shared his personal observation that usually

Muslim students are provided with a separate meal plan and better dorms at the universities, and they easily get government scholarships.

The young generation might continue to feel very strongly about their Uyghur identity, but with the increasing immigration of Han Chinese and the development of the regional economy, Uyghur culture might eventually dissolve against the interests of the dominant Han culture. The status quo should be found under the pressure of international society and for the unity of the nation. Manifestation of Uyghur nationalism should be considered by all sides as preservation of the Uyghur identity in the Autonomous Region in the unitary multi-national state.

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