

MUSLIM SEPARATISM IN NORTHWEST CHINA  
DURING THE REPUBLICAN PERIOD, 1911-1949

by

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ABSTRACT

MUSLIM SEPARATISM IN NORTHWEST CHINA  
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This dissertation represents an attempt to trace and analyse the recent history of the predominantly Muslim Chinese province of Sinkiang (and, where relevant to events in Sinkiang, of the neighbouring Chinese provinces of Kansu and Tsinghai). A study of this nature has been deemed desirable both because of Sinkiang's important strategic position\* and also because it is hoped that an analysis of the political and cultural aspirations of the Muslim peoples of Sinkiang during the period 1911-1949 will throw light on the Muslim revival now sweeping Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and parts of Soviet Central Asia.

No previous study of Muslim separatism in Northwest China exists. The field is almost completely new, and as such it has been necessary to include long passages of previously unrecorded historical narrative to provide a background for the sections of historical and political analysis which are also included. In view of the existence of several earlier studies dealing with the subject, discussions of great power strategy within Sinkiang have been kept to a minimum, except where they impinge directly upon the Muslim population of the province.

Extensive use has been made of unpublished diplomatic sources held in the India Office Library and Records and Public Records Office in London. The great majority of published sources employed are of a primary nature. The thesis provides an overall economic and political survey of Sinkiang from 1911 to 1949, with a postscript dealing in less detail with the situation up to 1955. Particular emphasis has been placed on the narration and analysis of events surrounding the Kumul rebellion of 1931; the "Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan" in 1933; "Tunganistan" and the southern Sinkiang Rebellion of 1937; and the "East Turkestan Republic" of 1944-49. Similarly, the Tungan invasions of Ma Chung-ying during 1931 and 1932-4 have been examined in depth for the first time.

The thesis concludes that, during the Chinese Republican era, the Turkic Muslim peoples of Sinkiang were divided less by their supposed ethnic and cultural particularities than by political differences manifested on a regional basis, with the eastern part of the province influenced by China, the north-west by Russia (later the Soviet Union), and the south-west by Afghanistan and the Muslim Middle East. Despite their Islamic identity, the Hui Muslims of the province remained consistently aloof from Muslim separatist struggles in Sinkiang throughout this period. Their spiritual loyalties may have been directed towards Mecca, but their political orientation remained exclusively Chinese.

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\*The province, which is China's largest, shares a 1,500 mile border with the Soviet Union, as well as shorter frontiers with Afghanistan, Pakistan and India, and since 1964 has been the home of China's nuclear testing ground at Lop Nor.

The sacred Issik K"ol, on which the first Turk,  
Born of the grey wolf, saw the light of the world;  
The two rivers, Jaihun and Saihun,  
And between them the holy graves of thine ancestors;  
The great mountains of Turan, Khan Tenri reaching to heaven —  
Look now to the mountains and think how the Turks  
suffer in bondage!

Maghjan Jumabay, Kazakh national poet.

Maghjan Jumabay, a Kazakh poet, was born in 1894 in Yedisu to the east of Lake Balkash. His collected poems were published in Tashkent in 1923, but the collection is incomplete, for many were too patriotic to pass the censors.

From: Olaf Caroe, Soviet Empire (London, 1967), p. 227.

The Issik Kōl is a major lake - verging on an inland sea - lying in the foothills of the northern Tien Shan in present day Kirghizia. The two rivers Jaihun and Saihun are the Amu Darya and the Syr Darya (the Oxus and Jaxartes of antiquity). Turan is the Turkic counterpart of Iran, the great area of steppe and mountain, desert and oasis, stretching from the Caspian Sea and Astrakhan in the west to the oasis of Kumul and the Gobi Desert in the east. Khan Tenri (Tk. "Lord of Heaven") is, at over 24,000 ft., the dominant peak of the Tien Shan, situated right on the current Sino-Soviet frontier.

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Special thanks are also due to Tom Ewing, friend and mentor in Central Asian Studies, as well as to Owen Lattimore, whose books first awakened my interest in Chinese Central Asia, and whose unique personal reminiscences - most notably around the McCormack dinner table - have helped to bring Republican Sinkiang to life for me. Similarly, thanks are due to Michael Young, who first introduced me to Arabic and Islamic Studies; to Michael Pye, who shares my interest in the Tarim Basin and who encouraged me to undertake my first postgraduate research in the field of Chinese Islam; and to Ursula King, who enabled me to broaden my knowledge in the related field of Indian Muslim separatism. All three have proved to be continuing sources of friendship and guidance, for which I am duly grateful.

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MUSLIM SEPARATISM IN NORTHWEST CHINA  
DURING THE REPUBLICAN PERIOD (1911-1949)

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\* A list of sources for these illustrations may be found at the end of this study.



ABBREVIATIONS USED IN TEXT

<u>AA</u>	Auswärtiges Amt (Bonn)
Ar.	Arabic
<u>CAJ</u>	<u>Central Asiatic Journal</u> (Wiesbaden)
<u>CAR</u>	<u>Central Asian Review</u> (London)
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
Ch.	Chinese
CNR	Committee for National Revolution (Khotan)
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
ETR	East Turkestan Republic (Kulja)
<u>FEER</u>	<u>Far Eastern Economic Review</u> (Hong Kong)
<u>FES</u>	<u>Far Eastern Survey</u> (New York)
FO	Foreign Office (Great Britain)
FPD	Foreign and Political Department (India)
<u>GJ</u>	<u>Geographical Journal</u> (London)
GOI	Government of India
GPU	State Political Administration (Russian abbreviation for the Soviet security service from 1922-34, subsequently NKVD)
HMCGK	His Majesty's (British) Consul-General, Kashgar
HMVCGK	His Majesty's (British) Vice Consul-General, Kashgar
HMCU	His Majesty's (British) Consul, Urumchi
<u>HRAF</u>	<u>Human Relations Area Files</u> (New Haven)
INA	Ili National Army (ETR)
IO	India Office (Great Britain)
<u>IOLR</u>	<u>India Office Library and Records</u> (London)
Ir.	Iranian
<u>JAH</u>	<u>Journal of Asian History</u> (Wiesbaden)
<u>JPRS</u>	<u>Joint Publications Research Service</u> (New York)
<u>JRCAS</u>	<u>Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society</u> (London)
KMT	Kuomintang (Chinese Nationalist Party)
<u>MEJ</u>	<u>Middle East Journal</u> (Washington DC)
MPR	Mongolian People's Republic
MW	<u>Moslem World</u> (now <u>The Muslim World</u> , Hartford, Conn.)
NKVD	People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (Russian abbreviation for Soviet security service from 1934-43, subsequently NKGB)
<u>NYT</u>	<u>New York Times</u>
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PRC	People's Republic of China
<u>PRO</u>	<u>Public Records Office</u> (London)
<u>REI</u>	<u>Revue des Études Islamiques</u> (Paris)
<u>RMM</u>	<u>Revue du Monde Musulman</u> (Paris)
RSFSR	Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic
STPNLC	Sinkiang Turkic People's National Liberation Committee
TIRET	Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan (Kashgar)
Tk.	Turkic
SSR	Soviet Socialist Republic
YKP	Young Kashgar Party

## INTRODUCTION

The central theme of this study is the development and nature of Muslim separatism in Sinkiang during the chaotic years between the fall of the Ch'ing Dynasty in 1911 and the establishment of the Chinese People's Republic in 1949. An ancillary but closely related theme is the consistent Soviet effort to penetrate Sinkiang during the three decades following the Bolshevik Victory in the Russian Civil War; the local and national Chinese response to this challenge; and the impact which continuing Soviet influence in Sinkiang had upon the indigenous Muslim peoples of Northwest China during this period.

Where detailed studies of Republican Sinkiang exist - and there are few in any language - there has been a perhaps inevitable tendency to concentrate on great power politics; on the supposedly pivotal role played by Sinkiang in the "Great Game" between Russia and China or Russia and Japan, just as earlier 19th century studies of the region tended to interpret Sinkiang politics in terms of the contemporaneous "Great Game" between Russia and Great Britain. Thus, previous analyses of Sinkiang's recent history have tended to set political developments within the province against a background of Chinese, Soviet, British, Japanese and even American interests, whilst the local and regional Islamic element has been almost completely ignored.

Perhaps the best examples of this perfectly legitimate approach are to be found in Lattimore's Sinkiang: Pivot of Asia (1950); Whiting's Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?; and Nyman's Great Britain and Chinese, Russian

and Japanese Interests in Sinkiang, 1918-1934 (1977), all of which concentrate primarily on the strategic significance of Sinkiang in global power politics to the exclusion of Muslim political developments within Sinkiang and of that region's position in relation to the wider Muslim world. This is, perhaps, hardly surprising. During the years 1911-1949, Sinkiang was directly affected by (and, no doubt, played some small role in), the emergence of the Soviet Union; the rise of Fascism; the Sino-Japanese struggle and the Second World War; the decline of the British Empire; the emergence of India and Pakistan as independent nations; and the seizure of power in China by the CCP. During the same period, moreover, the Muslim world appeared largely quiescent - even supine - crushed by the overwhelming political and military power of its French, British, Dutch, Italian, American, Russian and Chinese colonial masters.

It is self-evident that the situation has now changed. The world communist movement is openly and bitterly divided; Western colonialism is virtually at an end; and the Soviet Union stands revealed, monolithic and conservative, as the last bastion of European colonialism in Asia. In marked contrast, few would contest that in recent years the Islamic revival has emerged as one of the most driving and least predictable forces in the shaping of world affairs. No longer can the Muslim world safely be forgotten or ignored. In the past decade this factor has been forcibly brought home to the west by the emergence of Arab oil power, the Palestinian problem, and the Muslim fundamentalist revolution in Iran. Still more recently, the Soviet Union has clearly manifested both its fear of Muslim revivalism and its inability to limit or control its continuing spread, through the Red Army's December, 1979, invasion of Afghanistan.

Today, a plethora of Muslim separatist and revivalist movements span the map of Africa and Asia from the Atlantic to the Phillipines. Nor are there any indications that this phenomenon has reached its apogee. When viewed in this context, the recent history of Muslim separatism in Northwest China must assume new significance. Thus, between 1931 and 1949, Sinkiang was racked by four major and numerous minor Muslim rebellions, as well as by two quite distinct Hui Muslim invasions from neighbouring Kansu. Yet in previous studies of Republican Sinkiang, these events have either been passed over completely, or at best have received the most cursory and inadequate of examinations, whilst comparatively great attention has been paid to the machinations of great power politics in the area.

It is the purpose of the present study to redress this balance; to chart and analyse in detail and for the first time the course of Muslim separatism in Republican Sinkiang, both for the subject's considerable intrinsic interest and, hopefully, as a contribution to our greater knowledge and understanding of the political and social factors underlying the Muslim revival in Central Asia in recent years.

\*

In recognition of the complexity and inter-disciplinary nature of the subject under discussion (which falls somewhere between Chinese and Islamic Studies), it has been deemed desirable to include a fairly extensive introductory section (Chapters 1 and 2) detailing the geographical, ethnic and historical background of Republican Sinkiang. It is hoped that this introductory section, which is not intended to be definitive, will be of some value to the Islamicist who is not fully acquainted with the Central Asian periphery of the Muslim world, to the Sinologist who is not fully acquainted with the nature of Central

Asian Islam, and to all those who, like the present author, have never travelled in Sinkiang - from 1949 until very recently, a region almost completely closed to the outside world.

The main body of the present study is divided into seven chapters, arranged in chronological sequence, examining the economic and political factors affecting the Muslim population of Sinkiang between 1911 and 1949, and analysing the various Muslim responses to these factors.

Chapter 3 (1911-28), examines the rise to power and administration of Yang Tseng-hsin, governor of Sinkiang during these years. New light is cast upon Yang's personal economic activities, upon the true nature of his "benevolently despotic" rule and, most particularly, on the plight of the Muslims of southern Sinkiang during this period.

Chapter 4 (1928-31), examines the administration of Yang's successor, Chin Shu-jen, and concentrates in detail on the Kumul Rebellion of 1931 and the First Tungan Invasion of Ma Chung-ying.

Chapter 5 (1931-33), breaks almost completely new ground in setting out in detail, and for the first time, the series of events in southern Sinkiang leading to the area's brief secession from China under the short-lived "Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan".

Chapter 6 (1933-34), continues the themes examined in Chapter 4, detailing the conclusion of the Kumul Rebellion, the course of the Second Tungan Invasion of Ma Chung-ying, and the overthrow of Chin Shu-jen. As in Chapter 4, these events have never before been examined in depth. The Chapter concludes with the rise to power of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, the Soviet intervention of 1933-4, the defeat of Ma Chung-ying, and the collapse of the TIRET.

Chapter 7 (1934-44), provides the first full account both of the Hui satrapy of "Tunganistan" and of the 1937 Muslim Rebellion in southern

Sinkiang. Special attention is paid to Sheng's relationship with the Soviet Union; the true nature of his "progressive" period; and the impact of his ten years of power upon the Muslims of Sinkiang. The chapter concludes with an analysis of Sheng's gradual downfall and the parallel emergence of KMT authority in Sinkiang.

Chapter 8 (1944-46), examines KMT policies in Sinkiang between 1942 and 1946; the Kazakh revolt in Dzungaria; and the birth and expansion, under Soviet auspices, of the secessionist "East Turkestan Republic". New evidence of Soviet complicity in this revolt is provided.

Chapter 9 (1946-49), examines the KMT administrations of Wu Chung-hsin, Chang Chih-chung, Mas'ūd Sabri and Burhān Shāhidī, as well as the subsequent entry of the PLA into Sinkiang and, between 1949 and 1955, the elimination of both "right wing" and "left wing" Muslim separatism. Special attention is paid to the "Pei-ta-shan Incident", and to anti-Soviet Muslim separatism beyond the frontiers of the "Three Regions".

The study concludes with an analysis of the nature of Muslim separatism in Sinkiang between 1911 and 1949, with particular emphasis being placed upon regional (as opposed to ethnic) divisions within Sinkiang. Special attention is paid to the role of external influences (Soviet, pan-Turanian and Tungani) in shaping Muslim separatist history within the region.

\*

It is axiomatic that it cannot be possible to arrive at elaborate theories or analyses of events until the main facts surrounding those events have been established. Indeed, to establish such a sequence of facts and events for the first time and in an orderly way has been one of the chief purposes of the present research, primarily because there exists no previous

source from which they can be gleaned in even remotely comparable detail.

To this end, extensive use has been made of unpublished diplomatic and intelligence reports held in either the India or Public Records Offices in London. Since these records are subject to the thirty year official secrecy rule, many documents relating to the latter part of the Chinese Republican period have only recently become available and, presumably, have never been studied before. The greater part of these records are derived from the British Consulate-General at Kashgar, which was established in 1908, and from the British Consulate at Urumchi, which was established in 1943. The scope and extent of these records - based on a network of informants functioning throughout southern Sinkiang and running to many dozens of both bound and unbound volumes - is truly astonishing, and their value in the preparation of the present study has proved inestimable.

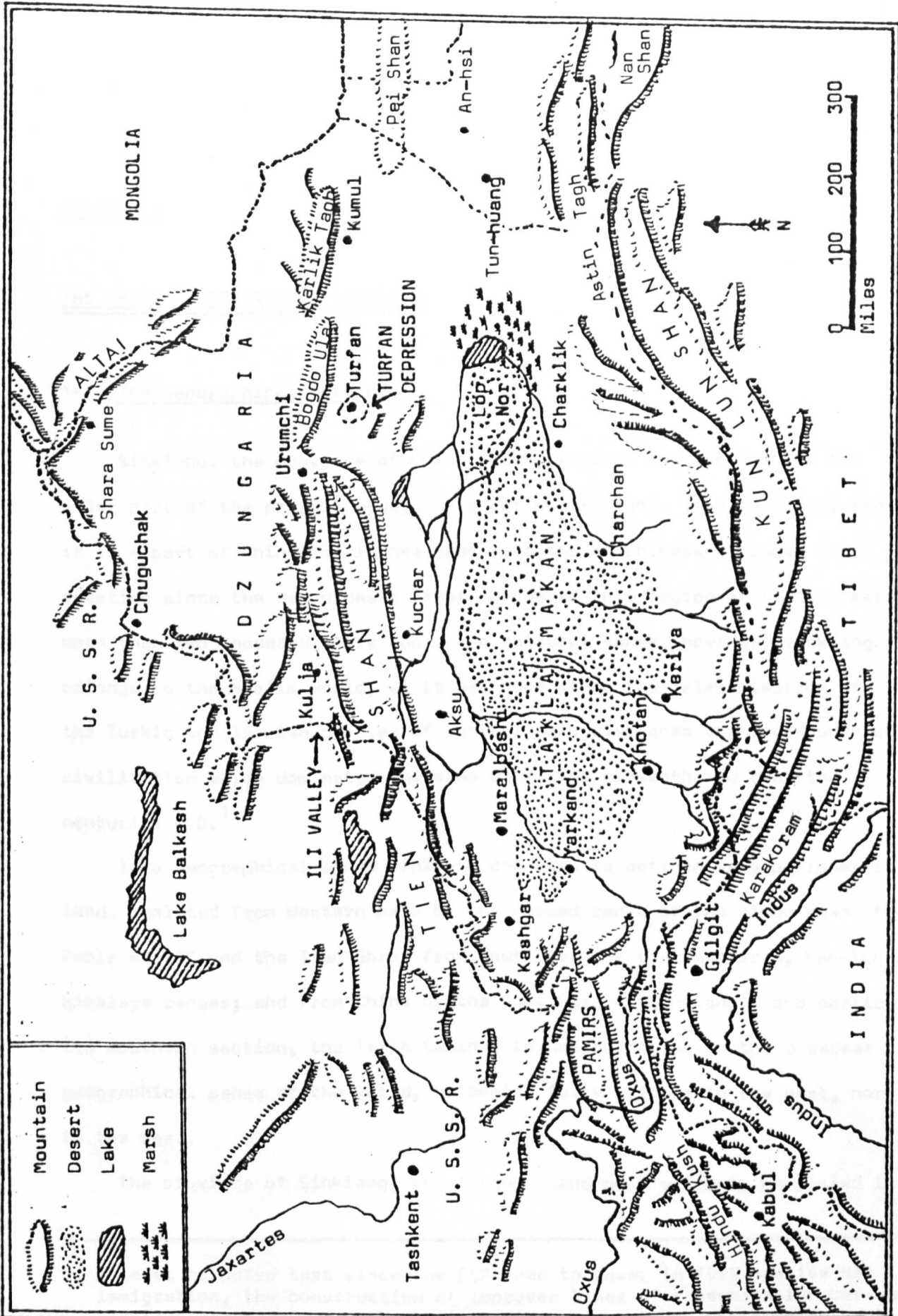
Extensive use of other primary sources has also been made, most notably in the form of contemporary news reports, records of personal interviews, travellers' accounts and memoirs. Perhaps the most significant of these have been the works of Cable and French, Chang Ta-chün, Fleming, Hedin, Maillart, Petro, Schomberg, Sheng Shih-ts'ai, Skrine, Vassel, Wu Ai-chen and Yulbars Khān (as cited in the bibliography). Through the agency of Allen S. Whiting's Pawn or Pivot, reference has also been made to unpublished Japanese sources (held in the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tokyo), and to unpublished Kuomintang sources (held in the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Taipei). Similarly, in the earlier part of the present study, use has been made of references to unpublished German and Swedish sources examined by Nyman with painstaking thoroughness in his 1977 study. In all instances, direct references to these sources have been included in the footnotes, together with specific references

to the secondary studies from which they have been drawn.

Secondary studies of Republican Sinkiang are, as might be expected, far fewer in number - indeed, the chief secondary works employed in the present study (by Lattimore, Whiting and Nyman), have already been cited. To these may be added the works of Clubb (which are, in fact, at least partially primary, being based to some extent on the author's personal experiences as US Consul in Urumchi during the last years of Sheng Shih-ts'ai's rule), Hayit, Kazak and Norins. Mention might also be made of Chen's Sinkiang Story, much of which is based on travels and interviews undertaken within Sinkiang, but which is seriously flawed both by the lack of source references, and by the author's overt political commitment which, on occasion, makes his reliability doubtful.

Finally, attention should be drawn to the detailed and useful studies of Yang (on Yang Tseng-hsin), and of Chan (on Sheng Shih-ts'ai), both of which are largely based on primary Chinese sources, as well as to the more recent studies of Sinkiang under the Chinese Communists by Lee Fu-hsiang and McMillen, which take up the continuing story of Northwest China from the point where the present study ends.





MAP 1. Sinkiang: Physical Geography

## CHAPTER 1

### THE CHINESE PROVINCE OF SINKIANG

#### 1.1 The Geographical Setting

Sinkiang, the province of China which provides the setting for the major part of the present study, is a peripheral land. In a political sense it is a part of China, as it has been at times of Chinese strength and prestige since the Han dynasty first conquered this region of Central Asia more than two thousand years ago. In a cultural sense, however, Sinkiang belongs to the Muslim world, as it has done since the Islamicisation of the Turkic and Iranian peoples of Central Asia displaced the Indo-Buddhistic civilization which dominated the area until the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D.<sup>1</sup>

In a geographical sense Sinkiang can also be defined as a peripheral land. Isolated from Western Asia by the massed ranks of the Hindu Kush, the Pamir massif and the Tien Shan; from South Asia by the Karakoram, Kun-lun and Himalaya ranges; and from China by the Gobi Desert, Sinkiang - and particularly its southern section, the Tarim Basin - is Central Asian in the broadest geographical sense of the world, belonging fully neither to the east, nor to the west.

The province of Sinkiang, the largest<sup>2</sup> and most sparsely populated in

- 
1. It must be noted that since the CCP came to power in 1949 massive Han immigration, the construction of improved lines of communication between Sinkiang and China proper, and the severance of links with Soviet Central Asia, Afghanistan and (to a lesser extent) with the Indian subcontinent, have all worked to strengthen Sinkiang's ties with China. Sinkiang is certainly more "Chinese" today than it has ever been.
  2. The total area of Sinkiang is 550,579 sq. miles. This should be compared with the area of Tibet (463,320 sq. miles) and of Britain (94,207 sq. miles).

China, lies in the very centre, the "dead heart" of Asia.<sup>3</sup> It can properly be divided into two main regions, the Tarim Basin and Dzungaria, and two lesser but economically and politically significant regions, the Ili Valley and the Turfan Depression. The Tien Shan range, running approximately eastwards from the Pamir massif, forms a formidable wall between Dzungaria and the Tarim Basin, making direct communication between the two areas extremely difficult. The Ili Valley, cut off from Dzungaria by a northern spur of the Tien Shan, is physically isolated from the rest of the province and is easily accessible only from the west - from the area which fell under Russian domination during the mid-nineteenth century, and which today forms a part of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic.

#### 1.1a The Tarim Basin

A glance at a map of the physical geography of the Tarim Basin is enough clearly to establish the inhospitable nature of the region. The Basin, a roughly oval-shaped depression 800 miles long and 400 miles broad at its widest point, is sharply defined by the vast mountain ranges which surround it closely on three sides, and which come close to cutting it off on the fourth, eastern side, at the point of access from Kansu.

The Tien Shan (Ch. "Heavenly Mountains"), rising to an average height of 12,000 ft., but in some cases to peaks of 24,000 ft., form the northern longitudinal rim of the Basin. The Pamir massif, a knot of mountains which has earned the designation "Roof of the World" from generations of travellers, rises sharply to peaks in excess of 24,000 ft. immediately to the west of Kashgar, linking the Tien Shan with the older and still less penetrable Kun-lun range. The Kun-lun mountains are in turn backed by the precipitous folds of the Karakoram range, the Tibetan plateau, and the Himalayas. To the east of

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3. The Shara Sume/Altai region of Sinkiang is further from the sea than any other region in the world.

the Kun-luns lie the little-known peaks of the Altin Tagh (Tk. "Gold Mountains"), cutting off the Tarim Basin from the great Tsaidam marshes of Tsinghai. Finally, at the eastern end of the Basin, the Altin Tagh in the south face the Kuruk Tagh (Tk. "Dry Mountains") in the north across a narrow corridor of desert. Even this narrow neck of land is largely blocked by the inhospitable salt wastes of Lop Nor, an area of shifting lakeland currently used by the Chinese as a nuclear test site. Access to the Tarim Basin from China has traditionally been by way of the northern road, a desert highway thrusting between the Tien Shan and the Kuruk Tagh ranges at Karashahr. A lesser southern route passes between the foothills of the Altin Tagh and the marginal lands around Lop Nor to the east of Charklik. In the past both routes have served as sections of the Silk Road, the position of the road depending on the fluctuating position of Lop Nor.<sup>4</sup>

Access to the Tarim Basin from the Ili Valley, the Soviet Union, Afghanistan, the Indian subcontinent and Tibet is only possible by a number of difficult passes,<sup>5</sup> all of which are subject to seasonal closure.

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4. See: Hedin, S., The Wandering Lake (London, 1940), pp. 231-54.

5. The chief passes to the Tarim Basin (all of which are referred to, either directly or indirectly, in the present study), are as follows:

- 1) From the Ili Valley to Aksu:  
the Muzart Pass, 11,450 ft.
- 2) From Naryn (Kirghiz SSR) to Kashgar:  
the Torugart Pass, 12,760 ft.
- 3) From Andijan (Kirghiz SSR) via Irkeshtam to Kashgar:  
the Terek Pass, ca. 12,200 ft.
- 4) From Wakhan (Afghanistan) via Tashkurgan to Kashgar:  
the Wakhjir Pass, 16,200 ft.
- 5) From Hunza (Kashmir) to Kashgar or Yarkand:  
the Mintaka Pass, 15,600 ft., and the Kilik Pass, ca. 15,000 ft.
- 6) From Leh (Ladakh) to Khotan:  
the Karakoram Pass, 18,290 ft.
- 7) From western Tibet to Keriya:  
the Kuchkach Bulak Pass, 16,198 ft., and the Shalgan Pass, 17,572 ft.

[Information variously compiled from: Schomberg, R.C.F., Peaks and Plains of Central Asia (London, 1933); Shipton, E., Mountains of Tartary (London, 1950); Chisholm, G.G. (ed.), The Times Gazetteer of the World (London, 1899); Przheval'skii, N., From Kulja, Across the Tian Shan to Lob Nor (London, 1879); Stein, Sir M.A., Ruins of Desert Cathay (London, 1912)].

The Tarim Basin has been described by Tregear as being comprised of a series of concentric belts:

In the heart of the region is the Taklamakan Desert, a howling wilderness, true desert for the most part utterly devoid of life and vegetation, a place of desolation of sand and rock. Ringing this desert is belt of piedmont gravel of varying width and thickness. This belt has been built up by the detritus brought down by the fast-running streams, which fan out on reaching the plain.<sup>6</sup>

The mountain ranges which ring the Tarim Basin rise steeply above the belt of piedmont gravel.

The single major river of the region, from which the Basin derives its name, is the Tarim. This river rises from a series of streams high in the Pamir and western Kun-lun ranges; these headwaters join together to form the Yarkand Darya (Ir. "river") which curves around the north-eastern edge of the Basin towards Aksu. Near Aksu it is joined by the waters of the Khotan Darya, the only river with its source in the central Kun-lun to succeed in crossing the sandy wastes of the Taklamakan, and the combined rivers become the Tarim. The Tarim is fed by a number of comparatively large left bank tributaries originating in the Tien Shan before it curves sharply south-eastwards near Korla and loses itself in the salt desert around Lop Nor.

Within this huge region the area capable of supporting sedentary agriculturalists is limited to a string of oases which surround the central desert like beads on a necklace. In the south-east at Keriya, Niya and Charchen, these oases are situated below the belt of piedmont gravel on the very edge of the Taklamakan. The major oases of the Basin (Khotan, Yarkand, Kashgar, Aksu, Kuchar, and Korla) are situated on a narrow ribbon of fertile land immediately above the gravel belt.

Further up the slopes of the surrounding mountains, especially in the Tien Shan and Pamir ranges, pastoral nomadism flourishes. Little contact is

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6. Tregear, T.R., A Geography of China (London, 1965), p. 286.

possible between the (relatively few) pastoral nomads of these isolated uplands and the sedentary agriculturalists of the oasis belt, as the well-watered plateau region used by the nomads is cut off from the cultivated lowland strip by steep, barren gorges and impassable loess-covered moraines:

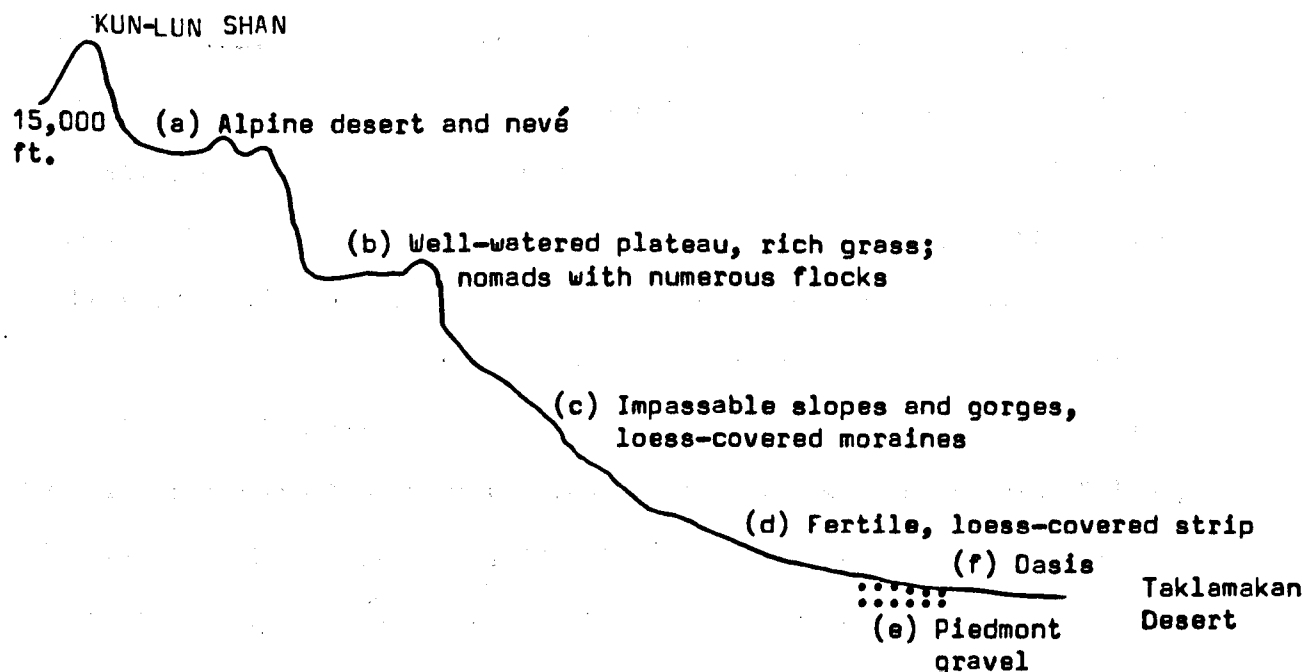


Fig. 1 Tarim Basin: section from Kun-lun to Taklamakan.<sup>7</sup>

The substantial differences existing between pastoral nomad and sedentary agriculturalist in the Tarim Basin have resulted in a continuing disjunction of political interest between the two groups; hostility between nomad and agriculturalist, despite a shared Islamic faith, features prominently in the history of Sinkiang, and is an underlying theme in the present study.

7. Tregear, op.cit., p. 287.

1.1b Dzungaria

An extensive plain, some 2,000 ft. lower than the Tarim Basin,<sup>8</sup> lies to the north-east of the Tien Shan; this is the region known as Dzungaria,<sup>9</sup> a vast, wind-swept, roughly triangular basin some 400 miles from north to south and rather further from east to west. Dzungaria, representing approximately 30% of the total area of Sinkiang, is bounded in the north-east by the Altai Mountains and the Mongolian People's Republic; in the north-west by the Ala Tau and Tarbagatai ranges on the frontiers of Soviet Kazakhstan, and in the south-west and south by the Tien Shan and Bogdo Ula ranges. In the south-east, on the borders of Kansu, the region terminates in the arid Barköl Tagh range and the wastes of the Nomin Gobi.

Access to Dzungaria from both the Tarim Basin and from China proper is via the Turfan Depression and the pass at Dawan Ch'eng,<sup>10</sup> leading over the col between the Tien Shan and the Bogdo Ula. The pass at Dawan Ch'eng, which is about 12,000 ft. high, cannot be described as an easy route; nevertheless, it is considerably easier than any of the passes leading out of the Tarim Basin, and is open for most of the year. No major routes lead over the border from Dzungaria to the Mongolian People's Republic, but in the north-west, between the Ala Tau and a spur of the Tarbagatai range, lies

8. The Tarim Basin is on average 2,000 ft. above sea level, rising slowly to nearly 6,000 ft. at its western end.
9. The name Dzungaria (more correctly but less commonly Jungaria), is derived from the Jungar Mongols, a tribe of the Oirat Confederacy, known as Kalmuk in the West. In the 17th century the Oirat Confederacy became powerful enough to pose a threat to the growing power of the Romanov tsars in Moscow; in the 18th century, however, the Jungars were all but exterminated by the Ch'ien Lung emperor (see main text, pp. 62-3). Samolin, W., East Turkistan to the Twelfth Century (The Hague, 1964), p. 9, fn. 1.
10. Dawan Ch'eng is an interestingly hybrid Turkic-Chinese name; (Tk. dawan = pass; Ch. ch'eng = city), thus "City of the Pass". Lattimore, O., High Tartary (Boston, 1930), p. 149. Many such hybrid names are found in Sinkiang.

the Dzungarian Gate, a narrow valley giving direct access to the steppe of the Kazakh SSR, and through which ideas, arms and trade have flowed for centuries. In the far west of Dzungaria the Talki Pass (6,260 ft.) crosses between the Ala Tau and a northern spur of the Tien Shan to provide the only satisfactory route between the Ili Valley and the rest of China.

Dzungaria shares many of the characteristics of the Tarim Basin, but is less arid. The central area is desert, though of a less forbidding nature than the Taklamakan. The lands which border this central desert area receive a low annual rainfall,<sup>11</sup> but still considerably more than the oases of the Tarim Basin. Dzungaria is also watered by numerous rivers and streams flowing down from the surrounding mountain ranges. As a result of this comparatively generous supply of water, Dzungaria is better suited to pastoral nomadism than the Tarim Basin. Pasture is hardly adequate, however, and life is hard for the nomadic population. Large herds of sheep, goats, cattle, horses and camels are maintained in Dzungaria,<sup>12</sup> but, in order to survive, both the herds and the men who tend them have to keep constantly on the move. In the high mountains which surround the central desert region, most notably in the Altai, rainfall is appreciably heavier;<sup>13</sup> as a consequence of this the upper reaches of these mountains are well forested with willow, poplar, alder, birch and larch. Kirghiz and Mongol trappers work these regions for the pelts of fox, sable, ermine, wolf, bear and wolverine.

The Tien Shan range, which forms an all-but-impenetrable arc across north-central Sinkiang, divides the arid deserts and settled oases of the Tarim Basin from the nomadic steppe of Dzungaria; the former region is akin to Soviet Turkestan, whilst the latter is 'a cold, bleak land, resembling Mongolia and

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11. Less than 10 in. per annum. (Tregear, op.cit., p. 292).

12. In 1943 there were 11,720,000 sheep and goats in Sinkiang, 1,550,000 cattle, 870,000 horses and 90,000 camels. Most of these were pastured by Kazakh and Mongol nomads in Dzungaria. (Chang Chih-yi, in Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p.155).

13. 20-30 in. per annum (Tregear, ibid.).



and Siberia more than Turkestan'.<sup>14</sup>

### 1.1c The Turfan Depression

To the east of the Tarim Basin, situated between the Bogdo Ula to the north and the Chol Tagh (Tk. "Desert Mountains") to the south, lies the Turfan Depression, an oval-shaped fault trough some 3,000 sq. miles in area, which descends at its lowest point to 505 ft. below sea level.<sup>15</sup> The Turfan Depression consists of two main valleys of differing height divided from each other by the low but arid Atash Tagh (Tk. "Fire Mountains"). The higher, northern valley is an arid and uninhabited waste of piedmont gravel; only the lower, southern valley is habitable.

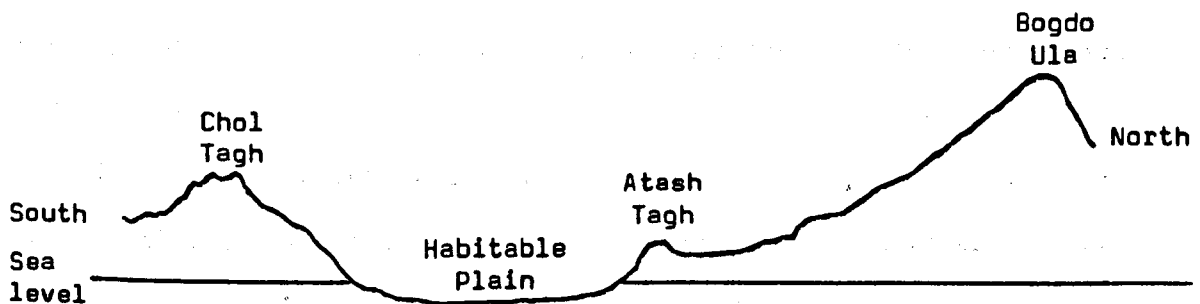


Fig. 2 Turfan Depression: Section from Chol Tagh to Bogdo Ula.<sup>16</sup>

The climate of the Turfan depression is, to say the least, inclement. Temperatures vary from 125-130° F. in the shade during mid-summer, to sub-zero during the winter; the debilitating heat of summer forces the Turfanliks<sup>17</sup> to withdraw to underground rooms during the blisteringly hot mid-day.<sup>18</sup>

14. Teichmann, Sir E., 'The Motor Route from Peking to Kashgar', Geographical Journal, LXXXIX, 4 (April 1937), p. 304.

15. Tregear, op.cit., p. 291.

16. Huntington, E., The Pulse of Asia (Boston, 1919), p. 307.

17. i.e. the inhabitants of Turfan; -lik is a common East Turki suffix which, together with a place name, indicates origin - hence Kashgarlik = an inhabitant of Kashgar.

18. Younghusband, F.E., The Heart of a Continent (London, 1896), pp. 138-9.

Rainfall is practically unknown in the depression, yet Turfan is renowned throughout China and Central Asia for the quality of its melons, grapes and other fruit. Cotton and various grain crops also flourish in the region.<sup>19</sup> This unexpected abundance in the midst of sun-blasted desolation is due to the widespread application of the kariz irrigation system (see below).

The Turfan Depression, like the Tarim Basin, is an area of inland drainage. It has no rivers of any size, but many small streams run down to the habitable plain from the southern slopes of the Atash Tagh. These streams provide surface irrigation to the northern edge of the habitable plain, but as the latter dips to the south surface irrigation is replaced by kariz, long underground irrigation channels which are the most characteristic feature of Turfan. It seems likely that this sophisticated and costly technique for irrigating areas of extreme aridity was introduced to Sinkiang from the Middle East; certainly underground irrigation channels are common in north-west India and Iran (where they are known as qanats), similarly the famous "aqueduct" which supplies water to Mecca and which is said to have been built on the instructions of queen Zubayda, wife of the <sup>C</sup>Abbāsīd Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd, is in fact a kariz.<sup>20</sup>

To the south-east of the Turfan Depression an empty, uninhabited waste stretches away towards Lop Nor and the borders of Tsinghai and Kansu. Directly due east of Turfan lies the important and historic oasis of Kumul (Ch. Ha-mi),

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19. Schomberg, R.C.F., 'The Turfan Depression', JRCAS, XV, 3 (1928), p. 301; Chang Hun-wen, 'Grapes in the "Land of Fire"', China Reconstructs, June 1963, pp. 28-30.

20. Schomberg, 'The Turfan Depression', p. 302. For kariz (Ar. kharaza, to pierce, bore) irrigation in Iran see: Stevens, R., The Land of the Great Sophy (London, 1965), p. 6; also Smith, A., Blind White Fish in Persia (London, 1953), passim. The kariz of north-west India were clearly visible to the present writer when he flew over the Thar Desert in 1976; the regularly-sited maintenance shafts leading down to the subterranean canals looked like long rows of craters, and gave the desert through which the kariz passed a strangely lunar appearance. For Queen Zubaydah's kariz in the Hijāz see: Philby, H. St.J., Arabian Jubilee (London, 1952), p. 116. An extensive discussion of the origins of the kariz system may be found in Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, pp. 159-61.

which features prominently in the present study. Kumul is the last major settlement in Sinkiang before the frontier with Kansu. The climate is similar to that of Turfan, though somewhat less severe. Some kariz irrigation is also practised there.<sup>21</sup>

#### 1.1d The Ili Valley

The Ili Valley, or more precisely the upper third of the Ili Valley, is the most prosperous region of Sinkiang; it is cut off from the rest of the province by the main body of the Tien Shan, and by a northern spur of the same range, the Boro Horo Ula. Ili faces westwards, towards the Soviet Union, and indeed the lower two-thirds of the valley lie within the frontiers of the Kazakh SSR. Because Ili faces westwards, it receives a generous rainfall, and consequently the region is rich in agricultural land, pastoral land and forest. Ili has traditionally been used by successive Chinese administrations as a penal colony - as a kind of Chinese Botany Bay situated far beyond the confines of China proper - and the population is consequently very mixed. There are Kirghiz and Kazakh nomads, Han and Hui settlers (often the descendants of exiles), small groups of former Manchu Bannermen,<sup>22</sup> and a major group of Uighur agriculturalists known locally as Taranchi (Tk. "cultivators"), who in no way differ from their fellow Uighurs of the Tarim Basin, but who were forcibly deported to the Ili Valley from the Kashgar region after the Ch'ing conquest of Sinkiang in the mid-18th century.<sup>23</sup> The main town of the Ili Valley is Kulja, known to the Chinese as I-ning.

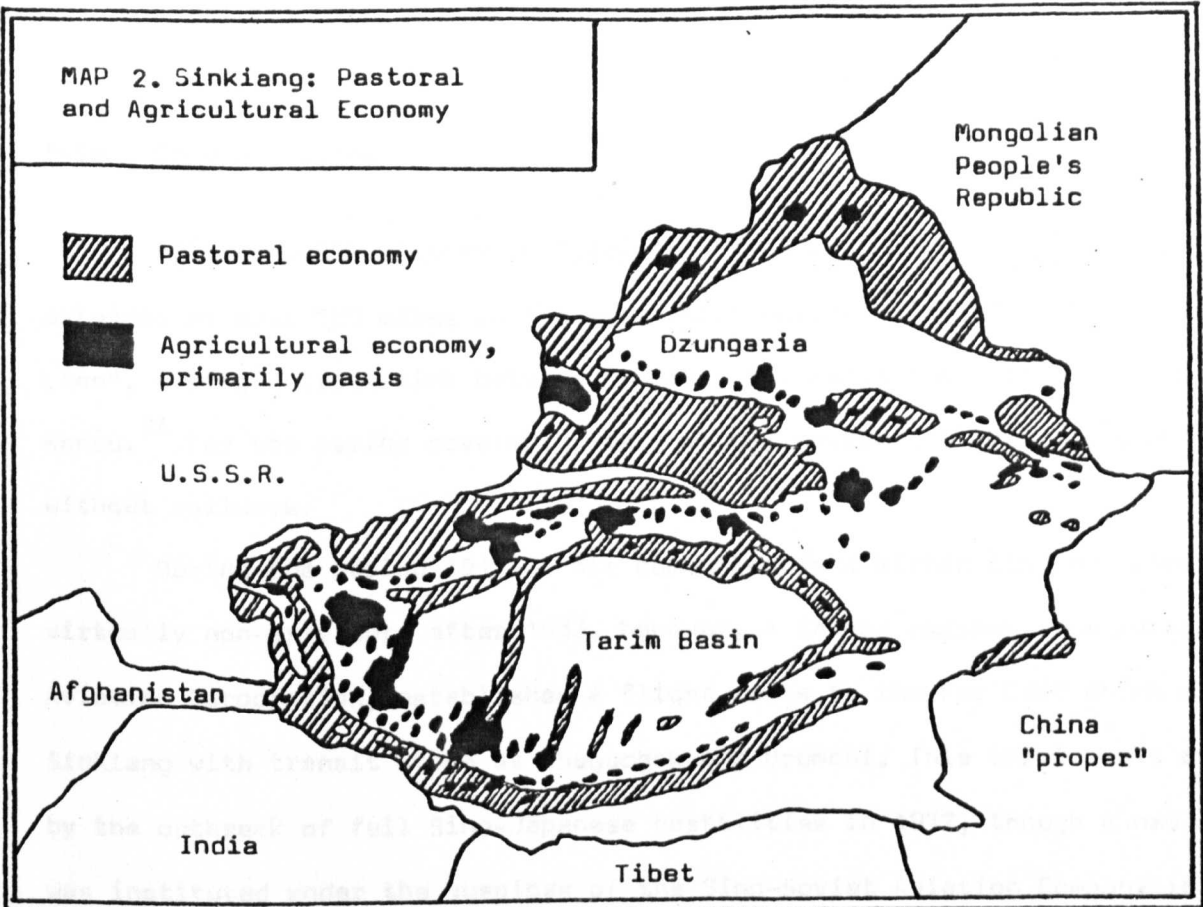
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21. Before the CCP victory in 1949, kariz irrigation in Sinkiang was limited to Turfan, Kumul and (on a much lesser scale) to Guma (Ch. Pi-shan). Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 160.

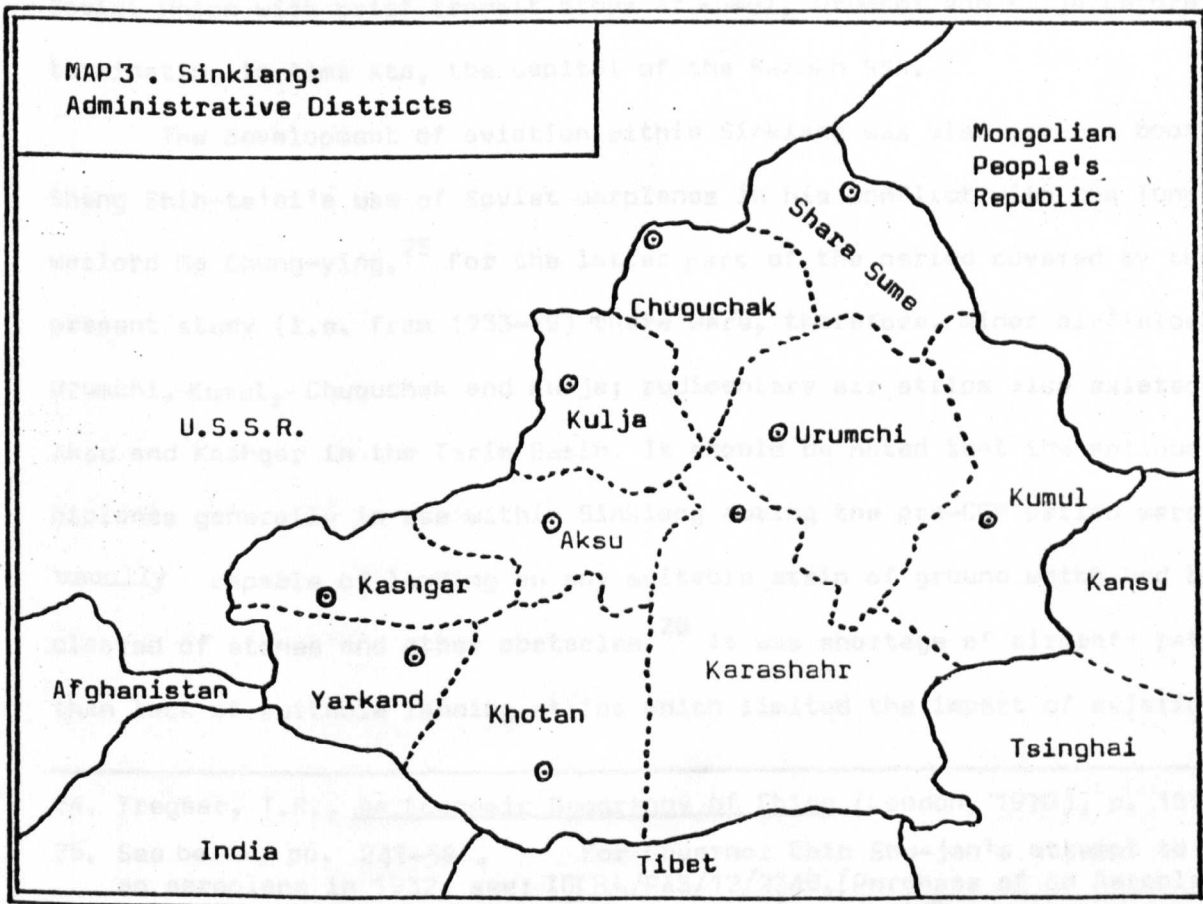
22. After the Ch'ing conquest of Dzungaria and Ili in the mid-18th century, military settlements were established in these areas. Under the Ch'ing Han Chinese settlements were not normally permitted to form a part of those military settlements established beyond the Great Wall. The Manchu troops who garrisoned these distant posts were known as Bannermen (Ch. Ch'i-jen or Ch'i-hsia) and formed a part of the Pa-ch'i, or "Eight Banners" into which the Manchu army was divided.

23. Lattimore, Pivot, p. 126.

MAP 2. Sinkiang: Pastoral and Agricultural Economy



MAP 3. Sinkiang: Administrative Districts



### 1.1e Communications

After the CCP victory in 1949, the Sian-Lanchow railway line was extended by over 700 miles in the epic construction of the "Sinkiang Friendship Line", a single track link between Urumchi, the capital of Sinkiang, and Kansu.<sup>24</sup> For the period covered by this study, however, Sinkiang was entirely without railways.

