

KIM, Hodong — *Holy War in China: The Muslim Rebellion and State in Chinese Central Asia, 1864–1877*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004. Pp. xviii, 295.

On June 4, 1864, Chinese-speaking Muslims in the old Silk Road city of Kucha rose up and attacked the garrison troops of the Qing Dynasty. Turkic Muslims (today known as Uyghurs or Uighurs, a term that did not exist at the time) quickly joined the uprising. Within months rebellion had spread across Eastern Turkestan and Zungharia. The Qing Empire had lost control of what they called Xinjiang, the New Dominion, which the Qianlong emperor had subdued in the 1750s. In the ensuing years, a Khotenese official named Ya'qūb Beg united those territories south of the Tianshan range and created a Muslim state centered on Kashgar. Ya'qūb Beg's state lasted for over a decade and signed agreements with Britain, Russia, and the Ottoman empire, until subdued by Qing armies under the command of the prominent Chinese official Zuo Zongtang in 1877.

Hodong Kim notes that *Holy War in China* is the first English-language book focused on this uprising published since Victorian journalist Demitrius Boulger published his *Life of Yakoob Beg* in 1878. This is slightly misleading: in the 1960s and 1970s Wen-djang Chu, Lanny Fields, and Immanuel Hsu published studies of the Qing suppression of the rebellion. Unlike those earlier works, however, Kim's book focuses primarily on the Muslim protagonists and the state they created. Kim, a Korean scholar trained at Harvard (this is a revision of his 1986 dissertation), has consulted materials in an extraordinary range of languages. By using several Central Asian accounts written in the decades after the collapse of Ya'qūb Beg's state, as well as Chinese, Russian, British, and Ottoman records, he has avoided the sinocentric bias of previous scholarship, and his work throws an altogether new perspective on an important event in nineteenth century Eurasian history.

*Holy War in China* is a political history of the Muslim uprising. Kim begins with a survey of the background of the (often brutal) Qing conquest and of Qing methods of indirect rule, in which local notables, known as begs, were appointed to official positions. He points to the growing problems Qing administrators had with charismatic Sufi leaders, *khwajas*, who, free from association with the Qing overlords, formed the centre of Muslim dissent. Kim carefully examines the beginning of the rebellion in 1864, apparently a response to rumours that the Qing authorities were planning a massacre of the Muslim population and, Kim claims, to excessive taxation. In succeeding chapters the author traces Ya'qūb Beg's arrival in Kashgar in 1865 and swift rise to predominance, examines the organization of the Muslim state, its diplomatic relations with Russia, Britain, and the Ottoman Empire, and finally describes the swift collapse of the Muslim state in 1876–1877.

For historians of China and Central Asia, Kim offers numerous insights. First, he clearly distinguishes the developments in Qing Central Asia from the earlier uprising by Muslims in the Chinese provinces of Shaanxi and Gansu. While the rumours that spurred the 1864 Kucha uprising may have been related to the massacres reportedly undertaken by ethnic Chinese militia against Muslims in Shaanxi and Gansu,

the new rebellion quickly took on a central Asian character, with Turkic Muslims joining their Chinese-speaking coreligionists. The following year Khotenese outsiders led by Ya'qūb Beg moved in, seized control from locals, and unified the localized rebellions under a single government in Kashgar. Kim's Ya'qūb Beg is not the central Asian adventurer and former dancer of earlier European accounts, but a longtime official in the Khoten khanate, who was sent to try to influence events in Kashgar. Only when the Khotenese polity disintegrated did he become an independent player.

According to Kim, the state that Ya'qūb Beg created was organized to maximize the power of the leader. It used secretaries of low status rather than scions of prominent lineages to aid the leader in civil affairs. The rebellion was dominated by newcomers from Khoten rather than locals, and the state was a standing army of 40,000 to avoid dependence on tribal forces. Ya'qūb Beg promoted more restrictive policies on social behaviour associated with the enforcement of Islamic law, such as the veiling of women and the banning of alcohol, but he also suppressed Sufi leaders who he evidently believed were a threat to his power.