During the period 1911-33 air communications within Sinkiang were virtually non-existent; after 1933, however, a German company, the Eurasia Aviation Corporation, established a flight route to the Far East which crossed Sinkiang with transit stops at Chuguchak and Urumchi. This service was cut short by the outbreak of full Sino-Japanese hostilities in 1937, though a new service was instituted under the auspices of the Sino-Soviet Aviation Company in 1939. The SSAC service offered a series of short-distance hops between China and the Soviet Union with brief transit stops at Kumul, Urumchi and Kulja before terminating in Alma Ata, the capital of the Kazakh SSR.

The development of aviation within Sinkiang was also given a boost by Sheng Shih-ts'ai's use of Soviet warplanes in his conflict with the Tungan warlord Ma Chung-ying.<sup>25</sup> For the latter part of the period covered by the present study (i.e. from 1933-49) there were, therefore, minor airfields at Urumchi, Kumul, Chuguchak and Kulja; rudimentary air strips also existed at Aksu and Kashgar in the Tarim Basin. It should be noted that the antiquated biplanes generally in use within Sinkiang during the pre-CCP period were usually capable of landing on any suitable strip of ground which had been cleared of stones and other obstacles.<sup>26</sup> It was shortage of aircraft rather than lack of suitable landing strips which limited the impact of aviation on

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24. Tregear, T.R., An Economic Geography of China (London, 1970), p. 159.

25. See below, pp. 241-58 . For Governor Chin Shu-jen's attempt to purchase an aeroplane in 1932, see: IOLRL/P&S/12/2340, (Purchase of an Aeroplane by Governor of Sinkiang, 22nd April - 24th August 1932).

26. This is vividly illustrated in G. Vassel's My Russian Jailors in China, (London, 1937), pp. 58-60 ; Vassel was employed by the Eurasia Aviation Corporation as a surveyor of possible air strips. He was probably also a German agent.

Sinkiang during the Republican period.

Sinkiang has been traditionally dependent on road transportation. This was true for both the Imperial and Republican eras, and it remains true today under the CCP.<sup>27</sup> The fertile oases ringing the Tarim Basin between Kashgar in the west and Kansu in the east are linked by permanent highways running through the intervening desert. In the north a major route runs between the Tien Shan and the Taklamakan Desert, linking Kashgar with An-hsi in Kansu via Maralbashi, Aksu, Kuchar, Korla, Karashahr, Turfan and Kumul. In the south a lesser route runs between the Kun-lun Shan and the Taklamakan Desert, linking Kashgar with An-hsi via Yangi Missar, Khargalik, Khotan, Keriya, Niya Charchen, Charklik and Tun-huang. The chief highway of Dzungaria, in Republican times a muddy and frequently impassable quagmire, runs from Turfan across the Dawan Ch'eng to Urumchi; from Urumchi it continues to the Russian frontier at Chuguchak via Manass. Between Manass and Chuguchak an important route branches off to the west, crossing the Talki pass to the Ili Valley. A lesser route from Dzungaria to the south leads from Urumchi via Kitai and Barköl to Kumul. At Kumul all the roads leading from Sinkiang to Kansu, whether from Dzungaria or the Tarim Basin (with the single exception of the comparatively unimportant Charklik-Tun-huang route to An-hsi) come together before crossing the western Gobi on the Sinkiang-Kansu frontier. Kumul is thus of considerable strategic significance, as any army which controls the oasis dominates communication links between Sinkiang and the rest of China. Other areas of obvious strategic significance are Turfan, Barköl and Karashahr within Sinkiang, and Tun-huang and An-hsi in north-western Kansu.

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27. Today Sinkiang remains primarily dependent on road communications, but this should not be allowed to obscure the considerable development of the province's communications infrastructure which has taken place under the CCP. Roads have been improved, extended and metalled, and a major route has been opened between Khotan and Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, across the disputed Aksai Chin. The "Sinkiang Friendship Line" has been pushed through the Turfan Depression as far as Urumchi in Dzungaria, and many new airfields have been opened, notably at Kuchar, Kashgar and Khotan in the Tarim Basin. Since the mid-1970's Sinkiang has been linked with Pakistan by the Karakoram Highway.

1.1f The Geographical Factor in the History of Sinkiang

Sinkiang, despite its forbidding physical geography, has always been a "land of passage" par excellence. This is especially true of the Tarim Basin, of which Stein, the Indian archaeological commissioner who devoted the greater part of his life to the study of Chinese Central Asia, wrote:

It might well seem as if this vast region ... had been intended by nature far more to serve as a barrier between the lands which have given our globe its great civilizations than to facilitate the exchange of their cultural influences ... (but) ... that region is singularly fitted to illustrate ... how geographical features may invest even the least attractive parts of our globe with very real importance for the history of civilization.<sup>28</sup>

The harsh geography of the Tarim Basin has made it unsuitable for pastoral nomadism. In the oasis belt at the foot of the surrounding mountain ranges only intensive agriculture is possible, so that a permanent "chain" of sedentary farmers has linked China throughout the ages with the Pamir and Karakoram routes to southern and western Asia. Nomads might descend from their pasture lands in the Tien Shan to raid these caravan trails, but 'nature, by denying grazing grounds to the vast basin between Kunlun and Tien Shan, has protected it against ever becoming the scene of great migratory movements and of such upheavals as are bound to accompany them'.<sup>29</sup> The sedentary agricultural population of the Tarim Basin has thus provided a stable factor in the fluctuating history of Chinese Central Asia by contributing not only fixed caravanserais on the desert trade routes of the region, but also by providing a human medium far more suited to the transmission of political, religious and cultural influences, whether emanating from the East or the West, than a nomadic population could possibly provide.

The situation in the Tarim Basin, where fixed trade routes pass from

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28. Stein, Sir M.A., 'Innermost Asia: Its Geography as a Factor in History', The Geographical Journal, LXV, 5, p. 378.

29. ibid., p. 403.

oasis to oasis both north and south of the Taklamakan, contrasts sharply with that in Dzungaria. The routes of the Tarim Basin have been characterised by Lattimore as "true roads":

They are adapted, wherever possible, to wheeled traffic, and to the orderly supervision of officials and tax collectors. They follow lines of least physical resistance. Shelter for travellers is not limited to tents, but is provided at inns, at regular stages. Food for travellers does not have to be carried, nor do transport animals have to depend on grazing, but provisions and fodder are gathered from agricultural communities situated along or near the road and made available at regular halting places. 30

North of the Tien Shan, in the Dzungarian Basin, conditions differ radically:

In these regions we depart altogether from the canons of the normal road. Routes, in fact, are no longer roads designed to communicate between fixed centres of population. They become, rather, general directions of march. Each direction of march is determined by the needs of a migrant population, moving not from one oasis to another but between vaguely defined areas. The areas themselves are determined by prevailing geographical conditions. They are not selected in the first place with regard to the potential development of trade, but because they meet the needs of flocks and herds. Men go where their cattle and sheep must go, and such trade as later develops must be able to follow the wandering men. 31

In Dzungaria, therefore, trade is entirely subordinate to pasture.

The sedentary nature of agricultural life in the Tarim Basin has traditionally provided some degree of identity of interest between the indigenous oasis-dwellers and the Chinese conquerors who extended their control over the area at times of dynastic strength. For the inhabitants of the oases Chinese control meant an inevitable loss of personal, cultural, commercial and religious freedom; on the other hand Chinese control might also mean stability, efficient administration, protection from the nomads of the Tien Shan and Dzungaria - all necessary elements for the profitable pursuit of trade and agriculture. However, when Chinese imperial power grew

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30. Lattimore, O., 'Caravan Routes of Inner Asia', The Geographical Journal, LXXII, 6, p. 517.

31. ibid.



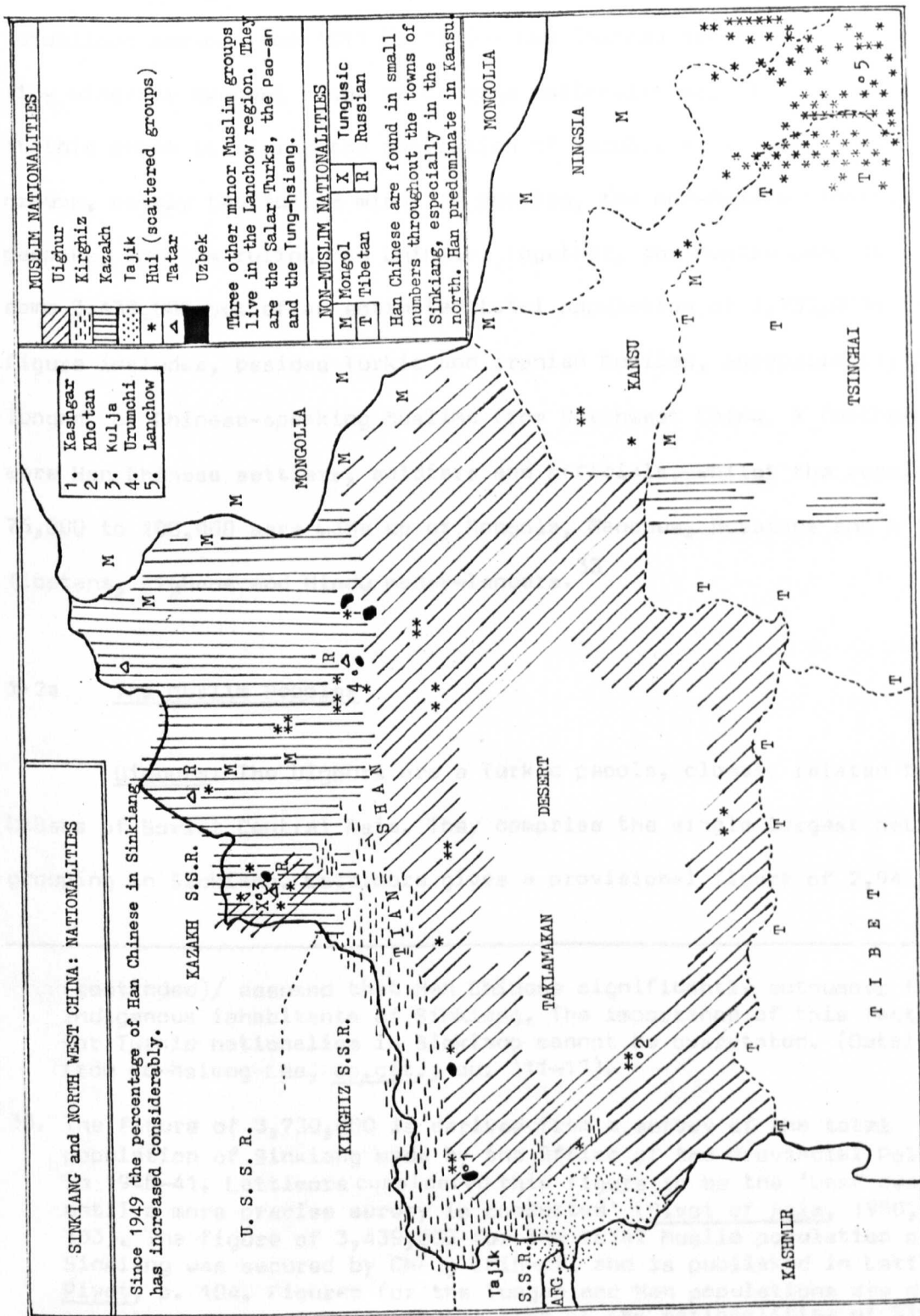
excessively oppressive or corrupt, this identity of interest between oasis-dweller and Han Chinese diminished; correspondingly a common interest in throwing off the Chinese yoke developed between the sedentary agriculturalist of the Tarim Basin and the pastoral nomad of Dzungaria. It must be stressed, however, that common hostility to Chinese rule - and more recently a common religion in Islam - has failed to overcome the radically differing Weltanschauung of pastoral nomad and oasis farmer. This has resulted in a continuing split in the ranks of the indigenous peoples of Sinkiang which successive Chinese administrations have been able to exploit with great success.

#### 1.2 The Ethnic Background

It must be emphasised from the outset that there has been a great change in both the size and ethnic composition of the population of Sinkiang since the Communist victory in 1949,<sup>32</sup> a transformation due primarily to a

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32. The CCP disclosed some sporadic information on the settlement of Han Chinese immigrants in Sinkiang during the 1950's, but these figures ceased after 1959. It is known that the population of Sinkiang totalled 4,040,000 in 1950 (Jen-min shou-ts'ie, Shanghai, 1950, I, p. 1). Allowing for a population growth of circa 2% (based on estimates given in Aird, J. S., The Size, Composition and Growth of the Population of Mainland China (Washington, 1961) and Chandrasekhar, S., China's Population: Census and Vital Statistics (Hong Kong, 1959), the population of Sinkiang should have risen to 5,437,396 by 1964. In fact the actual population of Sinkiang by 1964 was 8,000,000 (China Reconstructs, XVII, 12 (Dec. 1968), p. 32). It is known that the national minority population of Sinkiang did not increase by as much as the 2% national average during the period 1950-64; in fact the Turkic minority peoples increased at a mere 1.8% (Ulanfu, 'To Promote Uninterruptingly the Solidarity of Nationalities in Our Country', cited in Fu-hsiang Lee, The Turkic-Moslem Problem in Sinkiang (Ph.D., Rutgers University, New Jersey, 1973), p. 316), yet the population of Sinkiang rose by almost three times the national average during the same period. The difference must, therefore, have been made up by largely Han Chinese immigration from outside Sinkiang. The number of Han Chinese who emigrated to Sinkiang during the period 1950-64 can thus be estimated at 2,572,706. A Radio Moscow broadcast of 31st May, 1967, announced that the ratio of Han Chinese in Sinkiang had risen to 45% by 1966 (Foreign Broadcast Information Service Daily Report (Washington), no. 107, 1967 (June 2nd, 1967), p. 8B14). The rate of Han settlement in Sinkiang during the period 1964-78 has certainly not declined, and it may now be confidently/(see over)



Map 4

massive, CCP-inspired influx of Han immigrants. However, for the period with which the greater part of this study is concerned - that is the Republican period from 1911 to 1949 - Han Chinese settlers represented a tiny minority amongst a sea of diverse nationalities. It will be convenient at this point to divide the population of Republican Sinkiang into three groups, namely the Muslim minority peoples, the non-Muslim minority peoples, and the ruling Han Chinese. Together, the Muslim peoples numbered some 3,439,000 out of an estimated total population of 3,730,000; this figure includes, besides Turkic and Iranian Muslims, approximately 100,000 Tungan, or Chinese-speaking Muslims from Northwest China. A further 200,000 were Han Chinese settlers, soldiers and officials, whilst the remaining 75,000 to 100,000 were made up of Mongols, Manchus, Russians and a few Tibetans, Afghans and Hindu money-lenders.<sup>33</sup>

1.2a The Muslim Peoples

Uighurs: The Uighurs are a Turkic people, closely related to the Uzbeks of Soviet Central Asia. They comprise the single largest national grouping in Sinkiang. Lattimore gives a provisional figure of 2,941,000 for

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(continued)/ assumed that Han Chinese significantly outnumber the indigenous inhabitants of Sinkiang. The importance of this factor for Turkic nationalism in Sinkiang cannot be overstated. (Details from Fu-hsiang Lee, op.cit., pp. 311-17).

33. The figure of 3,730,000 is derived from a survey of the total population of Sinkiang made by the Office of the Provincial Police in 1940-41. Lattimore considered this figure to be the 'best available until a more precise survey is conducted' (Pivot of Asia, 1950, p. 103). The figure of 3,439,000 for the total Muslim population of Sinkiang was secured by Chang Chih-yi, and is published in Lattimore, Pivot, p. 104. Figures for the Tungan and Han populations are derived loosely from the 'unscientific' list of the nationalities of Sinkiang issued during the administration of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, and cited in Lattimore, Pivot, p. 110.

the total Uighur population of Sinkiang in the late 1940's;<sup>34</sup> this compares with a CCP figure of 3,900,000 based on the 1953 national census.<sup>35</sup>

The Uighur Turks, originally a tribal confederacy of pastoral nomads living along the banks of the Selenga River in what is now the northern part of the Mongolian People's Republic,<sup>36</sup> first came to dominate Dzungaria and the Tarim Basin in the mid-9th century. The Uighur conquerors were absorbed by the indigenous Indo-European people, a group who may be loosely classified after their language as "Tokharians";<sup>37</sup> the resulting tribal union retained the name "Uighur", but largely accepted the predominantly Mahayana Buddhist faith of the original inhabitants. It was not until the 10th century that Islam began to penetrate the Tarim Basin, starting in the Kashgar region. By 1500 the area may be considered to have been fully Islamicised.

The great majority of the Uighur people live in the oases south of the Tien Shan, dominating the Tarim Basin, Turfan Depression, and Kumul region. Uighurs are also to be found scattered throughout Dzungaria, and in large numbers in the Ili Valley (the Uighurs of Ili are frequently referred to as Taranchis or "cultivators" (Tk.) in documents dating from the Ch'ing and Republican eras. In fact there are no ethnic or cultural distinctions between the Taranchis of Ili and the Uighurs of the rest of

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34. Population figures for Sinkiang during the late Republican period throughout sections 1.2a, 1.2b and 1.2c are based on unpublished figures secured in Sinkiang by Chang Chih-yi and cited in Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 106. Where national groups are not included separately in Chang's figures (e.g. Tungan, Sibo and Solon), but are grouped together collectively as "Chinese" or "Manchu", figures are taken from the 'unscientific' list of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, cited in Lattimore, Pivot, p. 110. In fact the figures given by Chang and in the 'unscientific' list are remarkably similar, especially when it is remembered that the "Taranchi" of the latter source are in fact Uighur, and should more properly be classified as such.

35. CCP figures taken from the Hsin-Hua tzu-tien (Peking, 1957).

36. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 122; Samolin, W., East Turkistan to the Twelfth Century (The Hague, 1964), pp. 72-3.

37. Samolin, op.cit., p. 52; Von le Coq, A., Buried Treasures of Chinese Turkestan (London, 1928), pp. 20-1.

Sinkiang; the terminology was originally adopted by the Ch'ing as a political device to promote disunity amongst the ranks of their rebellious Uighur subjects). It should be noted that the Uighur population of the Ili Valley extends across the Soviet frontier, and that Uighurs form sizeable communities in both the Kazakh and Kirghiz SSR's.<sup>38</sup>

The Uighurs speak a dialect of the Chagatai branch of the Turkic group of languages. Uighur is the main language of Sinkiang and is generally referred to in European scholarly works as "Eastern Turki".<sup>39</sup> The Uighur people are fond of drama and music, and poetry is a highly respected cultural activity. The Uighurs of Kashgar, Yarkand and especially Khotan are famous for their skill in weaving oriental carpets, many of which have been exported to the West and are today highly valued for their richness of colour and rarity.<sup>40</sup>

With two minor exceptions,<sup>41</sup> the Uighurs are uniformly sedentary intensive agriculturalists. Authorities on Imperial and Republican Sinkiang almost universally describe the Uighurs as being quiet, easy-going, peace-loving farmers. They are all orthodox Sunni Muslims,<sup>42</sup> followers of the

38. Wheeler, G., Racial Problems in Soviet Muslim Asia (London, 1967), p. 66; also The Peoples of Soviet Central Asia (London, 1966), p. 117.
39. See, for example, the works by Jarring, G., and Raquette, G.R., in the bibliography.
40. Bidder, H., Carpets from Eastern Turkestan (London, 1964), passim.
41. The two minor exceptions are: (a) a group known as the Dulani, who live largely by animal husbandry along the banks of the Yarkand and Tarim Rivers, and (b) the Lopliks (i.e. inhabitants of the Lop Nor region) who live largely by fishing. (Lettimore, Pivot, p. 127).
42. Sunni (Ar.): an orthodox Muslim. Sunni Muslims, who constitute some 80% of the world Muslim population, consider themselves to be followers of the sunna (Ar. "trodden path") of the Prophet Muhammad. In particular, Sunni Muslims accept the legitimacy of the first three Caliphs (Abū Bakr, <sup>C</sup>Umar and <sup>C</sup>Uthmān), and reject the Shī'a doctrine of a hereditary caliphate founded in the family of the Prophet Muhammad through his son-in-law <sup>C</sup>Alī.

Hanafī madhhab;<sup>43</sup> in religious matters they are generally reckoned, both by other Muslim peoples and by non-Muslims, to be rather lax. They are renowned for their easy-going attitude towards marriage and divorce,<sup>44</sup> and more orthodox Muslims from the area which is now Soviet Central Asia have traditionally viewed their Uighur co-religionists as promiscuous and even degenerate in their adherence to the Islamic way of life. Uighur observance of the external ritual of Islam is certainly rather half-hearted, and this is probably a reflection of long-term popular awareness of the corruption which was widespread amongst the culama,<sup>45</sup> of Sinkiang. Lattimore records a common Uighur proverb which runs: 'Do what the mullah says, not what he does'.<sup>46</sup> This is clearly indicative of the low esteem in which many members of the religious establishment were held by the general populace. It should, however, be stressed that despite a certain lassitude in the observance of formal Islamic ritual, Uighur loyalty to the Islamic cultural identity was, and remains, strong. The Uighurs have time and again shown themselves to be capable of rising en masse over a religious or religio-cultural slight, just as they have shown themselves capable of rising against their Han Chinese rulers whenever the ruling regime has become excessively harsh or corrupt.

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43. Sunni Muslims are subdivided into four separate schools of jurisprudence (Ar. madhhab, pl. madhahib). The largest and probably the most liberal of these schools is the Hanafī (named after abu-Hanīfa al-Nu<sup>c</sup>mān ibn-Thābit, a jurist of Kūfa, southern Iraq, d. 767). For further details see: Coulson, N.J., A History of Islamic Law (Edinburgh, 1964). For a map showing the distribution of the various Sunni madhahib in the Muslim world, see: Fārūqī and Sopher, Historical Atlas of the Religions of the World (N.Y., 1974), map 56, p. 261, 'Islamic Schools of Law, Sects and Reform Movements'.
44. It is, however, clearly an exaggeration to state that amongst the Uighurs 'the family as an institution is unstable to a degree unsurpassed among peoples of Islamic faith' (Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 127), as this fails to take into consideration the instability of marriage in the Malay Archipelago, the matrilineal Islamic societies of Sumatra, South India and south-central East Africa, and the institution of temporary marriage (Ar. mut<sup>c</sup>a) as practised amongst the Shī<sup>c</sup>a of Iran.
45. Culamā (Ar.), those who are trained in the religious science of Islam; learned theologians, etc., in practice a member of the Islamic religious establishment.
46. Lattimore, O., Pivot of Asia, p. 128.

Kazakhs: the Kazakhs are a Turkic people inhabiting the vast steppe region stretching between the Caspian and Aral Seas, and the western frontier of the Mongolian People's Republic. They form the second largest Muslim national grouping in Sinkiang, and the third largest group in China (after the Uighurs and the Hui), but the Kazakhs of Sinkiang are in fact nothing more than the rump of the Kazakh nation, the great bulk of which lies within the frontiers of the Soviet Union. There are approximately 3,600,000 Kazakhs in the USSR; this compares with a figure of 319,000 Kazakhs in Sinkiang during the 1940's,<sup>47</sup> and a CCP figure of 530,000 Kazakhs in Sinkiang, Kansu and Tsinghai at the time of the 1953 national census.<sup>48</sup>

Within Sinkiang Kazakhs dominate the Chuguchak and Shara Sume areas, and form a substantial part of the population of the Ili Valley. The total Kazakh-inhabited area of Sinkiang amounts to some 130,000 sq. miles (an area roughly equivalent to that of the British Isles), whilst the area of the neighbouring Kazakh SSR is 1,073,000 sq. miles (an area greater than that of the Sudan, the largest country in Africa, and only some 15% less than that of India).<sup>49</sup> This territorial and population imbalance in favour of the Kazakhs of the USSR has inevitably meant that the Kazakhs of Sinkiang have tended to look to the Soviet Union in general, and to the Kazakh SSR in particular, for political and cultural inspiration.

The Kazakhs are primarily pastoral nomads of the steppe. They own vast flocks of sheep, goats, cattle, horses and camels, and have always wandered at will over the almost limitless expanse of the Central Asian steppe. This harsh but self-sufficient existence has made of the Kazakhs a

47. Figures of Chang Chih-yi, cited in Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 106.

48. Hsin-Hua tzu-tien, 1957, cited in Nagel, Encyclopaedia-Guide China (Geneva, 1968), pp. 62-4.

49. Area of Kazakh SSR taken from Caroe, O., Soviet Empire: The Turks of Central Asia and Stalinism (New York, 1967), p. 2. The area of the Sudan is 967,500 sq. miles, whilst that of the Republic of India is 1,229,215 sq. miles.

fiercely independent people who have traditionally opposed all outside interference in their affairs. The unwillingness of the Kazakhs to accept foreign tutelage of any sort has led them into open and bloody conflict with the forces of both Russian and Chinese expansionism at various times over the past two hundred years.

As a separate and distinct nation, the Kazakhs appear relatively late in history; their origins cannot be traced back beyond the fifteenth century with any degree of certainty. The first recorded use of the Turkic word Kazakh - meaning "riders of the steppe" - dates from the eleventh century, but it appears to have been used as a general term, and not to have designated any particular people. The ancestors of the Kazakhs were probably a constituent tribe of the Chagatai Khanate; it is believed that after the disintegration of Chagatai they were absorbed by the rising might of the Uzbek Confederation. In the mid-fifteenth century a dissident section of the Uzbek Confederation broke away from the ruling Khan and migrated to the area between Lake Balkash and Dzungaria.

In the sixteenth century the emergent Kazakh nation formed itself into three hordes which came to dominate a large part of the area which today forms the Kazakh SSR; these were the "Lesser Horde" (Tk. Kishi Zhuz) in the region of the Caspian Sea; the "Middle Horde" (Tk. Orta Zhuz) in the central Kazakh steppe; and the "Greater Horde" (Tk. Ulu Zhuz) in the region of Lake Balkash and the Ili Valley.<sup>50</sup>

The Kazakhs speak a dialect of the Tatar branch of the Turkic group of languages which is almost identical to Kirghiz. There is no difference in the language of the Soviet and Chinese Kazakhs. The Kazakh people excel in the skills and handicrafts associated with pastoral nomadism. Like the sedentary Uighurs they are fond of poetry, music and dancing. Their women

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50. Wheeler, G., The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia (London, 1964), pp. 11-12; Hambly, G., et al., Central Asia (London, 1969), p. 143.



weave and embroider intricate yurt-hangings, saddle cloths and numda-like carpets.<sup>51</sup> Kazakhs are famous throughout Central Asia for their skill as horsemen, and they have traditionally been employed by military authorities in the region as crack cavalry troops, a role which they continue to fill with considerable élan in both the Soviet and Chinese armies.

The Kazakhs, like the Uighurs, are Sunni Muslims of the Hanafi madhhab. They were Islamicised much more recently than the sedentary Uighurs; a superficial conversion began in the sixteenth century, and was largely completed by the beginning of the eighteenth century.<sup>52</sup> Islam, however, continues to sit lightly on the Kazakhs. Lattimore records that:

They neither veil nor seclude their women, because the conditions of nomadic life require active kinds of work which would be hampered by the veil. Men and women mingle in many kinds of work around the camp. They are also lax about the details of the Moslem dietary laws, except for the prohibition against pork; they do not adhere strictly to the hours of prayer or the seasons of fasting, and frequently neglect to circumcise their sons.<sup>53</sup>

Kazakh customary law ('āda) has never been fully superceded by Islamic shari<sup>c</sup> law; indeed 'āda remained a powerful force in the Kazakh regions of Sinkiang until the CCP victory in 1949, and probably remains so today. It may be that their recent and comparatively superficial conversion to Islam has left the Kazakh people (and their close kinsmen, the Kirghiz) more open to new ideas than the settled and more deeply Islamicised Uighurs. Certainly modern concepts of nationalism and socialism seem to have developed first amongst the nomadic Muslims of Chinese Central Asia, and only later amongst their sedentary bretheren.

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51. Yurt: a collapsible circular skin or felt-covered tent (from the Russian yrta). Numda: a carpet or coverlet of compressed felt, frequently embroidered (from the Sanskrit namata, "felt").

52. Bennigsen, A., and Lemerrier-Quellejay, C., Islam in the Soviet Union (London, 1967), p. 6.

53. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 132.

Kirghiz: The Kirghiz are a Turkic people inhabiting the Tien Shan and Pamir regions of Sinkiang, the Soviet Union and Afghanistan. The Kirghiz form the fourth largest Muslim national grouping in Sinkiang (after the Uighurs, Kazakhs and Hui), and the fifth largest in China (after the Tung-hsiang of Kansu); nevertheless the Kirghiz of Sinkiang, like their Kazakh kinsmen, are just the rump of the Kirghiz nation. There are 970,000 Kirghiz in the USSR (primarily in the Kirghiz SSR); a further 30,000 live high in the remote Afghan Pamirs. The Kirghiz of Sinkiang, numbering an estimated 65,000 in the mid-1940's<sup>54</sup> and 68,000 in 1953,<sup>55</sup> are distributed across the Tien Shan from the Ili Valley to Aksu; Kirghiz also dominate the mountainous hinterland of the Tarim Basin along the Sino-Soviet frontier to the Pamir and Karakoram mountains in the far west. Like the Kazakhs of Sinkiang, the Kirghiz draw much of their national and cultural inspiration from their more numerous, more prosperous, and better educated fellows in the Soviet Union.

The Kirghiz, like the Kazakhs, are pastoral nomads. They specialise in cattle, goat, sheep and horse farming. In contrast to the Kazakhs, however, they are Alpine and not steppe nomads. In the summer their herds range over the high pasture lands of the upper Pamirs and Tien Shan; in the winter both the Kirghiz and their animals descend to the river banks of the Pamir and Tien Shan foothills.

Little is known of the origin and early history of the Kirghiz. According to their own legends they sprang from a group of forty maidens (Tk. kirk kiz) who became pregnant and so gave birth to the Kirghiz people. According to one version of this legend, the forty maidens had intercourse with a red dog; another version explains that they became pregnant after dipping their fingers in a magic stream; the third - and

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54. Chang Chih-yi, cited in Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 106.

55. Hsin-Hua tzu-tien, 1957, cited in Nagel, op.cit., pp. 62-4.

surely the most symbolic - version holds that they were fertilised by the foam of the Issik K l, a lake long sacred to the Turkic peoples, and which has become a symbol of Turkic nationalism and independence;<sup>56</sup> (in this context, see the poem of the Kazakh national poet Maghjan Jumabay at the beginning of this study).

Kirghiz tribes are known to have settled along the upper Yenisei River between the sixth and ninth centuries A.D.;<sup>57</sup> Lattimore states that the earliest Chinese references to the Kirghiz date from the beginning of the Christian era.<sup>58</sup> During the ninth century, Kirghiz warrior bands attacked the Uighurs of Mongolia and precipitated Uighur emigration into the area which is now Sinkiang. In the tenth century the Kirghiz were in turn defeated by the Kara Kitai. A part of the Kirghiz people turned back towards the Yenisei where they were encountered by the Russians in the sixteenth century, but the main body emigrated en masse towards the south-west and into the region which they inhabit today.<sup>59</sup>

The Kirghiz speak a dialect of the Tatar branch of the Turkic group of languages.<sup>60</sup> There is no difference in language between the Kirghiz of Sinkiang and the Kirghiz of the Soviet Union, furthermore the Kirghiz are easily understood by both their Kazakh and Uighur kinsmen.

The Kirghiz are renowned horsemen and fighters, but their prowess has traditionally lain in the swift raid or razzia, and not in organised military conquest. Kirghiz of both sexes enjoy falconry; the men also hunt

56. Norins, M.R., Gateway to Asia (New York, 1944), p. 88.

57. Wheeler, G., The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia, p. 13.

58. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 133.

59. Lattimore, ibid.; Wheeler, The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia, p. 13.

60. Czalpicka, M.A., The Turks of Central Asia (London, 1918), p. 24, citing the Turkologists Beresin and Kasem Beg, states categorically that Kirghiz belongs to the Tatar branch of the Turkic group of languages. Lattimore, on the other hand, states that Kirghiz is a Turkic language, more closely related to Chagatai Turkish and Uighur than to Kazakh (Pivot of Asia, pp. 133-4); this would make Kirghiz a dialect of the Chagatai rather than the Tatar branch of the Turkic group of languages.

larger game, especially the rare ovis poli or long-tailed mountain sheep, and the wild yak. Like the Afghans and the Uighurs, the Kirghiz are avid players of the game of baiga (in Afghanistan known as buz kashi), a violent, no-holds-barred contest between some fifty mounted men who compete for the possession of a sheep or goat carcass.<sup>61</sup> The handicrafts of the Kirghiz are essentially similar to those of the Kazakhs; the women weave and embroider intricate saddle-cloths, yurt-hangings and felt carpets.

The Kirghiz are Sunni Muslims of the Hanafi madhhab. Like the Kazakhs, they are comparatively recent converts to Islam, and shamanistic traits retain some small significance in Kirghiz custom.<sup>62</sup> The Kirghiz themselves, however, have long considered their practice of Islam to be exemplary; they are fiercely conscious of their identity as Muslims, and are proud of their links with Dār al-Islām, the Islamic world.

Tajiks: The Tajiks are an Iranian people, of Indo-European rather than Turkic ethnic origin. They inhabit a remote and impoverished area of the Pamir-Karakoram ranges in south-western Sinkiang. Their numbers are very small, and their influence on the course of events in Sinkiang has always been slight.

The Tajiks of Sinkiang are primarily concentrated in the mountainous valleys of the Tashkurgan region.<sup>63</sup> Tashkurgan is also known as Sarikol, as a consequence of which the Tajiks are frequently referred to as "Sarikolis" in European works of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the mid-1940's there were an estimated 9,000 Tajiks in Sinkiang.<sup>64</sup> CCP

61. Norins, op.cit., p. 89.

62. Mote, V.L., 'Kirghiz', in: Weekes, R.V., Muslim Peoples (London, 1978) p. 218.

63. Tashkurgan (Tk. "stone tower"), almost certainly the "Tower of Stone" reported by Ptolemy to mark the half-way point between east and west on the ancient Silk Road. See Boulnois, L., The Silk Road (London, 1966), pp. 62-3.

64. Chang Chih-yi, in Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 106.

figures published in 1953 put the Tajik population of Sinkiang at the much higher, but in political terms still marginally significant figure of 15,000.<sup>65</sup>

The Tajiks are a settled people, cultivating oats, barley and legumes under very difficult climatic conditions - at no point does the Sarikol region drop below 10,000 ft. The Tajik agriculturalists live in close and relatively friendly contact with the surrounding pastoral Kirghiz. They frequently supplement their meagre agricultural source of income by acting as porters and guides for caravans and individual travellers crossing the 15,600 ft. Mintaka Pass between Sinkiang and Hunza. During the Republican period, however, it is doubtful whether this difficult and dangerous task made more than a marginal contribution to the financial position of the impoverished Tajik community. Lattimore, an authority who travelled extensively in Sinkiang during the Republican period, records that the Sarikolis were resentful of Chinese rule 'especially because of the burdens imposed upon them for supplying men and animals, without pay or for insufficient pay, to keep open a high mountain route between Sinkiang and India'.<sup>66</sup>

The Tajiks may have been the original Iranian inhabitants of the Afghanistan - East Turkestan area. Chinese sources from 128 B.C. describe the people of Bactria as being shrewd traders and poor fighters who lived in walled towns and did not follow a nomadic way of existence. These people were first conquered by the Arabs and later by the Turks sweeping down from Transoxiana, but they retreated into the Pamirs and Hindu Kush where they succeeded in maintaining a precarious foot-hold.<sup>67</sup> The French orientalist Grenard believed the Tajiks of Sarikol to be the descendants of the Tokharian inhabitants of Khotan, a people who dominated the Tarim Basin in

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65. Hsin-Hua tzu-tien, 1957, cited in Nagel, *op.cit.*, pp. 62-4.

66. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 138.

67. Wilber, D.E., (ed.), *Afghanistan (Human Relations Area Files)*, New Haven, 1956), p. 45.

the first centuries of the Christian era, but who were later conquered by the invading Uighur Turks.<sup>68</sup> Whatever the true origin of the Sarikoli Tajiks, it is apparent that they belong ethnically and culturally to the impoverished "Mountain Tajik" community of Afghan Badakshan, and not to the urbanised and sophisticated plains-dwelling Tajik community which constitutes in excess of 30% of the total population of Afghanistan,<sup>69</sup> and the overwhelming majority of the population of the Tajik SSR.<sup>70</sup>

The Sarikoli Tajiks speak an Iranian dialect of which Lattimore, writing in 1950, commented:

There are two Iranian languages spoken in adjoining districts. One is the Pamir group of dialects, spoken in the Wakhan Valley of Afghanistan and in the Mountain Badakshan Autonomous Region enclosed within the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic. The other is Tajik. Thus the question whether the Sarikolis speak Tajik or Pamir Iranian is important, but there is as yet no authoritative answer.<sup>71</sup>

Although no published philological research has been undertaken in the Tajik region of Sinkiang since the CCP victory in 1949, it may be tentatively suggested that the Sarikoli Tajiks speak an archaic Iranian dialect corresponding to Lattimore's "Pamir Iranian" which differs markedly from modern Persian. This conclusion is suggested by the Human Relations Area File on Afghanistan (1956), which states that:

In the high mountain valleys of Badakshan, and in Wakhan, the tongue of Afghan territory which extends between Kashmir and Soviet Tajikistan to meet Chinese Turkistan, dwell the mountain Tajiks. They speak an archaic Iranian language.<sup>72</sup>

The plains-dwelling Tajiks, on the other hand, speak a dialect of Persian which is almost indistinguishable from that used in eastern Iran. There are no plains-dwelling Tajiks in Sinkiang.

The Sarikoli Tajiks are an extremely poor people, a condition shared

68. Cited in Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 138.

69. Wilber, op.cit., p. 46.

70. Wheeler, The Peoples of Soviet Central Asia, p. 117.

71. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 138.

72. Wilber, op.cit., p. 46.

with their fellows in Afghan Badakshan<sup>73</sup> and in the Mountain Badakshan Autonomous Oblast of the Tajik SSR.<sup>74</sup> One reason for this poverty is that in an area which is overwhelmingly Sunni Muslim, the "Mountain Tajiks" (in contrast to the plains-dwelling Tajiks) are Shi<sup>c</sup>a Muslims; almost certainly this religious difference has contributed to the present isolation and poverty of the "Mountain Tajiks" in their remote and inhospitable valleys.<sup>75</sup> The Tajik Shi<sup>c</sup>a of Sinkiang are, in fact, Nizari Isma<sup>c</sup>ili, or followers of the Aga Khan;<sup>76</sup> as such they are a minority within a minority. They are regarded as heretics (Tk. rāfizi) by the Turkic and Hui Sunni Muslims of Sinkiang, and consequently have suffered a double persecution, firstly at the hands of successive corrupt Chinese administrations (cf. Lattimore, fn. 66 above), and secondly at the hands of their more orthodox co-religionists. This isolation helps to explain the continuing poverty and political impotence of the Sarikoli Tajiks in both Ch'ing and Republican times.

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73. The present writer travelled in Afghan Badakshan during September 1976.

74. The Tajik SSR has a total area of 55,600 sq. miles, with its capital at Dushanbe. Within the Tajik SSR lies the little-known Mountain Badakshan Autonomous Oblast, area 24,900 sq. miles, capital at Khorog in the Pamirs). The population of the Mountain Badakshan A.O. was 73,000 in 1959; this figure is made up of "Mountain Tajiks" in the west, and Kirghiz in the east. Utechin, S.V., Concise Encyclopaedia of Russia (London, 1961), p. 361.

75. The position of the "Mountain Tajiks" may best be compared with that of the Mongloid Hazara inhabitants of Afghanistan. Like the "Mountain Tajiks", the Hazara are Shi<sup>c</sup>a Muslims (though not Isma<sup>c</sup>ili), and are reviled as heretics by the Sunni majority in Afghanistan. The Hazara inhabit the infertile uplands of central Afghanistan, known as Hazarajat.

76. The Sarikoli Tajiks are in fact a faction (Nizari) within a minority (Isma<sup>c</sup>ili) within a minority (Shi<sup>c</sup>a); furthermore all Muslims are, of course, a minority within China. Little research has been undertaken on the religious background of the Sarikoli Tajik community, and most reference works on Sinkiang content themselves with describing them as "Shi<sup>c</sup>ites". Lattimore, however, states that the Sinkiang Tajiks acknowledge the Aga Khan as their spiritual leader (Pivot of Asia, p. 138). A short explanation of the term Nizari Isma<sup>c</sup>ili is appended to the present study so that the sectarian affiliations of the Sarikoli Tajiks may be clearly understood, particularly by the Sinologist who is not an Islamicist. (See Appendix II at the end of this study).

Uzbeks: There are only a handful of Uzbeks living in Sinkiang; figures from the mid-1940's show an estimated Uzbek population of 8,000.<sup>77</sup> Chinese Communist statistics from the 1953 national census put the figure at 11,000.<sup>78</sup> Unlike the various Muslim peoples who have been examined so far, the Uzbeks have no territorial base of their own within China. Most Sinkiang Uzbeks live in the cities, particularly Kashgar, Kulja and Chuguchak, where they work as merchants and traders.<sup>79</sup>

The Uzbeks of Sinkiang must be seen as an outpost of the cultured and sophisticated Uzbek nation. The Uzbek homeland is in and around the Zeravshan Valley in the area which is now Soviet Central Asia. Within the Soviet Union there are more than 6,000,000 Uzbeks, most of whom live within the Uzbek SSR. Uzbeks are the fourth most numerous nationality in the USSR after the Russians, Ukrainians and Belorussians; they are the largest Turkic group in the USSR, and the second largest Turkic group in the world after the Osmanli Turks of Turkey.<sup>80</sup> Outside the USSR there are about 1,000,000 Uzbeks in Afghanistan.

The Uzbeks probably derive their name from Uzbek, a Khan of the Golden Horde who adopted Islam and whose name gradually became associated with the Islamicised elements of the Horde. The Uzbeks came to dominate the area between the lower Volga and the Aral Sea during the fifteenth century. During the sixteenth century the predominantly Uzbek Shaibānid Dynasty conquered the formerly Timūrid lands around Bukhara, Samarkand and Tashkent. These are the areas inhabited by the great majority of the Uzbek people today.

After their conquest of the Zeravshan Valley, the Uzbeks became an increasingly sedentary people. The Turkic Uzbeks also absorbed many

77. Chang Chih-yi, cited in Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 106.

78. Hsin-Hua tzu-tien, 1957, cited in Nagel, op.cit., pp. 62-4.

79. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 149.

80. Wheeler, The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia, p. 10.



elements of the advanced Iranian culture which flourished in and around Bukhara and Samarkand. The Uzbeks became influential standard-bearers of Islam in Central Asia during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and during this period Uzbek traders and members of the 'ulamā' crossed the Tien Shan and settled in small numbers in Eastern Turkestan.

The Russian conquest of the ancient Khanates of Khiva, Bukhara and Khokand during the nineteenth century caused a further emigration of Uzbeks to Sinkiang; finally the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the civil war in Central Asia which followed created a constant flow of refugees from Russian to Chinese Central Asia; most of these refugees were "White" Cossack troops and their supporters, but it is clear that many Uzbeks, Kazakhs and Kirghiz also fled to Chinese territory.

The Uzbeks speak a dialect of the Chagatai branch of the Turkic group of languages. They are easily understood by the Uighurs, a people to whom they are closely related. Like the Uighurs, they are Sunni Muslims of the Ḥanafī madhhab. The Uzbeks are probably the most conscientiously observant Muslims in Sinkiang, and also the most orthodox. Their chief contribution to the historical development of Sinkiang has been political and cultural rather than military; they have helped in the spread of Islam, and particularly in the propagation and development of pan-Islamic sentiment through the Naqshbandī tā'ifa, a ṣūfī order based in Bukhara. The role of the Uzbeks in Sinkiang during the twentieth century, however, seems to have been more muted.

Tatars: The Tatars are the smallest Muslim nationality in Sinkiang, yet they have exercised (and continue to exercise) an influence on events in Sinkiang out of all proportion to their numbers. In the mid-1940's there were an estimated 5,000 Tatars in Sinkiang;<sup>81</sup> the CCP census of 1953 puts

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81. Chang Chih-yi, cited in Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 106.

the number of Tatars even lower, at 4,300<sup>82</sup> (this may well be explained by a possible return of Tatars to the Soviet Union after the CCP victory in 1949; the Tatars of Sinkiang tend to live along the Sino-Soviet frontier, and such an exodus would have proved comparatively easy).

Like the Uzbeks, the Tatars have no fixed territorial base in China; rather the Tatars of Sinkiang are concentrated in the northern cities of Kulja and Chuguchak. Lattimore estimated in 1950 that over 80% of all Sinkiang Tatars lived in these two cities; however even here they form a small minority of the population.<sup>83</sup> There are virtually no Tatars in the Tarim Basin. Like the Uzbeks of Sinkiang, the Tatars are primarily an urban community. They work as merchants and traders, and have made a substantial contribution to the administration of the province, under the CCP as well as during the Republican period.

Most Tatars trace their descent to the Khanate of Kazan, which was founded after the collapse of the Golden Horde in the Volga Area in 1438. In 1552 Kazan, which had emerged as the pre-eminent centre of Islamic civilization north of the Caucasus, was conquered by Ivan the Terrible. The Tatars were treated with singular brutality, and many fled eastwards. As the frontiers of the Russian state expanded inexorably eastwards, so the great mass of the Tatar people found themselves subjects of the Tsar. Tatar refugees and political dissidents gradually spread throughout the Russian dominions in Central Asia, and even into Siberia and Sinkiang. As with the Uzbeks, a further wave of emigration occurred during the 1917 revolution and the subsequent civil war. Today there are at least 5,000,000 Tatars in the Soviet Union (where they constitute the fifth largest nationality, after the Uzbeks);<sup>84</sup> they are scattered throughout the various national republics, though the majority live in the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic

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82. Hsin-Hua tzu-tien, 1957, cited in Nagel, op.cit., pp. 62-4.

83. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 150.

84. Utechin, S.V., op.cit., p. 431.

(RSFSR) and the Uzbek SSR.<sup>85</sup>

Tatars speak Tatar, a Turkic dialect which has given its name to the north-western group of Turkic languages amongst which are included Kazakh and Kirghiz. Like the Uighurs, the Kazakhs, the Kirghiz and the Uzbeks, the Tatars are Sunni Muslims of the Hanafi madhhab. They are orthodox Muslims, and proud of their Islamic faith and culture; however they are probably less conscientious than the Uzbeks in their observance of Islamic ritual. If the Uzbeks of Sinkiang played an important role in the dissemination of pan-Islamic ideas in Sinkiang, the bitterly anti-Russian Tatars made a similar contribution in the spread of pan-Turanian concepts. Driven to flee the Russian Empire by Tsarist persecution, Tatar emigrés came to Sinkiang as representatives of one of the most intellectually developed and culturally advanced Muslim communities in the world. Originally inhabitants of Kazan, the great northern seat of Islamic scholarship, the Tatars were driven by Russian conquest and persecution to spread throughout Russia and even to Sinkiang; in this diaspora they maintained contact with each other and with Kazan through literally hundreds of news sheets and information bulletins which were circulated between the scattered communities. Because of their intellectual sophistication and political organisation the Tatars have always been in the forefront of the Turkic national movement within both the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union; this Turkic nationalism spilled across the frontier into Sinkiang, and it is no coincidence that Burhān Shahīdī, first chairman of the provincial government of Sinkiang under the CCP, was a Tatar.

Hui: The seventh and last Muslim nationality of Sinkiang, the Hui, differ markedly from the previous six Muslim nationalities already discussed;

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85. Bennigsen and Lemerrier-Quelquejay, op.cit., p. 5; Wheeler, G., Racial Problems in Soviet Muslim Asia, pp. 65-6.

indeed the Hui have so little in common with the Uighurs, Kirghiz, Tajiks, Uzbeks and Tatars that they should really be grouped in a separate category of their own. They are Muslims, and they are a national minority people. Here the similarities end.

The Hui are the largest Muslim national minority in China. Chinese Communist statistics from the 1953 census show that there were 3,930,000 Hui scattered throughout China at that time. The greatest concentration of Hui is in Northwest China, especially in Kansu, Tsinghai and Ningsia Provinces, where they are frequently referred to as Tungans. (Under the CCP Ningsia Province has been reconstituted as the Ningsia Hui Autonomous Region). In Sinkiang, however, the Hui have always been a small, though politically significant, minority. Statistics from the mid-1940's show an estimated Hui population in Sinkiang of 92,146;<sup>86</sup> unfortunately CCP statistics from the 1953 census do not give figures for the Hui population of Sinkiang as distinct from the Hui population of China as a whole.

Within Sinkiang the Hui live primarily in the towns and villages of Dzungaria and the Ili Valley. There are also small Hui communities in several of the oases situated along the northern rim of the Tarim Basin (notably in Karashahr and Aksu) as well as in Kashgar and Khotan. Within Sinkiang many Hui have traditionally owned agricultural smallholdings; others maintain inns and lodging-houses which have a reputation for cleanliness and efficiency. As in much of north and north-western China, the Hui of Sinkiang dominate the caravan trade-routes and have figured prominently as soldiers.

Although the Hui are now recognised by the CCP as a separate nationality, in Ch'ing and Republican times their position was far less clear. The Ch'ing administration responsible for the suppression of the mid-nineteenth century Muslim rebellions in Northwest China tended to regard

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86. Chang Chih-yi, cited in Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 110.

Hui rebels as "traitors", whilst Turkic rebels were regarded as misled minority peoples. Consequently in areas reconquered by the victorious armies of the Ch'ing general Tso Tsung-t'ang, defeated Turkic peoples were treated with a considerable measure of leniency. Hui prisoners, on the other hand, were frequently subjected to a policy of extermination.<sup>87</sup>

With the overthrow of the Ch'ing and the establishment of the Chinese Republic in 1911, the separate national identity of the Hui was still not acknowledged. Sun Yat-sen, the father of the Chinese Republic, argued that in China the terms "state" and "nation" meant the same thing. Sun advocated a policy of assimilation and eventual Sinification for all the national minorities. He wrote as follows:

Although there are a little over ten million non-Han in China, including Mongols, Manchus, Tibetans and Tatars, their number is small compared with the purely Han population ... China is one nationality.<sup>88</sup>

Sun elsewhere argued that:

The name "Republic of Five Nationalities" exists only because there exists a certain racial distinction which distorts the meaning of a single republic. We must facilitate the dying out of all names of individual peoples inhabiting China ... we must satisfy the demands of all races and unite them in a single political and cultural whole.<sup>89</sup>

As June Dreyer points out, Sun seems to have subsumed all the Turkic Muslims of China under the term "Tatar"; similarly he does not mention the Hui, apparently assuming that they were a religious rather than an ethnic minority.<sup>90</sup>

87. 'The record in bloodiness was set by the armies of Tso Tsung-t'ang. When they took Uighur towns, surrender was usually accepted without massacre ... When they defeated Chinese Moslems, however, they massacred women and children as well as men, because these communities were regarded as not only political rebels, but traitors to the Chinese blood' (Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, pp. 143-4).

88. Hsü, L. Shih-lien, Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals (Los Angeles, 1933), p. 168.

89. Sun Yat-sen, Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary (Taipei, 1953), p. 180.

90. Dreyer, June, China's Forty Millions (Cambridge, Mass., 1976), pp. 16-17.

Sun Yat-sen had little or no opportunity to implement his plans for the integration of all minority peoples in China within a single race; indeed it is doubtful whether he had any real plans beyond vague theorising. His Kuomintang (KMT) successors, however, embraced Sun's ideas wholeheartedly, and indeed took them one stage further. In Chiang Kai-shek's opinion:

Our various clans actually belong ... to the same racial stock ... that there are five peoples designated in China ... is not due to differences of race or blood but to religion and geographical environment. In short the differentiation among China's five peoples is due to regional and religious factors, and not to race or blood.<sup>91</sup>

Chiang's statement, which is entirely without scientific foundation, is a fine example of the assimilationist policy known as Ta-Han chu-yi ("Greater Han-ism"). Before the CCP victory in 1949 the Hui nationality were the most frequent victims of Han attempts to assimilate the Muslim national minority peoples. This is because the Hui have frequently been officially considered as Han Chinese who have adopted the Muslim religion, and not as a separate nationality. At first glance this view might not seem too unreasonable. The Hui speak Chinese (a few can speak some Arabic; the majority are able to recite the fātiha and various other sūras from the Qur'ān, generally without fully understanding the meaning).<sup>92</sup> In general terms - at least to the outsider - the Hui look Chinese, though their appearance may differ widely according to their locality. (It must be pointed out that this apparent similarity between Hui and Han is strenuously denied by those fortunate enough to have been able to travel in the north-western Hui areas; most such authorities describe these Tungan Muslims as being larger and more hirsute than the Han; pronouncedly Semitic features

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91. Chiang Kai-shek, China's Destiny (N.Y., 1947, translation by Wang Chung-hui), pp. 12-13.

92. Ting, Dawood C.M., 'Islamic Culture in China', in Islam: The Straight Path (N.Y., 1958), p. 366.

are also widespread. A. Doak Barnett, an American correspondent who travelled widely in Northwest China during the Second World War, records that:

In appearance these people (the Hui) are clearly distinguishable from other Chinese. The men's skull caps and women's hoods are identifying marks, but, in addition, their facial features are quite distinctive. Their noses are larger and their eyes rounder than those of typical Chinese (i.e. Han Chinese), and the men wear luxuriant beards and bushy sideburns. Some have features and coloration so Occidental that they are startling in a remote Oriental setting.<sup>93</sup>

Similarly Owen Lattimore, who was appointed political adviser to Chiang Kai-shek in 1941 on the nomination of President Roosevelt, recalls that a Hui warlord from Northwest China whom he met during the war years 'looked more like a Sikh than a Han Chinese'.<sup>94</sup> It is certain that Hui are not simply Han Chinese who have adopted Islam. This point has now been accepted by both Chinese and non-Chinese authorities, as well as by the CCP Government in Peking. The Hui, of course, have long insisted on this separate identity.

Who, then, are the Hui? It would seem that they are the descendants of Muslim merchants and soldiers (primarily of Arab and Persian, and later of Turkic origin) who came to China between the seventh and seventeenth centuries.<sup>95</sup> These soldiers and merchants took Chinese wives and were gradually absorbed by the indigenous population. The process of assimilation was never fully completed, however, as the newcomers passed on their religion and various cultural and ethnic traits to their descendants. The nascent Hui community gradually expanded as a result of further intermarriage. The conversion to Islam and subsequent absorption of sections of the surrounding peoples must also have played an important role in the growth of the Hui nationality.

As time passed, certain Hui territorial bases emerged, most notably

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93. Barnett, A.D., China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover (London, 1963), p. 182.

94. Owen Lattimore in conversation with the author during 1976.

95. Forbes, A.D.W., 'The Muslim National Minorities of China', Religion VI, 1 (Spring 1976), pp. 70-2.

in the south-western province of Yunnan and in the north-western provinces of 'Tsinghai Kansu and Ningsia. Other smaller groups of Hui emigrated along the trade routes of China towards Peking and the three north-eastern provinces (Hui have always been active as caravaneers and traders; because of Islamic dietary laws it is desirable for Muslim travellers to have access to ḥalāl foodstuffs,<sup>96</sup> thus the predominance of Hui in the North China caravan trade created a need for small, settled Hui communities at intervals along the trade routes to service the needs of their itinerant co-religionists).

It is not known when the first Hui entered Sinkiang. No doubt numbers of Hui had passed through the region either en route for Mecca to perform the ḥājj, or on some mercantile enterprise, almost from the time of their inception as a national group. The policy of systematically settling Hui in the area dates from the eighteenth century conquest of Dzungaria and the Tarim Basin by the Ch'ing Emperor Ch'ien-lung. In his conquest of Dzungaria Ch'ien-lung sought permanently to break the power of his Mongol enemies by implementing a policy of genocide.<sup>97</sup> Dzungaria was to be re-settled by Han and Turkic immigrants; Manchu bannermen were to rule over these immigrants and to safeguard the western frontier for the Ch'ing. The emigration of Hui Muslims was also encouraged. This served the dual purpose of removing some of the warlike and fiercely independent Hui from China Proper, and gave additional military muscle to the Ch'ing presence in the still debatable lands of Central Asia. Many Hui fled westwards to Sinkiang before the advancing Ch'ing armies of Tso Tsung-t'ang in the mid-nineteenth century; however it is unlikely that these refugees added appreciably to the number of Hui in Sinkiang, as the victorious Ch'ing forces inflicted terrible losses on the Hui community already established in the area. During this period a

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96. Ḥalāl (Ar.) = "permitted"; Ch. equivalent, ch'ing, = "pure". Han Chinese are great eaters of pork, a foodstuff which is, of course, strictly forbidden to Muslims. See, however, the possibly apocryphal story concerning this matter related by Lattimore in his The Desert Road to Turkestan (Boston, 1930), p. 204, fn. 1.

97. Chu Wen-djang, The Moslem Rebellion in Northwest China, 1862-1878 (The Hague, 1966), pp. 1-2.



number of Hui fled across the Tien Shan to Russia, where they were given political asylum by the Tsarist Government. Today the descendants of these Hui refugees number 21,000 and constitute a narodnost' within the Kazakh and Kirghiz SSR's.<sup>98</sup>

The Hui, like the Turkic Muslims of Sinkiang, are Sunni Muslims of the Hanafi madhhab. They are strongly conscious of their Islamic identity, but their observance of formal Islamic ritual tends to be both lax and somewhat unorthodox. Dawood Ting, a Hui by nationality, comments that:

Only the Ahunds (sic) and country people of strong faith observe the five daily prayers. Others observe only two or three prayers and make the rest up at home and others go to the mosque only for the Friday service, but the largest group go to the mosque only for the two great festivals (id al-fitr and id al-adha). Some Muslims never go to the mosque except for a relative's funeral and then they disappear as soon as the ceremonies are finished; this is a large group. Not many men go to the mosque to worship and even fewer women go.<sup>99</sup>

Hui women generally do not observe pardah,<sup>100</sup> though in some parts of the northwest they may wear the veil; observance of fasting during Ramadan is irregular, and payment of zakāt<sup>101</sup> is rarely made. The pilgrimage to Mecca, theoretically obligatory on all Muslims who can afford to make the journey, is long and difficult, thus comparatively few Hui are able to make the hajj. Hui marriage and funeral ceremonies are widely influenced by Han Chinese customs, and this has often led to criticism of the heterodox nature of Hui Islam by pan-Islamicists and religious reformers.

The Hui of Northwest China and Sinkiang (who are known as Tungans in contrast to the Hui of Yunnan in Southwest China, the latter being sometimes

98. Wheeler, G., The Peoples of Soviet Central Asia, p. 118.

99. Ting, D., op.cit., p. 366; "Ahund" = a-hung (Ch.), a mullā, from the Persian akhund.

100. Purdah (Hindi, from the Persian parda, a curtain - hence the association with the veil); the Islamic custom of secluding women.

101. Zakāt (Ar.) - alms tax of 2½% of personal income theoretically payable to the poor by all rich Muslims.

referred to as Panthays)<sup>102</sup> are noted for their love of horses, their business sense, and their martial spirit. A. Doak Barnett, one of the most informative and observant war correspondents active in Northwest China during the late Republican period, described the troops of General Ma Pufang, Tungan warlord of Chinghai, as being:

.... among the best soldiers in the country. The bivouacs and camps of these troops are spotless, and the soldiers are well-dressed and disciplined. One sees these troops throughout the eastern districts of the province, and they help to create a general atmosphere that is very martial. 103

Harrison Forman, another American correspondent who travelled and worked in Northwest China at this time, was similarly struck by Tungan military ability:

Renowned for their prowess under normal circumstances, the Hui become formidable when engaged in holy war against the infidel .... outnumbered and armed only with swords, they have been known to charge Han machine-gun barrages and win. 104

A final example from the many which would serve adequately to illustrate this aspect of the character of the Tungan community may be taken from the writings of Robert Ekvall, an American who lived in the Kansu-Chinghai-Tibet border region for much of the later Republican period:

The Moslems make first-rate soldiers. In difficult places Moslem troops are supported by a sort of religious frenzy. I have seen them fighting the Tibetans, and I have seen them fighting the Chinese; once, when I was being held prisoner by them, I saw about two thousand fight their way out of a trap formed by six times as many Chinese regulars, taking machine-gun nests and making a way through sheer

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102. Panthay: A word of presumed Burmese origin (Burmese: pathi = Muslim) which has come to be applied to the Muslims of Southwest China, particularly of Yunnan province. See: Taw Sein-ko, 'The Derivation of the Word Panthay', The Indian Antiquary, XXX (1901), pp. 39-40; also Yule, H., and A.C. Burnell, Hobson-Jobson: A Glossary of Anglo-Indian Colloquial Words and Phrases (London, 1968), pp. 669-70.

103. Barnett, A. Doak, op.cit., p. 186.

104. Dreyer, op.cit., p. 27, citing Forman. See also Forman, H., 'China's Moslemia', Canadian Geographical Journal, XXVII, 9 (1948), pp. 134-43, passim; idem, Horizon Hunter (London, 1942), pp. 69-89.

courage and superior daring. It is interesting to note that the last general to stand against the Japanese in Manchuria, in 1931, was the Moslem Ma Chan-san ...'. 105

The Tungan military tradition recurs constantly in the present study, particularly in the person of Ma Chung-ying,<sup>106</sup> the young Hui warlord whose armies devastated Sinkiang in the 1930's. Two of the three sources given above refer to a 'sort of religious frenzy' which is said to grip Hui troops when 'engaged in holy war against the infidel'. In fact Hui military prowess originates more from a combination of their experience as a persecuted religious and national minority, as well as from the adventurous and dangerous nature of their preferred professional calling as long-distance caravaners and merchants, than from adherence to the Muslim faith; after all, the Uighurs of Sinkiang are also Muslims, yet they have no comparable military tradition. References to "holy war" are also misleading. To be sure, holy wars against the infidel have, from time to time, swept Northwest and Central China, but Tungan armies have not operated against Han Chinese, Tibetans and Mongols alone. The career of Ma Chung-ying serves well to illustrate that Tungan armies may equally be turned against fellow-Muslims (the Turkic Muslims of Sinkiang) at times of political expedience. Similarly Turkic Muslims from Sinkiang have shown themselves prepared to attack their Hui co-religionists (the most notable case of this may be found in Ya<sup>C</sup>qūb Beg's pyrrhic victory over the Tungans during the 1860's).<sup>107</sup> Traditionally, little love has been lost between the Turkic and Hui Muslims of Chinese Central Asia, and the prospect of an all-embracing Muslim holy war sweeping Central Asia - a spectre which has long haunted political strategists in

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105. Ekvall, R., Cultural Relations on the Kansu-Tibetan Border (Illinois, 1939), p. 18.

106. Nyman, Lars-Erik, Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests in Sinkiang, 1918-1934, pp. 101-4 ("General Ma Chung-ying as the Bearer of the Militant Tungan Tradition").

107. Boulger, D., The Life of Yakoob Beg (London, 1878), pp. 119-36 ("Wars With the Tungani").

both Moscow and Peking - has never shown signs of materialising.

1.2b The Non-Muslim Peoples

Sibo, Solon and Manchu: Following his crushing victory over the Jungar Mongols in the mid-18th century, the emperor Ch'ien-lung determined to consolidate his hold over the newly-conquered Turkic and Mongol peoples of the far western frontier by settling groups of Manchurian soldiery throughout the frontier area. Ch'ien-lung envisaged the permanent absorption of Sinkiang within the Ch'ing Empire, and to this end he established a new city, Hui-yüan (later to become known as "Little Kulja" or "New Kulja" in contrast to the old Jungar capital of Kulja which stood slightly to the east) within the strategic Ili Valley.<sup>108</sup> In Hui-yüan, and throughout the frontier districts of Dzungaria and Ili, Ch'ien-lung settled the demobilised soldiers from Manchuria who had been instrumental in overthrowing the power of the Jungars. In contrast to the established Ch'ing practice, these militiamen were encouraged to engage in agriculture in an attempt by Ch'ien-lung to establish permanent, self-sufficient, and loyal settlements of Manchurian troops in these remote regions of Central Asia. The Ch'ing military colonists chosen for this purpose were drawn from the Sibos, Solons and Manchu peoples of north-eastern China.

The Solons, a Tungusic people from the banks of the upper Nonni River in north-western Manchuria who belonged to the Manchu tribal coalition but were not, strictly speaking, true Manchus, were given the rich lands on the right (northern) bank of the Ili River. Lattimore notes that the Solons were famed archers.<sup>109</sup>

The Sibos, another group of Tungusic people from central Manchuria who were akin to the Manchus but nonetheless not Manchus in the strict sense

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108. Fletcher, J., 'Ch'ing Inner Asia c. 1800', p. 58, in: Fairbank, J.K., (ed.), The Cambridge History of China, X, Late Ch'ing, 1800-1911, I.

109. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 148.

of the term, were given the equally rich lands on the left (southern) bank of the Ili River. Lattimore notes that the Sibos had a reputation for not succumbing to Han Chinese influence and for retaining command of their own language and customs; they were frequently employed by the Ch'ing authorities as scribes and clerks.<sup>110</sup>

It seems Ch'ien-lung broke with the established policy of forbidding Ch'ing garrison troops to engage in agriculture and trade because of the extreme remoteness of north-western Sinkiang. It was felt that a series of permanent, self-sufficient military colonies would safeguard imperial interests in Central Asia even in the event of a Tungan rebellion in Kansu or Shensi; no doubt the Ch'ing authorities also had their eye on the expanding power of Tsarist Russia, and wished to stabilise the western frontier as soon as possible. Furthermore the reputation of the Sibos for resisting Sinicisation - no easy feat, as the Manchus themselves were to learn - was correctly interpreted as a sign that they would also resist Islamicisation or voluntary assimilation by the Turkic peoples of Central Asia. In the event, the Sibos, Solons and Manchus proved equal to the task; they remained ethnically and culturally distinct from the surrounding Muslims (though less so from each other) and until the fall of the Ch'ing in 1911 they seem to have refrained from making common cause with the Turkic peoples. Certainly one Ch'ing garrison at Chuguchak held out for the Imperial government throughout the great mid-19th century rebellions of Ya<sup>c</sup>qūb Beg and the Dzungarian Tungans.<sup>111</sup>

During the 1911 Revolution most of the city-dwelling Manchus in Sinkiang were killed, but the majority of the Manchu, Sibo and Solon villages which had developed from the original Ch'ing military colonies managed to survive. As a result during the mid-1940's there were an

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110. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 148; Norins, M.R., Gateway to Asia, pp. 84-5.

111. Bales, W.L., Tso Tsung-t'ang (Shanghai, 1937), map, p. 356.

estimated 670 Manchus, 2,489 Solons and 9,023 Sibos in Sinkiang;<sup>112</sup> the total Tungusic population of Sinkiang was thus a mere 12,362.

During their long period of isolation in the far north-west, the Manchus, Sibos and Solons managed to preserve their Tungusic racial exclusiveness; they did not intermarry to any measurable extent with Han, Hui, Mongol, or any of the Turkic peoples, but (as might be expected under the circumstances) divisions between the three groups gradually diminished. By Republican times the Sibo, Solon and Manchu languages as spoken in Sinkiang had become mutually comprehensible. Sheng Shih-ts'ai continued to classify the three peoples separately, no doubt as an extension of his policy towards the Muslims of divide and conquer,<sup>113</sup> but despite this Lattimore felt able to comment that 'the points of similarity are such that the three groups must be considered as essentially one people'.<sup>114</sup> CCP statistics dating from the 1953 census are unhelpful. The Solons appear to have been merged for statistical purposes with either the Manchus or the Sibos, and no distinction is made between the Manchu and Sibo population of Sinkiang and that of China as a whole. Thus we learn that in the early 1950's there were 21,000 Sibos in Sinkiang and the north-east; similarly there were no less than 2,430,000 ethnic Manchus in the north-east, Peking, Inner Mongolia and Hopai. No mention is made of their presence in Sinkiang, yet despite their small number it is only in Sinkiang that the Manchus have been able to preserve those characteristics which distinguish them from other peoples - most notably the Han Chinese.<sup>115</sup>

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112. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 110.

113. Similarly, it will be recalled, the Uighurs of Ili were designated "Taranchi" in an attempt to divide them artificially from their fellow Uighurs in the remainder of the province.

114. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 149.

115. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 147; Hsin-Hua tzu-tien, 1957, cited in Nagel, op.cit., pp. 62-4

The Manchus, Sibos and Solons of Sinkiang have to a large extent preserved their traditional way of life. They continue to exist as small farming communities, though they also hunt and have preserved something of their martial spirit. With the collapse of the Ch'ing dynasty in 1911, any inherent loyalty to the central government in Peking seems to have disappeared; there is no record of Tungusic backing for the anti-Han risings of the early 1930's, and indeed this is hardly surprising given the pan-Islamic nature of the struggle. Tungusic backing for the general rising in the Ili Valley against the oppressive KMT regime of Wu Chung-hsin was, however, clearly forthcoming. The Sibos in particular figured prominently in the struggle of the East Turkestan Republic against Wu and his KMT successors. Lattimore notes that during this period the Sibos and other Tungusic peoples were:

In the forefront of current developments in the province. Many speak other languages besides their own, including Russian. At one time there was even talk among them of replacing their Manchu writing with a script based on the Latin alphabet. The Sibos in particular have been praised for distinguishing themselves in carrying out the tasks assigned them by the Kulja regime (i.e. the ETR) such as delivering grain and clover .... They appear to have adopted a position in support of the Kulja program against the former Chinese administration. <sup>116</sup>

Mongols: According to figures dating from the mid-1940's, there were approximately 63,000 Mongols scattered throughout Sinkiang at that time. <sup>117</sup> Unfortunately CCP population statistics based on the 1953 census do not distinguish between the Mongols of Sinkiang and those of the rest of China. It is clear, however, that Mongols form one of the most important national minorities in China - their total number in 1953 (1,640,000), puts them in eighth place after the Chuang, Hui, Uighur, Yi, Tibetan, Miao and "Manchu". <sup>118</sup>

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116. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, pp. 148-9.

117. ibid., p. 106.

118. Hsin-Hua tzu-tien, 1957, cited in Nagel, op.cit., pp. 62-4.

This figure, however, belies their true importance. Mongols inhabit a vast tract of land (the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region) stretching from the Sinkiang-Kansu frontier area to the far north-eastern province of Heilungkiang;<sup>119</sup> they are also scattered throughout Sinkiang and Tsinghai. Last but not least, a major part of the Mongolian people (just under 1,000,000 people, together with 23 million horses, cows, yaks and camels)<sup>120</sup> succeeded in breaking away from the Chinese Republic after the collapse of the Ch'ing dynasty in 1911; as a result of this secession, the Mongolian Peoples's Republic was set up, with Soviet assistance, in 1924. The continued existence of an independent Mongolian state outside the sphere of Chinese political influence (and firmly within the sphere of the Soviet Union) has made the issue of China's Mongol national minority particularly sensitive.

Within Sinkiang the Mongols inhabit a narrow strip of land along the north-eastern border with the Mongolian People's Republic. Mongol communities also exist in Chuguchak and Ili, and in the highland region to the north of Karashahr. The Mongols of Sinkiang do not hold a particularly influential position in the province; this is partly due to their comparatively small number, but still more to the "league and banner system" by which the Ch'ing sought to weaken political and tribal unity amongst the Mongols (see below). It is because of the league and banner system that the Mongols of Sinkiang tend to be split up into small communities, with major concentrations of Turkic peoples interspersed between them.

The Mongols of Sinkiang are divided into three main tribal groups, viz:

- 1) The Western Mongols (including Ūlōts, Torguts and Khoshots)
- 2) The Chahar Mongols
- 3) The Urianghai Mongols

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119. It should be noted that administrative changes implemented in 1969 reduced considerably the area of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region.

120. Lattimore, O., Nomads and Commissars (N.Y., 1962), p. 23.



Tribal units do not correspond to political units as established under the Ch'ing league and banner system, thus the Mongols of Sinkiang were organised (in Ch'ing and Republican times) into three leagues and two special groups. These were:

- 1) The Unen Susuktu League, comprising ten banners of Torgut Mongols scattered from the slopes of the southern Tien Shan across Dzungaria to the Altai.
- 2) The Ching Setkhiltu League, comprising seven banners of Urianghai Mongols and three banners of Khoshot Mongols, all located in the Chuguchak-Altai area of northern Sinkiang.
- 3) The Bato Setkhiltu League, comprising three banners of Khoshot Mongols inhabiting the Yulduz Plateau in the central Tien Shan.

The two special groups of Mongols were the Chahars, living in Borotala Valley between Urumchi and Kulja, and the Ülöts, living in the Tekes and Kash river valleys of the Ili region.<sup>121</sup>

The Mongols of Sinkiang, like Mongols everywhere, are primarily pastoral nomads. In Sinkiang they share this way of life with the Kazakh peoples amongst whom they are interspersed. In Republican Sinkiang the social and economic position of the Mongols was, generally speaking, very low indeed. Lattimore notes that:

In their social organization, the hereditary princes of the Mongols enjoy a much stronger and much more institutionalized feudal power than the sultans of the Kazakh tribes. One result of this difference is that poor Mongols are much poorer than poor Kazakhs. In addition, the Lama Buddhist religion of the Mongols is institutionalized to the point of constituting an ecclesiastical feudalism, with the result that the payment of dues and the making of special gifts for the upkeep of lama monasteries is another principal cause of the impoverishment of the Mongols as compared with the Kazakhs.<sup>122</sup>

The political and religious power of Mongol hereditary princes in Sinkiang should be borne in mind by the reader when considering the impact on local politics caused by Chin Shu-jen's murder of Tsetsen Puntsag Gegeen, regent

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121. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, pp. 134-7; Norins, op.cit., pp. 85-8.

122. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 136.

and "living Buddha" of the Torgut Mongols, on May 21st, 1932. Under the Ch'ing administration a mutual distrust existed between the Mongols of Sinkiang and the various Turkic peoples, most notably the Kazakhs.<sup>123</sup> The heavy-handed policies adopted by Chin Shu-jen and his successor Sheng Shih-ts'ai were to reverse this state of affairs (which had been carefully encouraged by the Ch'ing), and by the latter half of Sheng's period of control the Mongols were beginning to make common cause with their former Kazakh rivals; by the time of the Ili rising in 1944-49, many Mongols of the province were prepared to support the revolutionary leadership of the ETR.<sup>124</sup>

The Russians: During the Chinese Republican era some 13,400 Russians, mostly "White" refugees from the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and the civil war which followed, lived in Sinkiang. Under the CCP this figure had fallen to 9,700 by 1953; today it is certainly still lower.<sup>125</sup> A certain number of Sinkiang Russians resided in the province before 1917, and they were trapped by the events which followed. The bulk of the White émigré population, however, fled to Sinkiang after the collapse of Admiral Kolchak's anti-Bolshevik forces in Siberia. Perhaps the most renowned of these White refugees was General Annenkov.

In November 1918 the Chinese High Commissioner at Chuguchak received a request from the Russian consul on behalf of the Cossack General Annenkov. Annenkov's White forces were hard pressed by the Bolsheviks, and he needed the permission of Yang Tseng-hsin, absolute ruler of Sinkiang at the time, to withdraw into Chinese territory before re-entering Russian territory further to the east. Yang demurred, but by the end of 1919 streams of defeated White troops were fleeing across the Sino-Soviet frontier into

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123. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 137.

124. ibid.

125. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 145; Nagel, op.cit., pp. 62-4.

Sinkiang. By mid-1920 it was estimated that over 7,000 White troops and refugees had entered Sinkiang.<sup>126</sup> Annenkov finally retreated to Ili, with some 1,500 troops, in May 1920. Accounts of the White general's fate differ. Yang records that he agreed to surrender his arms, but plotted against Yang Tseng-hsin after the latter had refused him permission to withdraw to India. Annenkov was finally put down on January 28th, 1921, after Soviet troops had threatened to intervene; he was detained in Sinkiang until his death at an unspecified date.<sup>127</sup> Nyman, on the other hand, suggests that Annenkov never had any intention of surrendering his arms, but that he hoped to continue his war against the Reds from Chinese territory:

When confronted with Governor Yang's strict policy of neutrality, General Annenkov marched against Urumchi with his following of Russian Cossacks and Manchurian brigands. After some time of roving around north of the provincial capital, Annenkov was lured to the governor's yamen (official residence) for a week-end. Immediately upon their arrival Annenkov and his staff were seized and chained. According to British sources, General Annenkov's health was gradually undermined by his addiction to Opium before being released to Kansu, where the pro-Soviet warlord Feng turned Annenkov over to the Soviet Union for execution.<sup>128</sup>

Whatever the true circumstances surrounding Annenkov's death, it is clear that despite Yang Tseng-hsin's policy of encouraging Russian émigrés to return to the Soviet Union, a sizeable White Russian community became established in Sinkiang as a result of the Bolshevik victory. Most of these Russians lived in Kulja, Chuguchak and Urumchi. A few crossed over the Tien Shan and found their way down to Kashgar, usually a resting point before attempting to enter British India. Within Sinkiang the White Russians were of considerable value to a succession of Chinese warlords, but as stateless refugees they had no diplomatic protection and were open to considerable abuse. In times of peace the Whites were useful technicians who could keep the transport system of the province moving by serving the

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126. Yang, R., 'Sinkiang Under Yang Tseng-hsin, 1911-28', CAJ, VI, 1 (1961), p. 310.

127. Yang, op.cit., pp. 314-5.

128. Nyman, op.cit., p. 39.

administration as mechanics; in times of war (and this was much of the time in Republican Sinkiang) the Whites provided the most disciplined and experienced troops in the province whether they liked it or not - for any sign of hesitation on the part of the Whites led to the threat of immediate repatriation to Stalin's Russia.

The technical and military skills of the White Russian émigrés were to lead, on occasion, to the apparently anomalous situation of their fighting indirectly on the part of the Soviet Union; thus White Russians were an important factor in Sheng Shih-ts'ai's victory over the Tungan warlord Ma Chung-ying, when White and Red Russians, both carrying Soviet arms, fought side-by-side on behalf of Stalin's protégé in Urumchi. The Whites, who received precious little thanks from their Chinese overlords, rapidly tired of this situation. As the passage of time dulled the hatreds of civil war, and as a new generation of Russians grew up in Sinkiang under the oppressive rule of a succession of warlords, a new identity of interest developed with the Soviet Union. By the time of the Ili rising in 1944, the White Russians of Sinkiang, like the various other non-Muslim minorities of Sinkiang, had become so disenchanted with the provincial government in Urumchi that they were prepared to back the ETR despite its strongly pro-Soviet orientation.

The Han Chinese: Although Han Chinese now form a substantial part of the population of Sinkiang, and may indeed outnumber the indigenous inhabitants,<sup>129</sup> for the period with which this study is concerned the Han Chinese, although rulers of the province, formed a tiny proportion of the population. Statistics dating from the mid-1940's show that there were an

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129. See Introduction, fn. 32. Jack Chen, in his The Sinkiang Story (N.Y., 1977), p. 284, states that there are currently 5,027,000 Uighurs in Sinkiang (45.7%) whilst the Han number 4,554,000 (41.4%). Unfortunately no source is given for these figures. By contrast, the figures given in this section, fn.32, would tend to suggest that the Han now outnumber the various minority nationalities of Sinkiang taken collectively. In either case, it is clear that Han Chinese immigration to Sinkiang since 1949 has been both consistent and massive.

estimated 202,239 Han Chinese in Sinkiang<sup>130</sup> - somewhere between 3% and 4% of the total population of the province. It is important to note that, although sizeable communities of Han Chinese naturally existed in the main administrative centres, there were no significant territorial enclaves in which the Han predominated.

It may be assumed that a Chinese presence, often extremely small, has existed in the area which is now Sinkiang since the early years of the Western Han Dynasty (B.C. 206-24 A.D.). It is interesting to note, however, that these Han remained an administrative minority. They did not put down permanent roots, but returned to China after the completion of their tour of duty. There was no significant Han emigration towards Central Asia, and no territorial enclaves were established there - a situation which contrasts strongly with the south-west. In Sinkiang: 'in between their periods of ascendancy they either remained an alien minority, returned to their homeland, or disappeared in the savage massacres which they often invited by their own misrule'.<sup>131</sup>

The Han Chinese who entered Sinkiang after Ch'ien-lung's conquest in the mid-18th century were, in the main, massacred during the great mid-19th century Muslim risings. No doubt a few isolated Han managed to survive this terrible period and were present to witness the savage Ch'ing counter-massacres, but for the period dealt with in depth in the present study (1911 to 1949), the Han Chinese population of Sinkiang dates almost exclusively from Tso Tsung-t'ang's reconquest of the area in the mid-1870's. They may be conveniently divided into five groups: the criminal exiles; the Hunanese, the Tientsin Han, the Shansi Han, and the Kansu Han.

The Criminal Exiles: The far western regions have long been associated with exile in Chinese history. Criminal (and often political) offenders were sent off under escort to live out their days far from the boundaries of

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130. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 110.

131. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 139.

China proper. Sinkiang, and especially the Ili Valley, represented the most distant area of Chinese political control; Ili in particular was used as a sort of Chinese Botany Bay. The Han exiles in Ili were forbidden to intermarry with the local peoples, and considerable effort was made by the authorities to prevent any collusion between the two groups. The presence of exiles in Sinkiang had little relevance to events taking place during the Republican era, but it is interesting to note that some of the Han inhabitants of the Ili Valley were to give their support to the ETR during its struggle with Wu Chung-hsin and his Kuomintang successors during the 1940's.

The Hunanese: Tso Tsung-t'ang, the military commander who reconquered Sinkiang in 1876-77, was a Han Chinese from Hunan province. The army which he employed to crush Muslim separatists in the north-west was largely made up of his fellow Hunanese. After the final collapse of Ya<sup>C</sup>qūb Beg's Kingdom in 1877, many of Tso's Hunanese followers elected to settle in Sinkiang - a course of action which was encouraged by the Ch'ing administration. Tso gave these Hunanese large tracts of the best land in the province, and appointed them to the most powerful and prestigious positions in the provincial administration. As a result, the major landowners of Sinkiang during the late 19th and early 20th centuries were predominantly Hunanese. Lattimore notes that this phenomenon was so pronounced that Sinkiang became known as a "Hunanese Colony".<sup>132</sup>

The Tientsin Han: Tso's army may have been largely made up of Hunanese, but his supply lines were dominated by Han Chinese merchants from Tientsin. Like the Hunanese, many of these Tientsin Han chose to settle in Sinkiang. Tso's administration ensured that favourable positions were made available to them, and throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries these Tientsin merchants were able to dominate the economy of the province. Both the Hunan

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132. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 140.

and Tientsin Han were later joined by families and relatives, a continuing process which helped to secure their position and to tighten their grip on the province.

The Shansi Han: Chinese from Shansi province have established a position of strength throughout Northwest China in the caravan trade. Their success in this role is due to Shansi's geographical position (the province lies across the lines of communication between Peking and the Northwest), as well as to a traditional Shansi specialisation in trade and transport extending into Mongolia and the north-eastern provinces. The Shansi Han had no great patron in Sinkiang, and therefore their position cannot be compared with that of the Hunanese (and to a lesser extent the Tientsin merchants), both of whom benefited from the patronage of Tso Tsung-t'ang.

The Kansu Han: Kansu province, a narrow "pan-handle" of land extending between Mongolia and the Tibetan plateau which links Sinkiang with China proper, has provided Sinkiang with Han colonists in the truest sense of the word. The Hunanese and Tientsin Han were, in a sense, a transient factor on the ethnic map of Sinkiang; they lived primarily in the big cities, and might return to their native provinces at any time. The Shansi caravaneers were transient in a purer sense of the term; most of them visited Sinkiang in the course of transporting goods from China proper, though a few settled in the province to manage the caravan business at that end. The Kansu colonists, however, were generally impoverished farmers seeking a new future in China's far west. They were squeezed out of Kansu - one of China's poorest provinces - by harsh economic factors, and they clung tenaciously to any land which they acquired within Sinkiang. The heyday of the Kansu settlers came during the administration of Chin Shu-jen between 1928 and 1933. Chin was a Kansu man himself, and he encouraged and aided the immigration of his fellow provincials fleeing famine and warlordism in the east. Chin's policies led to the resettlement of a number of Kansu Han on expropriated Uighur land in the

ancient oasis of Kumul. Chin's action was to result in the Turkic Muslim rising of March, 1931 and the accompanying Tungan invasion of Ma Chung-ying, events of central importance to the present study.

Besides the groups of Han Chinese already mentioned, three smaller but distinct provincial groups existed within Sinkiang during the Republican period. These were the Yunnanese, the north-easterners, and the Honanese. Many of the Yunnanese came to Sinkiang during the administration of Yang Tseng-hsin, governor during the first years of the Republic from 1911 to 1928. Yang was himself a Yunnanese, and he surrounded himself with a coterie of relatives and fellow provincials. The north-easterners consisted of a group of some 2,000 troops forced out of Manchuria by the Japanese invasion, and repatriated by the Soviet authorities to Sinkiang. Under the command of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, the warlord who controlled Sinkiang from 1933 to 1944,<sup>133</sup> these "Manchurian" troops became a powerful force in the province. The Honanese Han arrived in Sinkiang during 1944, fleeing famine in their native province. Sheng Shih-ts'ai expropriated land from the indigenous Kazakh Muslims, and gave this to the Honanese to settle on. His action was to prove as disastrous for the peace and security of Sinkiang as had that of his predecessor, Chin Shu-jen, in settling Kansu Han on Uighur land.

Finally, brief mention should be made of a very different group of Han Chinese who entered Sinkiang during the late 1930s; these were members of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), amongst them Mao Tse-min, the brother of Mao Tse-tung. United by ideology rather than by provincial origin, the Han Chinese communists were an influential group in Sinkiang until 1942.

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133. Sheng Shih-ts'ai came to Sinkiang in 1929 or 1930 well before the 2,000 north-eastern troops, to serve as Chin Shu-jen's Chief-of-Staff. See below, p. 231



Table 1. Muslim national minorities of China: population, ethnicity and language

Nationality	Population (1953)	Ethnic Group	Linguistic Group
Uighur	3,900,000	Turkic	Turki (Jagatai branch)
Kazakh	530,000	Turkic	Turki (Tatar branch)
Tung-hsiang	150,000	Mongoloid	Mongolian
Kirghiz	68,000	Turkic	Turki (Tatar branch)
Salar	31,000	Turkic	Turki (Jagatai branch)
Tajik	15,000	Indo-European	Iranian
Uzbek	11,000	Turkic	Turki (Jagatai branch)
Pao-an	5,500	-	-
Tatar	4,300	Turkic	Turki (Tatar branch)
Hui	3,930,000	Chinese	Chinese
Total	8,636,000		

Note: Chinese Communist sources from the early 1950's usually estimate the total Muslim population of China at 10,000,000. Since 1953 the overall population of China has increased by an estimated 2-5% annually. If this were applied to the Muslim population, the total number of Muslim inhabitants of the People's Republic of China would now exceed 16,000,000.

Sources: Nagel, Encyclopedia-Guide China, Geneva, 1968, pp.62-4 (based on figures published in the Msir-tus tru-tien, 1957); R.A. Czaplicka, The Turks of Central Asia, London, 1918; R.B. Shaw, 'On the Hill Canton of Salar', JRAS, London, 1878; R.B. Ekvall, Cultural Relations on the Kansu-Tibetan Border, Chicago, 1939; J. Dreyer, China's forty Millions, Harvard, 1976.

Table 2. Muslim national minorities of China - distribution

Nationality	Territorial base in:			Throughout China	Elsewhere
	Sinkiang	Kansu	Ningxia		
Uighur	*				95,000 in Kazakh and Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republics.
Kazakh	*	*	*		3,581,000 in Soviet Kazakhstan; minorities in Mongolian People's Republic and Anatolian Turkey.
Tung-hsiang Kirghiz	*	*	*		970,000 in Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic; circa 30,000 in Afghan Empire.
Salar	*	*	*		1,397,000 in Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic; small minorities in Afghanistan and Pakistan <sup>1</sup> .
Tajik	*				6,000,400 in Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic; circa 820,000 in Afghanistan.
Uzbek	*				
Pao-an	*	*	*		4,969,000 throughout USSR.
Tatar	*	*	*	*	21,000 in Kazakh and Kirghiz SSR's.
Hui	*	*	*	*	

## Sources:

Chinese Moslems in Progress, Peking, 1957, pp. vi-ix (unmarked); Hsin-Hua tzu-tien, Peking, 1971, pp. 590-3; G. Wheeler, Racial Problems in Soviet Muslim Asia, London, 1967, pp. 65-6; G. Wheeler, The Peoples of Soviet Central Asia, London, 1966, pp. 117-8; A. Bennigsen and C. Lemercier-Quelquejay, Islam in the Soviet Union, maps 1 and 3; D. N. Wilber, Afghanistan, New Haven, 1956, pp. 36-71; U.S. Government Area Handbooks for: Afghanistan, Washington, 1976; People's Republic of China, Washington, 1972; Mongolia, Washington, 1974; Pakistan, Washington, 1975; Soviet Union, Washington, 1974.

## Footnote:

1. The small "Mountain Tajik" population of Wakhan and Badakshan should not be confused with the much larger plain-dwelling Tajiks of Afghanistan who form an estimated 30% of the total population. The "Mountain Tajiks" are Shi'a Muslims like the Tajiks of Sinkiang and Pakistan. The plains Tajiks are Sunni Muslims. The same distinction applies in Soviet Tajikistan.

CHAPTER 2AN OUTLINE HISTORY OF SINKIANG TO 19112.1 Pre-Ch'ing History (c. BC 206-1644 AD):

For the greater part of the first millenium BC, the region of Central Asia approximately conterminous with present-day Sinkiang was dominated by various shifting Saka-Scyth, Yuëh-chih, Wu-sun and Hsiung-nu nomadic alliances. Throughout this period, the various warring Chinese states were certainly aware of the great nomadic federations of Central Asia, yet they were unable to adopt a satisfactory "forward policy" in the region until after the Ch'in unification of China in BC 221. The Ch'in Dynasty did not long survive this achievement, however, and it fell to the Western Han (BC 206-24 AD) to take the first decisive steps towards a Han Chinese conquest of Inner Asia.

By the end of the third century BC, the Hsiung-nu had emerged as the dominant force in the Mongolian steppe area, and as a distinct threat to the Chinese State. Accordingly Wu Ti, the fifth Western Han Emperor, conceived the idea of forming an alliance with the Yuëh-chih, a long-standing enemy of the Hsiung-nu living beyond the Tarim Basin, in the region of the Ili and Ferghana Valleys. In about 135 BC, Wu Ti despatched an imperial officer, Chang Ch'ien, as his emissary to the Yuëh-chih. Chang was captured by the Hsiung-nu whilst crossing the Tarim Basin, and spent ten years in their custody before making good his escape and establishing contact with the Yuëh-chih, only to discover that the latter, after years of destructive warfare against the Hsiung-nu, were not prepared to enter

into an offensive alliance with the Chinese.

Chang Ch'ien's diplomatic mission was thus a failure. Yet his epic journey did not prove entirely fruitless. Thus, he brought back to China the first accurate information available concerning the peoples and regions lying to the west, as well as tales of the fabulous wealth and natural resources of Central Asia which served to increase Wu Ti's determination to launch a western expedition even without Yuēh-chih support. That expedition set out shortly after Chang's return, resulting in the defeat of the Hsiung-nu and the extension of Han Chinese rule over Central Asia as far west as the Pamirs and Ferghana by the beginning of the first century BC.

Over the next 1,750 years successive Chinese dynasties were to strive to emulate Wu Ti by extending or maintaining the "Mandate of Heaven" in Hsi-yu, or the "Western Regions" lying beyond the Gobi Desert. Yet the course of this "mandate" was rarely to run smoothly. Thus, Western Han control over the oases of the Tarim Basin collapsed during the reign of the last Western Han Emperor, Wang Mang, during the second and third decades AD, only to be re-established between 58 and 76 AD by his Eastern Han successor, the Emperor Ming Ti. Almost immediately, a further period of decline set in, culminating in the fragmentation of the Chinese State and the collapse of Han power in Central Asia by 220 AD. Over the next four centuries Chinese power was excluded from the Tarim region, which remained under the cultural influence of Buddhist India, but was gradually settled by the T'u-chuēh, or Western Turks.

By the end of the 6th century AD the Chinese, under the short-lived Sui Dynasty, were once again unified. However, the Sui emperors were too weak to reassert Chinese hegemony in Central Asia, and it fell to T'ai Tsung, the second emperor of the T'ang Dynasty, to subdue the Western Turks in c.630 AD. Despite a brief period of Tibetan domination between c.670 and

c.690, the T'ang were to remain more or less securely in control of the Tarim Basin until the mid-8th century AD. During this period the indigenous Indo-European Buddhist civilisation of the Tarim oases was largely undermined, whilst further to the north-east the Khanate of the Eastern Turks collapsed (c.741 AD), setting in train the gradual migration of the Uighur Turks from their ancestral homeland in the Lake Baikal region towards the Mongolian heartland and, ultimately, towards the region of present-day Sinkiang.

Meanwhile the T'ang armies, having recaptured the Tarim Basin from the Tibetans by 694, were gradually expanding their influence to the west. In 714 they subdued Dzungaria and began to operate with relative impunity to the west of the Issik Kōl. This period represents the apex of T'ang power in Central Asia, with the Transoxianan centres of Tashkent, Bukhara and Samarkand falling, albeit briefly, under the influence of the Chinese court. Yet this period of maximum T'ang expansion from the east was paralleled by a still more spectacular expansion of Arabo-Islamic power towards Central Asia from the west. With the penetration of Chinese forces into Transoxiana following 714, a clash between the T'ang and the Arabs became inevitable. Thus, in 751, the Chinese forces of Kao Hsien-chih, numbering an estimated 30,000 men, were decisively defeated by the Islamic forces of Ziyād ibn Sālīh on the banks of the Talas River in the only major battle ever to have taken place between the Chinese and the Arabs. Four years later, in 755, the An Lu-shan Rebellion rocked the Chinese Empire to its foundations. These twin disasters, combined with contemporaneous Chinese defeats on the South-East Asian frontier, signalled the final collapse of T'ang authority in the Sinkiang region, which was subsequently divided between the Tibetans and the Qarluq Turks.

Han Chinese authority was not to be re-established over the Tarim Basin and Dzungaria for the best part of 1,000 years. During the intervening

period the region in question - which was to become known to the Muslim world as Mashriq Türkistan, or "Eastern Turkestan" - was to be settled by the Uighur Turks (c.850 AD), and then gradually to become Islamicised under a series of Qarluq, Uighur and Karakhanid rulers in a process which was largely complete by the mid-12th century.<sup>1</sup>

## 2.2 Sinkiang Under the Ch'ing (1644-1911):

Between c.1130 and the establishment of the Ming Dynasty in 1368, both Dzungaria and the Tarim Basin were to fall under the control of the Mongols. Yet, as elsewhere in the Muslim world, the sedentary Muslim civilisation of Eastern Turkestan served gradually to Islamicise its Mongol conquerors, so that the region's historical and cultural links with Transoxiana and the Middle East were strengthened, rather than weakened, during the period of Mongol domination. Even under the Ming, moreover, Chinese power proved unable to assert itself further to the west than the ancient oasis kingdom of Kumul.

During the 15th and 16th centuries Eastern Turkestan - effectively divided into the three regions of Dzungaria, Altishahr (the Tarim Basin) and Uighuristan (the Turfan-Kumul area) remained under the increasingly nominal suzerainty of the Chagatai Khanate. During this period numbers of saintly Muslims - sayyids and khojas - migrated eastwards from Transoxiana to the Tarim Basin. One such was the charismatic Makhdūm-i A<sup>o</sup>zam, a Naqshbandī shaykh who settled in the Kashgar region under the patronage of the ruling Chagatai Khan, and who died in 1540, the object of widespread popular veneration. Over the following 200 years, the oases of Altishahr

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1. See, in particular: Samolin, W., East Turkestan to the Twelfth Century (The Hague, 1964), passim. Similarly: Barthold, W., Turkestan Down to the Mongol Invasion (London, 1928), and Grousset, R., The Empire of the Steppes (New Brunswick, 1970).

came increasingly to be dominated by the theocratic influence of this khoja and his descendants - split, from the time of Makhdūm-i A<sup>c</sup>zam's grandsons, into Ishāqiyya (Karataghlik) and Āfāqiyya (Aktaghlik) factions<sup>2</sup> - so that in the latter part of the 17th century, c.1678, the Aktaghlik leader Hazrat-i Āfāq was able to assume power in Kashgar under the suzerainty of the neighbouring Oirot (Dzungarian) chieftain, Galdan.

Some 35 years earlier, in 1644, Manchu invaders from north-eastern Asia had succeeded in establishing the Ch'ing Dynasty in China. For the next five decades, as Manchu power was gradually consolidated throughout China proper, Ch'ing relations with Eastern Turkestan were to remain primarily commercial. In 1688, however, Galdan's Oirot warriors invaded Mongolia, and by 1690 they were openly at war with the Ch'ing. In Kashgar, Hazrat-i Āfāq took advantage of Galdan's preoccupation with the Ch'ing to throw off Oirot suzerainty and to establish himself, albeit briefly, as undisputed ruler of the Tarim Basin until his death in c.1693-4. Two years later, in 1696, the Ch'ing finally succeeded in expelling the Oirots from Mongolia as an extension of which, in the same year, the oasis of Kumul formally submitted to the K'ang-hsi Emperor. Finally, during 1697, Galdan himself died.

During the resulting period of Oirot confusion, Yarkand emerged as a centre of Karataghlik power, whilst Kashgar remained firmly committed to the Aktaghliks. It was not until 1713 that the reorganised Oirots were able to reimpose their authority over the Tarim Basin and to remove the leaders of both khoja factions to their capital in the Ili Valley. Two years later, in 1715, fighting between the Oirots and the Ch'ing recommenced, signalling the start of a 40-year period of intermittent warfare which

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2. See, in particular; Fletcher, J., 'Ch'ing Inner Asia c.1800', in: Fairbank, J.K. (ed.), The Cambridge History of China, X, Late Ch'ing, 1800-1911, I, pp. 87-90; also Schwarz, H.G., 'The Khwajas of Eastern Turkestan', CAJ, XX, 4 (1976), pp. 266-95.

was not to end until the final defeat of the Oirots at the hands of the Ch'ien-lung Emperor (plate 1) in 1755.