Kim makes a convincing case that the Ya'qūb Beg and his chief diplomatic emissary, his nephew Sayyid Ya'qūb Khan, skilfully managed diplomatic affairs, playing off different powers against each other to maintain autonomy. British officials were initially enthusiastic about supporting Kashgar as a buffer against Russian advance, and only slowly realized that it was peripheral to the defence of India and its commercial potential was limited. After initially cutting off trade with Russia, Ya'qūb Beg subsequently signed commercial treaties. Thereafter, the Russians, while not enthusiastic, tolerated the Kashgar regime. Kim argues that it is misleading to view these events in the framework of the rivalry between Britain and Russia called the Great Game: "The term easily conjures up the image of Central Asia as a chessboard and the separate political entities as pawns that were manipulated ... the fact is that Kashgaria was not a pawn" (p. 157). Particularly interesting is Kim's account of Kashgar's diplomacy with the Ottomans, who were increasingly concerned with their role as leaders of the Islamic world. It was the Sublime Porte that offered the most substantial support to Ya'qūb Beg, in return for his acknowledgement of suzerainty to the Sultan.

Kim's work has limitations. The complex political and military narrative in several chapters is sometimes hard to follow, and Kim assumes his readers have some knowledge of Chinese and Central Asian history. The emphasis on politics gives the book an admirable focus, but it leaves one asking a few questions. For a book that includes "holy war" in its title (the title is borrowed from one of the Central Asian sources), Kim gives little attention to the religious aspects of the rebellion. Likewise, the charismatic nature of Sufi traditions in Central Asian political culture deserves more discussion. In a different vein, Kim suggests that high taxes were an important cause of both the initial rebellion and the 1864 uprising and the collapse of the Muslim state a dozen years later, but he offers few specifics. Finally, some readers will be disappointed that Kim does not use his Muslim sources to explore questions about Qing massacres of local residents in Xinjiang during the Qing

reconquest, which have been raised in works by Lanny Fields and Owen Lattimore. Nevertheless, *Holy War in China* is a major contribution, and it will be of interest to scholars of China, central Asia, and nineteenth-century world history.

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KIRBY, William C. (ed.) — *Realms of Freedom in Modern China*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004. Pp. xii, 396.

Edited by Harvard University historian William Kirby, *Realms of Freedom in Modern China* offers 11 closely argued essays on the very general theme of freedom — or its absence — in the modern Chinese experience. This volume is the last of 15 produced in the series entitled “The Making of Modern Freedom” (general editor: R. W. Davis), which has traced the emergence of the idea and experience of freedom beginning in early Stuart England, and is the only volume of the series dedicated to a single Asian example (although a previous volume in the series covers both Africa and Asia). China merits inclusion because of its historical and contemporary importance and because of its protracted struggle to achieve political modernity, which, according to China’s detractors, has largely denied the legitimate rights of the Chinese people to the same freedoms we enjoy in the West.

Indeed, without joining the ranks of “China-bashers”, the contributors to this volume have a hard time locating and clearly describing significant “realms of freedom”. Some authors (such as Irene Bloom) identify alternative currents of political thought that might be rehabilitated (“Confucius himself was not nearly as hostile to the individual as the Confucianism of the imperial state turned out to be”); others (Madeleine Zelin, Robert P. Weller) discuss realms of relative autonomy that exist beyond the state’s ability to exercise effective control (the late imperial commercial economy, local religion past and present). But the theme that dominates this volume is that of growth of the Party-State over the course of the twentieth century, a Party-State that both carried forward certain imperial prerogatives and added many others, thanks to ideology and technology, in the process severely limiting the expression of any other sort of freedom. Taiwan’s recent achievement of democracy is one of the very few success stories recounted here; otherwise, even if groups or individuals manage to carve out tentative realms of relative autonomy, the Chinese state seems consistently to deny any formal claim to an enforceable right to freedom.

I do not mean by this that the volume should not be read — quite the contrary. *Realms of Freedom in Modern China* is a valuable corrective to the work of those (now relatively few) who continue to see China as a totalitarian society, and it is a valuable supplement to scholarship that focuses on Westernized Chinese intellectuals, their dissenting opinions, and their fate under the Chinese regime (indeed, intellectuals, authors, and artists hardly make an appearance in Kirby’s volume). The quality of the essays is uniformly high, much of the scholarship is new, and the volume deserves to be widely read — even if its title might be somewhat misleading.