Amongst those taken captive during the Ch'ing sack of the Oirots capital were the two leading Aktaghlik khojas, Burhān al-Dīn and Khoja Khān, who had been held hostage by the Oirots leader, Amur-Sana, as a guarantee of the continuing submission of their compatriots and followers in the Kashgar region. In the eyes of the Ch'ing, therefore, the Tarim Basin - formerly a vassal of the Oirots - automatically became a Chinese tributary state with the conquest of the latter by the Ch'ing. This view was clearly not shared by the khojas and their supporters, however, for a Ch'ing mission sent to Kashgar in 1757 to arrange payment of tribute was massacred by the Aktaghliks. Accordingly, one year later, Ch'ien-lung despatched an army to the Tarim Basin to enforce submission. Kashgar duly succumbed to Ch'ing force of arms, and Burhan al-Dīn, together with Khoja Khān, fled to the neighbouring mountain Khanate of Badakshan. Under the threat of Ch'ing invasion, the Badakshani ruler reluctantly ordered the execution of the fugitive Aktaghlik khojas, and sent their heads back to the Ch'ing garrison commander at Kashgar. Several thousand supporters of the khoja cause managed to flee, together with Burhān al-Dīn's son, Muhammad Amīn, to the more distant Khanate of Khokand, where they were beyond the reach of the Ch'ing armies. Here they settled, becoming the focus of both exiled and internal opposition to Chinese rule in the Tarim Basin over the next 110 years.<sup>3</sup>

Meanwhile, within the Tarim Basin, the Karataghlik faction seems to have accepted the inevitability of Chinese rule, just as it had that of the Oirots. For the next 60 years the exiled Aktaghliks made little or no

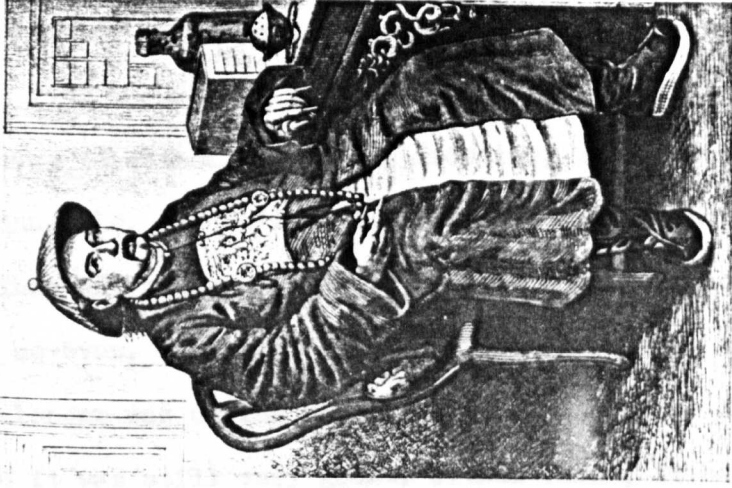
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3. Forsyth, T.D., Report of a Mission to Yarkund (Calcutta, 1875), pp. 180-81.

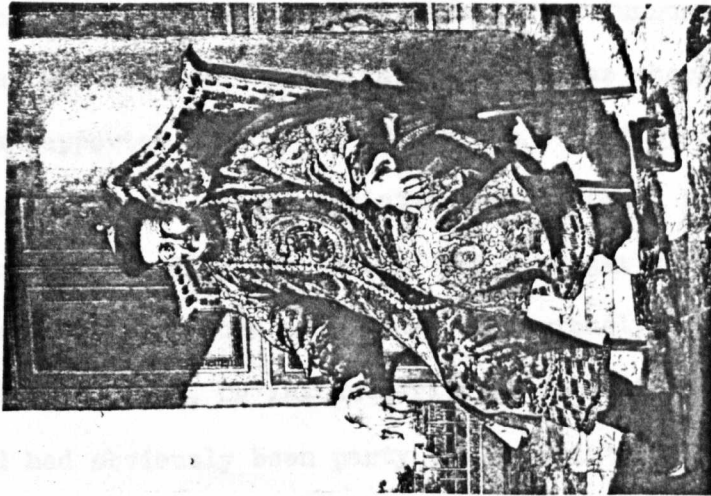


Plates 1 and 2:

THE CH'ING CONQUERORS OF SINKIANG



Tso Tsung-t'ang  
c. 1875.



Ch'ien Lung  
1736-95.

impact on their homeland, though indirect contacts with their supporters at Kashgar were maintained, and they seem never to have abandoned their determination to win back power from the Ch'ing. Muhammad Amīn died in Khokand c.1798, leaving three sons, Muhammad Yūsuf, Jahāngir and Bahā' al-Dīn. As early as 1797 the eldest of these, Muhammad Yūsuf, appears to have led a Kirghiz force to attack the Ch'ing frontier, though apparently to little avail. Meanwhile, the Ch'ing authorities continued to pay a sizable stipend to the Khan of Khokand in a bid to limit Aktaghlik activities.<sup>4</sup>

By 1820, however, the political situation in Central Asia had been transformed. No longer was Ch'ing power the immovable force it had represented in 1757 - though it was still very great. Within China, it had been challenged by the White Lotus Rebellion and various other anti-Manchu movements. Food was scarce, and the Ch'ing army was in decline. Accordingly, in 1820, Jahāngir left his base in Khokand and began to harry the borders of Eastern Turkestan. He was soon defeated by the Ch'ing, and fled back to Khokand. He returned in 1824, however, and by 1826 had captured Kashgar, massacring the entire Ch'ing garrison with the exception of the Tungani Muslims and any other Chinese who embraced Islam. This success was short-lived, however. The Karataghliks supported the Ch'ing status quo out of opposition to their Aktaghlik allies, and no sustained assistance was offered by Khokand. In 1828 Kashgar was recaptured by the Ch'ing, and Jahāngir was taken to Peking where he was 'hacked into pieces and thrown ingloriously to the dogs'.<sup>5</sup>

Despite this success, Ch'ing authority in Central Asia remained limited. Khokand had obviously been party to Jahāngir's jihād, but Ch'ing reprisals against this state were limited, for reasons of military weakness,

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4. Fletcher, J., 'Ch'ing Inner Asia c.1800', pp. 87-9

5. idem., 'China and Central Asia, 1368-1884', p. 222.

to economic sanctions. Moreover, even this limited response sufficed to provoke the Khan of Khokand into launching a new jihād against the Chinese in Eastern Turkestan, this time in 1830, under the nominal leadership of the Aktaghlik khoja Muhammad Yūsuf. Once again Kashgar fell to the invading forces, though the attack, which was opposed by the Karataghlik faction, was clearly intended as a punitive raid rather than aimed at an Aktaghlik restoration. Within three months the invaders withdrew to Khokand, laden with booty. Their action had seriously damaged the Aktaghlik cause in Eastern Turkestan, but had also served to establish the tenuous nature of Chinese control over the region.

The Ch'ing responded by permitting Khokand a virtual trade monopoly over Eastern Turkestan, as well as, following a Khokandi incursion into Sarikol in 1835, full extraterritorial rights within the Tarim Basin.<sup>6</sup> Khokand undoubtedly benefited from these concessions, and for more than a decade relative peace reigned over China's Inner Asian frontiers. In 1847, however, a further invasion of the Kashgar region was mounted from Khokand by seven leading Aktaghlik khojas, including two sons of Muhammad Yūsuf, Walī Khān, the son of Jahāngir, and Buzurg Khān, the son of Bahā' al-Dīn. Once again Kashgar opened its gates to the Aktaghliks, and once again the Karataghlik areas of Eastern Turkestan refused to participate in the jihād. After a few weeks, the Aktaghlik khojas withdrew to Khokand in the face of advancing Ch'ing troops, leaving the Kashgarlik populace to face terrible reprisals.<sup>7</sup>

This pattern of events was repeated in 1857, when, in response to a Muslim rising at Kuchar, the Aktaghlik khoja Walī Khān (who had participated in the 1847 "War of the Seven Khojas"), again entered Eastern Turkestan and

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6. Fletcher, J., 'Mongolia, Sinkiang and Tibet', pp. 375-85.

7. ibid., p. 388.

seized control both of Kashgar and Yangi Hissar. Once again, the fighting in Eastern Turkestan was characterised by fierce inter-Muslim rivalry and sectarianism. Thus, the Karataghlik 'ulamā' pronounced the Aktaghlik invaders "enemies of Islam", to be killed or taken prisoner, but not to be associated with, whilst Walī Khān made it known that, as well engaging in a jihād to expel the Chinese, his objective was to punish the Karataghlik "betrayers" of his father, the khoja Jahāngir. Meanwhile, the Tungani Muslims (north-western Hui) who had been settled in the region by the Ch'ing, were persecuted by both Turkic Muslim factions, with Walī Khān's partisans in particular slaughtering them 'on the same legal basis as infidels'.<sup>8</sup> Despite his initial successes, however, Walī Khān failed to capture the (predominantly Karataghlik) oasis of Yarkand, and was forced to flee Khokand after only four months in power at Kashgar in the face of Ch'ing armies advancing from the east.

The victorious Ch'ing, having recaptured Kashgar, demanded the extradition of Walī Khān from Khokand as a prerequisite for the resumption of trade. Yet, as Fletcher has indicated, this demand was primarily pro forma - Ch'ing military power being in serious decline - and a Khokandi promise to place Walī Khān under arrest had to suffice to satisfy the Chinese authorities.<sup>9</sup> A situation of continuing stalemate had thus emerged in Eastern Turkestan. The Ch'ing garrison forces were not powerful enough to ensure uninterrupted Chinese control over the area, whilst the Aktaghlik khojas based in Khokand failed to command universal support amongst the Muslims of the Tarim Basin and, at best, could only capture Kashgar and the surrounding towns for a few short months at a time. This situation continued into the 1860s, with minor Aktaghlik jihāds being launched in 1861 both by Walī Khān and by a son of Buzurg Khān, neither of which

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8. Fletcher, 'Mongolia, Sinkiang and Tibet', p. 392.

9. ibid., p. 393.

achieved any success.

In 1862, however, with the eruption of the great Hui Muslim rebellion in Shensi, the equation of power in Central Asia was to change completely. By 1863, the greater part of Shensi, Ningsia and Kansu provinces had passed under rebel control, and in 1864 the Tungans of Dzungaria, under the leadership of Tuo Ming, rose in sympathy with their co-religionists to the east.<sup>10</sup> Eastern Turkestan was thus completely isolated from China, and in 1865 Buzurg Khān, accompanied by an experienced military officer and partisan of the khojas called Ya<sup>o</sup>qūb Beg, invaded Kashgar from Khokand. Over the next twelve years Ya<sup>o</sup>qūb Beg, who rapidly eclipsed Buzurg Khan and, in 1867, proclaimed himself Khān, succeeded in establishing his control over the entire Tarim Basin as far as Turfan in the east. By 1871 he had crushed the Tungans of Dzungaria - though he was never able to extend his dominion over that region - and in 1873, in a remarkable diplomatic coup, he succeeded in winning the recognition of the Turkish Sultan, who bestowed upon him the title "Amīr" of Eastern Turkestan.<sup>11</sup>

Meanwhile, within China proper, Ch'ing control was gradually being reasserted over the north-west by the ruthless and competent Han Chinese general Tso Tsung-t'ang (see plate 2). By 1871 Tso had suppressed the rebel leader Ma Hua-lung, and was advancing into Kansu.<sup>12</sup> The reconquest of Kansu was to take a further five years, but, by 1876, the task was complete and Tso's Ch'ing armies stood at the gates of Sinkiang. By the winter of 1876-7, Dzungaria had largely been pacified, and Tso was able to turn his

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10. See, in particular: Chu Wen-djang, The Moslem Rebellion in Northwest China, 1862-1878 (The Hague, 1966); also Lee Fu-hsiang, The Turkic-Moslem Problem in Sinkiang (unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Rutgers University, 1973), pp. 43-4.

11. Boulger, D.C., The Life of Yakoob Beg (London, 1878).

12. Chu, op.cit.; Forbes, A., 'Ma Hua-lung', Encyclopaedia of Islam, NE, V, (at press).

attention to the Tarim Basin. Six months later, in May, 1877, Ya<sup>c</sup>qūb Beg died suddenly at Korla, almost certainly the victim of a political assassination.<sup>13</sup> With his death, the Amīrate which he had created came rapidly to an end. By December, 1877, Kashgar was in Chinese hands, and in February, 1881, Tsarist Russia reluctantly agreed to withdraw from the greater part of the Ili region which it had occupied in 1871, when the Muslim rebellion was at its height.<sup>14</sup>

By the end of 1881, therefore, Ch'ing authority had been fully restored throughout the region. With this achievement, moreover, the power of the Aktaghlik khojas was finally broken, as their former power-base at Khokand had been absorbed by the expanding Russian Empire in 1876. Meanwhile, following the attainment of his military objectives by 1877, Tso Tsung-t'ang took steps to reorganise the administration of Dzungaria and the Tarim Basin through a bureaucracy which was established at Ti-hua (Urumchi). Finally, on November 18th, 1844, the entire region was declared, for the first time, a province of China with the name of Sinkiang (Ch. Hsin-chiang, the "New Territory"). From this time until the collapse of the Ch'ing Dynasty in 1911, Sinkiang was to remain peaceful under the rule of a succession of generally able Han bureaucrats drawn from Tso Tsung-t'ang's associates and supporters. Yet this apparent stability was to prove deceptive. Sinkiang remained very much a part of the Muslim world despite the defeat of the Aktaghlik khojas, and the entire province - characterised by Fletcher as 'the most rebellious territory in the Ch'ing Empire' during the 19th century,<sup>15</sup> was to prove no less troublesome to Republican China during the 20th century.

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13. Statement of Muhammad Yusuf Effendi. Command Paper 2470 (1880), 21-3, LXXVIII, pp. 95-7.

14. Hsü, C.Y., The Ili Crisis (Oxford, 1965), passim.

15. Fletcher, 'Ch'ing Inner Asia c.1800', p. 90.

CHAPTER 3SINKIANG, 1911-28: THE ADMINISTRATION OF GOVERNOR YANG TSENG-HSIN

The Republic is raw with youth. The wars of the Five Kingdoms, the battles of the Seven Heroes, they fight them over again. But what care we how they fight? For I have made an earthly paradise in a remote region. The Muslims of the south, the nomads of the north, I will rule them to live contentedly in the old ways.

Yang Tseng-hsin, 1926.<sup>1</sup>

Under Governor Yang, Sinkiang became an extraordinary backwater, cut off from the modern world...There were still no bookshops in 1926, no newspapers, no cinemas, no telephones, not a mile of railway or even paved roadway, no schools other than those attached to mosques ... and those maintained privately by rich citizens or officials. Opium was "forbidden", but it was the curse of the land, slowly poisoning its people. Immured behind its mountains and deserts...Sinkiang was living in the Middle Ages, and Yang did all he could to preserve this anachronism.

Jack Chen, 1977.<sup>2</sup>

### 3.1 Yang Tseng-hsin's Rise to Power

Yang Tseng-hsin, (see plate 3), the first Republican governor of Sinkiang, was born in Meng-tzu, south-eastern Yunnan, in 1867. He received a classical Chinese education, passing his chin-shih degree in 1899 and entering the Imperial civil service in the same year.<sup>3</sup>

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1. From a scroll hanging on the gate of the governor's yamen, Urumchi. Written by Yang Tseng-hsin in 1926, after 15 years of his rule. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 32.
  2. Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 172.
  3. Boorman, H.L., and R.C. Howard, Biographical Dictionary of Republican China (N.Y., 1967), Vol 4, p. 11. The chin-shih was Ch'ing China's highest literary degree.

Over the next eighteen years Yang served the Ch'ing government as a district magistrate, and later as a circuit commissioner, in the northwestern provinces of Kansu and Ningsia. During these years he acquired a reputation for his ability to "manage" the local Tungan Muslim population.<sup>4</sup> In 1908 Yang was transferred to Sinkiang, where he was appointed tao-t'ai (circuit commissioner) at Aksu. As a result of his years of experience in the Tungan areas of Kansu, Yang's career prospered under Yüan Ta-hua, the last Ch'ing governor of Sinkiang. He rose rapidly to become tao-t'ai and commissioner for judicial affairs at Urumchi, the provincial capital, a post which he held at the outbreak of the Chinese revolution of 1911.<sup>5</sup>

The 1911 revolution had immediate repercussions in distant Sinkiang. In December uprisings against the Ch'ing broke out in Ili and Urumchi under the leadership of disaffected Han officers belonging to the Ko-lao-hui.<sup>6</sup> In Urumchi the rising was quickly suppressed. The ringleaders were beheaded or slowly tortured to death, and many of their followers were sent to join garrisons in southern Sinkiang - an area which, as a result, became a hotbed of Ko-lao-hui activities.<sup>7</sup> In Ili, however, the rebels succeeded in seizing power and in setting up a rival administration under the leadership of Yang Tsuan-hsü.

The Ch'ing governor Yüan Ta-hua was in a difficult position. He had successfully put down the rebellion in Urumchi, and had the support of his

4. Skrine, C.P., and Nightingale, P. Macartney at Kashgar (London, 1973), p. 212.
5. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol IV., p. 11.
6. Ko-lao-hui ("Elder Brothers' Society"): a powerful anti-Ch'ing secret society introduced to Sinkiang in the latter half of the nineteenth century by soldiers in the army of Tso Tsung-t'ang.
7. Yang, R., 'Sinkiang Under the Administration of Governor Yang Tseng-hsin, 1911-1928', CAJ, VI, 1 (1961) pp. 281-2.



commissioner for judicial affairs, Yang Tseng-hsin, who commanded 2,000 Tungan troops from Kansu, the best military force in the province. It soon became apparent, however, that the wider rebellion in China proper was succeeding. Events moved rapidly. On 1st January, 1912, Sun Yat-sen was inaugurated as Provisional President of the Republic of China at Nanking; on February 12th the Empress Dowager Lung YÜ signed an abdication edict in the name of the child emperor Hsüan-t'ung, bringing to an end 268 years of Ch'ing rule; and on March 10th, after an agreement had been reached with Sun Yat-sen, Yüan Shih-k'ai was formally installed as president of the newly-established Republic of China.

The writing was clearly on the wall for Yüan Ta-hua, and transferring his authority to Yang Tseng-hsin, he fled Urumchi.<sup>8</sup> Yang was not the sort of man to let slip an opportunity. He immediately declared his allegiance to the Chinese Republic, and in May he was duly rewarded by receiving Yüan Shih-k'ai's confirmation of his de facto position as civil and military governor of Sinkiang, with the concurrent post of military governor of the Ili region (at this stage still under the control of Yang Tsuan-hsü).<sup>9</sup>

For the next three years Yang was kept fully occupied with efforts to consolidate his internal position, threatened by both the Ili group and the Ko-lao-hui; and in repelling an external threat in the north-east of the province posed by Mongol raiders.

The authority given to Yang by Peking (and by his 2,000 Tungan troops) proved sufficient to bring the Ili group to the conference table. An agreement was reached in June 1912, and a treaty was signed at Chuguchak by which the rebel group recognised Yang Tseng-hsin as Governor of Sinkiang and the Ili region was fully incorporated within the province. Brigadier Yang

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8. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol IV, p. 11.

9. ibid.

Tsuan-hsü, the titular leader of the Ili group, was correctly recognised by Yang as a figurehead; consequently he was transferred to Kashgar where he was appointed t'i-t'ai (military commander). Two of Yang Tsüan-hsu's fellow revolutionaries whom Yang Tseng-hsin considered especially dangerous were given official positions in the provincial administration; shortly after their arrival in Urumchi, however, they were arrested by Yang and sentenced to death for treason.<sup>10</sup>

Yang next turned his attention to the Ko-lao-hui, especially in the south where the provincial administration was in complete disarray. During the last days of Yüan Ta-hua's administration Ko-lao-hui adherents had murdered the Ch'ing commissioner at Kashgar together with his wife,<sup>11</sup> as well as the magistrates of Kashgar, Kuchar and Karashahr. Yang, his political stature considerably increased by the bloodless victory over the Ili group, adopted an apparently conciliatory approach, pardoning and transferring to other districts the most prominent Ko-lao-hui leaders. Faced with the alternatives of fighting Yang's Tungan soldiery, 'undisciplined, ignorant and ferocious',<sup>12</sup> but undeniably effective, or agreeing to their transfers, the Ko-lao-hui leaders submitted; all were later secretly executed on Yang's orders.<sup>13</sup> After the Ko-lao-hui leaders had disappeared from the scene, Yang strengthened his own position south of the Tien Shan by rewarding Ma Shao-wu, a trusted lieutenant and a Hui Muslim from Yang's native province of Yunnan, with the post of military commander at Kuchar.<sup>14</sup>

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10. Yang, R., op.cit., pp. 276-7.

11. The murder is described in some detail in Skrine and Nightingale, op.cit., p. 178; see also Sykes, E. and P., Through Deserts and Oases of Central Asia (London, 1920), p. 296.

12. Sir George McCartney, British representative and consul-general at Kashgar, 1890-1918, cited in Skrine and Nightingale, op.cit., p. 243.

13. Yang, R., op.cit., p. 284.

14. ibid.

Having consolidated his position in the south of the province, Yang turned his attention to the north-eastern frontier, where Mongol troops professing allegiance to the Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu, "Holy Emperor" of the newly-independent Outer Mongolian state,<sup>15</sup> were threatening to advance into the Altai district. In August, 1912, these troops had stormed the town of Khovd, until this time under Chinese jurisdiction. The victorious Mongols looted the Chinese shops whilst in a grisly ceremony the living hearts of Chinese prisoners were torn out, the blood being used to dedicate the war banners of the victorious Mongols.<sup>16</sup> Yang reinforced his garrisons at a string of north-eastern centres from Kumul to Chuguchak. He also took the opportunity to strengthen his military control over other strategic centres in Ili and to the south of the Tien Shan; as a result the whole of Sinkiang was brought under his direct control.<sup>17</sup>

Yang had no desire for a prolonged struggle with the Mongols, not least because he mistrusted the loyalty of the Mongol population in Sinkiang. He was therefore content to reach an interim agreement with their forces (through the offices of the Russian consul in Urumchi) pending a solution to the Mongolian problem at international level. The crisis on the north-eastern front was eventually defused by the official Sino-Russian "declaration" of November 5th, 1913, by which the Chinese Republic effectively recognised Outer Mongolia's autonomous

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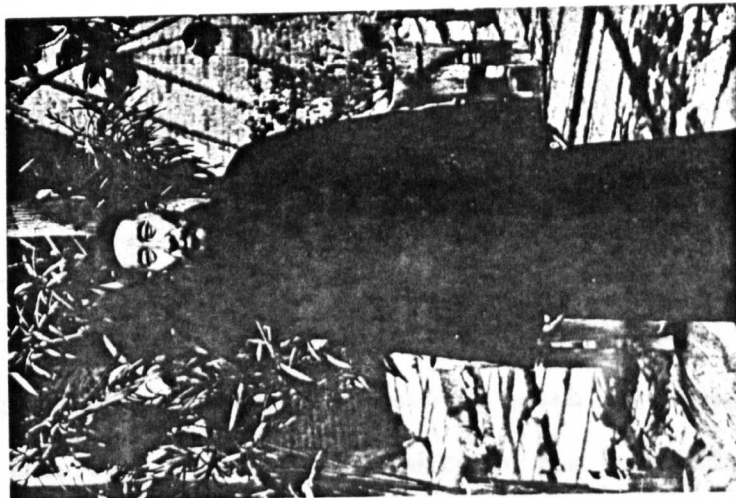
15. At the time of the 1911 revolution Outer Mongolia proclaimed her independence from China as a theocracy under the Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu, primate of Mongolian Lamaism and "Holy Emperor" (Boqo Khaan). Ewing, T.E., 'Revolution on the Chinese Frontier: Outer Mongolia in 1911', JAH, XII, 2 (1978), p.101.

16. Bawden, C.E., The Modern History of Mongolia (London, 1968). pp. 197-8.

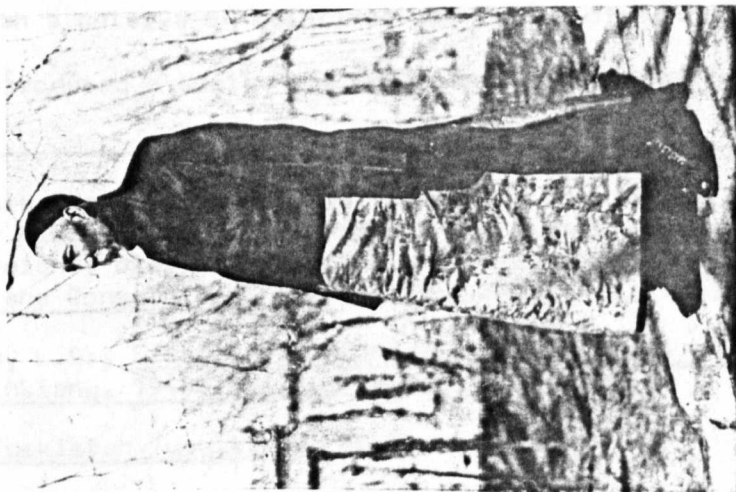
17. Yang, R., op.cit., p. 299.

Plates 3 and 4:

EARLY REPUBLICAN GOVERNORS OF SINKIANG



Chin Shu-jen  
c. 1928.



Yang Tseng-hsin  
c. 1928.

status.<sup>18</sup> In March of 1914, both Sinkiang and Mongolia withdrew their troops from the Altai front. At about the same time, after three years of struggle, Yang Tseng-hsin finally succeeded in crushing the Ko-leo-hui in Sinkiang.

### 3.2 Yang's Maintenance of Power

Yang was now the undisputed master of China's largest province, and could devote himself more fully to "making an earthly paradise in a remote region". He made few changes to the basic Ch'ing administrative structure of Sinkiang; however all former ties with Kansu were abolished, and Ili and Altai were absorbed, adding two circuits to the four original circuits of Urumchi, Aksu, Kashgar and Chuguchak. Similarly, the number of hsien in the province was increased from 40 to 47. Below hsien level, the Ch'ing system of native begs (ming-bashi, yuz-bashi and on-bashi) was retained.<sup>19</sup>

Throughout his long rule, Yang was greatly troubled by fear of revolt. He mistrusted his subordinates,<sup>20</sup> and he mistrusted his predominantly Muslim subjects.<sup>21</sup> In an attempt to allay these fears, Yang surrounded himself with a coterie of relatives and fellow-provincials from Yunnan;<sup>22</sup> he also introduced a series of increasingly Draconian laws designed to

18. By this "declaration" China recognised and respected the autonomy of Outer Mongolia, whilst in return the Russians recognised China's sovereignty over all Mongolia. MacMurray, J., Treaties and Agreements With and Concerning China (Oxford, 1921), pp. 1066-7.
19. Nyman, L.E., Great Britain and Russian, Chinese and Japanese Interests in Sinkiang, 1918-1934, (Malmö, 1977) pp. 25-6.
20. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, pp. 46-7.
21. In Yang's first report as Governor of Sinkiang to the Peking government, at the very beginning of his rule, he stressed his fear that the proclamation of Mongolian independence would stir up other peoples... 'particularly the Muslims in Sinkiang'. Yang R., op.cit., p. 271.
22. Yang built up a family hierarchy, posting his relatives from one end of his domain to the other. In 1927 all the district magistrates in southernmost Sinkiang, from Kashgar to Keriya, with two or three exceptions were related to him either directly or by marriage. Bosshard, W., 'Politics and Trade in Central Asia' JRCAS, XVI, 4 (1929) p. 436.

isolate, divide, and maintain in enforced ignorance the peoples of Sinkiang. He ruled as a complete autocrat, with all power gathered in his own hands. Sven Hedin, who travelled extensively in Sinkiang at various times during Yang's rule, said that nowhere on earth did there exist a more absolute ruler.<sup>23</sup> Claremont P Skrine, the British consul-general at Kashgar from July 1922 to September 1944, informed his superiors in New Delhi that Yang had consolidated his personal power by the following means:

- (1) Instituting a system of direct correspondence between himself and the magistrates of even the most remote districts of southern Sinkiang, thus reducing all tao-yin to the position of little more than figureheads.
- (2) Despatching officers on special duty (wei-yuan) throughout the province to keep a close watch on the activities of all officials.
- (3) Gradually replacing Peking-appointed officials with his own relatives and fellow-provincials.
- (4) Exercising a strict personal censorship over the mails and correspondence of even his highest officials, whilst excluding from the province all newspapers or printed matter of any kind connected with current events.<sup>24</sup>

When dealing with his own officials, Yang carried secrecy to obsessive lengths. He accepted the necessity of the telegraph, but reputedly kept the key to the Urumchi telegraph office always on his own person, opening the door in the morning and locking it again each night. 'Informative telegrams he kept to himself; inconvenient ones he simply destroyed. His archives were in his own meticulous mind, and even his closest subordinates could seldom follow his trend of thought'.<sup>25</sup>

Yang was quite merciless when he discovered - or even suspected - disloyalty. When, during January 1916, some of Yang's fellow Yunnanese domiciled in Sinkiang sought to persuade him to join the movement against

23. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 39.

24. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2342. (Kashgar Annual Reports, 1922-31), P. 4839. 1924.

25. Davidson, B., Turkestan Alive (London, 1957), p. 104.

Yüan Shih-k'ai which had broken out in their native province,<sup>26</sup> Yang would have none of it. Some days later Yang learned secretly that several of the Yunnanese were still conspiring to bring Sinkiang into the struggle on the side of Yüan's opponents. Yang immediately had his informant executed 'to allay the fears of the plotters and to let them know that he trusted them'.<sup>27</sup> The subsequent fate of the plotters, as related to Wu Ai-chen<sup>28</sup> by an eye-witness, bears quotation in full; it casts interesting light on Yang Tseng-hsin's relationship with his subordinates, and is representative of descriptions of several similar events which have come down to us:

It was the Mid-January Festival. The Governor invited his officials to dine with him. The Inspector of Education from Peking was to be the guest of honour and the Sinkiang Minister of Finance, Pan, an elderly gentleman close upon eighty...was also there.

The affair had every appearance of a formal function, and there was not the least suspicion in the mind of any guest that more was intended.

When the cups had been filled a few times the Governor suddenly rose and left the hall. This action aroused no suspicion, since it was known that Yang cared little for wine. But in a few minutes he returned, followed by a soldier who held concealed behind his back a long curved sword. The Governor paused behind the seat of Hsia Ting, one of the principal malcontents. Then in a cold, even casual voice speaking typical Yunnanese dialect, he said: "Behead Hsia Ting".

The knife flashed, and Hsia Ting fell dead, his blood spouting on the robes of those who sat at table with him. All cowered in horror, none daring to move; but in calm tones the Governor reassured them: "This has nothing to do with you. Come, more wine for my guests!" When the cups were refilled the Governor again left the chamber, but almost immediately returned, a second

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26. On December 25th, 1915, Ts'ai O and various other south-western generals declared Yunnan's independence from Peking and their general opposition to Yüan Shih-k'ai's attempt to re-establish the monarchy. Clubb, O.E., Twentieth Century China (London and N.Y., 1965), pp. 56-7.

27. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 43.

28. Wu Ai-chen is a source generally sympathetic to Yang Tseng-hsin.

soldier at his side. Proceeding around the table they halted at the chair of one Li Yin, and once again the astounded guests heard the dread command...The table was in confusion, blood was everywhere. The Inspector from Peking looked on, speechless with horror, the old Finance Minister Pan lay half-fainting in his chair. As for the Yunnanese officials, they sat petrified with fear, expecting at any moment that they too would meet an awful end. Hsia Ting and Li Yin had been two of the most trusted officers in the Governor's service, his own personal friends. Who then was safe if these were slain? But there was no more bloodshed. Calmly the Governor resumed his seat at the table, called for more wine, and proceeded without the least trace of emotion to give judicial reasons for what he had done. Then, having spoken, he applied himself to the dishes which were set before him, and to the astonishment of the company he made a hearty meal, finishing his two bowls of rice as usual.<sup>29</sup>

In contrast, the careers of those who served Yang well were assured. By these traditional methods ("generous in cultivating good will and severe in punishing offences")<sup>30</sup> Yang sought to ensure the loyalty of members of his administration.

Yang's policy towards the various minority peoples of Sinkiang, who constituted in excess of 90% of the population, rested on the twin principles of accentuating regional and national differences, and excluding external - particularly Soviet - influences. Thus, in a deliberate reversal of Ch'ing policy (formulated by Yang in response to the emergence of an independent Mongolian state), the Kazakhs of Dzungaria were favoured

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29. Eye-witness account of a Yunnanese official called Chang, as related in Wu, Turkistan Tumult, pp. 43-4; This story is also recounted by Hsieh Pin, the Inspector of Education who was present at the "dinner party", in his Account of Travels in Sinkiang (Shanghai, 1925), p. 135. It seems likely that Yang deliberately used theatrical effect to create terror amongst his opponents; cf. Nicholas Roerich's description of Yang's extravagant execution of an official who had angered him: 'he sent the disfavoured one to Hami and on the way the Amban was "pasted with paper" and by this unique method strangled. In the Garden of Tortures of Mirbeau this invention of evil was omitted'. Roerich, N., Altai-Himalaya (London, nd.), p. 280.

30. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 54.



over the Mongols of the region.<sup>31</sup> Similarly, Yang did his best to divide the oasis-dwelling Uighurs of southern Sinkiang from the pastoral nomads of Dzungaria and the Tien Shan.<sup>32</sup> This well-tried technique, which had served Yang's Ch'ing predecessors so well, proved satisfactory when applied to localised disturbances such as that faced at Kumul during the first year of Yang's rule,<sup>33</sup> or at Kuchar in 1918.<sup>34</sup> More disturbing to the Han administration, however, was the rapid expansion of pan-Islamic, pan-Turanian and pro-Soviet sentiment amongst the "minority nationalities" of the province; these were doctrines which, if permitted to flourish unchecked, could turn a purely local grievance amongst the Uighurs of the south or the Kazakhs of the north into a generalised Turkic Muslim rising against the provincial authorities in Urumchi.

Throughout his rule, Yang Tseng-hsin considered that the chief external threat to the survival of his regime lay across the western frontier, in Tsarist (later Soviet) Central Asia.<sup>35</sup> During the 19th century the Muslims of Sinkiang looked to the Central Asian Khanates of Bukhara and particularly Khokand for inspiration - a factor which certainly influenced Tso Tsung-t'ang's order for the execution of all Khokandi Muslims apprehended by his troops in southern Sinkiang after the collapse of Ya<sup>c</sup>qūb Beg's kingdom.<sup>36</sup> The Russian conquest of Western

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31. Lattimore, O., 'The Chinese as a Dominant Race' in: Studies in Frontier History (London, 1962) pp. 213-4.
32. Rossabi, M., China and Inner Asia (London, 1975), p. 221.
33. Yang, R., op.cit., pp. 289-90.
34. ibid., p. 291.
35. The emergence of a number of powerful, semi-independent Tungan satrapies to the east, in the provinces of Kansu, Tsinghai, and Ningsia, must have added to Yang's fear.
36. Muhammad Yussuf Effendi, a cavalry officer in the forces of the Ottoman Empire, was present in Sinkiang at the time of Tso Tsung-t'ang's reconquest of the area. He notes that the victorious Chinese 'carefully selected the men of Khokand, Bukhara and other foreign parts and put them to death, whereas the natives (of Sinkiang) were treated kindly and allowed to return to their homes'. Statement made by Muhammad Yussuf Effendi, Late in the service of the Ameer of Kashgar, 1880, Cmd. 2470, Vol. 78, pp. 95-7.

Turkestan during the latter half of the 19th century temporarily relieved the authorities in Sinkiang from the pressures of Khokandi political influence,<sup>37</sup> for the Tsarist authorities did all that lay within their power to ensure the quiescence of their new Central Asian subjects. In a policy which might have been formulated by Yang Tseng-hsin himself:

The Russians...aimed at...isolating the country from all outside influence, and at maintaining it in a state of medieval stagnation, thus removing any possibility of conscious and organised national resistance. As their religious and educational policy, the Russian administrators sought to preserve the archaic form of Islam and Islamic culture...Quranic schools of the most conservative type were favoured and protected against any modernist influence. 38

Yet despite assiduous Russian efforts to exclude pan-Turanianism and other "dangerous thoughts" from their Central Asian empire, the spread of such concepts was merely delayed and not halted. Indeed the victorious Russians planted the seeds of modern Turkic nationalism when they first entered the oases and deserts of Inner Asia. The presence of these Christian infidels helped to unite the Muslim inhabitants of the various conquered Khanates; in Western Turkestan the presence of Russian settlers and political exiles contributed to the growth of Uzbek, Tajik and Turkoman national consciousness; and in the Kazakh steppe the deliberate Tsarist attempt to wean the superficially Islamicised Kazakhs and Kirghiz from their more orthodox sedentary brethren to the south actively encouraged the spread of "Western" concepts of nationalism and egalitarianism.<sup>39</sup> During the last

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37. Before the Russian conquest of Khokand, the Ch'ing had been obliged to pay an annual supplement to the Khan of Khokand to prevent his interference in Sinkiang. A treaty forced on the Ch'ing by Khokand in 1831 allowed Khokandi extraterritoriality in Sinkiang and permitted Khokandi agents to collect taxes in this Chinese territory. Kuropatkin, A.N., Kashqaria (Calcutta, 1882), pp. 143-4.

38. Bennigsen, A., and C. Lemerrier-Quellejay, Islam in the Soviet Union, p. 15.

39. Zenkovsky, S.A., Pan-Turkism and Islam in Russia (Cambridge, Mass., 1960), pp. 60-61.

decades of the 19th century the Muslims of Russian Central Asia were increasingly influenced by reformist groups such as the Jadīd movement.<sup>40</sup> Under the leadership of the Tatar intellectual Ismā'īl Bey Gasprinskiy a series of religious, cultural and educational reforms were implemented with the aim of uniting the various Turkic peoples of Central Asia in response to Russian domination.<sup>41</sup>

By 1900 the Muslim inhabitants of the Russian Empire were already the most "reformed" Islamic community in the world; from this centre concepts of pan-Turanianism and religious reform spread rapidly to the neighbouring Muslims of Ch'ing China, Qajar Iran, and even Ottoman Turkey. In 1904 the Tatar Islah movement, from which the first authentic Muslim communists were to spring, was founded.<sup>42</sup> In 1909 a secret revolutionary organisation called the "Young Bukharans" (drawing much of its inspiration from the successes of the Young Turks in 1908) was formed in Western Turkestan,<sup>43</sup> whilst in 1912 the Alash Orda nationalist movement was founded by dissident intellectuals in the Kazakh steppe.<sup>44</sup> During this period the Jadīd movement continued to expand - by 1916 there were in excess of 5,000 Jadīd-ist schools scattered throughout the Russian Empire<sup>45</sup> - and to move rapidly leftwards. By the time of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 the Jadīd movement, which dominated the Turkic nationalist movement in Russian Central Asia, 'represented a revolutionary element in the truest sense, being opposed to both the Russian presence

40. Hostler, C.W., Turkism and the Soviets (London, 1957), pp. 130-32.
41. Nor did Gasprinskiy forget the 'cameleer of Kashgar' in his scheme; Bennigsen and Lemerrier-Quellejay, op.cit., p. 39.
42. ibid., pp. 42-5; Zenkovsky, op.cit., pp. 24-36.
43. Bennigsen and Lemerrier-Quellejay, op.cit., p. 47.
44. ibid., pp. 46-7.
45. ibid., p. 39.

and to the reactionary Muslim clergy'.<sup>46</sup>

Yang Tseng-hsin, the Republican governor of Sinkiang, was determined to exclude from his domain all reformist and egalitarian influences emanating from the Russian Empire. He was in any case wary of Russian intentions. During the Ko-lao-hui disturbances of 1912 the Russians had sent cossack troops to safeguard their interests in Kashgar, and Yang had had considerable trouble persuading them to return home.<sup>47</sup> Four years later Yang had faced a major crisis when Tsarist conscription amongst the Muslim peoples of Russian Central Asia had caused large numbers of Kazakhs to take refuge across the border in Sinkiang.<sup>48</sup>

After the Bolshevik Revolution Yang's fears were redoubled. He disliked foreigners, and was determined to isolate Sinkiang from their influence in so far as this was possible; the realities of political power in the region, however, necessitated a careful balancing act between the Russians and the British. Yang responded to the Red victory in the Russian civil war by adopting an overtly conciliatory policy towards the victors, but he warned his Muslim subjects to 'beware of associating themselves with a people who are entirely without religion and who would harm them and mislead their women'.<sup>49</sup>

How justified were Yang's fears of the spread of Russian, and later Soviet political influence amongst the Muslims of Sinkiang? As early as

46. ibid., p. 48.

47. Yang, R., op.cit., p. 287; Skrine and Nightingale, op.cit., pp. 184; 203.

48. Yang, R., op.cit., pp. 305-8. According to R. Yang, Yang Tseng-hsin calculated the total number of Kazakh refugees in Sinkiang to be over 300,000 - surely an over-estimate. W.A. Douglas Jackson (The Russo-Chinese Borderlands, Princeton, 1962, p. 51) puts the figure at 100,000, but gives no source reference.

49. IOLR, L/P&S/10/976, (Kashgar Diaries, October 1925), p. 4211.1925.

1909 Sir George Macartney, British consul-general at Kashgar, warned that the Chinese would have to 'take into account' pan-Islamic influences which were awakening amongst the Turkic peoples of the province.<sup>50</sup> Macartney's warning must have been based in part on his knowledge of Husayn Bai Batcha, a "widely read" millionaire merchant of Artush who had travelled extensively in Europe. Husayn Bai Batcha was one of the first pan-Islamic activists in Sinkiang. He endowed a charitable institution (Ar. waqf) in Artush to build schools and libraries for the education of both girls and boys, and he personally paid for certain promising young Turkic Muslims to study abroad.<sup>51</sup> The outbreak of the First World War and Turkey's part in it undoubtedly gave added impetus to the pan-Turanian movement in Sinkiang, and in 1915 a Turkish subject, Aḥmad Kamāl, started a school in Kashgar where the local Turkic children were taught to look to the Sultan of Turkey as their spiritual father. Yang Tseng-hsin initially closed the school and imprisoned all those associated with it; it was later allowed to re-open on the condition that all symbols of allegiance to the Sultan of Turkey were removed, and that Chinese language instruction and military drill were added to the curriculum.<sup>52</sup> With the defeat of Turkey in the First World War and the establishment of the Soviet regime in Russia, however, the presumed threat from Turkey melted away,<sup>53</sup> and was replaced by mounting concern over the growth of Soviet influence in

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50. Macartney, G., 'Eastern Turkistan: The Chinese as Rulers Over an Alien Race', Proceedings of the Central Asian Society, 10th March 1909, pp. 18-19.

51. Macartney visited Husayn Bai Batcha at Artush in June 1908. Skrine and Nightingale, op.cit., p. 157.

52. ibid., pp. 248-9.

53. 'After the First World War Pan-Turkism was discredited not only within Turkey but in the world in general. There was no hope of finding support for the movement in the new Republic of Germany, and Austro-Hungary had ceased to exist. Great Britain, France and the United States were unfriendly to the political conceptions held by the defeated Ottoman Empire and Germany, and Pan-Turkism was additionally held responsible for the anti-Armenian atrocities'; Hostler, C.W., Turkism and the Soviets (London, 1957) p. 156.

Sinkiang.<sup>54</sup>

Even during the course of the civil war the Bolsheviks were able to score some notable successes in Sinkiang. In 1920 - the year in which the White general Annenkov was driven across the Sino-Soviet frontier into Dzungaria - an informal agreement was signed by Yang's administration giving the Soviet authorities official representation at Kulja and special trading rights in the fertile Ili Valley and Chuguchak. As a result of this agreement the Soviets were able to open a library at Kulja which, according to one contemporary British diplomatic source:

Quickly became the nocturnal rendezvous for young Ili; many hundreds of Chinese subjects were enrolled in Bolshevik secret societies; tribal chiefs of the Kazakhs, Kalmucks and Taranchis were subsidised; and agents, including numerous women, were sent out in the districts to preach the blessings of communism, domestic emancipation and the new Islam.<sup>55</sup>

Yang could not tolerate this, and even at the risk of antagonising his powerful Soviet neighbours, the library was closed down. He also attempted to limit the numbers of his subjects visiting the Soviet Union. In this he was not very successful, especially in the north-west of the province where Soviet influence continued to expand. Even in remote Kashgar, as R.O. Wingate, a British consular official who visited southern Sinkiang during the mid-1920s, noted:

Several of the wealthier men are constantly travelling to and fro in Russian Turkestan; some go on business even as far as to Moscow. So their sons, even if educated at home, eventually come to learn Russian, and are much in contact with the ideas of Bolshevism as understood in Tashkent (emphasis added). Like the merchant families of Europe in the sixteenth century, they are the first to be affected by new ways of life, and amongst the foremost to criticize

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54. Despite this concern, Yang fully appreciated his own weakness vis-à-vis the Soviet Government, and scrupulously avoided involvement in the Basmachi-Soviet struggle in Western Turkestan. Rossabi, op.cit., p. 227.

55. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2342. P.4839.1924.

the conservative and "out-worn" views of the Mullahs.

But it is not only members of the wealthy families that come into contact with Bolshevik propoganda. It has attractions for many go-ahead young fellows in East Turkestan...The ambitious young workmen from Kashgar or Ili goes over to Russia to get a temporary job and at once finds himself in a land of unveiled women, railways, motor-cars, cinemas, and all that he believes to constitute the acme of modern civilisation.<sup>56</sup>

The growth of Soviet influence in - and around<sup>57</sup> - Sinkiang was as worrying to the British as it was to Yang Tseng-hsin. C.P. Skrine, the British consul-general at Kashgar in the mid-1920s, reported back to New Delhi that,

Not only in Ili, but also to a less extent in the south, the Soviet Government is doing what it can by means of an insidious propoganda to awaken the race - and class - consciousness of the Muhammadan population. Chinese policy is directed towards the prevention of this awakening.<sup>58</sup>

Yang redoubled his system of internal surveillance. All publications in Turkic languages were banned,<sup>59</sup> and restaurants throughout the province

56. Wingate, R.O., 'Education in Chinese Turkestan', JRCAS, XVI, 3 (1929), p. 326. Wingate's point about railways is interesting - no doubt the Turkic people of Sinkiang were very conscious of their isolation. In 1956 an old Uighur of Kumul said to Basil Davidson: 'I tell you that generations have gone by, and we have not seen a train. It was promised but one did not come. Now we shall see one. We shall see one early next year, and it is the government of Chairman Mao that brings it'. Davidson, Turkestan Alive, p. 61; cf. Lattimore, Studies in Frontier History, pp. 193-4.
57. Four years after the Bolshevik Revolution, in 1921, the Mongolian People's Republic was established under Soviet tutelage, on Yang's north-eastern flank. In 1925 Feng YÜ-hsiang, "Christian General" and nominal warlord of Northwest China, suddenly stopped baptising his troops with fire hoses, formed an alliance with the Soviet Union, and moved into the north-western province in force. Yang, at this time almost surrounded by the Soviet Union and its protégés, was obliged to reinforce his eastern garrisons against potential attack from Feng. He also attempted to forge closer links with the British in Kashgar.
58. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2342. P.4839.1924.
59. Bosshard, W., 'Politics and Trade in Central Asia', JRCAS, XVI, 4(1929), p. 438. According to the Scottish missionary G.W. Hunter, who lived in Sinkiang for over 40 years: 'Not one newspaper of any kind, Chinese or Sart (i.e. Turkic), is allowed to be printed or circulated in the whole of Chinese Turkestan, no doubt for political reasons', 'The Chinese Moslems of Turkestan', M.W., X, (1920), p. 170.

were posted with the sign 'no political discussions allowed'.<sup>60</sup> Skrine was somewhat troubled by these policies, but clearly felt that, on balance, they were necessary and even desirable:

By means of censorship...and other methods, not only is all written or printed matter dealing with current events excluded from the province, but the dissemination of "news" in writing among the inhabitants is effectively prevented. The same policy is responsible for the official attitude towards education: all schools except those attached to mosques, at which nothing but reading, writing and the Qur'an are taught by the Mullas, are forbidden; even attempts by private individuals such as Russian refugees to make a living by teaching foreign languages are looked upon with disfavour. This stifling of progress may be reprehensible from the ideal point of view, but it at any rate serves to keep an almost exclusively agricultural population quiet and contented under Chinese rule; and after all, if the greatest happiness of the greatest number is the summum bonum for Chinese Turkistan as for less secluded countries, there is much to be said for it.<sup>61</sup>

However Nicholas Roerich, who travelled through Sinkiang with the "Roerich Expedition" in 1925-6, described the peace of the province as 'the peace of death'.<sup>62</sup>

### 3.3 The Situation in Southern Sinkiang

During the early Republican era the most powerful representative of the provincial government in the area to the south of the Tien Shan - and generally speaking the second most powerful figure in the province - was the t'i-t'ai (military commander) of Kashgar. Isolated from Urumchi by difficult terrain and poor communications, this official enjoyed considerable autonomy, and was effectively able to make south-western Sinkiang into a

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60. Cable, M., and F. French, Through Jade Gate and Central Asia (London, 1950), p. 263.

61. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2342.P.4839.1924; cf. Benningsen & Lemerrier-Quellejay's description of Tsarist policies in Western Turkestan, above, p. 81.

62. Roerich, N., Altai-Himalaya, p. 280.



private fief. We have seen that Yang Tseng-hsin took initial steps to establish his writ in southern Sinkiang (known to the Chinese simply as Nan-lu)<sup>63</sup> during his campaign against the Ko-leo-hui in 1912-14. In January, 1913, Brigadier Yang Tsuan-hsü, the titular leader of the Ili revolutionaries whom Yang Tseng-hsin had transferred to Kashgar, arrived in the city with 400 "new style" troops to take up the office of t'i-t'ai.<sup>64</sup> Within a very short time Yang Tsuan-hsü had usurped the authority of the tao-t'ai (circuit intendant),<sup>65</sup> and had become the most powerful figure in Kashgar. As a result of his successes against the Ko-leo-hui in Nan-lu, Yang Tseng-hsin was able to appoint Ma Shao-wu, a Hui Muslim from Yang's native Yunnan, to the post of commanding officer at Kuchar.<sup>66</sup> This move considerably strengthened Yang's grip on the south, but Kashgar, the chief city of Nan-lu, as well as the still more remote oases of Yarkand and Khotan, retained considerable independence. Yang Tseng-hsin did not regard Yang Tsuan-hsü as a suitable ally; his association with the Ili revolutionaries counted against him, and he had only been appointed t'i-t'ai of Kashgar as a device to isolate him from his supporters in Ili. Consequently Yang Tseng-hsin took no steps to support Yang Tsuan-hsü's position in Kashgar, and when in August, 1915, the t'i-t'ai was forced to resign by his own troops, Yang Tseng-hsin seized the opportunity to appoint another Yunnanese Muslim, Ma Fu-hsing (see plates 5 and 6) to the post of Military Commander at Kashgar.<sup>67</sup>

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63. i.e. "South Road", from Tien-Shan Nan-lu, "The road to the south of the Tien Shan".

64. Skrine and Nightingale, op.cit., p. 214. "New style" troops supported the 1911 revolution and had removed their queues.

65. In August 1914 the Ch'ing title tao-t'ai was changed to the Republican title tao-yin.

66. See above, p. 73.

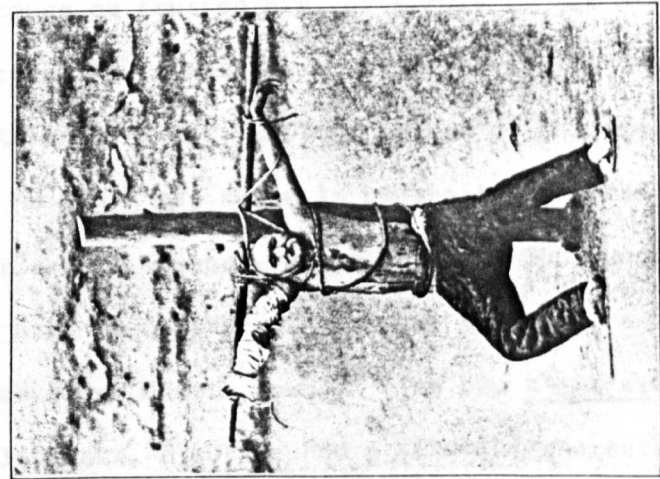
67. Skrine and Nightingale, op.cit., p. 229.

Plates 5,6 and 7:

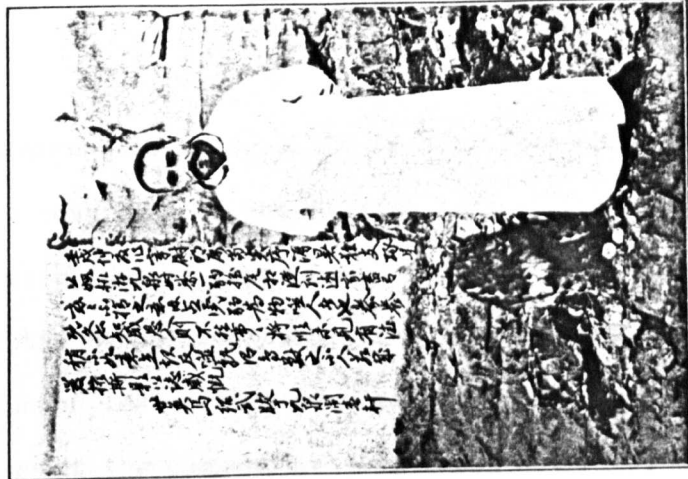
EARLY REPUBLICAN RULERS OF KASHGAR



Ma Fu-hsing with Turkic wife and son. c. 1922.



Ma Fu-hsing - nemesis May, 1924.



Ma Shao-wu c. 1926.

Ma Fu-hsing's background is obscure. It is not clear when he first came to Sinkiang; it may have been as one of Yang Tseng-hsin's Hui troops, although most of these were Tungans from Kansu, and not Yunnanese Muslims. In 1911, at the time of the Republican Revolution, Ma Fu-hsing was appointed head of the Tungan levies that were raised by the Ch'ing authorities in Urumchi under the command of Yang Tseng-hsin. From 1911 to 1915 he had remained in the Urumchi area 'shooting down Chinese sedition-mongers and riffraff'.<sup>68</sup> It is difficult to say whether Yang Tseng-hsin sent him to Kashgar because he trusted him, or simply to get him out of the way. In either case, Ma Fu-hsing's appointment was to prove a disaster for the peoples of southern Sinkiang, whether Turkic or Chinese.

Ma Fu-hsing - or Ma T'i-t'ai, as he is generally referred to in contemporary sources - arrived in Kashgar, accompanied by 300 Tungan levies, in December 1915. He made his headquarters in Kashgar New City, about 2½ miles to the south of the much older Muslim town.<sup>69</sup> The new t'i-t'ai was 64 years old and quite illiterate,<sup>70</sup> but he had a forceful character and was determined to establish his authority over the tao-yin as swiftly as possible. The pattern of Ma's eight-and-a-half year dictatorship over southern Sinkiang was set on his first full day in Kashgar when, against the wishes of the tao-yin, he ordered the arrest and execution of three men who, according to Skrine, 'appeared to be innocent of any possible crime'.<sup>71</sup> On

68. ibid., p. 243.

69. Kashgar, like most of the oasis towns of Sinkiang during this period, was divided into two towns, the old Muslim city (Ch. Shu-fu) and the new Chinese city (Ch. Shu-leh). At Kashgar, which had a population of about 40,000, both cities were surrounded by moats and thick, crenellated walls pierced by iron gates which were shut at sunset. Skrine and Nightingale, op.cit., p. 19.

70. Bailey, F.M., Mission to Tashkent (London, 1946), p.23.

71. Skrine and Nightingale, op.cit., p. 243.

March 8th, 1916, the tao-yin, who had been completely outflanked by the wily Ma Fu-hsing, was dismissed by the provincial authorities in Urumchi, and a replacement was sent. In mid-September the new tao-yin arrived in Kashgar; he proved to be an emaciated opium addict, none other than the brother of Yang Tseng-hsin. The new tao-yin was never to be seen in public before 2 p.m., and he delegated most of his authority to the Kashgar District Magistrate, a man named Ma who was yet another of Yang Tseng-hsin's Tungans.<sup>72</sup> The appointment of Yang's enfeebled brother as tao-yin served further to strengthen Ma T'i-t'ai's position, and by mid-June, 1916, Macartney was able to report to London that 'at present the Governor (Yang Tseng-hsin) and t'i-t'ai wield extraordinary powers...and anyone, be his political creed what it may, who attempts to disturb them, they will seize and summarily shoot down'. Macartney continued with prophetic accuracy: 'I doubt if any Chinese authority, not even that from Peking, can remove them, barring the one derived from the knife of the assassin'.<sup>73</sup>

In Macartney's opinion, Ma Fu-hsing realised that he had risen to as high a rank as he could ever expect to reach; he now intended to maintain this position whilst lining his own pockets.<sup>74</sup> Having secured his position at Kashgar, he immediately set about exploiting the human and mineral resources of his new domain. C.P. Skrine, a successor of Macartney who was British consul-general at Kashgar during the height of Ma Fu-hsing's absolutist power,<sup>75</sup> has left an astonishing account of an official dinner party with

72. ibid., pp. 253-4.

73. ibid., p. 247.

74. ibid., p. 246.

75. Macartney left Kashgar in August 1918, after 28 years service at this remote post. He was replaced by Colonel P.T. Etherton, who was in turn replaced by N. Fitzmaurice in May 1922. C.P. Skrine replaced Fitzmaurice in July of the same year, and remained until September 1924. See Appendix VII, 'British Consuls-General at Kashgar'.

the t'i-t'ai who, although nominally Muslim, was an incorrigible drunkard.<sup>76</sup> Skrine's description of his meeting with the t'i-t'ai at the Kashgar New City yamen captures the half-comic, half-homicidal character of Ma Fu-hsing very well:

Passing through huge painted doors we were welcomed in an inner courtyard by a short, grizzled, monkey-like old man with a long wispy moustache and fierce eyes, resplendently arrayed in a saxe-blue Chinese Field Marshal's uniform several sizes too large for him, complete with plumed hat, several rows of stars and medals and gold lace epaulettes the size of hassocks flapping from his shoulders (see plate 5). With the gold-encrusted tunic hanging about his wispy old frame like a frock-coat on a scarecrow, and the overalls, as usual in the Sinkiang Army, innocent of braces, he looked a regular Chinese Count Hedzoff of Paphlagonia; but there was a sinister feel behind the opera-bouffe - or was it only because we knew about the murders and torturings which went on somewhere behind the grim walls of his citadel?<sup>77</sup>

But, as Skrine clearly indicates, there was nothing comic about Ma Fu-hsing in the eyes of his subjects. 'He made everybody call him padishah (Ir., "king") on pain of death, and assembled a harem of the prettiest Turkic Muslim women in Kashgar; meanwhile his agents roamed the country-side "looking for new cows to milk" as the Tital facetiously put it'.<sup>78</sup> Ma was not content with the forced "loans", "subscriptions" and "presents" usually extorted by corrupt officials in Kashgar, but turned to trade and the exploitation by primitive methods of the mineral resources of Nan-lu. He claimed all the mineral wealth of the country as the perquisite of the military authorities, and exploited them for his own benefit. Thus he worked oil wells at Aksu

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76. Skrine, C.P. Chinese Central Asia, (London, 1926) pp. 86-8; see also Blacker, L.V.S., On Secret Patrol in High Asia (London, 1922), pp. 15-16.

77. Skrine, Chinese Central Asia, p. 86.

78. ibid., p. 85.

and at Kanjigan about 30 miles west of Kashgar, copper mines also at Kanjigan, jade mines at Tung on the upper Yarkand river, and coal mines at various places throughout the region. As he employed forced labour and was also able by force both to retain a monopoly of production and to prevent competition in the local bazaars, he derived large profits from these concerns.<sup>79</sup> In the local manufacturing sector he took over the carpet factories and established jade workshops; according to one authority, he conscripted craftsmen for these concerns, and forced them to 'live like slaves on the premises'.<sup>80</sup> The t'i-t'ai made further profits by drawing large sums from the Kashgar treasury for the upkeep of his Tungan troops:

Needless to say, not a tenth of these sums was spent. The nominal strength of the Tital's forces was between 4,000 and 5,000; the actual number maintained may have been about 500. Most of these were quarter-trained, opium-sodden wretches who received neither pay, rations nor equipment, and lived on the country by virtue of the fear inspired by their terrible chief, and the antiquated (and in most cases quite useless) carbines they carried.<sup>81</sup>

The fear inspired by Ma Fu-hsing was very real. Descriptions of his brutalities abound, and at least one picture of his victims has come down to us (see plate 8). He had a large hay-chopping machine with which he used to amputate the limbs of his victims, starting at the extremities and proceeding joint by joint.<sup>82</sup> P.S. Nazaroff, a White Russian refugee who spent some time in Kashgar during Ma Fu-hsing's rule, records how the t'i-t'ai crucified, maimed and murdered all those who opposed his will - or even crossed his path when he was drunk. During the four years Nazaroff

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79. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2342. p.4839.1924; Skrine, Chinese Central Asia, p. 261.

80. Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 173.

81. Skrine, Chinese Central Asia, p.262.

82. Skrine, Chinese Central Asia, p. 85; Nazaroff, P.S., Moved On! From Kashgar to Kashmir, (London, 1935), p. 78; see also Etherton, P.T., In the Heart of Asia (London, 1925), pp. 66-7.

Plate 8:

SOME VICTIMS OF MA FU-HSING



The Chinese reads: 'A photograph of people who had their hands and feet cut off by Ma Fu-hsing'.

lived at Kashgar he frequently saw 'bundles of men's amputated arms or feet nailed to the city gates, with notices stating whose members they were and why they were cut off. Sometimes the lawful owner of the arms or legs would be chained to the wall with them'.<sup>83</sup> Ma T'i-t'ai used some of his ill-gotten wealth to build a large (and leaky) palace at Bakalyk, about 16 miles from Kashgar;<sup>84</sup> however most of the gold, diamonds and other moneys amassed were transferred to Ma's superior, Yang Tseng-hsin, in Urumchi.<sup>85</sup>

Eventually Ma T'i-t'ai's behaviour became too outrageous, and Yang Tseng-hsin - who was in constant fear of revolution or assassination - decided it would be better to remove him. In the autumn of 1923 the t'i-t'ai conceived the idea of forcing the citizens of Kashgar to buy a fixed quantity of paraffin wax (a largely unsaleable by-product of Ma Fu-hsing's oil refinery at Kanjigan) every month. Cobblers, who used paraffin wax in their trade, were obliged to buy double quantities. When the head of the cobblers' guild complained to the t'i-t'ai, he was beaten to death and his wife was fined so heavily that she was forced to sell her home and driven into penury.<sup>86</sup> Apparently the paraffin wax episode (which earned the t'i-t'ai the nickname "bald wax seller" in the bazaars of Nan-lu) was the last straw as far as Ma Fu-hsing's fellow officials were concerned. A petition was sent to Urumchi, and Yang Tseng-hsin, who realised that the t'i-t'ai's deprivations had gone too far, dismissed Ma Fu-hsing and abolished

83. Nazaroff, op.cit., p.75.

84. ibid., pp. 78-9.

85. Nyman, op.cit., p. 28.

86. Skrine, Chinese Central Asia, p. 262. The contemporaneous brutalities of Ma Fu-hsing's son, who was made GOC Kashgar, must also have outraged the Kashgarliks. For example: 'Returning one afternoon from a visit he (Ma's son) was informed that three of the young (Turkic) girls of his harem had been out for an unauthorised walk. They were therefore taken into the garden and beaten, their hands tied behind their backs at their wrists, after which they were suspended by the latter from a tree and left there throughout the night. In the morning when cut down, two were dead, but the third afterwards recovered, although hopelessly crippled with the arms wrenched completely out of joint at the shoulders'. Etherton, pp. 105-6.



this post which might one day threaten his own. Ma refused to accept his dismissal, and attempted to appease his subjects by arresting his own paraffin wax agents, mutilating four of them with his hay chopper, and exposing one at each of the four main gates of Kashgar Old City with their limbs nailed to the walls behind them.<sup>87</sup>

However this time Ma Fu-hsing's luck had run out. Yang Tseng-hsin sent orders from Urumchi to the tao-yin of Aksu, who in turn despatched an armed force of 600 men under the command of Ma Shao-wu, the Yunnanese Hui whom Yang Tseng-hsin had appointed commander of the garrison at Kuchar in 1914 and who had since risen to the post of amban at Uch Turfan.<sup>88</sup> A larger body of troops was sent to Maralbashi to mislead the t'i-t'ai, and Ma Shao-wu's force was thus able to approach Kashgar from the north without detection. On 31st May, 1924, Ma Shao-wu and a small band of picked men made their way into Kashgar New City where the t'i-t'ai, 'over-confident as usual, and imagining that his enemies were still several marches from Kashgar, had omitted to take the most elementary precautions'.<sup>89</sup> Ma Fu-hsing was asleep in his elaborate new Kashgar palace (a building quite distinct from the leaky palace at Bakalyk), and his troops were unprepared and for the most part under the influence of opium. After a short skirmish the t'i-t'ai was captured, alive but wounded in the arm, and his troops surrendered. An exchange of telegrams between Ma Shao-wu and Yang Tseng-hsin in Urumchi sealed the ex-t'i-t'ai's fate, and on the next day he was put up against the south gate of the New City and shot. His body was later tied to a crucifix and left for the

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87. ibid., p. 263.

88. Skrine, Chinese Central Asia, p. 264. Uch Turfan (Tk. 'Crooked Turfan'), so called 'because of its long, straggling rows of houses, to distinguish it from the larger and more famous Turfan' about 300 miles further to the east (Schomberg, R.F.C., A Turkestan Diary, 1926-29, p. 44).

89. Skrine, Chinese Central Asia, p. 265.

people of Kashgar to insult and defile (see plate 6).<sup>90</sup> Ma Shao-wu was promoted to the office of tao-yin of Khotan as a reward for his loyalty to Yang Tseng-hsin, and, the post of t'i-t'ai having been abolished, the incumbent tao-yin became the most influential official in Kashgar almost by default. On the death of the latter in 1927, Ma Shao-wu was transferred from Khotan to Kashgar, thus attaining the second most powerful position in the province (see plate 7).<sup>91</sup>

### 3.4 The Economy of Sinkiang Under Yang Tseng-hsin

Before 1911 Sinkiang had been heavily subsidised (to between two and three million taels annually)<sup>92</sup> by the Ch'ing Imperial Treasury. With the overthrow of the Ch'ing Dynasty and the subsequent political fragmentation of the Chinese Republic, this subsidy was ended and Sinkiang, under its new governor Yang Tseng-hsin, was left to fend for itself. To make matters worse, the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 seriously dislocated economic relations with the Russian Empire, traditionally (and by geographic necessity) Sinkiang's major trading partner.<sup>93</sup> Before 1914 Sinkiang had acted as a supplier of raw materials (chiefly cotton) to the Tsarist Empire,

90. Various unsavoury details surround the execution of Ma Fu-hsing. According to Nicholas Roerich (Altai Himalaya, p. 163), Ma Shao-wu personally shot the t'i-t'ai after the latter had been crucified for two days; Skrine suggests that his hands and feet were packed in a box and sent to Yang Tseng-hsin at Kashgar (op.cit., p. 269). The official report of the British Consulate (IDLR, L/P&S/12/2342. P.4839.1924. also written by Skrine) simply states that he was shot on 2nd June.
91. An excellent photograph of Ma Shao-wu may also be found in Bosshard, W., Durch Tibet und Turkestan (Stuttgart, 1930), plate 79.
92. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p.59.
93. Kuropatkin, A.N., Kashgaria, pp. 60-68.

and had relied heavily on the importation of Russian manufactured goods.<sup>94</sup> In 1913, the second year of Yang's rule in Sinkiang, the value of Russian exports to Sinkiang stood at 8,424,000 roubles, whilst imports in the reverse direction reached 9,846,000 roubles;<sup>95</sup> Sinkiang was thus running a healthy trade surplus of 1,604,000 roubles with the Russian Empire, and to some extent this helped to offset the loss of the Imperial subsidy. Between 1914 and 1917, however, trade declined disastrously, as did the value of the Russian rouble; when the rouble fell, it dragged the Sinkiang tael with it.<sup>96</sup> By 1919, when the civil war was at its height, trade between Sinkiang and Russia was almost non-existent.<sup>97</sup> The decline of the Russian trade had disastrous effects for Sinkiang, especially in the agricultural south where the area under cotton cultivation (which in 1913 had provided just over 25% of all Sinkiang exports to the Russian Empire)<sup>98</sup> was cut back by 50%, resulting in widespread hardship amongst the Uighur farmers of Nan-lu.<sup>99</sup>

It may fairly be said that, from an economic point of view, Yang Tseng-hsin took over the administration of Sinkiang at a singularly inopportune time. Yet Yang had certain advantages working for him; he had inherited a well-established provincial administration from his Ch'ing predecessors, and his province was rich in potentially exploitable mineral resources.<sup>100</sup> Some authorities have portrayed Yang as something of an

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94. For detailed figures of Sinkiang-Russian trade in 1913 see Mu Ning, 'Su-lien yü Hsin-chiang sheng ti shang-yeh kuan-hsi' (The Soviet Union's commercial relationship with Sinkiang Province), Hsin Ya-hsi-ya (Nanking), VI, 5 (Nov. 1933), pp. 42-3.

95. ibid., p. 43.

96. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 59.

97. According to Russian statistics, only 300 tons of goods were exported to Sinkiang in 1920. Mu Ning, op.cit., p. 44.

98. That is, by weight; by value the proportion must have been still higher. (Based on figures in Mu, op.cit., p. 43).

99. Mu Ning, op.cit., p.44.

100. See section on mineral resources (especially jade, gold, copper, oil and coal) of southern Sinkiang, The China Year Book, 1924-5 (Tientsin, 1924) pp. 601-2.

economic reformer. Thus Lattimore credits Yang with attempting (unsuccessfully) to abolish the ula system of forced labour employed by the Manchus; with limiting official rates of interest to 10%; and with preventing officials from loaning public money to private money-lenders who then re-loaned it at steeply increased rates of interest.<sup>101</sup> Similarly Morris Rossabi claims that Yang 'maintained an effective system of controls over his government, imposing harsh sanctions on those who illegally alienated the local peoples. His economic policies were also designed to reduce the tax burden on the Uighurs, Kazakhs and others and to win their support'.<sup>102</sup>

However, this view of Yang is seriously misleading. Far from attempting to modernise or advance the economy of Sinkiang, Yang made every attempt to hold the clock back. Where reforms in the system were made (as with the attempt to abolish ula), Yang was simply acting to prevent a possible rising amongst his Turkic Muslim subjects; he realised (as with the case of Ma T'i-t'ai) that there was a limit beyond which the indigenous peoples of Sinkiang could not, safely, be pushed. In fact Yang judged this limit very nicely - and for fifteen years he ran the economy of Sinkiang largely for his own benefit.

Shortly after consolidating his hold on Sinkiang in 1914, Yang set about establishing an efficient machine for stripping the province of its assets. As has already been shown, whilst maintaining the Imperial administration almost intact, Yang surrounded himself with relatives and fellow provincials from Yunnan. Rigorous censorship was introduced to minimise unrest amongst the Turkic Muslims, and a sophisticated system of economic checks was introduced to concentrate the wealth of the province

101. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, pp. 56-8. (ula is a Manchu term).

102. Rossabi, op.cit., p. 221.

in Yang's own hands.

With the fall of the Ch'ing Empire in 1911, China's unified fiduciary system disappeared. Securely isolated from the warring factions of the new Republic by the wastes of the Gobi Desert, Yang Tseng-hsin was able - indeed he was almost obliged - to issue his own currency. In fact he was to issue four regional paper currencies, the Urumchi, Ili, Kashgar and Aksu taels, each exchanging at different rates against the others.<sup>103</sup> Except in south-western Sinkiang, where some silver and gold specie was in circulation,<sup>104</sup> the province relied exclusively on paper and copper currency, quite unbacked by official reserves. Yang introduced this complicated system as a safeguard against revolution - 'for no insurrection could come to a head unless it were financed, and with several currencies in use unusually large transfers of money can be detected. Furthermore, the value of paper would at once fall in any region in rebellion against the Governor, leaving the rebels without funds'.<sup>105</sup> The various local currencies were adequate for local and intra-provincial trade, but for trade with Russia or the rest of China a system of controlled barter was necessary, with merchants roughly balancing the value of their imports to, and exports from, Sinkiang. In this way locally-resident Chinese merchants were prevented from exporting profits to China without importing in return; the same criteria applied to Turkic Muslims trading with Western Turkestan. As a result of this policy it was extremely difficult for indigenous inhabitants of Sinkiang of whatever race, to invest their profits other than in further trading activities or in property within the

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103. Lattimore, 'The Chinese as a Dominant Race', in: Studies in Frontier History (London, 1962), p. 209.

104. ibid.

105. ibid., cf. Lattimore, 'Chinese Turkistan', in Studies in Frontier History, p. 193.

province. Naturally this problem was not faced by Han Chinese officials temporarily resident in Sinkiang and planning to return to their native province at the end of their period of service; they were able simply to export merchandise, to sell it in China (or Russia), and to bank the proceeds against their retirement. Other locally-based merchants wishing to export profits in China, or companies based outside China and wishing to export their profits from trade with the province, were only able to do so through a semi-official system of speculation controlled and exploited by Yang himself.

Owen Lattimore, who travelled through Sinkiang during the last years of Yang Tseng-hsin's régime, was clearly impressed with the results which Yang's economic and fiscal policies appeared to be yielding. In a paper published in 1928 he noted that:

The use of paper money for concentrating wealth in the hands of the ruling power is a favourite device in contemporary China. Every regional potentate issues paper money, the acceptance of which is enforced at the point of a bayonet, while for payment of taxes and other government receipts only silver is accepted, or the notes of sound banks. In Sinkiang there is no such maintenance of blatantly false values. In the first place, the government accepts its own paper. In the second place, all the nominal values are in taels, whereas in China there are no paper taels, and silver taels have been superseded for the most part by silver and paper dollars. For this reason, and because of the great distance between the province and China, and the slow transit of goods, it is not affected by the money market in China. The extent of local confidence in the paper currency is reflected by the steady rate of exchange between the Urumchi taels and the few silver dollars that arrive by way of the caravan route at Ku-Ch'eng-tze. In the third place, there is not a single bank, not even a provincial bank (that favourite engine of Chinese governors) to complicate exchange with credit transactions. The province is hermetically sealed.<sup>106</sup>

But the province was not, in fact, hermetically sealed. Throughout

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106. Lattimore, 'The Chinese as a Dominant Race', p. 209.

the province Chinese officials (and in the south-west, Indian money-lenders as well)<sup>107</sup> assiduously hoarded all the precious metal they could lay their hands on, with the object of transferring it to private bank accounts outside Sinkiang. Furthermore, since there was not enough precious metal to go around, the ruling group (chiefly composed of Han Chinese, but including the more affluent sections of other national groups) transferred wealth out of the province in merchandise. Lattimore, measuring Yang's Sinkiang against the yardstick of contemporary Republican China, was impressed with the free trade economy which this system seemed to have created:

The wisdom of the Chinese in Sinkiang is in not bleeding their subjects (by excess taxation). As the civil service is not paid by the Republican Government, so the revenues of the province are not remitted to Peking. Revenue is therefore sufficient without undue taxation. The governing class combine to exploit the trade rather than the fiscal revenue. Every great firm leans on official aid. The gratifying result is that business, instead of being hampered by tolls and levies, often flourishes by going tax free.<sup>108</sup>

But C.P. Skrine, who, as British consul-general at Kashgar had access to information which was not readily available to Lattimore, saw things rather differently. In an official report on the trade of Chinese Turkestan (Sinkiang) for the period 1924-5, he reported that:

The value of exports exceeds that of imports including specie (emphasis added) by no less than Taels 366,825, or 75.2%. The explanation of this is that when merchants from Inner China bring specie to Chinese Turkestan to pay for goods exported from the south of the province, they are obliged by order of the Governor to deposit their money in the Government Treasury at Urumchi, and are issued cheques on treasuries in Southern Sinkiang in exchange. These cheques are

107. Nyman, op.cit., p. 30.

108. Lattimore, 'The Chinese as a Dominant Race', p. 210. In this 1928 article Lattimore fails to make clear the important role played by tax on cultivated land (almost all of which was Uighur-owned). However, in his Pivot of Asia (1950, p. 59), it is made quite clear that land tax was, in fact, the major source of provincial revenue.

cashed by the officials in Yarkand, Kashgar, etc., for local paper currency, with which the goods are bought.<sup>109</sup>

In other words Yang Tseng-hsin's economic policy, in both its mercantile and fiscal aspects, was bleeding Sinkiang to death. Moreover there is every indication that Yang realised this, that he actively encouraged it in the interests of personal profit, and that he was planning a swift personal departure before the inevitable débâcle. Certainly Yang showed no desire to re-establish commercial links with the Russians after the Red victory in the civil war; he feared Soviet economic penetration of Sinkiang, and between 1919 (when trade with Russia was almost nil) and 1925 (by which time Russia, in its new Soviet guise, was once again firmly established as Sinkiang's chief trading partner) every improvement in commercial relations between Sinkiang and the Soviet Union was forced on Yang by Moscow.<sup>110</sup> According to some sources Yang was also loath to permit the establishment of a modern industrial base within Sinkiang. In a move aimed at excluding the Soviet ideological penetration of the province (had Yang been reading some of the Soviet propoganda material he confiscated?) 'factories and large commercial enterprises were strictly forbidden, for they necessitated the employment of large bodies of workmen, who might form the nucleus of a workers' class in Sinkiang, and thus endanger the social structure of the province'.<sup>111</sup>

109. The China Year Book, 1924-5, p. 605.

110. Yang was effectively compelled to sign the Ili Trade Agreement of 1920 under the unspoken threat of Soviet occupation of the Ili Valley (Nyman, op.cit., p. 36). Similarly it seems likely that Yang extended further trade facilities to the Soviets, including the right to establish a motor service from Kazakhstan to Urumchi, in return for Soviet restraint being placed upon their protégé in Kansu, the "Christian General" Feng Yü-hsiang (Lattimore, 'The Chinese as a Dominant Race', p. 216).

111. Roerich, G.N., Trails to Inmost Asia, p. 118. cf. Roerich, N., Altai-Himalaya, p. 280.



In effect, Yang was not concerned with developing the indigenous economy of Sinkiang, but only with exploiting its resources - especially gold.<sup>112</sup> His primary aim lay in maintaining the movement of bullion caravans and foreign bank drafts from Sinkiang to Peking or Tientsin. The imported specie which visiting merchants were obliged to pay into the Urumchi treasury was rapidly re-exported, reportedly to Manila in the Phillipines where Yang is said to have maintained a personal bank account under the protection of the American flag.<sup>113</sup> Deals were also struck by which Yang was saved the trouble of importing and re-exporting specie. For example, when the Sino-Swedish Scientific Expedition was preparing to travel to Sinkiang in 1927, an arrangement was made whereby Yang Tseng-hsin agreed to supply the expedition with local paper currency to a face value of 60,000 Mexican silver dollars (an enormous sum) on its arrival in Urumchi; Sven Hedin, the leader of the expedition, agreed to pay the counter-sum (in silver) to Yang's son-in-law in Peking.<sup>114</sup>

Yang's attitude towards the economy of Sinkiang was followed, to a greater or lesser degree, by the entire administration. Whereas under the Ch'ing many Han officials attained office through success in the Imperial examinations, under Yang the passport to an official appointment became money. Administrative salaries were quite inadequate, and it was understood that an incumbent official, having bought his way to office

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112. Nyman (op.cit., p. 31), says that the provincial authorities were unwilling to introduce modern methods of gold-mining because they 'feared the political consequences of a goldrush'. According to C.P. Skrine, however, the Turkic peoples often knew of gold deposits, but 'kept them secret to prevent the Chinese starting mines and forcing the local people to work in them' (The China Year Book, 1924-5, p.602).

113. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p.58. Bosshard, op.cit., p. 436.

114. Hedin, Sven, Across the Gobi Desert (London, 1931), p. 348.

was free to make as much as he could from bribes and "taxes", leaving his subordinates to fend for themselves and thereby extending corruption to the lowest levels of the system. 'The only upper limit for taxation existed in open rebellion or complaints directly to the governor, who himself constituted the last step to this pyramid of spoils'.<sup>115</sup> In the words of the Swiss traveller, Walter Bosshard, who accompanied the Trinkler Asian Expedition to Sinkiang during the last years of Yang's reign:

In Chinese Turkestan, where corruptness permeated all classes, advancement, like other marketable commodities, was bought and sold...The result was that nothing was done which was not specially paid for, and the people were plundered in order that their rulers might grow rich. Such was the way in which villages and towns were vampired.<sup>116</sup>

### 3.5 The Assassination of Yang Tseng-hsin

During his sixteen years of absolute power, Yang Tseng-hsin established himself as a singularly competent autocrat, a mandarin of the old school, accurately described by Lattimore as the most able of the feudal bureaucrats to administer Sinkiang.<sup>117</sup> Despite his policy of long-term economic exploitation, the inevitable result of which was the impoverishment and exhaustion of the province, Yang realised that there was a limit to the official rapacity which the indigenous population were prepared to endure. His solution, as we have seen, was to tolerate corruption in his administration provided it remained within acceptable limits - that is, providing it did not spark off a Muslim rising. Yang also realised that the most prominent members of the Turkic Muslim population must be permitted a share of the takings. By retaining the Ch'ing administrative structure which

115. Nyman, op.cit., p. 26.

116. Bosshard, W., 'Politics and Trade in Central Asia', p. 437.

117. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 52.

employed local Muslims as junior officials - ming-bashis, yuz-bashis and the like - he was thus able to kill two birds with one stone. On the one hand, the Chinese administrative officials were insulated from the great mass of the indigenous Muslim peoples by a layer of junior Muslim officials who would bear the first brunt of any popular anger; on the other, the Muslim officials maintained a vested interest in protecting the system which provided them with a degree of power and affluence. Similarly Yang realised 'the great men of the oases must be allowed to accumulate land, and the great men of the nomads to accumulate herds'.<sup>118</sup> By such methods, as well as by the extensive use of censorship, informers and secret police, Yang was able to minimise the chances of a Turkic Muslim rebellion. When unrest did occur, it was possible to isolate and cauterize the source.

As a result of Yang's judicious policies, Muslim opposition to his rule remained limited and ineffectual. Little is known of Turkic or Tajik Muslim political organisation in Sinkiang during this period. According to R.F.C. Schomberg, a British political officer who made investigative tours of the province in 1927-29 and 1930-31, the Turkic Muslims (or at least the settled Uighur population) were still divided into the Aktaghlik and Karataghlik factions found as early as the 16th century,<sup>119</sup> although the original political distinctions seem to have disappeared or become blurred. At the time of Schomberg's tours, the Aktaghlik, or White Mountaineer faction, remained the party of Turkic nationalism, with its power base in Kuchar. Known as sayyid-parast, or "sayyid-followers",<sup>120</sup> its

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118. Lattimore, O., Inner Asian Frontiers of China (Boston, 1962), p. 189.

119. See above, pp. 61-9.

120. sayyid (Ar.) a descendant of the prophet Muhammad through the line of his grandson, Hussein.

supporters were strongly anti-Chinese. In marked contrast the Karataghlik, or Black Mountaineer faction, was content to let Sinkiang remain under Chinese rule. With a power base at Artush, its followers were generally referred to by the Uighurs as Khitai-parast, or "followers of China". According to Schomberg, followers of the two groups did not intermarry. A further traditional distinction was that adherents of the Aktaghlik faction always cut the top off a melon and said "bismillāh" (Ar. 'in the name of God') before slicing it; in contrast, the less pious Karataghliks would slice up the melon at once, without saying "bismillāh".<sup>121</sup> Whilst it is interesting to note the continuation of these petty Uighur differences in the oases of the Tarim Basin well into the 20th century, it is clear that they posed no serious threat to Governor Yang in Urunchi. Nevertheless, discontent was growing amongst the indigenous peoples of the province. The Chinese authorities were unable to stem the annual flow of workers from southern Sinkiang to Soviet Central Asia, largely because of the higher wages paid in the USSR.<sup>122</sup>

After such a sojourn, many a Kashgarian saw his country in a new light. According to Swedish missionaries (based in Khotan and Yarkand), much indoctrination with Soviet propaganda did occur on these stays intended to have future use in the 1930s.<sup>123</sup>

Nor was Yang's system of censorship entirely successful in stopping the spread of Soviet influence within his domain. The Sinkiang rumour mill, known to the local Turkic Muslims as the "long-eared telegraph",<sup>124</sup> was very

121. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2336, P.1349.1930.

122. Nyman, op.cit., p. 30.

123. ibid, citing interviews with missionaries Sigfrid Moen and Georg Roberntz.

124. Schomberg, R.F.C., A Second Turkestan Diary, 1930-31 (unpublished Ts. in the library of the Royal Society for Asian Affairs (London), p. 82.

effective.<sup>125</sup> As a result of this age-old method of disseminating news, Soviet land reform was to have a considerable impact on the Uighur peasantry of Sinkiang. As one contemporary French source commented:

The "Agrarian reforms" implemented according to communist principles in (West) Turkestan had their echo in Sinkiang. The peasants did not fail to notice these events and to speak of Soviet power which, they said, had "divided the land into equal parts in order to offer it to the peasants of Turkestan".<sup>126</sup>

But it was Yang's less able successors who were to reap the harvest of Turkic Muslim discontent. Throughout his rule Yang faced a far more serious threat from his own subordinates - not so much from the Tungans, who were generally unpopular with both Han Chinese and Turkic Muslim, and who owed much of their position to Yang's patronage - but from his fellow Han Chinese. Some of the latter were simply ambitious for personal power, but others (witness the Yunnanese conspirators at the time of the Ts'ai O rising)<sup>127</sup> felt strongly that Sinkiang should be more closely involved with events in China proper.

There are indications that, after the bloody dinner party which ended the attempt to bring Sinkiang into the Ts'ai O affair, the mistrustful Yang deliberately surrounded himself with opium addicts on the grounds that 'the inveterate opium smoker thinks more of his own comfort and convenience than of stirring up unrest among his subordinates'.<sup>128</sup> Nevertheless,

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125. See, for example, Vassel, G., 'Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien', Berichte des Asiens Arbeitskreises, I (Feb., 1939), p. 15.

126. Castagné, Joseph, 'Le Problème du Turkestan Chinois (Sin-kiang)', Revue des Études Islamiques, VII, 2 (1933), p.159.

127. See above, pp. 77-8.

128. Bergman, Folke, in: Hedin and Bergman, History of the Expedition in Asia, 1927-1935 (4 vols, Stockholm, 1934-45), Vol I, p. 246, fn.

during the last years of his rule the ageing autocrat was seriously to alienate certain of his senior officials. Perhaps Yang was becoming over-confident - it was in 1926 that he penned his rather self-indulgent claim to have 'created an earthly paradise in a remote region'.<sup>129</sup> In the same year Yang turned on his Tungan supporters; many were accused of conspiring with the Tungan warlord of Hsi-ning in Tsinghai, and were driven from Urumchi.<sup>130</sup> Deprived of his formerly loyal Tungans, Yang seems to have become increasingly isolated. When the Roerich Expedition visited Urumchi during 1926, G.N. Roerich noted that:

The Governor's residence consisted of several well-isolated buildings and enclosed courtyards. The gates were carefully guarded by patrols of heavily armed men. ... The Governor's yamen seemed to us to be in a very dilapidated condition. The glass in many of the windows on the ground floor was broken and dirty papers and rags had been pasted on the window frames. Numerous retainers roamed about the courtyards and villainous bodyguards, armed with Mauser pistols and swords, were on duty at the entrance to the yamen.<sup>131</sup>

It may be that Yang was already preparing to leave Sinkiang. He had 'made his pile',<sup>132</sup> and by some accounts his immediate family had been sent out of the province, either to China proper,<sup>133</sup> or, as seems more likely,

129. See above, p. 70.

130. Roerich, G.N., Trails to Inmost Asia, p. 115-119; according to Roerich, Yang's mistrust of the Tungans dated from the execution of Ma Fu-hsing, T'i-t'ai of Kashgar, in 1924. Apparently Ma Fu-hsing was a cousin of Ma Ch'i, Frontier Commissioner and Governor of Hsi-ning in Tsinghai. During Roerich's stay, Ma Ch'i was believed to be preparing to invade Sinkiang. Roerich's account may be factual, but it is worth noting that Ma Ch'i was a genuine Tungan, i.e. a Hui Muslim of the north-west, whilst Ma Fu-hsing was a Hui Muslim of Yunnan. This does not preclude the possibility of their having been cousins, but it diminishes the likelihood.

131. Roerich, ibid., pp. 116-7.

132. Anon, 'His Excellency Yang Tseng-hsin', JRCAS, XVI, 1 (1929), p.89.

133. ibid.

to Manila, where Yang is said to have maintained a personal bank account.<sup>134</sup> Possibly as a grandiose gesture of his leave-taking, Yang erected a statue of himself in the public gardens at Urumchi. According to Nicholas Roerich, this memorial was paid for with forced contributions 'from the grateful population';<sup>135</sup> all authorities agree that the statue was in execrable taste.<sup>136</sup> Finally, after the completion of the second stage of the Northern Expedition and the entry of the Nationalists into Peking in June 1928, Yang ordered that the Kuomintang flag should be raised in Sinkiang, thereby acknowledging the authority of the new National Government under Chiang Kai-shek at Nanking.<sup>137</sup> This last uncharacteristic gesture, taken together with Yang's advancing years and the signs already mentioned, must have convinced many of his subordinates that his departure was imminent. The most ambitious of these subordinates, a Han Chinese called Fan Yao-nan, determined to act.

Fan Yao-nan was a "modernist",<sup>138</sup> an ambitious official who had been educated in Japan and whom Yang Tseng-hsin 'distrusted on sight'. He was appointed to the post of tao-yin of Aksu by the Central Government in Peking - an appointment which Yang could easily have ignored, but it

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134. Bosshard, W., 'Politics and Trade in Central Asia', p. 436; cf. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 64. According to Mildred Cable and Francesca French, Yang sent his wealth and family to the safety of the British concession at Tientsin. See their description of how, in 1926, Yang smuggled his eldest son out of Sinkiang in disguise in the company of these missionaries. The Gobi Desert (London, 1943), pp. 232-3.

135. Roerich, N., Altai-Himalaya, p. 280.

136. Roerich, ibid., describes the statue as 'an ugly little copper figure with gilded epaulettes and stars'. cf. Hedin and Bergman, History of the Expedition in Asia, Vol I, p. 252.

137. Boorman and Howard, Biographical Dictionary of Republican China, Vol. IV. It seems most unlikely that the autocratic Yang would ever have agreed submit to Chiang Kai-shek, and it therefore seems probable that he was preparing to leave Sinkiang permanently.

138. According to Nyman (op.cit., p.73), Fan favoured the industrialisation of Sinkiang and wished to improve the living conditions of the indigenous peoples.

appears that he was impressed with Fan's abilities.<sup>139</sup> Fan must have proved useful to Yang, for he rose to the position of tao-yin of Urumchi, and was made Sinkiang Provincial Commissioner for Foreign Affairs.<sup>140</sup> Nevertheless, it would seem that neither Yang nor Fan respected each other; Yang Tseng-hsin told his Industrial Commissioner Yen Ting-shan, who claims to have warned Yang against Fan on numerous occasions, that he kept Fan 'chained like a tiger',<sup>141</sup> whilst in March 1926 Fan Yao-nan suggested to the German scientist Filchner that Yang was mad.<sup>142</sup> Together with a small group of like-minded officials, amongst whom were included the engineer at the Urumchi telegraph station and the dean of the local school of law, Fan determined to assassinate the aged autocrat. Nyman has suggested that Fan may have wished to gain the favour of the Kuomintang, to which party he is reported to have belonged.<sup>143</sup> In any event, on July 7th 1928, 6 days after Yang had officially assumed the post of Chairman of the Sinkiang Provincial Government under the Kuomintang, Fan struck.

On the day in question, Yang was invited to a banquet to celebrate a graduation ceremony at the Urumchi law school. Fan had arranged the banquet, and eighteen of his soldiers were present, disguised as waiters 'with red bands round their arms and Browning pistols in their sleeves'.<sup>144</sup>

139. Wu Ai-chen, Turkistan Tumult, p. 46.

140. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol. IV, p. 13.

141. Wu Ai-chen, op.cit., p. 47. Yen remarked to Yang that 'tigers were awkward beasts to handle'; Yang replied 'not to a tiger trainer'.

142. In his conversation with Filchner, Fan criticized Yang bitterly, and pointed meaningfully at his head. Filchner, W., Om Mani Padme Hum (Leipzig, 1938), pp. 40-41.

143. Nyman, op.cit., p. 74. cf. Nemchemko M., 'Kolonial'nyi rezhim i agrarnye otnosheniya v Sin' tsyane' (The Colonial Regime and Agrarian Relations in Sinkiang), Problemy Kitaya VIII-IX, 3-4 (1931), pp. 182-3.

144. Anon, 'His Excellency Yang Teng-hsin', p. 87.



During the course of the meal Fan proposed a toast to the health of Yang Tseng-hsín, at which time

shots rang out simultaneously, all aimed at the Governor. Seven bullets in all were fired, and all reached their mark. Yang, mortally wounded, but superb in death, glared an angry defiance at his foes, 'who dares do this?' he questioned in the loud voice which had commanded instant obedience for so many years. Then he fell slowly forward, his last glance resting upon the face of the trusted Yen, as though to ask forgiveness that he had not listened to the advice so often given to him.<sup>145</sup>

According to Yen Ting-shan, who was himself wounded, Fan Yao-nan later finished Yang Tseng-hsin off with two further shots.<sup>146</sup>

Immediately after the assassination, in which some fifteen or sixteen people were killed or wounded, Fan went to Yang's official residence to seize the seals of office. Once inside the building he sent a letter summoning Chin Shu-jen, commissioner for civil affairs in Sinkiang and Yang's second in command. Chin called Fan's bluff by refusing to come and sending soldiers of his own to arrest Fan. In the power struggle which followed, Fan, who had seriously miscalculated the strength of his personal support, lost out. After a short gun battle he was arrested by Chin and subsequently executed, together with a number of his accomplices, on July 8th.<sup>147</sup>

The outwardly dignified and austere manner of the dead Yang Tseng-

145. From the eye-witness account of Yen Ting-shan ("the trusted Yen"); Wu Ai-chen, op.cit., p. 49. See also the detailed account of Yang's assassination, together with a photograph of Yang, Fan, Yen and the other main protagonists in Sven Hedin's Riddles of the Gobi Desert (London, 1933), pp. 60-70.

146. ibid.

147. According to G.N. Roerich (op.cit., p. 119), 'Fan Yao-han (sic) and his daughter were condemned to the ling-chi, a torture of being cut alive into 10,000 pieces. Fan was made to witness the horrible death of his daughter'. See also the lurid account of Fan's execution in Hedin's Sino-Swedish Expedition, Vol II, p.4.

hsin had made a favourable impression on many visitors, both Chinese and Western, to his province - especially when seen against a backdrop of contemporary China. Yet Yang's seventeen years of power, still widely portrayed as a period of comparative calm and justice for the indigenous peoples of Sinkiang,<sup>148</sup> were in reality no more than an ossified version of the Imperial administration where 'economic rapacity was brought to perfection'.<sup>149</sup> The seeds of Muslim revolt sown by Yang between 1912 and 1928 were ultimately to be reaped by his less able successor, Chin Shu-jen, during the early 1930s.

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148. See, for example, Richard Yang's 'Sinkiang Under the Administration of Governor Yang Tseng-hsin', an informative but uncritical eulogy of Yang's policies.

149. Nyman, op.cit., p. 28.

CHAPTER 4SINKIANG, 1928-31: THE REBELLION AT KUMUL AND THE FIRST TUNGAN INVASION

He was like the rider on the pale horse, which appeared when the fourth seal was broken: "And I looked, and behold a pale horse; and his name that sat on him was death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with the sword, and with hunger and death, and with the beasts of the earth.

Sven Hedin, on Ma Chung-ying.<sup>1</sup>

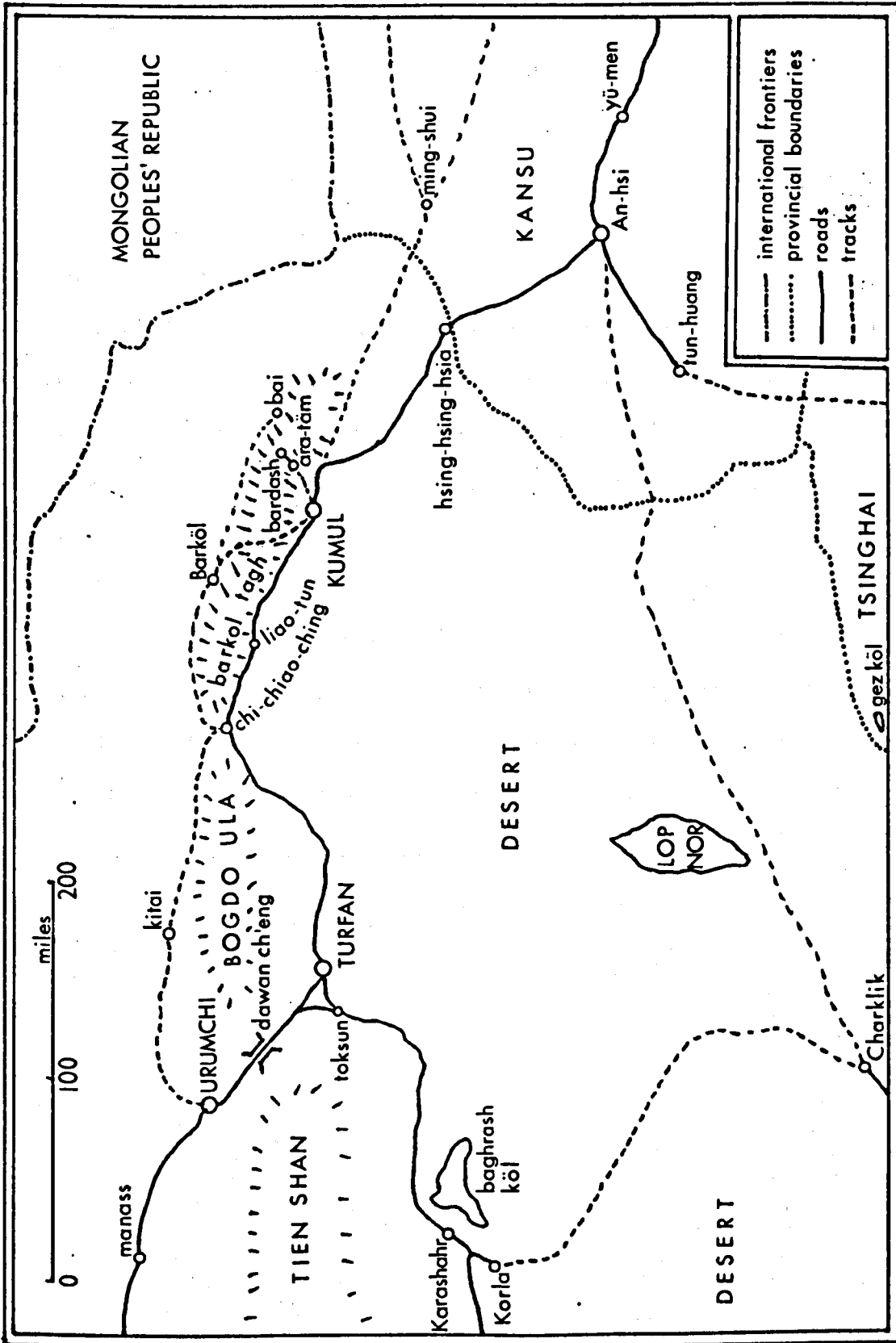
He was a silly boy. He went mad. He murdered everyone.

Rewi Alley, on Ma Chung-ying.<sup>2</sup>

#### 4.1 The Administration of Chin Shu-jen

Yang Tseng-hsin's successor, Chin Shu-jen (see plate 4), was a Han Chinese of Kansu, born in Tao-ho hsien, near Ho-chou (the modern Lin-hsia) circa 1883. After graduating from the Kansu provincial academy, he served for a time as the principal of a provincial normal school. He then entered the Imperial civil service, where he came to the attention of Yang Tseng-hsin, then district magistrate at Ho-chou. Chin must have made a favourable impression on Yang, for when the latter was transferred to Sinkiang in 1907, Chin followed him to serve

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1. Hedin, S., Big Horse's Flight (London, 1936), p. 17.
  2. Davidson, B., Turkestan Alive, p. 109. Rewi Alley is a New Zealander, who has lived in China for over forty years and who knew Ma Chung-ying personally.



MAP 5. North-eastern Sinkiang: Towns and Communications

as a hsien (district) magistrate.<sup>3</sup> Following the collapse of the Ch'ing in 1911, Chin rose steadily in rank throughout Yang Tseng-hsin's long period of absolute power (in the light of Yang's known tendency to surround himself with opium addicts<sup>4</sup> and sycophants, a sure sign of mediocrity). In 1927, Chin became provincial commissioner for civil affairs at Urumchi, a post which he held at the time of Yang's assassination in July 1928.<sup>5</sup>

After his elimination of Fan Yao-nan, Chin, who was already in effective control of Sinkiang, sent a telegram to Nanking seeking official KMT recognition of his position. Faced with a fait accompli Nanking had no alternative other than to confirm Chin in office, though under the new KMT terminology he was appointed Provincial chairman (Ch. chu-hsi) and commander-in-chief (Ch. tsung -ssu-ling) in contrast to his predecessor, Yang Tseng-hsin, whose official titles had been provincial governor (Ch. sheng-ch'ang) and military governor (Ch. tu-chün).

Immediately following his seizure of power Chin took steps to secure his position. As a first step the secret police force was sub-

3. Boorman and Howard, Biographical Dictionary of Republican China, Vol I, p. 381. In later years Chin was to claim that he never wished to go to Sinkiang: 'when Governor Yang of Sinkiang first sent for me to join him ...I twice refused to go. On the third occasion he added the taunt that I was afraid to leave my quiet country life for that dangerous region, and I could refuse him no longer'. Hogg, G., I See a New China (London, 1945), p. 118.
4. Two sources which indict Chin as an opium addict are: Cable, M., and F. French, The Gobi Desert (London, 1943), p. 219; Nyman, op.cit., p. 80. Georges Le fèvre, who met Chin during the Citroën Expedition's stay in Urumchi (in 1931), does not mention opium, but describes a dinner party at which Chin, 'sunk deep in his chair, eyes half-closed, preserved his habitual mask, turning his head towards a speaker without listening, looking without seeing, nodding without understanding, and smoking innumerable cigarettes, which were lit and inserted into his long jade cigarette holder by one of his guards'. An Eastern Odyssey (London, 1935), pp. 260-61.
5. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol I, p. 381.

stantially increased,<sup>6</sup> salaries for all ranks in both the army and police force were doubled, and new uniforms were issued.<sup>7</sup> Later the army was expanded, and Chin took steps to acquire new weapons.<sup>8</sup> The administrative system employed by the late Ch'ing governors and Yang Tseng-hsin was retained almost unchanged,<sup>9</sup> whilst in the appointment of provincial officials Chin followed the example of his mentor Yang Tseng-hsin by surrounding himself with a coterie of relatives and fellow-provincials. Under the new regime, therefore, Yunnanese followers of Yang (both Han and Hui) were rapidly replaced by Han Chinese from Chin's native Kansu - especially from the Ho-chou region.<sup>10</sup> Chin's younger brother, Chin Shu-hsin, was appointed provincial commissioner for military affairs at Urumchi, and another brother, Chin Shu-chih, was given the senior military post at Kashgar.<sup>11</sup> Similarly Chin's orderly and bodyguard, Ts'ui Chao-chi, was promoted to the position of brigade commander at Urumchi.<sup>12</sup>

Chin maintained and expanded Yang Tseng-hsin's system of internal surveillance and censorship. According to H. French Ridley of the China Inland Mission at Urumchi, people were executed for 'merely making in-

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6. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 65.
  7. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933. (Report of R.P. Watts, British Vice-Consul Kashgar, dated 21st October 1932).
  8. Hedin, S., Big Horse's Flight (London, 1936), p. 3; IOLR, L/P&S/12/2342. PZ.5695.1931. (Kashgar Annual Report, 1930-31).
  9. In another change of terminology under the new KMT system the eight tao-yin (circuit intendents) became known as hsiang-chung ch'ang-kuan (executive chief officials). For ease of reference the term tao-yin will be retained in the present study.
  10. A lampoon current in Urumchi during Chin's rule ended with the couplet "In the morning learn the Hochow dialect, and you'll get a fat job in the evening". Hedin, S., Big Horse's Flight, p. 171.
  11. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol I, p. 381; Chan, Fook-lam Gilbert, 'The Road to Power: Sheng Shih-ts'ai's Early years in Sinkiang, 1930-34', Journal of Oriental Studies, VII (1969), p. 230; cf. Lattimore, Pivot, p. 65.
  12. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol I, p. 381.

discreet remarks in the street during ordinary conversation'.<sup>13</sup> Besides increasing the strength of both the secret and ordinary police forces, Chin introduced a system of internal passports so that any journey performed within Sinkiang needed an official passport (signed, according to Jack Chen, by Chin himself),<sup>14</sup> thus tightening internal security and, incidentally, providing a further source of official revenue for the venal provincial administration. Travel outside the province became well-nigh impossible, especially for Han officials and merchants wishing to travel to China proper. Yet despite these precautions, Chin clearly felt insecure in his position as provincial chairman; several sources report that he hardly ever left his yamen, and when he did so it was only under the tightest security.<sup>15</sup>

Under Chin Shu-jen the economy of Sinkiang continued to deteriorate as the new chairman followed the example set by his predecessor in single-mindedly accumulating a personal fortune, only less discreetly, and at a greatly increased rate.<sup>16</sup> As has been shown, with

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13. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5443.32. According to members of the Citroën Expedition, who were detained by Chin in Urumchi for some months during 1931, the provincial chairman maintained an incinerator at his yamen where all imported printed matter was burned. Le Fèvre, G., An Eastern Odyssey, p. 173. For other details of censorship see: Hedin, S., Big Horse's Flight, p. 3; History of the Expedition in Asia, Vol II, p. 202; Nyman, op.cit., p. 80.
14. Chen, J., The Sinkiang Story, p. 174. It is difficult to see how Chin could have signed internal passports for the Kashgar region, whilst several hundred miles away in Urumchi. See however, Hedin, History of the Expedition in Asia, Vol II, p. 202, where it is stated that travel within Sinkiang was impossible without a permit bearing Chin Shu-jen's personal seal.
15. Le Fèvre, G., An Eastern Odyssey, p. 261; Hedin, S., History of the Expedition in Asia, Vol II, p. 25.
16. Chin almost certainly realised that, in contrast to Yang Tseng-hsin's time, contemporary political conditions militated against a prolonged period of personal power; for this reason he was anxious to make a substantial fortune and to return to China proper as soon as possible.

the collapse of the Ch'ing in 1911, Yang Tseng-hsin introduced a provincial fiduciary system based on the issue of four regional paper currencies. His initial issue of unbacked paper currency had a face value of 10 million taels. Chin Shu-jen took this process several stages further by expanding the issue to 145 million taels, thus fuelling the already considerable inflation within the province.<sup>17</sup> Under Yang Tseng-hsin land tax was already established as the major source of provincial revenue, though Yang took care not to push the Turkic peasantry into open revolt; under Chin, however, caution was thrown to the winds and land revenues were collected to almost double the legal amount.<sup>18</sup> Yang had been prepared to settle for a share - albeit substantial - in the profits made by private enterprise within his domain. Chin, however, emulated Ma Fu-hsing, the barbarous t'i-t'ai of Kashgar from 1916 to 1924, in establishing "government" monopolies on various profitable enterprises, notably the working of gold at Keriya and jade at Khotan. Chin also established a monopoly on the valuable wool and pelt trade of Sinkiang (notably karakul); and with the backing of the expanded police force and army he was able to force the sale of lambskins at a mere 10% of the market value.<sup>19</sup> Officials of Chin's administration also prospered. According to one contemporary Russian source, under Chin's

17. Chiang Chün-chang, Hsin-chiang chin-yin lun (Chungking, 1939), p. 136. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 66; cf. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933.
18. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 66; Nyman, op.cit., p. 81. According to an anonymous article published in the Tashkent edition of Pravda for 8th August, 1930: 'It is not possible to define accurately the limits of the taxes paid by the Tien Shan peasants, since they are collected not only in the form of a land tax (5 to 10% of the crop), but also by means of forced work, by the collection of money for the use of officials, by the surrender of a fixed number of days work to the priest (sic), by the rural administration, etc.' (Translation from the Russian in IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.477.1931, 'Tien Shan on the Verge of a Crisis').
19. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933; Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 66; Hedin, S., History of the Expedition in Asia, Vol II, p. 202.



regime only 12% of trade capital held in Urumchi belonged to local merchants, whilst 37% belonged to the "compradore bourgeoisie" (i.e. Han and foreign merchants), and a massive 51% belonged to Chinese officials.<sup>20</sup> As in Yang Tseng-hsin's time, wealth flowed out of the province in a continuous stream, much of it to banks in China proper. Chin was deeply involved in the export of gold bullion - indeed according to Sven Hedin, the provincial chairman maintained a personal monopoly on the export of gold dust.<sup>21</sup> Naturally Chin Shu-jen left no official records of his dealings in bullion, but indications of his involvement do exist. Georg Vasel, a German engineer (and Nazi agent)<sup>22</sup> who was active in the construction of airfields in Kansu during the early 1930s, records a meeting in Su-chou with a German pilot, Rathje, who had been employed by Chin to fly one million dollars' worth of bullion from Urumchi to Peking.<sup>23</sup> That Chin exported gold bullion by air is confirmed by Schomberg, a British colonel who travelled extensively in Sinkiang on behalf of the British intelligence services during the late

20. Nemchenko, M., 'Kolonial'nyi rezhim i agrarnye otnosheniya v Sin'tsyane' (The Colonial Régime and Agrarian Relations in Sinkiang), Problemy Kitaya VIII-IX, 3-4 (1931), p. 187.
21. Hedin, S., History of the Expedition in Asia, Vol II, p. 202. This is in contrast to Nyman's suggestion that 'even Governor Chin indulged in gold export by air to China proper' (implying widespread bullion export by Chin's subordinates) op.cit., p. 85; It should be borne in mind, however, that Hedin knew Chin personally, whilst Nyman is anxious to present Chin Shu-jen in a more favourable light than is usual.
22. Vasel, the author of two travel books on Northwest China, is clearly author of the anonymous, but overtly National Socialist article 'Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien', Berichte des Asiens Arbeitskreises, I (1939), pp. 5-30. I am obliged to David Gordon for pointing this out to me.
23. Vasel, G., My Russian Jailers in China (London, 1937), p. 97. According to Nemchenko, between 2 and 3 million dollars' worth of gold and Mexican silver dollars was exported from Sinkiang annually during Chin's regime. 'Kolonial'nyi rezhim i agrarnye otnosheniya v Sin'tsyane', p. 182.

1920s and early 1930s.<sup>24</sup> Chin also attempted to obtain hard currency from the Citroën Expedition, using much the same method as Yang Tseng-hsin had employed in his dealings with the Sino-Swedish Expedition in 1927.<sup>25</sup>

Le Fèvre records that the chairman had made an agreement with Haardt, the leader of the Citroën Expedition, to 'advance any sum in Sinkiang currency against payment in silver dollars to his account in Tientsin'. Once again, however, Chin proved more inept than his predecessor; the rate of exchange he offered Haardt was so prohibitive that the Frenchman had secretly to resort to the Urumchi black market.<sup>26</sup>

From the moment of his seizure of power, Chin Shu-jen did his best to exclude all foreigners and foreign influence from his domain.<sup>27</sup> His barely-concealed hostility to those Westerners who did manage to visit Urumchi is generally attributed to Chin's supposedly deep-seated xenophobia.<sup>28</sup> Indeed it seems highly probable that Chin had little love for Europeans, whether capitalist or communist. It should be noted, however, that many of the "diplomats" and "explorers" active in Sinkiang during the

24. PRO, FO 371/16214 - F 3035/340/10. Schomberg, R.F.C., (Report on Sinkiang, 1930-31), esp. pp. 2,4; see also IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5443. 32 (Information supplied by Revd. H. French Ridley, China Inland Mission, recently returned from Urumchi).

25. See above, p. 104.

26. Le Fèvre, G., An Eastern Odyssey, p. 263. The rate demanded by the avaricious Chin Shu-jen was 250% that asked by the Urumchi representatives of the various Tientsin firms operating in Sinkiang.

27. Chin forbade the British Consul General at Kashgar to visit Urumchi; IOLR/L/P&S/10/976, p.3679,1929 (Kashgar Monthly Diaries, Feb. 1929); he made considerable difficulties for the Citroën Expedition (Le Fèvre An Eastern Odyssey, pp. 253-68, 'In the Trap of Urumchi'), and for Hedin's Sino-Swedish Expedition (History of the Expedition in Asia, Vol II, pp. 25-31).

28. Hedin, S., Big Horse's Flight, p. 3. See, however, Lattimore, O., High Tartary, pp. 304-6, for an alternative view.

1920s and early 1930s were, in fact, in the employ of foreign powers seeking to influence the course of events in Central Asia.<sup>29</sup> Nor was Chin's "xenophobia" limited to Westerners; he imposed strict limits on contacts between Sinkiang and China proper, and excluded KMT functionaries from the province whenever possible. It has been suggested that Chin sought to conceal from Nanking the extent of his misgovernment,<sup>30</sup> but it is more probable that he simply wished to keep the KMT ignorant of his operations and thus less able to interfere; besides, in Republican China misgovernment by warlord governments, including the KMT at Nanking, was the established norm.

Doubtless Chin Shu-jen sought to emulate his more able predecessor by maintaining in Sinkiang a closed, almost medieval society, and he would probably have been content to limit external trade to the exchange of long-distance caravans with China proper.<sup>31</sup> However, by the late 1920s this was no longer possible. Under normal conditions a transport from Urumchi to Tientsin took from 120 to 180 days,<sup>32</sup> but following Feng Yu-hsiang's occupation of eastern Kansu and the resultant increase in civil disorder, trade along this route was completely disrupted.<sup>33</sup> This

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29. Most notably Lt.Col. R.F.C. Schomberg and Georg Vassel, both of whom have already been cited. Hedin, the leader of the Sino-Swedish Expedition, was later (in 1933) employed by the Nanking Government to study the possibility of improved road links with Sinkiang. (Hedin, S., The Silk Road (London, 1938), pp. 9-14). Nyman characterises Chin's period of rule as a time when 'Sinkiang became the target of political influence from Great Britain, the Kuomintang, Japan, Germany and Turkey' (op.cit., p. 79). Chin's reaction was to exclude as many foreigners as possible.

30. Hedin, S., Big Horse's Flight, p. 3.

31. See above, p. 104.

32. Camel caravans travelling from Sinkiang to China proper left Ku-ch'eng-tze for the railhead in Sui-yuan via Inner Mongolia, a distance of over 1200 miles; alternatively carts left Kumul for the railhead in Shensi via Kansu, an even greater distance. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 172.

33. Barber, A., and N.D. Hanwell, 'The Emergence of China's Far West', Far Eastern Survey, VIII, 9 (April 26th, 1939), p. 103.

severing of the traditional trade route to China coincided with the re-emergence of Russia, in its Soviet guise, as Sinkiang's major trading partner.<sup>34</sup> In 1926 the Soviet government decided to construct a new railroad linking Frunze, the capital of the Kirghiz SSR, with Semipalatinsk in western Siberia. This railroad, to be known as the Turksib, was aimed primarily at the development of Western Turkestan and at its fuller integration within the Soviet economic system. However it was made clear by Artemi Khalatov, a leading official in the Soviet Railway Commissariat, that the new railroad (which ran parallel to the Sinkiang frontier for over 400 miles) was also designed to 'prevent the penetration of western European capitalism into Sinkiang'.<sup>35</sup> With the completion of the Turksib in 1930 the Soviet economic stranglehold on Sinkiang became all but complete.<sup>36</sup> China's share of the Sinkiang market dropped to a mere 12.5%,<sup>37</sup> and the value of Soviet trade with the province, which at the time of Russian Civil War had fallen to almost nil, rose to over 32 million roubles during the course of 1930.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, the extension of a virtual Soviet trade monopoly over Sinkiang adversely affected

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34. See above, p. 103; also Nyman, op.cit., pp. 35-8. IOLR, L/P&S/2/2336. PZ.3394.1932 (Soviet Trade with Sinkiang) contains a detailed report on "Sovsintorg", the Soviet-Sinkiang Trading Company.

35. Khalatov, A., O Turkestano-Sibirskoi Zheleznoi Doroge (1927), pp. 29-31; cited in Dallin, D.J., Soviet Russia and the Far East (New Haven, 1948), p. 91; cf. Cheng Tien-fong, A History of Sino-Russian Relations (Westport, Connecticut, 1975), p. 168.

36. Chan, Fook-lam Gilbert, op.cit., p. 231; Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, pp. 66-7. Ts'eng Wen-wu, 'Su-o tui Hsin-chiang chih ching-chi ch'in-lueh' (Soviet Russia's Economic Aggression Against Sinkiang), Hsin Ya-hsi-ya, VII, 2 (Feb 1934) p. 50.

37. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 172.

38. ibid., pp. 66-7. According to the anonymous article 'Tien Shan on the Verge of a Crisis' (Pravda, 8th August 1930), trade between the USSR and Sinkiang increased eightfold between 1925 and 1930. (IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.477.1931).

the local merchants and cotton farmers, who found themselves unable to compete. The resultant decline in the fortunes of these Sinkiang merchants was reflected in a fall in revenue which, in an all-too familiar vicious circle, led to additional forms of taxation being devised by the provincial authorities.<sup>39</sup> The completion of the Turksib also contributed substantially to the growth of Soviet political influence in Sinkiang. It became faster and easier to travel from China proper to Sinkiang via Vladivostok, the Trans-Siberian and the Turksib than across Northwest China;<sup>40</sup> besides adding to Soviet prestige in the eyes of the Turkic Muslims of Sinkiang, this naturally gave the Soviet government a degree of control over Nanking's relations with Urumchi through its right to withhold visas, and thus to control the accessibility of Sinkiang to KMT officials.<sup>41</sup>

#### 4.2 The Annexation of the Khanate of Kumul

Chin Shu-jen's policies towards the Turkic Muslims of Sinkiang, as well as towards the Tungans and Mongols, were singularly misconceived from the very beginning of his rule. According to Mildred Cable and Francesca French, two British missionaries long resident in Northwest China at the time of Chin's seizure of power:

Chin Shu-jen, Governor of Chinese Turkestan, had none of the qualities essential to good rule or wise administration. He was a man beset by fears, alternately too feeble or

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39. Beloff, M., The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia (London, 1966), Vol. I, pp. 231-2.

40. Wu Ai-chen travelled to Sinkiang on behalf of the Nanking government during 1932 by this route. Turkistan Tumult, pp. 5-20.

41. Beloff, op.cit., Vol I, p. 231; cf. Cheng Tien-fong, op.cit., p. 169.

too harsh, dealing out leniency to the rich and severity to the poor, and showing that combination of tyranny and vacillation which is the most fatal characteristic that an autocrat can possess.<sup>42</sup>

According to Nyman, Chin was prejudiced against Muslims 'because of unpleasant experiences in his home province of Kansu'.<sup>43</sup> Whatever the truth of this assertion, Chin rapidly antagonised both his Turkic and Tungan Muslim subjects by introducing a tax on the butchering of all animals in the province,<sup>44</sup> and by forbidding Muslims to perform the hājj to Mecca, 'probably to stop money leaving the country'.<sup>45</sup> Clumsy attempts by the provincial administration to impose Han Chinese officials on the Kirghiz and Mongol nomads of the Tien Shan led to armed demonstrations against Chin and the death of a number of Mongols during 1929.<sup>46</sup> As a result of these and other similarly short-sighted policies, the Muslim majority of the province, as well as the militarily important Torgut Mongols of the Tien Shan, came to despise Chin Shu-jen.<sup>47</sup>

Despite this widespread hostility towards Chin, the first challenges to his autocratic rule came not from the various minority peoples of the province, but from ambitious Han officers under his command. In May, 1929, the Tao-yin of Altai attempted to stage a coup against Chin's régime, but the provincial chairman had been forewarned, and was able to confine

42. Cable, M., and F. French, The Gobi Desert (London, 1943), p. 220.

43. Nyman, op.cit., p. 80.

44. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2342, PZ.5695.1931 (Kashgar Annual Report, 1930-31).

45. IOLR, L/P&S/2/2336, (Lt.Col. Schomberg's Report on Sinkiang, 1930-31), p. 21.

46. ibid., p. 9 ('Action Against the Nomads').

47. Lin Tung-hai 'Impressions of Sinkiang', People's Tribune, NS, V (1933), p. 534.

any fighting to the Shara Sume area.<sup>48</sup> In the spring of 1931 troubles broke out in Urumchi itself, as discontented Han officers and soldiers launched an attack on Chin's yamen. The attack failed, and the instigators of the plot were summarily executed.<sup>49</sup>

Chin finally pushed the Turkic Muslims of Sinkiang into open rebellion in 1931 as a result of his annexation of the Kumul Khanate, known to the Chinese as Ha-mi. After Tso Tsung-t'ang's reconquest of Sinkiang in the 1870s, a few local principalities were permitted to survive on a semi-autonomous basis, rather like the "native states" of the British Indian Empire. Kumul, the most important of these semi-autonomous principalities, was ruled by a royal family which dated back to the Ming Dynasty and which may have been descended from the Chagatai Khans.<sup>50</sup> The Khanate of Kumul, which dominated the chief road from Sinkiang to China proper and was therefore of considerable strategic importance to the Chinese, extended from I-wan-ch'üan northwards to the Barköl Tagh, thence along the tops of the mountains to Bai and south-eastwards to Hsing-hsing-hsia on the Sinkiang Kansu frontier. To the south the Khanate was bounded by the barren wastes of the Ghashun Gobi

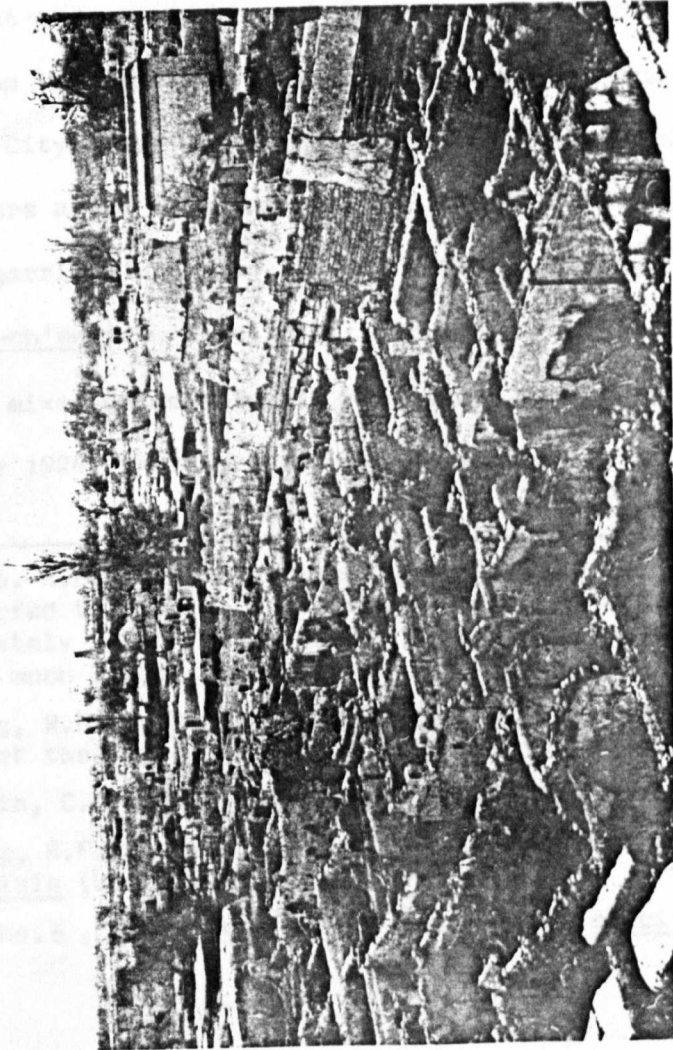
48. PRO, FO 371/14270 - F 2031/416/10 (Schomberg, 'Memo on Chinese Turkestan'), p. 3.

49. ibid.

50. Matsumura Jun, 'Mindai Hami oke no kigen' (On the origin of the Royal Family of Kumul during the Ming Period), Toyo Gakuho, XXXIX, 4 (March 1957), pp. 32-48. Less important "princely states" existed in Sinkiang at Lukchun, Aksu and Kuchar. Hedin, S., History of the Expedition in Asia, Vol I, p. 225. According to Von le Coq, who visited Kumul in 1906, only the rulers of Kumul and Lukchun were mamlakat wang, or "Kings of the realm", whilst the ruler of Aksu was merely a khizmatkar-wang, or "titular king". Von le Coq, A., Buried Treasures of Chinese Turkestan (London, 1928), p. 150.

Plates 9 and 10:

## VICTIMS OF CHIN SHU-JEN



Ruins of Kumul  
c. 1932.



Tsetsen Puntsag Gegeen  
c. 1930.



(see Map No. 5).<sup>51</sup>

At the time of the 1911 revolution Maqsūd Shāh, then aged about 47 years, was on the throne of Kumul - known to the Chinese as the Ha-mi wang (king), to his subjects as Khān Maqsūd or Sultān Maqsūd, and to European travellers as "the King of the Gobi". He was the 'last independent Khan of Central Asia...who had seen his fellow rulers all flung into the stew-pot of progress'.<sup>52</sup> Yang Tseng-hsin, who came to power in 1912, was content to let Kumul retain its semi-autonomous status; besides, Maqsūd Shāh was friendly towards the Chinese.<sup>53</sup> He spoke Turkic with a marked Chinese accent, and wore Chinese clothes; on the other hand, he had a long white beard and always wore a turban or a Uighur cap.<sup>54</sup> A staunch Muslim, the Khan ruled his petty oasis kingdom from an ancient and ramshackle palace in Kumul proper - one of the three towns making up the capital of the Kumul oasis and known to the Chinese as the Muslim City (Ch. Hui-ch'eng). The Khan had a bodyguard of 40 Chinese soldiers armed with mausers, and was able to call on the services of a Chinese garrison billeted in the fortified Chinese town, or Old City (Ch. Lao-ch'eng). The third town, known as New City (Ch. Hsin-ch'eng) had a mixed Chinese-Turkic population and contained the main bazaars.<sup>55</sup> By 1928, shortly after the assassination of Yang Tseng-hsin,

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51. Schomberg, R.F.C., 'Hami or Komol', JRCAS, XVI, 1 (1929), p. 91. The Bai referred to lies to the north-east of the Karlik Tagh, in approximately 94°05' east, 43°30' north, and should not be confused with the much larger Bai in the central Tien Shan foothills.
52. Schomberg, R.F.C., A Turkestan Diary, 1926-29 (unpublished Ts. in the library of the Royal Central Asian Society), p. 45.
53. Mannerheim, C.G., Across Asia, 1906-8 (Dosterhout, 1969), p. 382.
54. Schomberg, R.F.C., 'Hami or Komul', p. 91; also Peaks and Plains of Central Asia (London, 1933), p. 82.
55. See Map No. 6, based on a map in Mannerheim, op.cit., p. 386.

it was estimated that the ageing Maqsūd Shāh ruled over a population of between 25,000 and 30,000 Kumulliks. The Khān was responsible for levying taxes and dispensing justice; his administration rested on 21 beqs, 4 of whom were responsible for Kumul itself, five others being responsible for the plains villages, and the remaining twelve administering the mountainous regions of the Barköl and Karlik Tagh.<sup>56</sup> Maqsūd Shāh also maintained a Turkic militia which was reputed to be better trained than its counterpart in the predominantly Chinese Old City.<sup>57</sup> Throughout Yang Tseng-hsin's long period of power Kumul remained relatively peaceful and prosperous.<sup>58</sup> Maqsūd Shāh paid a small annual tribute to Urumchi, and in return the Sinkiang government paid him a formal subsidy of 1,200 silver taels each year - no doubt in Yang Tseng-hsin's opinion a small enough sum for ensuring the continued obedience of the strategically vital Khanate. For the Uighurs of Kumul autonomy meant freedom from 'the usual swarm of rapacious Chinese officials'.<sup>59</sup> The only tax paid by the citizens of Kumul was a small one of sheep or goats annually to the Khan. The soil of the oasis was rich and well-cultivated, and the condition of the Kumulliks before 1929 was one of relative contentment and prosperity.<sup>60</sup> According to Mildred Cable and Francesca French, both of whom knew Maqsūd Shāh personally, the continued existence of the Khanate of Kumul was also

56. Schomberg, 'Hami or Komul', p. 92.

57. ibid.

58. Yang did experience some slight troubles at Kumul during the first year of his rule. See above, p. 80 ; also Yang, R., 'Sinkiang Under the Administration of Yang Tseng-hsin', pp. 289-90.

59. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933 ('Khanate of Hami'), p. 3.

60. ibid., Note, however, that both Mannerheim, op.cit., pp. 380-5; and Cable and French, The Gobi Desert, pp. 220-1, state that the Khan sometimes overtaxed his subjects.

of psychological importance to the Uighurs of Turfan and the Tarim Basin:

The Moslem elements in the important oases, always so difficult to conciliate, were only tolerant...so long as their own seat of government was firmly established at Hami under Khan Maksud Shah, a man of their own race, religion and speech, who still held the proud title of King of the Gobi.<sup>61</sup>

Whilst Yang Tseng-hsin appreciated the importance of Kumul's autonomous status for the continuing peace of the province, his successor, Chin Shu-jen, clearly did not. For the first 19 months of his rule Chin Shu-jen was content to maintain the traditional status quo, although when Schomberg visited Kumul in February 1928 (only seven months after Chin's seizure of power), the area was under martial law, presumably because of Tungan warlord activities in neighbouring Kansu.<sup>62</sup> Then, in March, 1930 Khan Maqsūd Shāh died of old age. Maqsūd's eldest son and heir, Naṣīr, should have inherited the throne of Kumul, but Chin Shu-jen and his Han subordinates stationed in Kumul Old City had other plans for the future of the Kumulliks. Shortly after his father's death Naṣīr travelled to Urumchi, the provincial capital. There is some doubt as to the reason for his presence in Urumchi. Both Lattimore and Hai state that Naṣīr was unpopular and that he went to Urumchi to seek Chin's aid in imposing himself on the people of Kumul.<sup>63</sup> According to several other sources, however, Naṣīr together with his chief counsellor Yulbārs Khān (see plate 12),

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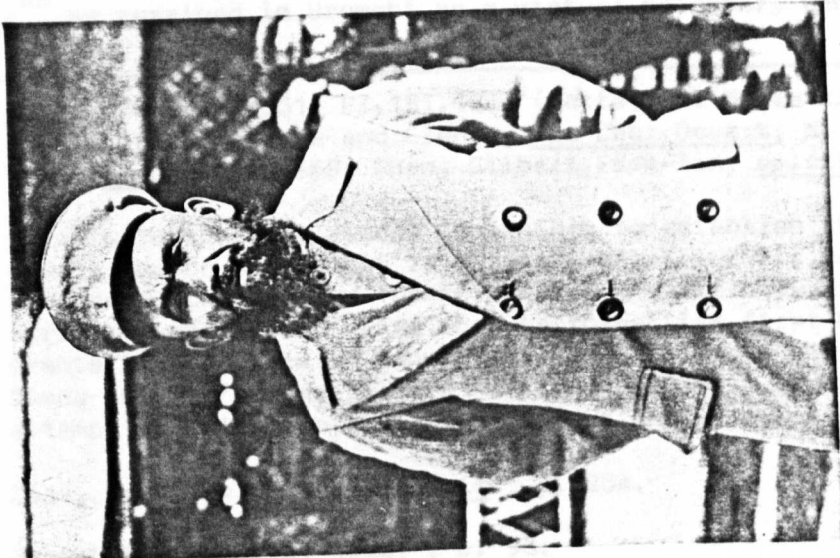
61. Cable and French, op.cit., p. 220.

62. Schomberg, 'Hami or Komul', p. 92.

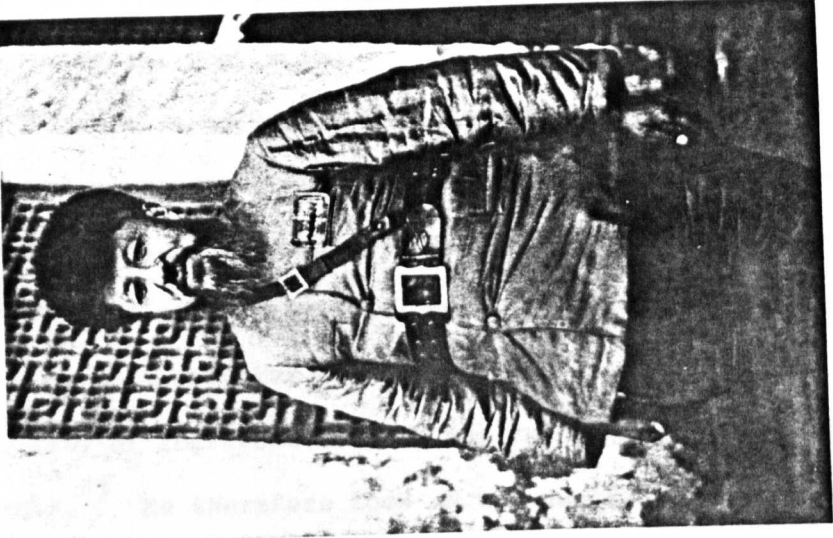
63. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, pp. 67-8; Hai, Badruddin Wee-liang, Muslim Minority in China (unpublished MA thesis, Columbia University, NY, 1956), p. 100. Hai's information, at least, must be treated with caution, as he calls Maqsūd Khan's successor 'Shakir'.

Plates II and I2:

LEADERS OF THE KUMUL RISING



Khoja Niyās Hājji  
c. 1932.



Yulbārs Khān  
c. 1932.

was ordered to Urumchi by Chin Shu-jen in order to make formal submission to the provincial government.<sup>64</sup> Chin's subsequent behaviour and the fate of the Kumul Khanate would seem to indicate that the latter version of events is nearer the truth.<sup>65</sup>

At the time of Maqsūd Shāh's death Li Hsi-ts'eng, a Han Chinese divisional commander stationed at Kumul, suggested to Chin Shu-jen that the Khanate should be abolished and its inhabitants brought under the direct control of the provincial administration.<sup>66</sup> There can be little doubt that Chin welcomed this advice - control over Kumul would offer the possibility of increased revenue and new positions for Han Chinese officials.<sup>67</sup> He therefore took up the suggestion, ordered Naṣīr and Yulbārs to Urumchi, and rushed a resolution through a meeting of his ministers abolishing the Khanate and dividing Kumul into three separate administrative districts, Ha-mi (centred around the capital), I-ho and I-wu.<sup>68</sup> When Naṣīr arrived in Urumchi he was given the position of "senior adviser" to the provincial government and forbidden to return to Kumul;<sup>69</sup> he remained in Urumchi as a virtual prisoner, and according to

64. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933 (Watts), p. 3; Wu Ai-chen, Turkistan Tumult, p. 62; Cable and French, The Gobi Desert, p. 220; Cheng Tien-fong, op.cit., p. 169; Chan, Gilbert Fook-lam, op.cit., p. 234.

65. It is, unfortunately, almost impossible to establish the true course of events, since no account is entirely reliable. All western sources are secondary. Chinese and Turkic sources are strictly limited and equally strictly unreliable. Even when retrospective first-hand accounts of events taking place in Republican Sinkiang are available - viz works by Sheng Shih-ts'ai and Yulbars Khan in the bibliography - they invariably attempt to whitewash the activities of their respective authors.

66. Chan, Fook-lam Gilbert, op.cit., p. 234.

67. Schomberg, 'Hami or Komul', p. 93.

68. Wu Ai-chen, Turkistan Tumult, p. 62. The names I-ho and I-wu dated from the Han dynasty, and were presumably adopted by Chin Shu-jen in an attempt to provide historical legitimacy for his actions. Fu Tung-hsien, Chung-kuo Hui-chiao shih (Shanghai, 1940), p. 174.

69. Chan, op.cit., p. 234; Wu, op.cit., p. 62.

one Chinese source only escaped with his life by bribing Chin heavily.<sup>70</sup> Yulbars, on the other hand, was sent back to Kumul with a group of Chinese officials who had been instructed by Chin to set up the new administrative machinery.<sup>71</sup>

It has been suggested by Lattimore, no doubt with some justification, that the Kumulliks had little love for their Khanate, and that only a minority of the population wished for Naṣīr to inherit his father's position.<sup>72</sup> It is true that the old Khān had, on occasion, over-taxed his people and earned their ire as a result.<sup>73</sup> There were other factors, however, which suggest that Lattimore's analysis (which relies primarily on Tu Chung-yūan, a pro-Chinese source) may overstate the disregard in which the Kumulliks held their Khān; besides the question of Uighur national pride, already mentioned above, the Khanate is said to have held some religious significance for the Turkic Muslims of Sinkiang.<sup>74</sup> There was also an important economic factor - elsewhere in Sinkiang Han Chinese immigrants were permitted to settle on untilled land; with the abolition of the Khanate traditional restrictions on Han settlement in the region were lifted, a development which found absolutely no approval with the Uighur citizens of Kumul.<sup>75</sup> Whatever the original attitude of the Kumulliks to Naṣīr, Chin Shu-jen was shortly to learn that - in the words

70. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933 ('Khanate of Hami'), p. 3. Tu Chung-yūan, Sheng Shih-ts'ai yū hsin Hsin-chiang (Shanghai, 1938), p. 65, states that Naṣīr bribed Chen to avoid harm.

71. Wu Ai-chen, Turkistan Tumult, p. 62; Cable and French, The Gobi Desert, p. 220.

72. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 68.

73. See, for example, Cable and French, The Gobi Desert, pp. 220-1.

74. Wu Ai-chen, Turkistan Tumult, p. 63.

75. ibid.

of the Nanking official Wu Ai-chen - 'subject peoples obstinately prefer self-government to good government'.<sup>76</sup> Since Chin's government of Kumul was anything but good, the bitterness with which the Kumulliks regarded the passing of their Khanate may be easily imagined.

The newly-appointed Chinese administration upset the people of Kumul almost from the minute of its installation. It was announced that the privilege of exemption from direct taxation by Urumchi was to be abolished; moreover, to add insult to injury, one year's "arrears" of taxes were to be collected from the Uighur Kumulliks. Meanwhile Kumul was thrown open to Chinese settlement, and it was announced that settlers taking up this offer were exempt from taxation for two years.<sup>77</sup> To make matters worse, Kumul, which is situated on the chief road from north-western Kansu to Sinkiang, was at this time subjected to a flow of refugees from famine and warfare in the former province.<sup>78</sup> A column of these unfortunate emigrants was seen by Berger Bohlin of the Sino-Swedish Expedition in April 1931; his account makes it clear that people in Kansu were well aware of Chin's opening of the Kumul region to Han settlement:

During my stay at Hua-hai-tze I witnessed a curious spectacle. The Chen-fan region had for a number of years been visited by failure of the crops and famine, and large numbers of people therefore emigrated to more prosperous tracts. Such an emigration-wave now passed Hua-hai-tze. It consisted of a caravan of 100 camels, transporting 150 persons with all their baggage to Sinkiang, where it was said that land was being

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76. ibid.

77. Chan, op. cit., p. 234.

78. For accounts of conditions in contemporary Kansu see: Harris, G.K., 'The Rebellion in Kansu', Moslem World, XIX, 3 (1929), pp. 291-8; Ekvall, R.B., 'Revolt of the Crescent in Western China', Asia, XXIX (1929), pp. 994-7; 1004-7; also Sheridan, J.E., Chinese Warlord: The Career of Feng Yu-hsiang (Stanford, 1966), pp. 193-7 ('The Kuominchün in Kansu').

thrown open.<sup>79</sup>

The refugees clearly were not entirely destitute, however, for Bohlin emphasizes that all were 'carefree and happy' and seemed 'fairly prosperous'. Chin Shu-jen, a Kansu man himself, was anxious to settle in Sinkiang as many of these refugees as possible - yet land was not as plentiful, nor Sinkiang as prosperous as the refugees had been led to believe.<sup>80</sup> Chin solved the problem by ordering Lung Hsieh-lin, the Chinese amban in charge of I-ho district, to provide land for the would-be settlers from Kansu.<sup>81</sup> Lung responded by forcing his Uighur subjects to leave their own cultivated land and handing it over to the Kansu Chinese. The expropriated Uighurs were "compensated" with untilled lands on the fringe of the desert where the soil was barren.<sup>82</sup> According to Lattimore the re-settled Uighurs were then assessed for land tax on the basis of their old holdings (despite the fact that it was customary in Sinkiang for previously untilled land to be exempted from taxation for the first two years of cultivation), whilst the Kansu settlers who had been given the expropriated Uighur land were excused payment of tax for three years.<sup>83</sup> The Kumulliks, sorely tried, organised a petition

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79. Bohlin, B., 'Palaeontological and Geological Researches in Mongolia and Kansu, 1929-33' in History of the Expedition in Asia, Vol IV, p. 285. See also Bohlin's plate 7a, op.cit., p. 284.
80. According to one contemporary Russian source, the fertile acreage of Sinkiang amounted to between 750,000 and 850,000 hectares, but only 5% of this was under cotton or scientific cultivation; failure to develop agriculture was blamed on excessive land tax. The same source indicates that famine threatened large parts of Sinkiang in 1930, with the mass of the peasantry subsisting on maize cake. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.447.1931.
81. Chan, op.cit., p. 234; Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 68.
82. Wu Ai-chen, Turkistan Tumult, pp. 63-4.
83. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 68; According to Badruddin Wee-liang Hai (op.cit., p. 181), expropriated Uighur land was also given to Han officers in Chin's army.



which was duly despatched to the chairman's yamen in Urumchi. No acknowledgement was received, and nothing was done to redress the grievances of the dispossessed Uighurs.<sup>84</sup> Instead the settlement of Kansu Chinese was continued, and the price of food in the Kumul region began to climb steeply as a result of the large numbers of provincial troops billeted in the oasis and on the Kansu frontier.<sup>85</sup> For the moment the Turkic Muslims of the region remained peaceful, perhaps lulling Chin Shu-jen into a sense of false security, but according to Sven Hedin, whose Sino-Swedish Expedition remained in Sinkiang and Kansu during Chin's period of control:

Discontent increased; the people clenched their teeth and bided their time; the atmosphere was tense and gloomy. Inflammable matter accumulated, and only a spark was needed to fire the powder magazine.<sup>86</sup>

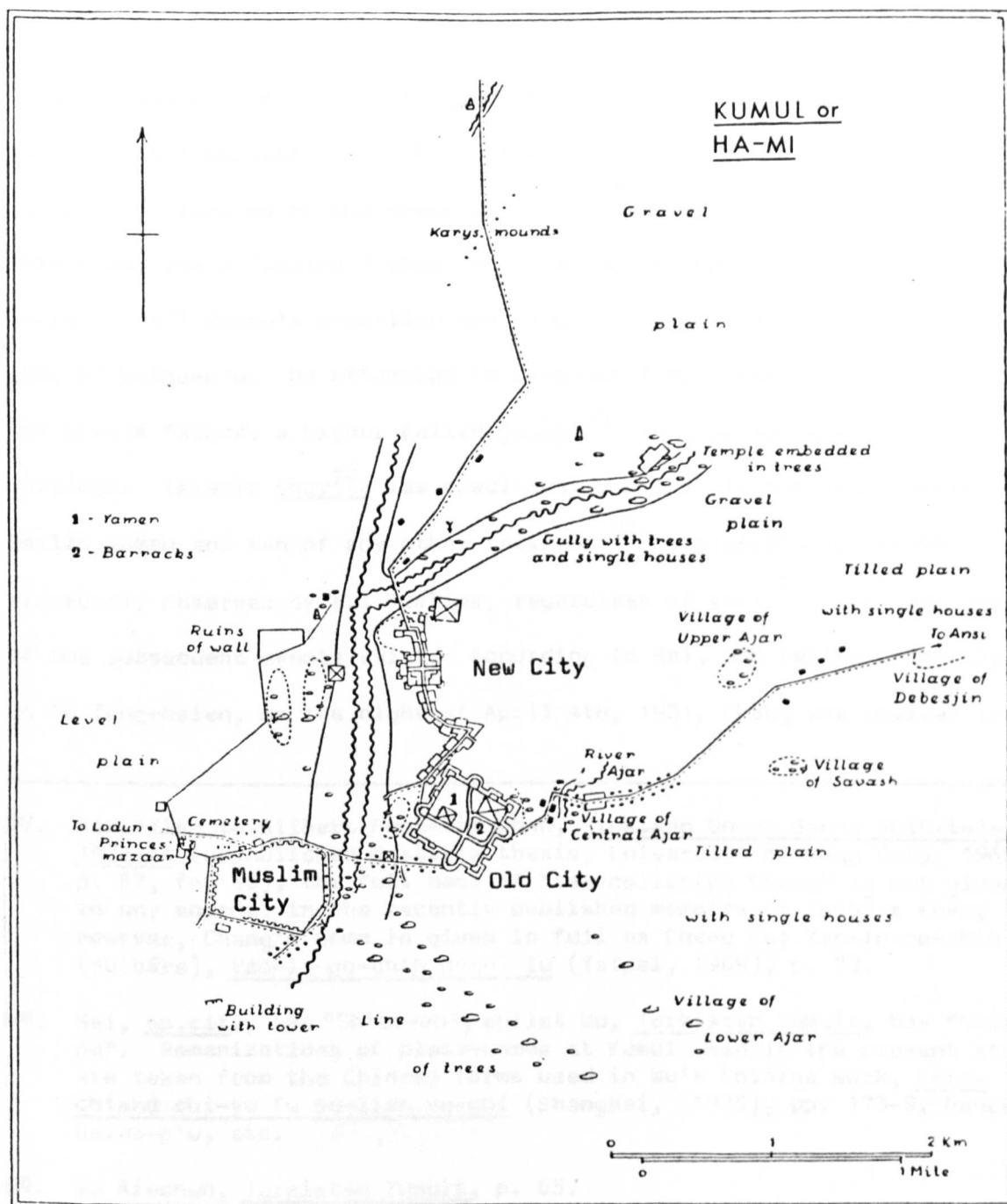
#### 4.3 The Kumul Rebellion

The explosion at Kumul began as the result of a religious and cultural slight which offended the sensibilities of the whole Muslim population, both Turkic and Tungan, and united them against the Chinese authorities. As a result of the administrative reorganization which accompanied Chin Shu-jen's annexation of the Kumul Khanate, a young

84. According to two Chinese sources, Lung Hsieh-lin withheld the petition from Chin Shu-jen. Chan, op.cit., pp. 234-5; Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 64.

85. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933, p. 3. According to Lattimore the Kumulliks were further angered by a decree issued by the new administration requiring every citizen to purchase a set quota of salt daily from the Kumul Salt Bureau; alternatively they might pay cash for a "salt certificate". Pivot of Asia, p. 68.

86. Hedin, S., Big Horse's Flight, p. 3.



MAP 6. Kumul or Ha-mi: Based on a map drawn by Field Marshal C.G. Mannerheim in 1907.\* The oasis was divided into three towns and numerous villages. The Muslim City and surrounding villages were predominantly Uighur, whilst the New City was mixed, and the "Old City" (in fact, much newer than the Muslim City), was dominated by the Chinese.

\* op.cit., p. 386.

Chinese called Chang Mu,<sup>87</sup> from Chin's native district in Kansu, was appointed tax-collector and chief of police to the small village of Hsiao-p'u, located to the north of Kumul.<sup>88</sup> According to Wu Ai-chen this Chang was a 'wastrel' whose conduct soon became a public scandal.<sup>89</sup> Early in 1931 Chang's attention was caught by a pretty Turkic Muslim girl of Hsiao-p'u. He attempted to make use of his position to force the girl's father, a Uighur called Ṣalāh,<sup>90</sup> to give him the girl in marriage. Islamic shari'a law specifically prohibits marriage between Muslim women and men of any other religion,<sup>91</sup> a proscription which is rigorously observed by all Muslims, regardless of sect.<sup>92</sup> Two versions of the subsequent events exist. According to Hai, who relies primarily on Fu Tung-hsien, on the night of April 4th, 1931, Chang was invited to

87. According to Gilbert Fook-lam Chan, Sinkiang Under Sheng Shih-ts'ai, 1933-44 (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Hong Kong, 1965, p. 87, fn. 15), the full name of "tax collector Chang" is not given in any source; in the recently published memoirs of Yulbars Khan, however, Chang's name is given in full as Chang Mu; Yao-lo-po-shih (Yulbārs), Yao-lo-po-shih hui-i lu (Taipei, 1969), p. 78.
88. Hai, op.cit., has "Shiao-pu", whilst Wu, Turkistan Tumult, has "Siao-pu". Romanizations of place-names at Kumul used in the present study are taken from the Chinese forms used in Wu's Chinese work, Hsin-chiang chi-yu fu Su-lien yu-chi (Shanghai, 1935), pp. 173-9, hence Hsiao-p'u, etc.
89. Wu Ai-chen, Turkistan Tumult, p. 65.
90. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2392, Ext. 4910.1941 ("Who's Who in Sinkiang to 15th April 1940") p. 19 (Saleh Lu Cheng). Hai, op.cit., pp. 101-2, calls the girl's father 'Abdullāh. The two names are not mutually exclusive.
91. Schacht, J., An Introduction to Islamic Law (Oxford, 1964).
92. The story of Chang's attempted marriage to a Muslim girl grew almost out of recognizable proportions as it spread westwards from Kumul across the Muslim world. In 1933 the British Consul-General at Kashgar heard that Turkic girls were demanded as wives by all the Chinese officials at Kumul (IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933, p. 3), whilst according to an Iranian source dated Teheran, 1960, 'Thousands of Chinese were moved en masse into Turkestan, and the people of Turkestan were forced to give their daughters in marriage under the threat of prison and torture', Isma'il, M.S., Moslems in the Soviet Union and China (JPRS, 3936, 1960), p. 8.

eat at the girl's house, apparently in honour of the forthcoming wedding. During the course of the meal Chang was attacked by Uighur conspirators, and was killed along with 32 members of his 'bodyguard'.<sup>93</sup> Wu Ai-chen implies that Chang had already seduced the girl, and that the 'ulamā' never had any intention of permitting the marriage to take place. Instead, on the night of the proposed ceremony, a mob appeared in the streets of Hsiao-p'u. Chang and his soldiers had been drinking, and were easily overcome by the infuriated Uighurs; all were killed, including the unfortunate Uighur girl, and between 20 and 30 rifles were captured. The rebels next turned their attention to the Kansu Chinese said to have numbered about 100 families, all of whom were massacred 'and their heads buried in the soil of their farms'.<sup>94</sup>

Following these successes the rebels turned their attention to the Chinese outposts at Tu-lu-hu and Lao-mao-hu; at both centres the Chinese garrisons and tax collectors were killed, and the small arsenals were captured.<sup>95</sup> Armed with weapons taken from Chin's soldiers, the rebels felt strong enough to move against Kumul itself. It seems that Kumul Muslim City, with its overwhelmingly Uighur population, fell into the hands of the rebels with little or no fighting; most of the Han Chinese, however, withdrew into the fortified Old City and barred the gates. Those Chinese caught outside the Old City were apparently massacred wholesale,<sup>96</sup>

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93. Hai, Badruddin Wee-liang, op.cit., pp. 101-2. According to Hai the girl was already betrothed to the son of 'a Turkish chief called Yalbuḥ'. This possible reference to Yulbars Khān must be treated with caution, and probably represents a later embellishment of events. Yulbars makes no mention of such a relationship in his memoirs.
94. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 66. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 69, confirms that the settlers from Kansu were killed. For an account of the "Hsiao-p'u incident" in Arabic see: Hai, Badruddin, Ta'rīkh al-Muslimīn fī al-Ṣīn (Tripoli, A.H. 1394/1974 A.D.), pp. 122-3.
95. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 66.
96. ibid. According to R.P. Watts, the British Vice-Consul at Kashgar, many Chinese soldiers in outlying districts were amongst those killed. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933, p. 3.

but when the fighting died down it was clear that a stalemate had been reached. The rebel forces controlled Kumul Muslim City and the surrounding countryside, but the provincial forces remained secure within the fortified Old City, retaining control of its important arsenal. Kumul New City, which seems to have had no fortifications worth speaking of, was probably abandoned to the rebels.<sup>97</sup>

It is not clear whether the Hsiao-p'u incident was a carefully planned challenge to the Chinese authorities, or whether it was simply a spontaneous outburst by a small Uighur community pushed beyond the limits of tolerance by a corrupt Chinese official. There are indications, however, that the troubles at Hsiao-p'u sparked off a much larger rebellion before the insurgent leaders were fully prepared. According to Mildred Cable and Francesca French, who were resident in the Kumul area during and shortly after Chin's annexation of the Khanate, a rising against Chin Shu-jen was being systematically planned by certain prominent Kumulliks:

While officials surreptitiously transferred their wealth to a place of safety, the instigators of trouble were equally persistent in their secret preparations for war. Camels and mules were requisitioned to transport weapons, ammunition and stocks of food over little-known tracks, that they might be stored in mountain caves known only to the few. Steady streams of small caravans carrying ammunition to the mountains came from the South Road, from Tunhwang and across the most lonely tracks of the desert connecting Kansu with Barkul. All these converged on the Khan's summer palace grounds in Aratam, and the stronghold of

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97. According to Mannerheim, who visited Kumul in 1907, the walls of the New City were small and neglected, being pierced in two places by gateways without gates (Across Asia, p. 386). Repairs may, of course, have been made during the 24 years intervening between his visit and the 1931 rising, but the Chinese authorities were probably more concerned with maintaining their fortress at Kumul Old City.

Bardash was stocked with huge supplies of food and firearms.<sup>98</sup>

If this was indeed the case, then after the Hsiao-p'u incident the leaders of the planned rising were faced with a fait accompli. Yulbārs Khān, the former chancellor of Maqsūd Shah, claims to have been in the Tien Shan 'escaping from the heat' when the fighting started.<sup>99</sup> Whether he was at Bardash, secretly preparing an uprising, must remain open to speculation. Certainly he was soon to emerge, together with Khoja Niyās Hājji - (a prominent Uighur whose name indicates that he had made the pilgrimage to Mecca, see plate 11) - as joint leader of the Muslim insurgent forces. Cable and French indicate that the Tungan population of Kumul also joined the revolt at this stage<sup>100</sup> - indeed it is likely that a prominent Tungan Kumullik, referred to by the missionaries as "Wang the Merchant", was party to the planned rebellion and may have helped to finance the arms purchase. He is described as being 'a man of means', with business links which extended to China, India, Iran and the Soviet Union, as well as to the ownership of a string of caravanserais scattered throughout the oases of Sinkiang.<sup>101</sup> Besides the Tungans, the Uighur insurgents of Kumul were joined by the neighbouring Kirghiz

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98. Cable and French, The Gobi Desert, p. 223; the two missionaries go on to describe how they met a party of gun-runners at Aratām, and how the gun-runners took flour from them to feed their exhausted camels; cf. Cable and French, A Desert Journal (London, 1934), p. 137. The Khans of Kumul maintained three palaces, one at Kumul Muslim City, one at Aratām, and one at the natural fortress of Bardash set high in the Karlik Tagh.

99. Yao-lo-po-shih, op.cit., p. 78.

100. 'Having gone thus far, the revolt had to run its course, led by the excitable, turbulent, bloodthirsty Turkis and backed by the wealthy, astute, calculating Tungans'. Cable and French, op.cit., p. 221.

101. According to Cable and French, Wang, 'like all Tungans...was made for revolt and was deeply conscious of racial and religious inadaptability to Chinese rule', op.cit., p. 247.

of the Karlik Tagh who held a grudge against Chin because of his attempts to impose Chinese officials on them during 1929;<sup>102</sup> according to Wu Ai-chen troubles also broke out at Barköl, and the Kazakhs of that area joined the insurgents 'to a man'.<sup>103</sup> Chin had clearly succeeded in alienating all the Turkic peoples of north-eastern Sinkiang, and great skill in diplomacy was needed if a full scale Muslim rising was yet to be avoided.

Unfortunately, Chin decided that the situation demanded strong action. Blind to the limited power of his own military forces, and rejecting the advice of Liu Wen-lung, his commissioner for education, and Yen Yu-shan, his commissioner for reconstruction, both of whom advocated a policy of conciliation,<sup>104</sup> he ordered troops to proceed against the rebel areas where, according to Wu Ai-chen, they were instructed to 'act with the utmost severity'.<sup>105</sup> Meanwhile the Muslim insurgents, unable to breach the fortifications at Kumul Old City, fanned out through the surrounding countryside looking for Han settlers and soldiers. According to R.P. Watts, the British Vice Consul-General at Kashgar, an initial detachment of 300 soldiers sent by Chin to relieve the beleaguered troops at Kumul Old City were surprised by the insurgents and killed almost to a man, their rifles, ammunition and a machine gun being captured by the Muslim forces.<sup>106</sup>

102. See above, p. 125.

103. Wu Ai-chen, Turkistan Tumult, pp. 66-7.

104. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 235.

105. Wu Ai-chen, Turkistan Tumult, p. 66.

106. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933, p. 3. Watts is the only source to mention this battle; there is therefore the possibility that he has made a chronological error in placing it before the Tungan invasion and is referring to Ma Chung-ying's defeat of Chin's troops at Ch'i-chiao-ching later in the year. See below, p. 157.

Many of the troops thus slain were said to have been sleeping off the effects of opium, the probability of which is borne out by Schomberg's 1930 report which describes the officer in command of a key garrison at Kumul 'laying stretched on the kang, smoking his opium in a jade pipe'.<sup>107</sup> Despite this initial success, the insurgent forces were unable to prevent provincial forces under the command of Chu Jui-ch'ih, the tao-yin of Aksu, from marching to the relief of Kumul Old City.<sup>108</sup> In late April the siege was lifted. Chu occupied the Old City fortress and ordered his second-in-command, Hsiung fa-yü, to hold Kumul Muslim City.<sup>109</sup> The Muslim insurgents retained control of the countryside and were able to harass Chu's forces whenever they strayed too far from their fortified citadel, but they were unable to offer a serious challenge to the provincial troops in Kumul Old City. In the meantime the Chinese troops, under the leadership of Hsiung fa-yü, began a series of reprisal massacres against Muslim non-combatants in Kumul Muslim City and the surrounding villages.<sup>110</sup>

In an attempt to break this stalemate the Uighur leaders determined to seek external help in their struggle against Chin Shu-jen. According to Yulbars Khān a decision was taken to send an appeal to the Kuomintang government in Nanking. Accordingly "one day in June" 1931 Yulbars, who was probably chosen because of his fluency in Chinese, set out secretly

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107. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2336, Coll 12/5, (Col.Schomberg's Report of 1930-31). A kang is a mud bed warmed by flues from a stove. The system is widely used throughout north China.

108. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 235.

109. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 67.

110. ibid., pp. 66-7.



for Kansu, ostensibly en route for the Chinese capital;<sup>111</sup> whether he genuinely intended to appeal to Chiang Kai-shek must remain uncertain. Yulbars claims that he travelled directly to Soochow, an important town in north-western Kansu which was at that time under the control of Ma Chung-ying (see plate 17), the youngest and most volatile of the "Five Ma" Tungan warlords and a man destined to play a vital role in the history of Republican Sinkiang.

#### 4.4 The Involvement of Ma Chung-ying

Little is known of Ma Chung-ying's early years. He was born c. 1910 at Ho-chou in south-eastern Kansu. Almost nothing is known of his father,<sup>112</sup> but Chung-ying shared the same paternal grandfather as the Kansu/Tsinghai warlords Ma Pu-ch'ing and Ma Pu-fang, and was thus a scion of the extremely powerful Ma family of Pieh-ts'ang, a small village some 30 kms. south-west of Ho-chou.<sup>113</sup> He was also distantly related to the Kansu/Ningsia warlords Ma Hung-k'uei and Ma Hung-pin. Together these warlords came to be known as the "Five Ma" (Ch. Wu Ma) - warlord clique. Ma Chung-ying first entered military service in 1924 when, at about the age of 14, he joined the local Muslim militia. One year later the Kuominchün forces of Feng Yü-hsiang, the so-called "Christian General", invaded eastern Kansu. The

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111. Yao-lo-po-shih, op.cit., p. 87. Yulbars 'does not remember clearly' on which day he set out. Yulbars was unusual for a Uighur Turk in being fluent in Chinese; Folke Bergmann of the Sino-Swedish Expedition even suggests that he may have been half Chinese. History of the Expedition in Asia, Vol I, p. 227 fn. 1.

112. According to Cable and French, Chung-ying's father was 'a certain general Ma'. The Gobi Desert, p. 222. See also Andrew, G.F., 'Islam in North-West China Today', JRCAS, XIX (1932), p. 95, where Ma's father is called "Ma Tong".

113. Mei, Y.P., 'Stronghold of Muslim China', Asia, XL (1940), p. 660. See also appendix III, 'The "Wu Ma" (Five Ma) Warlord Clique'.

Tungan warlords of western Kansu remained, for the most part, aloof from the struggle. Ma Chung-ying, however, who had been appointed an officer in the forces of his uncle, Ma Ku-chung, is said to have laid siege to and captured the important city of Ho-chou on his own initiative. Ma easily defeated the troops (under the command of Ma Lin, a great uncle) which were sent to recapture the city. As a result of these victories Ma Chung-ying, still only 16 or 17 years old, won a reputation as a military strategist and the nickname "Ga Ssu-ling" or "Little Commander". Ma Chung-ying's triumph was short-lived, however, for Ma Ku-chung had not ordered the occupation of Ho-chou, and promptly dismissed his nephew for insubordination. The "Little Commander" learned this lesson well; he withdrew to the Hsi-ning area of Tsinghai and began to build up his own private army.<sup>114</sup>

The Kuominchün "pacification" of Kansu left large areas of the province devastated, but failed to break the independent spirit of its people. In 1927 north-western Kansu was racked by a violent earthquake; this, combined with the increased use of good arable land for the cultivation of opium by Feng Yü-hsiang's regional commander, Liu Yü-fen, caused widespread famine. Early in the spring of 1928 the patience of the north-western Tungsans ran out, and the standard of revolt was raised against the Kuominchün by the Muslim general Ma T'ing-hsiang. Ma Chung-ying rapidly became involved in the fighting, leading three separate attacks against Kuominchün forces in Ho-chou. According to Robert Ekvall, an American who travelled in south-eastern Kansu at this time:

The revolt had by this time assumed all the aspects of a holy war. Chanting prayers,

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114. Forbes, A.D.W., 'Ma Chung-ying', The Encyclopaedia of Islam (Leiden), NE, V (at press).

forty or fifty thousand fighters went into battle with fanatical zeal...the young rebel leader Ma Chong-ying (sic) seemed to bear a charmed life and by his reckless courage gained the utmost in obedience and devotion from his ruffian troops. The Chinese were panic-stricken at the desperate courage of the Moslems, but eventually, by machine gun fire and light artillery, proved superior.<sup>115</sup>

According to American diplomatic reports the ravages of war and famine in Kansu reduced some people to cannibalism; between 1926 and 1929 as many as 2 million people may have died.<sup>116</sup> One casualty was Ma Chung-ying's father, who was executed by Liu Yü-fen as a reprisal against Chung-ying during the winter of 1929.<sup>117</sup>

In 1929 Ma Chung-ying, his position strengthened by several victories over the Kuominchün,<sup>118</sup> travelled to Nanking, where he enrolled briefly in the military academy. It has been suggested that during his short stay at Nanking Ma offered his services to the nationalist government on the understanding that, if he could win control of Sinkiang, he would be recognised by the KMT.<sup>119</sup> After leaving Nanking Ma made his way to Chung-wei on the Yellow River where he rejoined his troops. He then marched his forces across the southern fringes of the Ala Shan desert to north-western Kansu where he assumed control over the four districts of

115. Ekvall, R., 'Revolt of the Crescent in Western China', Asia, XXIX (1929), pp. 946-7.

116. Sheridan, Chinese Warlord, p. 252.

117. Boorman and Howard, Biographical Dictionary of Republican China, II, p.463. See also Andrew, op.cit., p. 98. Andrew informed Ma of his father's execution.

118. Andrew, op.cit., pp. 87-8.

119. Petro, W., 'Mongolia, Kansu and Sinkiang as seen by a member of the Haardt-Citroen Expedition', JRCAS, XX, 2 (1933), p. 210, cf. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 238, where it is stated that Ma Chung-ying joined the KMT.

Tun-huang, An-hsi, Soochow and Kan-chou.<sup>120</sup>

Ma Chung-ying was thus the Tungan warlord chieftain controlling north-western Kansu at the time of the Kumul rising in April 1931. According to Yulbārs Khān, who claims to have set out for Nanking in June, 1931, he arrived in Soochow en route for the national capital and was, apparently by chance, invited to go and eat with the "Little Commander" (who was still only some 21 years of age). According to his recently-published memoirs, Yulbārs was entertained by Ma Chung-ying and a number of senior Tungan officers of his command including Ma Shih-ming, Ma Fu-yūan, Ma Shih-lu and Ma Ho-ying. (Yulbārs comments that there were so many "Mas" in Ma Chung-ying's army that it was familiarly known as the "Ma Household Army").<sup>121</sup> After the meal Chung-ying dismissed his officers and began to question Yulbārs about the origins and progress of the Kumul rebellion, and about the present state of affairs of the Kumul administration. Yulbārs claims that he was careful not to criticize Chin Shu-jen because he was unsure of Chung-ying's purpose. At this stage the "Little Commander" began to curse Chin Shu-jen and to say that he was unfit to govern Sinkiang. Yulbārs claims that on hearing this he realised for the first time that 'not all Kansu people were supporters of Chin'; he therefore took Chung-ying into his confidence and explained the purpose of his mission to Nanking. Ma Chung-ying immediately asked Yulbārs what he expected to gain from such an appeal to the KMT. On being told that the Kumulliks wanted Nanking to replace Chin with a new governor, Ma sat silently for some time, apparently considering the

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120. According to Petro (op.cit., p. 211), Ma laid siege to Ningsia en route for Kansu and only withdrew after receiving a substantial ransom. This is not mentioned elsewhere.

121. Yao-lo-po-shih, op.cit., pp. 87-8. Yulbārs calls Ma's army the "KMT 36th Division", but in fact it did not receive this designation until 1932, whilst Yulbārs' meeting with Ma at Soochow took place in 1931.

matter. He then asked whether Yulbārs had any personal contacts in the Nanking government, and on receiving a reply in the negative he advised Yulbārs in the strongest terms not to go to Nanking 'or he would be disappointed'. He gave three reasons for this:

- 1) The Kuomintang had just finished its Northern Expedition and needed peace; it was therefore in no position to replace its frontier governors, whatever their faults.
- 2) Even if the Nanking government were to agree to Chin Shu-jen's replacement, it would take two or three years to put the decision into effect because of the distances involved.
- 3) Because of Chin's avarice, he would be disinclined to comply with an order to step down and might well turn to a foreign power to bolster his position. In such circumstances Sinkiang might fall under foreign domination.

Yulbārs listened to this advice but then pointed out to Ma that he had been chosen by his people to go to Nanking. What would happen if he failed to go? Ma replied:

I have a way...I can meet the needs of the Uighurs of Ha-mi...In the name of Muslim brotherhood, I shall take my army into Sinkiang. First I shall alleviate the suffering of the Uighurs of Ha-mi, then I shall drive Chin Shu-jen from the stage by force of arms.<sup>122</sup>

Despite Yulbārs version of events - not surprisingly the only record of the discussion known to exist - it is highly unlikely that Ma conceived his invasion of Sinkiang over a spontaneous dinner with the Uighur leader in the yamen at Soochow.<sup>123</sup> There is a possibility, though

122. ibid., pp. 88-91.

123. According to Cable and French (The Gobi Desert, p. 234), a group of six Kumulliks was sent to appeal to Ma Chung-ying for aid (the missionaries watched their departure); moreover the deputation is said to have met Ma Chung-ying in Kan-chou, not Soochow (op.cit., pp. 223-4). By June 1931, when Yulbārs claims to have set out for Kansu, Ma had already vacated Kan-chou which had subsequently been occupied by the troops of his uncle, Ma Pu-fang (Le Fevre, op.cit., pp. 140-1). Perhaps two separate appeals were sent by the Kumullik insurgents, one to Ma Chung-ying, led by the six riders mentioned by Cable and French, and the other (that of Yulbārs), to Nanking? In such a case would not Yulbārs, one of the two most prominent Kumullik leaders, have been aware of the earlier mission to Ma Chung-ying?

no more than that, that even in his memoirs, written almost forty years after the Kumul rising, Yulbārs was anxious to conceal the existence of a carefully-planned Uighur rising against Chin Shu-jen to which the Tungan of north-western Kansu were also party.<sup>124</sup> Ma Chung-ying was certainly interested in the Kumul rising before Yulbārs' arrival in Soochow; moreover Yulbārs was aware of this interest, for he tells us elsewhere in his memoirs that Ma Chung-ying had sent messengers to him seeking information, but that he was unable to help because he "knew nothing".<sup>125</sup> Ma must also have received information on the political situation in Sinkiang from two Turks, both apparently originating from Istanbul, who travelled to north-western Kansu from Urumchi early in 1931.<sup>126</sup> Both men subsequently became attached to Ma's military headquarters and one, Kamāl Kaya Effendi, became Ma's chief-of-staff.<sup>127</sup> A possible indication of Ma Chung-ying's earlier involvement in Sinkiang affairs may also be found in the gun-runners of Bardash. According to the British missionaries Cable and French, the arms caravans reaching

124. Yulbārs' memoirs were published in Taiwan in 1969, at a time when he held the post of governor-in-exile of Sinkiang in the KMT government. It is therefore unlikely that he would have admitted to conspiracy with the Tungan warlord Ma Chung-ying, albeit in a scheme to oust the widely-discredited Chin Shu-jen.
125. Yao-lo-po-shih, op.cit., p. 87.
126. According to Cable and French these men had travelled to Urumchi with a view to going into business there; however, they were arrested by Chin Shu-jen and imprisoned, presumably on suspicion of spying. When they were eventually released from prison they had lost their caravan of trade goods and were bankrupt. They subsequently fled from Sinkiang to Kansu, where they are said to have approached Ma Chung-ying with the offer of their military services. (The Gobi Desert, pp. 224-5). Cable and French seem to have been unaware that both Turks entered Sinkiang from the Soviet Union. 'Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien', Berichte des Asiens Arbeitskreises No. 1 (Vienna), February, 1939, p. 7.
127. Kamāl Kaya Effendi seems to have had considerable military experience, both during the First World War, and later during the Russian Civil War. See Appendix I, 'Who Was Who in Republican Sinkiang' for further details.

Kumul came from the south and east - that is, from north-western Kansu. Such traffic would have been all but impossible without Ma Chung-ying's acquiescence, if not his active participation. Moreover the important Tungan community of Kumul is known to have backed the rising, chiefly with funds. Certainly a Tungan like "Wang the Merchant", with business contacts as far afield as Iran, India and Siberia, might reasonably be expected to have approached his fellow Tungans in neighbouring Kansu for aid in the planned rebellion.<sup>128</sup>

Ma's unstable military and financial position in north-western Kansu would also seem to indicate a premeditated rather than a spontaneous movement into Sinkiang. His power base in Kan-chou was strictly temporary. According to Mildred Cable and Francesca French, both of whom were resident in north-western Kansu under Ma Chung-ying, the young warlord's strategy was

based on the assumption of the paralysing effect of frightfulness in action, and as a method of temporary invasion it answered his purpose well, but it never served him as a basis of true conquest, nor did he ever establish rule over one single acre of the land which he invaded. His was the method of the locust...and his army was always viewed as a plague. It came, it devoured, and when it had passed over, the patient, constructively minded peasants instantly began to repair the damage done to their fields, and to beget sons to replace those who had been swept away in his train.<sup>129</sup>

In 1931 Ma Chung-ying's personal army was by no means large - despite some exaggerated reports it probably numbered no more than 1,000 men.<sup>130</sup> Yet

128. See above, p. 141.

129. Cable and French, The Gobi Desert, pp. 222-3.

130. According to Hedin, Ma had an army of 10,000 men in north-western Kansu. Big Horse's Flight, p. 5). In view of the fact that Ma's initial invasion force thrown against Kumul numbered no more than 500 cavalry, Hedin's figure is likely to be grossly exaggerated. It is difficult if not impossible to provide accurate estimates of military strength for the remote north-west, but according to the China Year Book for 1935 (Shanghai, 1935), p. 430, the combined military forces for Kokonor (Tsinghai) totalled 5,000. No doubt Ma's forces attracted large numbers of camp-followers and hangers-on; this may have misled Hedin, whose colleague, Gerhard Bexell, was attacked by stray members of a group of Ma's "troops" said to be 1,500 strong in April 1931. History of the Expedition in Asia, Vol IV, pp. 220-1.

by the very nature of its modus operandi - aptly described by Cable and French as 'that of the locust', Ma's army needed to move ever onwards. Besides, Ma Chung-ying was a highly ambitious young warlord who was to dream, in his wilder moments, of creating a Muslim empire which would include the whole of Soviet, as well as Chinese, Central Asia.<sup>131</sup> In the spring of 1931, however, Ma Chung-ying, as warlord of north-western Kansu, had only two possible directions in which to move. One was back towards China, but this would have involved an attack on his uncle, Ma Pu-fang, with whom he was conducting a vigorous propaganda war, but who may have been his secret ally;<sup>132</sup> the other was into Sinkiang, where his Muslim co-religionists were apparently ready to welcome him as a liberator from the corrupt Chin Shu-jen. It is therefore at least certain that, whether or not Ma Chung-ying was party to a planned Kumullik rebellion which was sparked off prematurely by the Hsiao-p'u incident, and whether or not Yulbārs Khān really intended to travel beyond north-western Kansu to Nanking,<sup>133</sup> the 1931 rising at Kumul occurred at a most opportune moment for the young Tungan warlord from Kansu.

#### 4.5 The First Invasion of Ma Chung-ying

Although Ma Chung-ying had clearly been contemplating an invasion of

131. Hedin, Big Horse's Flight, pp. 223-4.

132. Cable and French, The Gobi Desert, pp. 235-6. Little or no actual fighting seems to have taken place. One possible explanation, advanced by a member of the Citroën Expedition who knew Ma Chung-ying personally, is that Chung-ying had reached a secret agreement with Pu-fang by which the latter would stage a mock attack on Soochow and Kan-chou, occupy the towns during Ma's attack on Sinkiang, and incidentally provide some legitimate reason for Chung-ying's move against Chin Shu-jen. Petro, op.cit., p. 211. See also Le Fèvre, op.cit., pp. 140-1.

133. According to Wang Wen-hsuan, 'I-yueh-lai chih hsi-pei', K'ai-fa hsi-pei, I, 4 (April 1934), p. 84. Ma actually restrained Yulbārs to prevent his travelling to Nanking.



Sinkiang for some time, he did not move directly against Kumul, but began a series of manoeuvres within Kansu which may have been designed to confuse the Sinkiang authorities or may alternatively have reflected continuing indecision on the part of the young Tungan warlord. According to Cable and French Ma Chung-ying made an impetuous decision to move against Ningsia, but was advised by Kamāl Kaya Effendi to turn suddenly against Sinkiang, thus taking the provincial authorities off their guard.<sup>134</sup> Having taken the decision to attack Chin Shu-jen's forces in Sinkiang, Ma Chung-ying wasted no time making his move. After assembling a force of 500 Tungan cavalry,<sup>135</sup> he made a swift crossing of the desert between Anhsi and Kumul in the full heat of mid-summer,<sup>136</sup> arriving in the oasis on June 28th, at almost exactly the same time as the French Citroën Expedition. An initial encounter between the vanguard of Ma's Tungan cavalry and a Chinese machine gun detachment took place at the village of Yi-k'o-shu. Le Fèvre's account of the ensuing fighting would seem to indicate that the Chinese forces included a number of Mongol soldiers.<sup>137</sup> After the Tungans had been beaten back by the Chinese machine guns, the Citroën

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134. Cable and French, The Gobi Desert, p. 225.

135. According to Hedin, Big Horse's Flight, p. 5; and Cable and French, The Gobi Desert, p. 225, Ma's initial invasion force consisted of 500 Tungan cavalry. According to Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 69; and Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 235, the size of the initial invasion force was nearer 400. Le Fèvre's figure of 4,000 (op.cit., p. 158) is certainly exaggerated, and probably includes the insurgent Kumullik forces. Cf. Nyman, op.cit., p. 105.

136. All sources cited agree that this was a remarkable feat; it is interesting to note that preparations for the desert crossing had been made when Ma's army was billeted at Soochow, where 'every small artisan was busy making tin mugs, kettles and water-bottles out of disused oil tins, or goatskin bellows for blowing up camp fires for his army', Cable and French, The Gobi Desert, p. 224.

137. Note Le Fèvre's description of the butchery of a Muslim prisoner at Yi-k'o-shu, with the living heart torn from the body, op.cit., pp. 154-5; cf. Chapter 3, p. 74, fn. 16 above.

Expedition was able to continue to Kumul Old City, which they found in a state of turmoil, feverishly organising its defences. The French were immediately taken to see the Chinese commandant, Chu Jui-ch'ih. En route through the muddy streets of the town, packed with military convoys and soldiers of all kinds, they saw the faces of anxious Muslims peering from their shuttered homes, and hanging from a telegraph pole the head, heart and liver of an insurgent.<sup>138</sup> Chu gave his permission for the French to continue towards Urumchi at their own risk. The Expedition accordingly set out on July 1st, 1931; however three of their number, including a European engineer called Petro, were left behind to await the arrival of further supplies from Kansu. They were thus to witness the first stages of Ma Chung-ying's siege of Kumul Old City.<sup>139</sup>

On or about July 3rd Ma Chung-ying sent two messengers to Chu Jui-ch'ih bearing, according to Petro, the following message:

By order of National Government of China I have been appointed commander-in-chief of all military forces of Kansu and Sinkiang. Having assumed my new post on this date, I allow you to petition for your resignation and I order you to hand over to me command of the Ha-mi garrison. Urgent order.<sup>140</sup>

Chu Jui-ch'ih replied by ordering the execution of one of the messengers, and sending the head back to Ma by means of the other. On the same night Ma began a fierce attack on Kumul Old City. However, his Tungan cavalry were ill-suited for siege warfare, and the Chinese appear to have been well armed. According to Petro, the garrison had an 'immense stock' of

138. Le Fèvre, op.cit., p. 156.

139. See Le Fèvre, op.cit., pp. 240-52 ('Petro's Story'), also Petro, W., 'Mongolia, Kansu and Sinkiang as seen by a member of the Haardt-Citroën Expedition', JRCAS, XX, 2 (1933), pp. 205-19. Note that in the latter source, p. 215, Petro gives June 3rd as the date when Kumul was attacked by Ma Chung-ying; this is an error, which should read July 3rd (cf. Le Fèvre, op.cit., pp. 240-1).

140. Petro, op.cit., p. 215.

modern rifles and ammunition, four machine guns, two Krupp 65 mm. howitzers, and a number of old brass cannons.<sup>141</sup> Kumul Muslim City had been abandoned to the insurgents, and the Chinese garrison had withdrawn within the walls of the Old City. No contemporary description of the Old City fortifications would appear to exist, but Field Marshal Mannerheim, who visited Kumul in 1907, has left a detailed account of the fortifications at that time.<sup>142</sup> They appear to have been strong enough to pose a serious problem for Ma's Tungan cavalry, a force which was to prove itself all but invincible when facing Chin Shu-jen's troops in the open field.

Petro's description of Ma Chung-ying's first attack on Kumul Old City is worth quoting at some length, as it presents a rare picture of warfare on Sinkiang's eastern front during the first Tungan invasion. It is immediately apparent that Ma Chung-ying's struggle with Chin Shu-jen's troops was hard and brutal - not at all like some of the mock "battles" fought out between rival warlords in some parts of contemporary Republican China. On the night of July 3rd Petro was awoken by cannon, machine-gun fire and savage yells. He climbed to a point of vantage on the city walls from where he had a commanding view of the western and northern approaches to the city:

From numerous points on the wall the Chinese were firing flares which gave a certain amount of light. There were no enemy on the glacis, but a little distance beyond, among the bushes, could be seen the flashes of their muskets. Suddenly, to the

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141. ibid.

142. 'Laocheng, the actual town, is surrounded by a wall, 3½ fathoms high, with a crenellated parapet and a fosse, about 2½ fathoms wide and 1-1½ fathoms deep, which is flanked by the gate projections and partly by other wall projections. Covered clay buildings, 2 between the wall projections, 3 between the corners and gate projections and 1 on each wall projection, all with a gun embrasure facing outwards, are built on the ramparts. Above the gates the usual towers of wooden lattice work. The wall is of unbaked bricks and in good preservation. The gates are of logs with iron fittings, enclosed in arches of baked bricks. In the archway from gate to gate 44 paces. The N and S walls of the fortress are 680 paces in length, the E and W walls 620. Infantry barracks in the NE corner. The Yamen of the district near the W gate'. Mannerheim, op.cit., pp. 386-7.

beating of drums and the blowing of trumpets, the glacis swarmed with men rushing towards the high city wall. The front rank consisted of Chinese peasants (conscripts from Kansu) carrying scaling ladders, who were driven forward by Tungan soldiers armed with huge curved swords. The air was rent by the shrill battle cries of the Tungans and the yells of defiance of the defenders. In spite of a murderous fire, ladders were placed at different spots, and the rebels...began to climb up one after the other. Then the defenders discarded their firearms for pikes and axes, and hurled down on the attackers heavy rocks, blazing tow soaked in oil and hand-grenades...Notwithstanding the stubborn defence, several scaling ladders were placed against the wall, and the Tungans clambered up one after another. Many were speared or pushed away, but as they fell to the ground others took their place. Then the cannonade ceased, and only the clash of steel, the cries of the wounded, and an occasional pistol shot could be heard as hand-to-hand fighting began on the wall itself...just when the place seemed to be doomed a machine gun, which up to this had been silent... suddenly came to life. Emplaced in a blockhouse flanking the wall, it opened fire, mowing down the assault, and the glacis was soon cleared except for heaps of corpses.<sup>143</sup>

It is clear that the attacking Tungans lacked heavy artillery for breaching the city walls. Three separate attacks were made on the night of July 3rd, but all were beaten back. Chu Jui-ch'ih, a military veteran, had no intention of surrendering to the "Little Commander" whom he dismissed contemptuously as a "thieving cub".<sup>144</sup> Ma Chung-ying clearly had little enthusiasm for this sort of siege warfare, besides which his forces needed more armaments. On July 5th he led the greater part of his Tungan cavalry away from Kumul Old City leaving some 2,000 provincial troops under siege by an estimated 1,000 Uighur insurgents and a handful of Tungans.<sup>145</sup> Chu Jui-ch'ih, who was unaware of Ma Chung-ying's real

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143. Le Fèvre, op.cit., pp. 241-2.

144. Ch. Tsei wa-tzu. Le Fèvre, op.cit., p. 244.

145. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933, p. 11; Petro's figure of 6,000 regular troops comprising the Kumul Lao-ch'eng garrison is certainly exaggerated. Le Fèvre, op.cit., p. 242.

purpose, decided against making a sortie because he feared a trap.<sup>146</sup> Meanwhile the "Little Commander" led his highly mobile forces over the Karlik Tagh to Barköl, a move which was quite unexpected by the provincial authorities. Faced with an imminent Tungan attack, Barköl surrendered without a struggle. According to Hedin, the local commandant went over to Ma, who seized 2,000 rifles and a large store of ammunition held in Barköl arsenal.<sup>147</sup> Leaving a garrison of 100 men to occupy the captured town, Ma turned back to the south.<sup>148</sup> According to Wu Ai-chen, with Ma's already considerable charisma much increased by the desert crossing and the subsequent capture of Barköl, Kazakhs and Tungans from the region to the north of the Karlik Tagh flocked to join his forces.<sup>149</sup> By mid-July Muslim insurgents were in effective control of the whole territory of the old Kumul Khanate, from Hsing-hsing-hsia on the Kansu-Sinkiang frontier to the vicinity of I-wan-ch'üan on the road to Turfan; groups of invading Tungan troops from Kansu, in alliance with the insurgent Sinkiang Muslims, held Hsing-hsing-hsia and Barköl and were participating in the siege of Kumul Old City; moreover at this time Ma Chung-ying seems to have enjoyed the full support of the indigenous Muslim peoples, whether Uighur, Kazakh, Kirghiz or Sinkiang Tungan.

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146. Le Fèvre, op.cit., p. 242.

147. Hedin, Big Horse's Flight, p. 5. According to Petro, Ma killed most of the Chinese garrison at Barköl, (op.cit., p. 217).

148. According to Lattimore (writing in 1935), Ma Chung-ying took Barköl on his return journey to Kansu, and not at the beginning of the invasion; 'Chinese Turkestan or Sinkiang', The China Year Book, 1935 (Shanghai, 1935), p. 44. This does not agree with the accounts of Hedin (Big Horse's Flight, p. 5); Cable and French (The Gobi Desert, p. 225); Wu (Turkistan Tumult, p. 67); and Petro (op.cit., p. 217), all of which agree that Ma took Barköl soon after invading Sinkiang.

149. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 67.

Chin Shu-jen's initial response to this first Tungan invasion seems to have been precipitate and ill-judged. On hearing that Ma Chung-ying, backed by the main body of his Tungan cavalry, was approaching Ch'i-chiao-ching, Chin appointed his chief secretary, Lu Hsiao-tsu, commander-in-chief of the provincial forces; Tu Chih-kuo and Sheng Shih-ts'ai (of whom more later) were appointed joint chiefs-of-staff. Lu Hsiao-tsu was a civilian with little or no military experience; moreover, according to Chan Fook-lam, he was a bitter rival of Chin Shu-hsin, the younger brother of Chin Shu-jen and commissioner for military affairs at Urumchi.<sup>150</sup> Lu hurriedly mustered a force of about 1,000 men, almost all of whom were lacking in military training or experience.<sup>151</sup> Under the command of Tu Chih-kuo this quite inadequate force was sent to Ch'i-chiao-ching where it was ordered to stem the Tungan advance pending the despatch of further reinforcements. In the event, the promised reinforcements never arrived (being delayed, according to Chan, by Chin Shu-hsin, who seized this opportunity to isolate his rival Tu Chih-kuo).<sup>152</sup> Shortly after their arrival at Ch'i-chiao-ching these troops were surprised in a night attack by Tungan forces and killed almost to a man.<sup>153</sup> The commander, Tu Chih-kuo, is reported to have committed suicide.<sup>154</sup> According to Kamāl Kaya Effendi,

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150. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 236.

151. According to Sheng Shih-ts'ai many of these troops were incapable of even firing a rifle. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 69.

152. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 236.

153. According to Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 69, only the advance guard of Tu's troops were attacked by the Tungans, causing the others to 'fall back in dismay having been ordered to burn all stores which might fall into enemy hands' - almost certainly a euphemism for the total disintegration of the provincial forces. Le Fèvre's statement that 10,000 Chinese troops were mustered at Ch'i-chiao-ching is certainly grossly exaggerated (op.cit., p. 163; cf. Petro, op.cit., p. 217); similarly Le Fèvre's figure of 8,000 Chinese dead as a result of the engagement (op.cit., p. 189).

154. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 236; Petro, op.cit., p. 217. Elsewhere Chan states that Tu was killed in battle (Sinkiang Under Sheng Shih-ts'ai, p. 66). Le Fèvre, op.cit., p. 189, states that the commanding officer "General Kiu" committed suicide.

Ma Chung-ying's Turkish chief-of-staff, the Tungan force that defeated Tu's troops at Ch'i-chiao-ching was commanded by Ma Chung-ying in person, the young warlord having approached Ch'i-chiao-ching by little-known trails through the Karlik Tagh and Bogdo Ula after his successful capture of Barköl.<sup>155</sup> Certainly such a crossing of the mountains would have been possible, for although Ma Chung-ying can have <sup>had</sup> no personal knowledge of the area, Kirghiz and Kazakh insurgents who knew the Karlik Tagh and Bogdo Ula intimately were attached to his forces and could have guided him to Tu's encampment at Ch'i-chiao-ching.

Following his victories at Barköl and Ch'i-chiao-ching, Ma Chung-ying is believed to have left a detachment of troops guarding the road to Urumchi before returning to Kumul with the intention of capturing the besieged Old City. It is difficult to know why Ma failed to follow up his annihilation of Tu Chih-kuo's forces with an advance on Urumchi. It may be that he over-estimated the strength of Chin Shu-jen's forces defending the provincial capital; alternatively the Tungan commander may have been unwilling to advance further into Sinkiang without first eliminating a garrison which might conceivably - were military fortunes to be reversed - block his retreat to the security of north-western Kansu. It has been suggested by Wu Ai-chen that Ma Chung-ying was wounded during the engagement at Ch'i-chiao-ching and that this prevented him from marching on the capital.<sup>156</sup> No mention of such a wound is made by Petro, however, who spent a week at the Tungan H.Q. at Kumul shortly after the Muslim victory at Ch'i-chiao-ching and who claims to have seen and spoken with Ma Chung-ying at this time;<sup>157</sup> Wu is therefore

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155. Petro, op.cit., p. 217 (in conversation with Kamāl Kaya Effendi); cf. Le Fèvre, op.cit., p. 189.

156. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 69. Wu also claims that Ma was surprised by the number of troops opposing him at Ch'i-chiao-ching, but considering the overwhelming nature of his victory over Tu Chih-kuo this claim must be viewed with some scepticism.

157. Petro, op.cit., p. 217.

likely to have written in anticipation of a wound received by Ma on the western front later in the autumn of 1931.

Both during and after the Tungan campaign in the west of the old Kumul Khanate, the insurgent Uighurs maintained their pressure on the forces of Chu Jui-ch'ih besieged within Kumul Old City. After Ma Chung-ying's return to Kumul the siege proceeded with renewed vigour. Between July 3rd and October 16th, during which time Petro was present at Kumul either in the besieged Old City or the Tungan H.Q.,<sup>158</sup> Ma's forces are reported to have staged 43 separate attacks on the besieged Chinese garrison. The Tungans dug trenches and built barricades in their attempts to storm the walls; meanwhile the besieged troops were forced to eat their camels, horses and mules. By October 1st the defending troops were reduced to a per capita ration of 3/4 of a kilo of Kaoliang flour daily, and this was due to run out by the end of the month. Ammunition was also running very low, and Chu Jui-ch'ih resorted to the use of archaic weapons - "fire arrows" and "big swords" - preserved in an arsenal established by Tso-Tsung-t'ang during his Sinkiang campaign in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Petro reports that nothing but opium was available for sale in the bazaar. Supplies of oil were gradually exhausted - partially as a result of its being hurled, boiling, on the heads of the attackers. The Tungans made several attempts to mine and blast the walls, but they lacked sufficient supplies of powder. On one occasion a breach was made in the walls, but the attackers blocked it with bales of wool before the attackers could force an entry. A ditch was subsequently dug around the walls, flooding the Tungan trenches and preventing further mining. By mid-October the defending garrison was reduced to desperate straits. According to

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158. Petro was employed as a messenger by both sides, and was thus able to visit the Tungan H.Q. where he conversed with Ma Chung-ying and Kamāl Kaya Effendi; he later returned to the besieged Old City.



Petro who, after 108 days in Kumul, broke out of the encircled town on October 16th in a (successful) attempt to reach Urumchi:

What sustained the men was opium. They could not have held out without it, and so long as it lasted and no strenuous effort was demanded of them, they could get along on practically no food. At night the opium lamps of the sentries could be seen sparkling like little stars the length of the ramparts. The whole garrison was in fact intoxicated. It was fantastic!<sup>159</sup>

It is equally likely that the predominantly Han garrison was driven to continued resistance by the thought of their probable fate at the hands of the Tungans should they succumb. Ma Chung-ying refused to accept any terms other than unconditional surrender, and since the struggle in Sinkiang had taken an overtly racialist tone neither side had shown much inclination to take prisoners. In any case, the unexpectedly fierce resistance of Kumul Old City delayed the Tungan advance on Urumchi and enabled Chin Shu-jen to begin a hasty reorganization of the provincial forces. As a first step, which was to prove singularly unsuccessful, Chin ordered Tsetsen Puntsag Gegeen, regent and "Living Buddha" of the Sinkiang Torgut Mongols (see plate 10), to lead his famed Torgut cavalry against the Tungan forces at Kumul. These Torgut troops were undoubtedly the best available to the provincial government, and were probably the only indigenous Sinkiang force capable of facing Ma Chung-ying's formidable Tungan cavalry.<sup>160</sup> Tsetsen Puntsag Gegeen was still smarting, however, from Chin Shu-jen's ill-considered attempt to

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159. For Petro's description of the siege see his 'Mongolia, Kansu and Sinkiang as seen by a member of the Haardt-Citroën Expedition', pp. 217-8; also Le Fevre, op.cit., pp. 242-9. See also Wu, Turkistan Tumult, pp. 67-8.

160. For details of the Torgut cavalry and their remarkable fighting abilities see Haslund, H., Men and Gods in Mongolia (London, 1935), 208, 212, 243; also 3 plates facing p. 245. A description of Tsetsen Puntsag Gegeen may be found in Haslund's Book II, Chapter 5, 'The Strong Man of the Torguts' (op.cit., pp. 240-7).

force Chinese officials on the Sinkiang Torguts in place of their own leaders;<sup>161</sup> moreover a plot had recently been discovered by which the regent was to have been assassinated by members of his own confederacy at Karashahr. Tsetsen Puntsag Gegeen suspected Chin Shu-jen's complicity in this plot, and when the would-be assassins fled to Urumchi and Chin refused to surrender or bring them to justice, these suspicions were largely confirmed.<sup>162</sup> The "Living Buddha" accordingly refused to become involved in the hostilities at Kumul, taking his forces instead to Karashahr in a demonstration of power which he hoped would be noticed and understood by Chin Shu-jen. Chin understood very clearly, but for the present he was preoccupied with the deteriorating position in the north-east of the province.

Lacking sufficient numbers of reliable Han Chinese troops, Chin turned next to the sizeable White Russian community which had been established in Sinkiang, especially in the Ili Valley,<sup>163</sup> since the communist victory in the Russian civil war. Lu Hsiao-tsu, who had proved incompetent as provincial commander-in-chief, was consequently replaced by Chang P'ei-yüan, the military commander of the Ili region. Chang immediately began to build up a force of White Russian "volunteers" - in effect, refugees who refused to fight for the Chinese authorities at Urumchi until threatened with forced repatriation to Stalin's Russia.<sup>164</sup> In late September or early October Chang P'ei-yüan's forces, headed by a force of some 250 White

161. See above, p. 125.

162. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933, p. 6; Anon, 'Recent Events in Sinkiang', JRCAS, XXI, 1 (1934), pp. 82-3.

163. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933, p. 13; Schomberg, R.F.C., 'The Ili District', JRCAS, XVI, 4 (1929), p. 457.

164. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933, p. 13. cf. Chen, 'The Road to Power', p. 236.

Russians under the leadership of Colonel Pappengut, a former staff officer of the Russian Imperial Army, left Ili with the object of relieving the besieged garrison at Kumul Old City. According to British diplomatic sources, almost all these Russian troops were experienced soldiers who had served with both the Tsarist and White Russian forces - military experience which was to make the Russian émigré army (Ch. Kuei-hua), the most competent force in Sinkiang.<sup>165</sup> It is not clear whether Ma Chung-ying was informed of the approach of Chang P'ei-yüan and Pappengut, or whether, as indicated by Cable and French, he simply became tired of the siege at Kumul Old City and decided to march on the provincial capital.<sup>166</sup> Whichever might be the case, he drew most of his Tungan cavalry away from Kumul and rode westwards along the road to Ch'i-chiao-ching and the advancing Russians. What happened next is not certain, but it is clear that no major battle between Pappengut's forces and the Tungan forces took place at this time. It seems probable that during one of the initial skirmishes, according to one report at the village of Liao-tun (some 60 kms. east of Ch'i-chiao-ching), Ma Chung-ying was quite seriously wounded, being shot through both legs.<sup>167</sup> Casualties appear to have been minimal, with the White Russians sustaining losses of one dead and two wounded.<sup>168</sup>

As a result of the injury sustained by Ma Chung-ying, a large part of the Tungan forces present in Sinkiang retreated to north-western Kansu taking

165. IDLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933, p. 4.

166. Cable and French, The Gobi Desert, p. 226.

167. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol 2, p. 464.

168. IDLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933, p. 4; according to Cable and French, however, the provincial forces sustained a crushing defeat and were almost wiped out during this engagement (The Gobi Desert, p. 226). All sources, including Cable and French, agree that Ma Chung-ying was wounded and subsequently withdrew to Kansu.

their wounded leader with them. It has been suggested that Ma was "bought off" for a substantial sum by Chin Shu-jen,<sup>169</sup> but there is no real evidence for this, and Ma's injuries were certainly serious enough to merit a prolonged period of recuperation away from the front line.<sup>170</sup> Once safely back across the Kansu-Sinkiang frontier Ma Chung-ying was given control of the four districts of An-hsi, Tun-huang, Yü-men and Soochow by his uncle Ma Pu-fang, a development which suggests that the two Tungan warlords had indeed been acting in concert at the time of Chung-ying's original invasion of Sinkiang.<sup>171</sup>

Meanwhile the advancing forces of Chang P'ei-yüan, still spearheaded by Pappengut's White Russian troops, moved further into the territory of the old Kumul Khanate, relieving the besieged garrison at Kumul Old City on or about November 1st, 1931.<sup>172</sup> The victorious Chinese troops were given permission to sack Kumul, a "reward" denied to the White Russians but not, apparently, to Chang P'ei-yüan himself.<sup>173</sup> The provincial forces then set about the systematic destruction of large parts of the Kumul Khanate, levelling whole villages and terrorising the inhabitants. Chi Jui-ch'ih, the commander of the besieged garrison, returned to Urumchi; however his lieutenant, Hsiung Fa-yü, remained at Kumul and began a series of mass executions. These reprisals were on such a scale that even those Uighurs who had remained neutral

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169. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.1232.1932. HMCGK Fitzmaurice - Govt. of India, 11th Nov. 1931; cf. Nyman, op.cit., p. 106.

170. Cable and French, The Gobi Desert, p. 241.

171. See, however, Wu Ai-chen's suggestion that Ma Pu-fang was forced to make a deal with Ma Chung-ying because of 'other troubles' (Turkistan Tumult, p. 70).

172. Le Fèvre, op.cit., p. 286. Chan dates the raising of the siege in September 1931 ('The Road to Power', p. 236), but Petro's record of the siege show that this is a chronological impossibility.

173. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933, p. 4.

felt bound to join the rebellion.<sup>174</sup> Refugees poured westward towards Turfan, whilst the Uighur insurgents withdrew to the Karlik Tagh, especially to their well-stocked mountain fastness at Bardash, which was to prove impregnable. From Bardash, according to Cable and French, they organised a widespread guerilla war against Chin's troops in collaboration with units of Ma's Tungan forces who remained in Sinkiang pending the recovery of their leader. Messages were regularly exchanged between Bardash and An-hsi by means of the desert track leading from Barköl.<sup>175</sup> Meanwhile, secure in his stronghold of north-western Kansu, Ma Chung-ying nursed his wounds and began to expand and re-equip his forces.

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174. Wu Ai-chen, Turkistan Tumult, p. 71; Hedin, Big Horse's Flight, pp. 23-4; 34-6.

175. Cable and French, The Gobi Desert, p. 226.

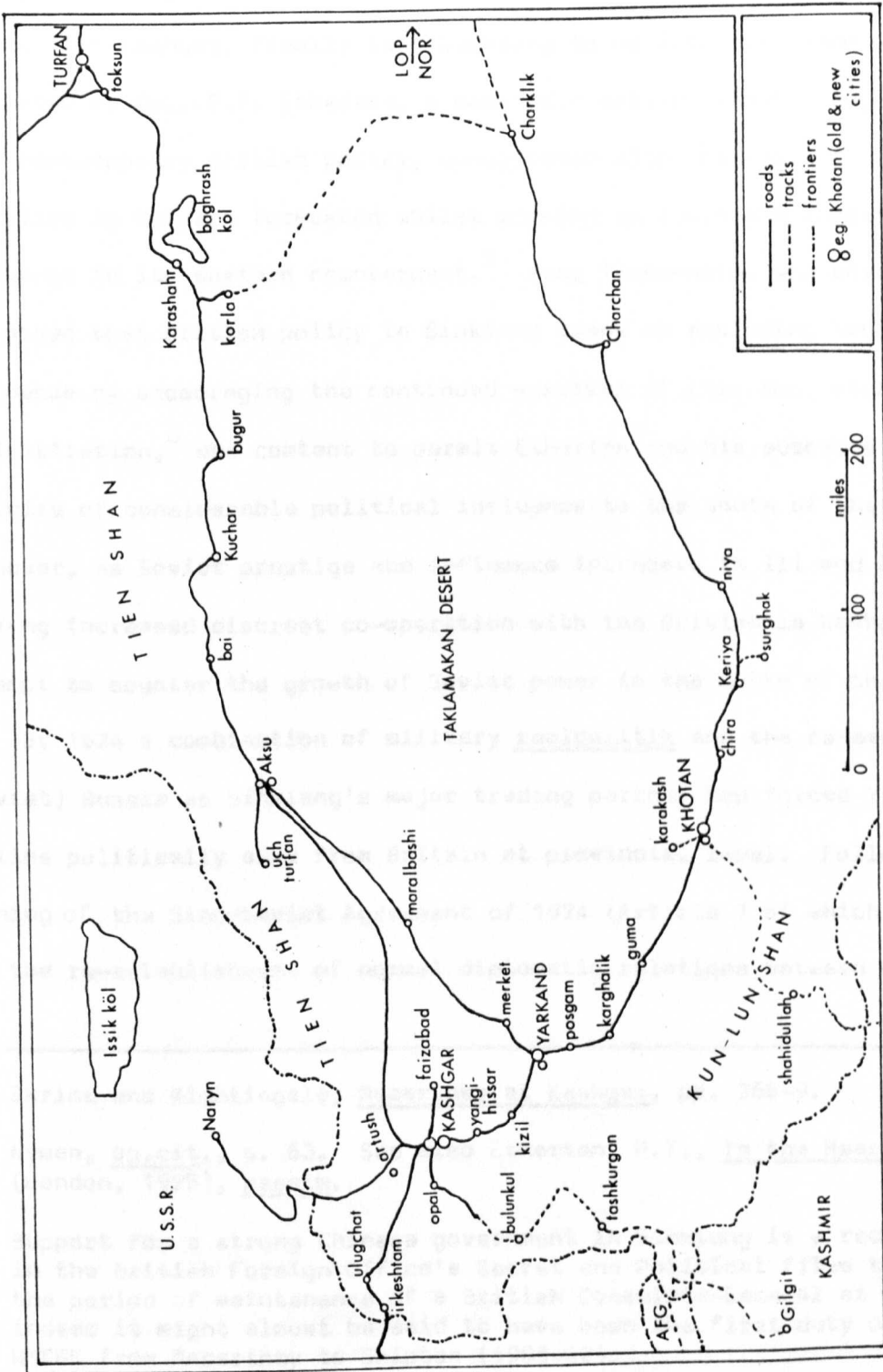
CHAPTER 5SINKIANG, 1931-33: THE TURKIC MUSLIM REBELLION IN THE SOUTH,<sup>1</sup>

It will be remembered that the origin of the present rebellion...was the general discontent of the people of the Province of Sinkiang with the corrupt and inefficient rule of their Chinese overlords. It is now clear that the complicated struggle which ensued and still continues soon resolved itself into two entirely separate conflicts: the one, north of the Tien Shan, centring round Urumchi, the provincial capital, the other round Kashgar, the seat of the British consulate-general, in the south-west.<sup>2</sup>

5.1 The Development of Pan-Turanian Nationalism in Southern Sinkiang

Following the execution in 1924 of Ma Fu-hsing, the barbarous t'i-t'ai of Kashgar, and the subsequent appointment of his executioner, Ma Shao-wu, to the post of tao-yin at Khotan in the same year,<sup>3</sup> the situation in southern Sinkiang remained peaceful until several years after the assassination of Governor Yang Tseng-hsin in July, 1928. During the last years of Yang's rule southern Sinkiang often known as "Kashgaria", remained very much a British sphere of influence, a state of affairs which had existed since the

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1. It is necessary to present a detailed study of the complex sequence of events occurring in southern Sinkiang during 1931-33 as this period of Sinkiang history remains virtually unstudied in both Eastern and Western language works. The present chapter draws particularly heavily on unpublished British diplomatic sources.
  2. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2356, PZ.4894.1934 (Confidential Memo Respecting the Sinkiang Rebellion, F.O., May 30th, 1934).
  3. See above, Chapter 3, p. 97 ; Ma Shao-wu proved to be a tough tao-yin who ruled with an iron hand - see, for example, Bosshard, W., Hazards of Asia's Highlands and Deserts (London, n.d.), pp. 111-2 - but his régime lacked the corruption and wanton brutality of his predecessor's.



MAP 7. Southern Sinkiang: Towns and Communications

collapse of Russian influence at the end of the First World War and the subsequent closure of the Imperial Russian Consulate-General at Kashgar.<sup>4</sup> In August, 1918, Sir George Macartney, Britain's long-serving Consul-General at Kashgar, finally left Sinkiang to go into retirement. He was succeeded by Col. P.T. Etherton, a convinced anti-Bolshevik who, in line with contemporary British policy, co-operated with the anti-Soviet Basmachi guerillas in Western Turkestan whilst working to limit the spread of Soviet influence in its eastern counterpart.<sup>5</sup> Yang Tseng-hsin, who correctly perceived that British policy in Sinkiang aimed at excluding Soviet influence by encouraging the continued survival of (his own) stable Chinese administration,<sup>6</sup> was content to permit Etherton and his successors the exercise of considerable political influence to the south of the Tien Shan. Moreover, as Soviet prestige and influence increased in Ili and Dzungaria, so Yang increased discreet co-operation with the British in Kashgar in an attempt to counter the growth of Soviet power in the north of the province.<sup>7</sup>

By 1924 a combination of military realpolitik and the re-emergence of (Soviet) Russia as Sinkiang's major trading partner had forced Yang to incline politically away from Britain at provincial level. Following the signing of the Sino-Soviet Agreement of 1924 (Article 1 of which provided for the re-establishment of normal diplomatic relations between Peking and

4. Skrine and Nightingale, Macartney at Kashgar, pp. 258-9.
5. Nyman, op.cit., p. 63. See also Etherton, P.T., In the Heart of Asia (London, 1925), passim.
6. Support for a strong Chinese government in Sinkiang is a recurrent theme in the British Foreign Office's Secret and Political files throughout the period of maintenance of a British Consulate-General at Kashgar - indeed it might almost be said to have been the first duty of every HMCGK from Macartney to Shipton (1908-48).
7. See Nyman, op.cit., pp. 135-6.



Moscow),<sup>8</sup> the Soviet government at Omsk sent an envoy to Sinkiang to discuss the question of mutual consular representation with Yang Tseng-hsin. As a result of this mission an agreement was signed on October 6th (bilaterally, without the participation of the Chinese Government), providing for the exchange of consulates-general between Tashkent and Urumchi, as well as for the establishment of Soviet consulates in Sinkiang at Chuguchak, Kulja, Shara Sume and Kashgar.<sup>9</sup> Yang Tseng-hsin seems to have accepted the increased Soviet presence in the north of the province with resignation if not with equanimity. The Soviet presence at Kashgar was, however, another matter. It upset the carefully-maintained balance of power between Britain and the Soviet Union to too great an extent; moreover, as Yang was well aware, it permitted direct Soviet access to the densely-populated oases of the Tarim Basin - the source of nearly all provincial revenue in Sinkiang.<sup>10</sup>

Shortly after the official opening of the Soviet Consulate at Kashgar on October 10th, 1925, a local power struggle began to develop between Max Doumpiss (the Soviet Consul - a Lett by origin), Major Gillan (the British Consul-General at this time) and the tao-yin of Kashgar. Sino-Soviet relations in southern Sinkiang began inauspiciously with the discovery in November 1925 of large quantities of silver bullion concealed in 34 boxes of Soviet "diplomatic bags" en route to the Kashgar consulate.<sup>11</sup> The Kashgar tao-yin, who was also reportedly affronted by the 'barely-concealed

8. Wu Ai-chen, China and the Soviet Union (London, 1950), p. 252.

9. In exchange the Sinkiang authorities were permitted to establish consulates at Semipalatinsk, Alma Ata, Andijan and Zaysan.

10. This was graphically stated by Schomberg in a letter to the FO from Gilgit dated June 27th, 1933: 'The loss of the southern part means the loss of all revenue, as Kashgaria is the tail that wags the dog'. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4690.33.

11. IOLR, L/P&S/10/976, P.403.1926 (Kashgar Diaries, November 1925).

dissemination of Soviet propaganda' in the southern oases, retaliated by ordering the expulsion of a number of suspected Russian agents.<sup>12</sup> In March, 1926, serious riots broke out in Kashgar which were blamed by the Chinese on an interpreter employed by the Soviet Consulate, by name Akbar <sup>C</sup>Ali. The rioters were suppressed by a force of 400 (local) Tungan troops and Akbar <sup>C</sup>Ali was thrown into prison; subsequent Soviet demands for his release were ignored by the tao-yin.<sup>13</sup> The Chinese authorities were also seriously disturbed at the rapid expansion of Soviet consular staff of European origin from about 15 persons in 1925 to between 30 and 40 persons in 1927.<sup>14</sup> All these factors must have been brought to the notice of Governor Yang Tseng-hsin in Urumchi. Yang was doubtless faced with a series of similar developments around the new Soviet Consulates at Kulja, Chuguchak and Shara Sume.<sup>15</sup> It seems that in Kashgar, with the discreet support of the British, he determined to take action to limit the spread of Soviet influence.<sup>16</sup>

The Kashgar tao-yin accordingly adopted a strong anti-Soviet line. Censorship, already severe, was tightened still further. Moreover, Yang

12. IOLR, L/P&S/10/976, P.960.1926 (Kashgar Diaries, December, 1925). The Chinese were also offended by the Soviets' May Day party in Kashgar during 1926 at which a call was made for the people of Turkestan to unite. Nyman, op.cit., p. 67; cf. Suydam Cutting's personal recollections of the occasion in his The Fire Ox and Other Years (London, 1947), pp. 57-8.
13. IOLR, L/P&S/10/976, P.1730.1926 (Kashgar Diaries, March 1926).
14. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2342, P.6188.1928 (Kashgar Annual Report, 1927-28), p. 3.
15. See, for example, Jackson, W.A., The Russo-Chinese Borderlands, p. 51.
16. In 1926 Yang Tseng-hsin asked the British to sell him 2,000 rifles and 1 million rounds of ammunition. The Government of India and the India Office in London approved the sale (PRO, FO/371/11696, F.4632.4632.10), but it was eventually decided by the Foreign Office that this course of action would contravene the China Arms Embargo Agreement of 1919; the proposed sale was accordingly barred. (PRO, FO/371/12442, F.819.100.10; Foreign Office to India Office, 8th February, 1927).

Tseng-hsin's 'favourite nephew', the officer in command of the Chinese troops on the Sino-Soviet frontier north of Kashgar, became a frequent and friendly visitor to the British Consulate General at Chini Bagh in Kashgar.<sup>17</sup> With the death of the old tao-yin in 1927 and the subsequent transfer of Ma Shao-wu from Khotan to take his place, anti-Soviet measures in southern Sinkiang were substantially increased. Ma Shao-wu's first actions included the jailing of a group of 60 alleged local communists and the tightening of Chinese control over the Sino-Soviet frontier to the north of Kashgar.<sup>18</sup> Subsequently the freedom of the Soviet Consul to travel within southern Sinkiang was severely curtailed, and Kashgar citizens suspected of pro-Soviet sympathies became liable to the confiscation of their property and deportation to other oases.<sup>19</sup> Yang Tseng-hsin reinforced Ma Shao-wu's attempts to limit Soviet influence in the Tarim Basin by imposing a swingeing new tax on Muslims leaving southern Sinkiang to go on hājj via the Soviet Union. Similar new legislation required merchants visiting the Soviet Union to deposit a substantial sum with the Chinese authorities at Kashgar which was forfeit if the depositor failed to return to Sinkiang within 60 days.<sup>20</sup>

These policies failed entirely to isolate southern Sinkiang from Soviet influence,<sup>21</sup> but they did ensure that at the time of Yang Tseng-hsin's assassination in 1928 the southern part of the province, and particularly Ma Shao-wu's fief around Kashgar, Yarkand and Khotan, retained considerable

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17. Nyman, op.cit., p. 68.

18. PRO, FO/371/12485, F.6067.1752.10; F.6708.1572.10 (Kashgar Diary, April; May, 1927).

19. IOLR, L/P&S/10/976, P.2428.1928; P.5434.1928 (Kashgar Diaries, Jan-Feb; May-June 1928). Cf. Bosshard, 'Politics and Trade in Central Asia', pp. pp. 441-2.

20. Persson, C., in Missionsförbundet (Stockholm), XXVIII (1928), p. 434, cited in Nyman, op.cit., p. 68.

21. See above, p. 107.

independence from the Soviet Union. This was in marked contrast to the Ili Valley, Chuguchak and Shara Sume (where Soviet influence became paramount soon after 1925), and even to the provincial capital at Urumchi, where, by the spring of 1928, the Soviet Consul-General wielded considerable influence.<sup>22</sup>

It was perhaps due to Ma Shao-wu's anti-Soviet stance and the continuing dominance of British influence in southern Sinkiang during the last years of Yang Tseng-hsin's rule that Kashgar was to emerge as a centre of conservative pan-Turanian reaction to Chinese rule during the 1930s. Because of Yang Tseng-hsin's deliberate attempt to isolate southern Sinkiang from Soviet influence, the Uighurs (and to a lesser extent the Kirghiz) of the Tarim Basin were less influenced by the progressive nationalist propaganda emanating from (Sovietised) Western Turkestan than were the Turkic Muslims of the Ili Valley and Dzungaria. This is not to suggest that the Turkic socialist nationalism advocated by the Jadid-ists after 1917 failed to make any headway south of the Tien Shan; nevertheless Kashgar, which lay outside the Soviet sphere of influence in north-western Sinkiang, provided a natural haven for right-wing Turkic nationalists and Islamic traditionalists who rejected Chinese rule but were still more bitterly opposed to the advance of "atheistic communism" and its Soviet champions in Central Asia. Many of these right-wing Turkic nationalists were defeated Basmachi guerillas, chiefly of Uzbek, Kazakh and Kirghiz nationality, but including a number of Osmanli Turks and, according to Olaf Caroe, 'old men who had fought against the Chinese at Kashgar'.<sup>23</sup> Perhaps the most prominent Basmachi

22. For anti-Soviet feeling in Kashgar see: 'Central Asia from Within', JRCAS, XXII, 1 (1935), p. 109; for the rise of Soviet influence in Ili see: Nyman, op.cit., pp. 69-72.

23. Caroe, Soviet Empire, p. 128. See also 'The Rebellion in Chinese Turkestan', JRCAS, XXII, 1 (1935), p. 101.

leader to flee to Kashgar was Jānib Beg, a Kirghiz who was to play an important role in the politics of southern Sinkiang during the early 1930s. After Yang Tseng-hsin's assassination in July, 1928, Soviet influence in southern Sinkiang began rapidly to increase; nevertheless, at the time of the Kumul Rebellion in 1931, rumours of forced collectivisation and the suppression of nomadism in Western Turkestan sufficed to make many Turkic Muslims of southern Sinkiang suspicious of Soviet motives.

If, during the late 1920s and early 1930s, the Turkic Muslims of southern Sinkiang were divided in their approach towards the Soviet Union and the newly-emergent Turkic (and Tajik) SSRs in Western Turkestan, they were at least united in their attitude towards their Tungan co-religionists to the east. Unlike the Turkic Muslim rebels of Kumul, the Uighurs and Kirghiz of southern Sinkiang were too far distant from Kansu to appeal for assistance from the Tungan warlords of the "Five Ma" clique. Besides, Han Chinese rule in the oases of the Tarim Basin had long been maintained by Tungan troops and officials.<sup>24</sup> Ma Fu-hsing, the t'i-t'ai of Kashgar who had so ruthlessly exploited his Turkic Muslim subjects between 1916 and 1924, had been a Hui Muslim from Yunnan; similarly Ma Shao-wu was himself a Yunnanese Muslim. The Turkic Muslims of southern Sinkiang therefore entertained no illusions of "Muslim brotherhood" with their Tungan co-religionists. It was Tungan troops who intervened to suppress any demonstration against Chinese misrule. The Tungans of the Tarim Basin were the allies of the Han Chinese administration and as such the enemies of the Turkic Muslim peoples - at least until they proved themselves otherwise.

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24. Han Chinese employment of Tungan troops in southern Sinkiang dated back (at least) as far as Yang Tseng-hsin's transfer from Ho-chou to Aksu in 1907. See above, p. 72. See also: Kazakh, Fuad, Ostürkistan zwischen den Grossmächten, p. 19.

The Tarim Basin, and particularly its western rim, was therefore unique in Sinkiang politics during the latter half of Yang Tseng-hsin's rule in that a large part of its Turkic Muslim population looked neither to the "progressive" Muslim leadership of Western Turkestan nor to the Tungan warlords of Kansu; instead attention seems to have been focused on the conservative reformist regimes in Turkey and Afghanistan. Contacts between Turkey and southern Sinkiang were never strong, though the Sinkiang Muslims doubtless recalled that between 1873 and 1877 the Ottoman flag had flown over Kashgar and coins had been minted which bore the name of the Turkish Sultan <sup>C</sup>Abd al-<sup>C</sup>Aziz.<sup>25</sup> Since the time of the Ch'ing reconquest tenuous links had been maintained through the activities of pan-Turanian idealists such as Husayn Bai Batcha of Artush,<sup>26</sup> but with the defeat of the Ottoman Empire during the First World War contacts ceased almost completely. Emotional links remained strong, however,<sup>27</sup> and the nationalist revolution of Atatürk (who had little personal interest in pan-Turanianism) represented a Turkish national renaissance which inspired all shades of Turkic opinion from the Crimea to Kumul.

Political and religious contacts with Afghanistan, which shares a common frontier with southern Sinkiang, were rather more concrete than the links with distant Turkey. In 1919 Amīr Amanullāh, the last Muḥammadzai ruler of Afghanistan, seized the throne of the country on the death of his father. Amanullāh was an impetuous ruler who was ultimately to bring

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25. See above, p. 68.

26. *ibid.*, p. 84.

27. In this context note the poem addressed to Turkey by the Kazakh nationalist Maghjan Jumabay at the end of World War I:

My brother, far away, so greatly suffering,  
My brother, like a tulip broken,  
Is not Altai our common mother?

(for a full translation see Caroe, *op.cit.*, p. 228). Although Maghjan Jumabay came from the Issik Kōl region, his sentiments were echoed by many Turkic Muslims in Sinkiang - hence the leaders of the conservative nationalist movement at Kashgar during the early 1930s turned to Turkey for moral support. See below, pp. 263-4.

about his own downfall through the implementation of a series of drastic and forced reforms which were to result in the revolution of 1928.<sup>28</sup> In 1919, however, shortly after his seizure of power, Amanullāh won widespread support amongst the Muslim peoples of Central Asia by launching, in the Third Afghan War against the British, a combined jihād and struggle for Afghan independence. As a result of this conflict the British were forced to acknowledge Afghanistan's right to an independent foreign policy.<sup>29</sup>

During the decade following the outbreak of the First World War there emerged widespread support for pan-Islamic and even pan-Turanian sentiment in Afghanistan.<sup>30</sup> In 1915 a joint Turco-German mission under the leadership of the German Von Hentig travelled to Kabul where, by emphasising pan-Islamic links between Afghanistan and the Ottoman Empire (as well, no doubt, as Kaiser Wilhelm's claim to be the defender of the Muslim World), it attempted to persuade the Amīr Ḥabībullāh to declare war on the British in India. Ḥabībullāh, though no friend of the British, was too cautious to commit himself; accordingly the mission left Kabul in May, 1916,<sup>31</sup> and Von Hentig, together with two German colleagues, travelled to Yarkand in southern Sinkiang. Once in Yarkand, Von Hentig is reported to have intrigued with members of the city's influential Afghan population until his arrest by Ma Shao-wu and subsequent deportation to China proper cut short these activities.<sup>32</sup> Despite the failure of the Von Hentig Mission, Afghan support

28. As a result of the 1928 revolution Amanullāh was forced into abdication and exile. Wilber, D.N., Afghanistan, p. 74.

29. ibid., cf. Griffiths, J.C., Afghanistan (London, 1967), p. 31.

30. Caroe, op.cit., p. 118, 124-5, 127; Macmunn, Sir G., Afghanistan: From Darius to Amanullah (London, 1929), pp. 286-8 ('Pan-Turk and Basmach').

31. Swinson, A., North-West Frontier (London, 1967), p. 314.

32. Skrine and Nightingale, Macartney at Kashgar, pp. 250-3.

for the Ottoman cause remained strong at popular level throughout the First World War, and with the defeat of Turkey this support seems to have been transferred to the Basmachi guerillas, under the leadership of Enver Pasha, in their struggle against the Soviets.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, in 1919, soon after the conclusion of the short-lived Third Afghan War, Enver Pasha's brother, Jamāl, arrived in Kabul. Jamāl, who may have been receiving Soviet backing, immediately established the "Islamic Revolutionary League", an organisation purportedly dedicated to the freeing of India from British domination.<sup>34</sup>

Amanullāh thus came to the throne of Afghanistan at a time of considerable religious and political ferment. He is known to have been influenced by the pan-Turanian Basmachi movement, and during the first years of his rule he is said to have toyed with the idea of creating an Islamic Confederacy which was to have included Afghanistan, Bukhara, Khiva and Khokand.<sup>35</sup> Certainly Amanullāh was interested in promoting Afghan influence in Sinkiang, where numerous Afghan merchants (particularly from Badakshan) had long resided under British protection. Following Britain's recognition of Afghanistan's right to an independent foreign policy by the treaty of Peshawar in 1919, British diplomatic protection of Afghan citizens in Sinkiang was withdrawn. Amanullāh accordingly determined to establish independent diplomatic links between Kabul and Urumchi, and following negotiations with a (Sinkiang) Chinese delegation sent to Kabul by Yang Tseng-hsin in the summer of 1922, an Afghan mission under Muḥammad Sharīf Khān was despatched to Yarkand, arriving in the autumn of the same year. The Chinese authorities regarded the Afghan mission as a trade delegation, but Muḥammad Sharīf Khān

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33. Macmunn, op.cit., p. 288.

34. Caroe, op.cit., p. 123.

35. Nyman, op.cit., p. 58.



carried printed visiting cards styling himself "Afghan Consul-General in Sinkiang"; moreover he submitted a draft agreement to the Chinese demanding full extraterritorial rights and other privileges for Afghan subjects in Sinkiang, as well as the right to import opium freely into the province. Hardly surprisingly, Yang refused to agree to these demands, restricting his recognition of the Afghan mission to the level of that enjoyed by the Soviet representative at Kulja. An acrimonious dispute between Muhammad Sharif Khān and the provincial authorities dragged on throughout the remainder of Yang's rule, but the Afghan mission refused to leave Sinkiang, remaining at Yarkand as a focus of Turkic Muslim discontent. As a result of this Afghan presence something of an Afghan cult began to develop at Yarkand, and the Chinese authorities at Kashgar were disturbed to hear that some local Turkic peoples were studying Pushtu.<sup>36</sup> Certainly links were established between the Afghans and Turkic nationalist circles in southern Sinkiang during this period; both British and German diplomatic sources report that in February, 1927, a deputation came from Sinkiang to Kabul where it sought the backing of the Afghan government for a projected Muslim rising against the Chinese. Amanullah, beset by problems of his own, held out no prospect of aid for the intended insurgents, but apparently indicated his willingness to accept Muslim refugees from Sinkiang in Afghanistan.<sup>37</sup> Despite this rebuff, many Turkic Muslims of southern Sinkiang continued to look to Kabul (and in some cases beyond, to Ankara) at the time of Yang Tseng-hsin's assassination in 1928.

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36. PRO, FO/371/9209, F.2933.278.10 (Kashgar Diary, July 1923).

37. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2355, Coll 12/23 (Chinese Turkestan: Afghanistan), p.794. 1928 (British Legation, Kabul, to Government of India, letter dated 6/1/1928); cf. Auswärtiges Amt (Bonn) IV, Chi 1475/8. Juni 1927: Deutsche Gesandtschaft, Kabul, den 29 April, 1927 (the latter cited in Nyman, op.cit., p. 52).

## 5.2 The Outbreak of Rebellion in the South and the Collapse of the Chinese Administration

Throughout the initial stages of the Kumul rising and the subsequent Tungen invasion, Chin Shu-jen made every effort to prevent news from the north-east of the province reaching the Muslim population of the still quiescent south.<sup>38</sup> However contemporary British diplomatic reports (as well as subsequent events)<sup>39</sup> indicate that all attempts to isolate the south ended in failure; rumours and reports from the rebellious north-east continued to flood into the oases of the Tarim Basin, inflaming anti-Chinese feeling amongst an indigenous population already indignant at the imposition of increased taxes and the forced issue of huge quantities of unbacked paper currency to pay for Chin's war effort.<sup>40</sup>

Chin Shu-jen was doubtless aware of the tensions existing in the south of the province, but encouraged by his apparent victory over Ma Chung-ying as well as by the delivery of 4,000 rifles and 4 million rounds of ammunition from British India,<sup>41</sup> he determined to maintain his uncompromising stance. This decision was to prove most unwise. The rebellion at Kumul, far from being crushed, continued to smoulder; moreover the brutalities inflicted on the Muslim inhabitants of the Kumul area by Hsiung Fa-yü following the relief of Kumul Old City in November, 1931, caused widespread Turkic anger and a constant movement of refugees westward towards Turfan. In or about May, 1932, Ma Chung-ying sent one of his lieutenants,

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38. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331 (Chinese Turkestan, Internal Situation Sept. 1930 - Nov. 1933), PZ.6313.31 (HMCGK to FPD India, 4/8/1931); cf. L/P&S/12/2332 (Kashgar Diaries, Jan. 1931 - Dec. 1938), PZ.416.1932 (Sept., Oct., 1931), para. 147; PZ.7339.1932 (Sept. 1932), para. 348.

39. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.1232.1932 (HMCGK to FPD India, 11/11/1931).

40. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.2331 (Report of HMVCGK Watts, 21/10/32), p. 7.

41. In 1929 the Government of British India, disturbed by Chin Shu-jen's slipping hold on Sinkiang and by the rapid expansion of Soviet influence in the province, raised the ban on arms sales to China which had existed (by international agreement) since 1919. Lattimore, 'Chinese Turkestan or Sinkiang', The China Yearbook, 1935, p. 43; IOLR, L/P&S/12/2342 (Kashgar Annual Reports, 1922-31), PZ.5695.1931.

a young Tungan called Ma Shih-ming, to take command of the Tungan forces remaining in Sinkiang.<sup>42</sup> Ma Shih-ming established his base near Turfan, probably in the mountains to the north of the town. From here he worked in close co-operation with the Turkic Muslim insurgents owing allegiance to Yulbārs Khān and Khoja Niyās Hājji; he is also likely to have made contact with Ma Fu-ming, a Tungan officer in command of the Sinkiang provincial forces at Turfan.<sup>43</sup>

By coincidence, it was also during May 1932 that Chin Shu-jen decided to revenge himself upon Tsetsen Puntsag Gegeen, regent of the Torgut Mongols inhabiting the Tien Shan north of Karashahr, for the latter's refusal to commit his Torgut cavalry to the struggle against Ma Chung-ying's invading Tungans. Tsetsen Puntsag Gegeen was accordingly invited to travel to Urumchi where it was understood that he would be able to attend an investigation into the assassination plotted against him.<sup>44</sup> On May 21st, shortly after his arrival in Urumchi, Tsetsen Puntsag Gegeen, together with two Torgut officers and the young Torgut prince (who was under age), were invited to an official banquet at Chin Shu-jen's yamen. Once again, in the best tradition of Yang Tseng-hsin, the banquet was to become a bloodbath. According to R.P. Watts, the British Vice Consul-General at Kashgar who chanced to arrive in Urumchi on the very day of the murders:

While drinking the usual preliminary cup of tea

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42. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 238. According to Wu Ai-chen, Ma Shih-ming led an abortive mission to Turfan without Ma Chung-ying's permission in 1930. The resulting "revolt" is said by Wu to have 'petered out', although Ma Fu-ming is also said to have been implicated; (Turkistan Tumult, pp. 58-9). Wu's 1930 revolt does not seem to be mentioned in any other source, and probably rests on chronological confusion with the 1932 revolt in his account. Certainly Ma Shih-ming is reported by Yulbārs to have been in Kansu during the summer of 1931, apparently on good terms with Ma Chung-ying. See above, p. 147.

43. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, pp. 71-2. cf. Chan, Sinkiang Under Sheng Shih-ts'ai, pp. 68-9.

44. See above, pp. 160-61.

the regent and the two military officers were led out into a courtyard and executed. According to Chinese custom in such matters proper observance was accorded to the high rank of regent even at the moment of execution. A red carpet was spread on the ground on which he was invited to seat himself. He was then killed by being shot, through the head from behind by one of the governor's special executioners. His two companions being men of inferior rank were not given the privilege of a red carpet to sit on whilst being executed.<sup>45</sup>

The young prince was later permitted to return to Karashahr. No doubt Chin intended, by his harsh action, to remove the stubborn and powerful Torgut regent whilst terrifying the young Torgut prince with a display of ruthless power. In the event, Chin's treachery and brutality merely served to alienate the Torgut Mongols - the one minority nationality in Sinkiang which might normally have been expected to side with the Han Chinese against the Turkic Muslims of the province.<sup>46</sup> With trouble about to break out amongst the Uighurs and Tungens of Turfan, as well as amongst the nomadic Kirghiz of the Tien Shan, Chin Shu-jen could hardly have chosen a worse time to anger the Torguts.

Early in 1932, Turkic Muslim opposition to the forced collectivisation and suppression of nomadism pursued by Stalin in the Kazakh and Kirghiz regions of Soviet Central Asia, began to spill over the Sino-Soviet frontier

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45. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.2331 (Watts' Report), 7. cf. accounts of the Torgut regent's murder in IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5443.32 (Account of the Revd. H. French Ridley of the China Inland Mission); Anon, 'Recent Events in Sinkiang', JRCAS, XXI, 1 (1934), 82-4; Haslund, Men and Gods in Mongolia, p. 325.

46. According to the anonymous author of 'Recent Events in Sinkiang', the Torgut Mongols 'feel they have more in common with their Chinese rulers than with their Moslem fellow-nomads', JRCAS, XXI, 1, p. 83. It is interesting to note, however, that even the Buddhist regent of the Torguts was deeply interested in the activities of Amanullah of Afghanistan. Haslund, op.cit., p. 246.

into Sinkiang.<sup>47</sup> In March, 1932, large numbers of Kirghiz were driven across the Sinkiang frontier by pursuing Soviet forces. A series of guerilla counter-attacks against the Soviets were mounted from Chinese territory, and in raids on Koku and two other Soviet posts a total of 37 Russian troops were killed.<sup>48</sup> The "Soviet" Kirghiz refugees naturally received aid and support from their "Chinese" Kirghiz brethren, and in June, 1932, a Chinese official was killed by Kirghiz insurgents in the Tien Shan. The Chinese were reportedly 'much incensed' at this development, and Ma Shao-wu despatched 300 troops from Kashgar New City and 200 troops from Kashgar Old City to the frontier area. These units were joined by a further 100 troops from Opal, 25 miles south-west of Kashgar, and 200 troops from the Uch Turfan area, the combined forces being placed under Brigadier Yang, Yang Tseng-hsin's "favourite nephew", reportedly one of the few competent officers in the Kashgar region.<sup>49</sup> In July, 1932, Yang's force began joint operations with the Soviet forces against the Kirghiz insurgents under the leadership of C'Id Mirāb. The Chinese forces 'who are said to have been suffering badly from want of opium', reportedly behaved very badly towards the Kirghiz, a number of whom were driven to take refuge in Russian territory. In an attempt to ensure future Kirghiz submission to Chinese rule, Yang's forces took about 70 hostages from a wide number of Kirghiz families; these unfortunate individuals were carried off from the high Tien Shan and held prisoner in the lowland oases of

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47. Collectivization of Kazakhstan began in 1929. For Soviet policies towards the Kazakh and Kirghiz nomads at this time see: Caroe, op.cit., pp. 180-8. For initial impact on Sinkiang see: IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332 (Kashgar Diaries), PZ.2867.1932 (February 1932).

48. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.3451.1932 (Kashgar Diaries, March 1932).

49. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.5241.1932 (Kashgar Diaries, June 1932); L/P&S/12/2331, (Chinese Turkestan, Internal Situation September 1930 - November 1933), PZ.1979.1933 (HMCCK-GOI, 9/2/1933).

Khotan, Keriya and Charchan.<sup>50</sup> Chin Shu-jen and Ma Shao-wu thus succeeded, within a few months of Ma Chung-ying's withdrawal to Kansu, in alienating both the Turkic and Mongol nomads of the Tien Shan. Nor can the lesson of joint Sino-Soviet action against the Kirghiz and emerging Soviet military backing for Chin Shu-jen's regime have been lost on the Turkic Muslims of southern Sinkiang;<sup>51</sup> indeed it is likely that these developments strengthened the position of the conservative pan-Turanian nationalists at Khotan, Yarkand and Kashgar.

Meanwhile the influence of the continuing Turkic Muslim rebellion at Kumul spread rapidly westwards. In the autumn of 1932, some months after Ma Shih-ming's arrival in the Turfan region, Ma Fu-ming, the Tungan officer in command of the provincial garrison at Turfan, went over to the rebel forces together with his troops.<sup>52</sup> Wu Ai-chen implies that that Ma Fu-ming's decision was based on the continuing flow of Turkic Muslim refugees from Kumul to Turfan combined with reports of the mass executions being carried out in the Kumul region by Hsiung Fa-yü;<sup>53</sup> however, it is at least as probable that Ma Fu-ming came to an arrangement with his fellow Tungan Ma Shih-ming, and decided to throw in his lot with the Kansu Tungan forces threatening Turfan. According to Wu Ai-chen, Ma Fu-ming's first action was to send a telegram to Chin Shu-jen at Urumchi requesting the despatch of reinforcements; he also sent a letter to Hsiung Fa-yü at Kumul, asking him to come to Turfan as swiftly as possible. A detachment of troops was duly despatched from Urumchi to Turfan; they

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50. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.6134.1932 (Kashgar Diaries, July 1932).

51. For Chin's increasing dependence on Soviet military and financial aid, see below, pp. 227-8.

52. Wu Ai-chen, Turkistan Tumult, p. 71.

53. ibid.

entered the oasis without suspecting treachery and were shot down 'to the last man' by Ma Fu-ming's forces as they passed the city gates.<sup>54</sup> Some days later a detachment of just over 100 men under the command of Hsiung Fa-yü reached Turfan from the east and suffered the same fate. Hsiung was taken prisoner and later 'tortured to death in public with every refinement of cruelty and vileness of method'.<sup>55</sup> Following Ma Fu-ming's defection, the Turfan depression became the main centre of Muslim rebellion in north-eastern Sinkiang; Kumul, which had been largely destroyed by the vengeful Chin Shu-jen after Ma Chung-ying's withdrawal to Kansu, was left to the Turkic Muslim insurgents and a handful of Tungan troops, but the greater part of the Tungan forces opposed to Chin Shu-jen, whether rebels under the "renegade general" Ma Fu-ming, or invaders from Kansu under the command of Ma Chung-ying's adjutant Ma Shih-ming, massed at Turfan in preparation for an attack across the Dawan Ch'eng on Urumchi itself, a mere 100 miles to the north-west.

The developments at Turfan, following closely on the Turkic Muslim rising at Kumul, were shortly followed by a series of apparently unco-ordinated risings amongst the Turkic Muslims of southern Sinkiang. It was doubtless apparent to the Uighurs of the Tarim Basin and the Kirghiz of the Tien Shan that Chin Shu-jen's grip on the province was slipping; moreover, the presence of rebel Tungan forces in Turfan at the southern end of the Dawan Ch'eng effectively isolated the oases of the south from the provincial capital at Urumchi and Chin Shu-jen's White Russian troops -

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54. ibid.

55. ibid., p. 72; cf. Chan's account (Sinkiang Under Sheng Shih-ts'ai, pp.68-9), which holds that Hsiung was murdered by Uighurs and his body mutilated by forces owing allegiance to Ma Shih-ming; the varying accounts of Hsiung's death would at least seem to confirm the reported co-operation between Ma Fu-ming and Ma Shih-ming during the troubles at Turfan in late 1932.

a force which might otherwise have intimidated the Uighurs and Kirghiz of Nan-lu. As it was, however, the White Russian and other provincial forces were hard-pressed by the combined Tungan forces of Ma Fu-ming and Ma Shih-ming; reports that Ma Chung-ying would shortly re-enter the fray in person were rife, and Chang P'ei-yüan, the military commander at Ili, had fallen out with Chin Shu-jen and could no longer be relied upon by the Urumchi authorities.<sup>56</sup> The Turkic Muslims of southern Sinkiang were thus in a better position to rebel against Chinese rule than at any time since the rising of Ya<sup>c</sup>qūb Beg in the early 1860s.

Events moved with startling rapidity. In the winter of 1932-33 successful risings occurred at Pichan (Ch. Shan-shan) to the east of Turfan, and at Karashahr some 175 miles to the south-west.<sup>57</sup> Lack of Torgut support at Karashahr following the murder of Tsatsen Puntsag Gegeen sealed the fate of the Chinese forces in that city, and a new Tungan leader, Ma Chan-ts'ang, emerged as commander of the rebel forces in this area.<sup>58</sup> Ignoring the increasingly bitter struggle between Ma Shih-ming and the provincial forces on the Turfan-Urumchi road, Ma Chan-ts'ang marched westwards, capturing Bugur in early February and advancing to Kuchar where he entered into an alliance of convenience with Timūr, the local Uighur leader, described by Wu Ai-chen as 'an able fellow who had been head of the

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56. Chang P'ei-yüan's struggle with Chin Shu-jen is described in Section 5.4, below.
57. Chang Ta-chün, Szu-shih-nien tung-luan Hsin-chiang (Forty Years of Turmoil in Sinkiang), Hong Kong, 1956, pp. 33 ff. ; cf. Wu Ai-chen, Turkistan Tumult, p. 240.
58. According to Wu (Turkistan Tumult, p. 240), Ma Chan-ts'ang was a Tungan from Kashgar; according to the GOI, however, he originally came from Kansu (IOLR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT. 4910.1941: Who's Who in Sinkiang Corrected up to 15th April, p. 17). On balance, the GOI source is more likely to be correct, as it is based on information derived from Kashgar - and had Ma Chan-ts'ang been a native of that city the British-Consul-General would probably have known. See also Appendix I, "Who Was Who in Republican Sinkiang".



mule waggon service'.<sup>59</sup> Having occupied Kuchar without hostilities, the joint forces of Ma Chan-ts'ang and Timūr then advanced towards Aksu, taking the small town of Bai en route.<sup>60</sup>

Ma Shao-wu, the Yunnanese Muslim tao-yin of Kashgar and the second most powerful official in the provincial administration after Chin Shu-jen, thus found himself cut off from the provincial capital at Urumchi by two separate armies of Muslim rebels, each composed of separate but allied Tungan and Turkic factions. One such army, apparently comprising a small but militarily competent Tungan force under Ma Chan-ts'ang and a much larger but poorly-armed mass of Uighur peasants owing allegiance to Timūr, was advancing south-westwards towards Aksu; the other army, a loose alliance of extremely competent Tungan troops under Ma Shih-ming and Ma Fu-ming fighting alongside a predominantly peasant army of Turkic Muslims owing allegiance to Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī and Yulbārs Khān, continued to press its attack across the Dawan Ch'eng on Urumchi.

In February 1933, completing the confusion in the south (as well as the isolation of Ma Shao-wu at Kashgar), the rebellion against the Chinese spread southwards across the Tarim Basin to its southern rim. Fitzmaurice, the British Consul-General at Kashgar, blamed this development on Tungan agitators sent to the Khotan and Keriya oases from Kuchar.<sup>61</sup> Whatever the truth of this assertion, risings against the Chinese administration broke out almost simultaneously amongst the gold-miners of Surghak, near Keriya, and of Karakesh, near Khotan. The gold-miners of the southern oases had long resented the imposition by the provincial government of a fixed rate for the purchase of gold throughout Sinkiang; moreover conditions of

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59. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, pp. 240-1.

60. ibid.

61. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.2693.1933 (Kashgar Diaries, Feb. 1933), para. 17; cf. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2356, PZ.8042.1933 (F4845/456/10, No. 1), Memorandum Respecting Sinkiang Rebellion, 1933, pp. 1-2.

employment were extremely harsh.<sup>62</sup> As a result of the spiralling inflation which resulted from Chin Shu-jen's unrestrained issue of unbacked paper notes, the miners of Surghak and Karakash were forced to exchange their gold for increasingly worthless paper currency.<sup>63</sup> By the spring of 1933 their patience with the provincial authorities had clearly run out, and Uighurs under the leadership of Ismā'īl Khān Khoja seized control of Karakash, killing the amban and a number of other Han Chinese; at the same time rebellious Uighurs at Keriya seized control of the Surghak mines and threatened to take over the whole oasis. Rebel notices displayed at Karakash and subsequently conveyed to the British Consul-General at Kashgar indicate that rebellion broke out as a result of economic unrest in the gold-mining community. Prominent rebel demands included the lifting of government-imposed trade monopolies, the introduction of a fixed price for the purchase of gold and silver, and prohibition on the purchase of precious metals with paper currency. More general demands included the lowering of taxes, a prohibition on usury, an end to government tyranny, the introduction of Islamic shari<sup>C</sup> law, and the stationing of Muslim soldiers 'in every city'.<sup>64</sup> The notices indicated

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62. See above, p. 104 fn. 112. For a detailed study of the gold industry in Sinkiang at this time see: Kazak, Fuad, Osttürkistan zwischen den Grossmächten (Königsberg, 1937), pp. 37-44. According to Kazak, gold-mining was carried out in extremely primitive conditions in mines which were often surprisingly deep - he cites a figure of 80 metres for Surghak; elsewhere gold was panned for on the surface. Working conditions were reportedly so hard that 'the whole business of mining extraction (became) a kind of forced labour or punishment', with miners heavily in debt to local usurers. In 1873 the Surghak gold mines employed c. 3000 men; Kazak gives no employment figures for the 1930s, but states that working conditions were even worse than they had been under Ya qūb Beg, when workers had been driven to work in the mines to finance wars against the Tungans and Chinese.

63. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331 (Chinese Turkestan, Internal Situation, September 1930 - November 1933), PZ.2652.1933 (HMCCK-GOI, 9/3/1933).

64. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.2794.1933 (HMCCK-GOI, 23/3/1933).

a willingness to compromise with the Chinese authorities, promising that, if their demands were met, the rebels were 'ready to live as peaceful subjects'.<sup>65</sup> Moreover it is noteworthy that, although the gold-miners of Karakash represented a rare example of a genuine proletariat in Republican Sinkiang, there was no indication of Soviet or socialist influence in the terminology employed by the rebel leadership;<sup>66</sup> rather the tone was distinctly Islamic, adding weight to the theory that the south Sinkiang rebellion of 1933 was, at least initially, pan-Islamic and not pro-Soviet. Thus the anonymous author of one of the Karakash notices addressed the Chinese authorities in the following terms:

A friend for the sake of friendship will make known a friend's defects and save him from the consequences of his defects. You, who are supposed to rule, cannot even realise this, but try to seek out the supporter of Islam to kill him. Foolish infidels like you are not fit to rule. If you had understood my meaning, you would have rewarded me. How can an infidel, who cannot distinguish between a friend and a foe, be fit to rule? You infidels think that because you have rifles, guns...and money, you can depend on them; but we depend upon God in whose hands are our lives. You infidels think that you will take our lives. If you do not send a reply to this notice we are ready. If we die we are martyrs. If we survive we are conquerors. We are living but long for death.<sup>67</sup>

Ma Shao-wu, the Kashgar tao-yin, decided to move first against the Muslim insurgents threatening Aksu - no doubt reasoning that, should Ma Chan-ts'ang and Timūr be defeated, the much weaker rebel forces at Karakash and Surghak would offer little resistance. Another reason for relieving Aksu

65. ibid.

66. This is in marked contrast to the proclamations of the Ili rebels in 1945 (see below, pp. 404-5), and even to the letter sent by the Kirghiz leader Uthmān 'Alī to the British Consul-General Kashgar in May 1933 (see below, p. 198).

67. Anonymous notice issued at Karashahr, 28 Shawwāl 1351 (26 February 1933), translated in IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.1794.1933. HMCCK comments that similar notices were reportedly sent to Maralbashi by the Muslim rebels at Aksu.

lay in the fact that Ma Shih-ming's forces at Turfan had severed the telegraph line between Urumchi and Kashgar; the line had been re-routed via Aksu, but if Aksu were to fall to rebel forces, communication with the provincial capital would only be possible via the USSR, thus permitting Soviet interception of top secret cables.<sup>68</sup> Accordingly brigadier Yang, at the head of a mixed force of 280 cavalry and 150 infantry, set out for Aksu on February 6th, 1933.<sup>69</sup>

Ma Shao-wu's position was not strong. On February 9th Chin Shu-chih, the younger brother of Chin Shu-jen and commander-in-chief at Kashgar New City, died after a sudden illness.<sup>70</sup> His place was taken by a Chinese officer called Liu, who took command of three detachments of cavalry (estimated strength 480 men) and one detachment of artillery (estimated strength 160 men) formerly under the command of Chin Shu-chih. Ma Shao-wu retained direct command over two regiments of cavalry (estimated strength 700 men) and three detachments of infantry (estimated strength 300 men), all stationed at Kashgar Old City.<sup>71</sup> In the middle of February reports reached Kashgar that Brigadier Yang, heavily outnumbered by the rebels under Ma Chan-ts'ang and Timūr, had fallen back from Aksu and was occupying Maralbashi. On February 23rd celebrations were held at Kashgar to mark Chin Shu-jen's conferral of the title "Special Commissioner for the Suppression of Bandits" on Ma Shao-wu - salutes were fired at the yamen and

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68. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 241; IOLR, L/P&S/12/2356, PZ.8042.1933 (Memo-randum Respecting Sinkiang Rebellion, 1933).

69. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.1979.1933 (HMCCK-GOI, 9/2/1933).

70. ibid., according to Wu, Ai-chen (Turkistan Tumult, p. 241) Chin Shu-chih committed suicide.

71. Figures given by Fitzmaurice, HMCCK, in IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.1979.1933.

Kuomintang flags were flown on buildings throughout the city;<sup>72</sup> shortly afterwards 'practically all' the New City forces under the command of Liu were despatched to Maralbashi to bolster the position of General Yang.<sup>73</sup> In a bid to suppress the risings at Surghak and Karakash before a full-scale rising could develop on the south road, 200 men under the command of a Colonel Li were despatched to Khotan; similarly a force of unrecorded size under Colonel Chin, the former amban of Maralbashi, was despatched to Yarkand.<sup>74</sup> Since the movement of troops to both the Khotan and Maralbashi fronts resulted in the serious depletion of the forces defending Kashgar, Ma Shao-wu ordering the raising of a force of Kirghiz levies and recalled Chinese troops from the frontier districts to the west of Kashgar. As a result of these policies, the Chinese garrison at Sarikol withdrew to Kashgar on February 12th, leaving the region's Tajik inhabitants to their own devices pending the restoration of Chinese authority elsewhere in southern Sinkiang.<sup>75</sup> At Kashgar itself soldiers were posted on the walls of both cities, orders were given for the closure of all city gates at 7 o'clock in the evening, and restrictions were placed on the movement of the local inhabitants.<sup>76</sup>

Despite these moves, the provincial forces proved quite incapable of stemming the rebel advance along both the north and south roads to Kashgar. On February 25th rebel forces entered Aksu Old City, shot all the Chinese residents, and seized their property; it seems probable that this was the

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72. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.2336.1933 (letter, HMCCK-GOI, 23/2/1933).

73. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.2653.1933 (letter, HMCCK-GOI, 2/3/1933).

74. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.2336.1933.

75. ibid.

76. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.1647.1933 (letter, HMCCK-GOI, 2/2/1933).

work of Timūr's men, as the Tungan forces of Ma Chan-ts'ang are reported to have peacefully occupied Aksu New City, where they took possession of both the arsenal and treasury. British consular sources reporting the fall of Aksu indicate clearly for the first time that Ma Chan-ts'ang, at the head of approximately 300 well-armed Tungan troops, was allied to Ma Shih-ming at Karashahr, and therefore to Ma Chung-ying, still recuperating in north-western Kansu. The contents of the Aksu New City treasury and arsenal were reportedly sent to the Tungan Headquarters at Karashahr.<sup>77</sup> Later Ma Chan-ts'ang, accompanied by Timūr at the head of an estimated 4,700 ill-armed Uighur irregulars,<sup>78</sup> resumed his advance on Maralbashi and Kashgar.

Meanwhile, on the southern road, both Keriya and Khotan passed into the hands of Uighur insurgents. In the Keriya oasis the Chinese officials agreed to accept Islam and to hand over their goods, but on March 3rd a group of 35 Chinese, including the leading officials, were executed and their heads hung up in the bazaar. Khotan Old City seems to have declared for the rebels almost immediately, whilst the New City surrendered on March 16th and a reported 266 Chinese, including the Khotan tao-yin, accepted Islam. The Khotan treasury and arsenal both passed into rebel hands. Successful risings also occurred at Chira and at Shamba Bazaar, where two Shikarpuri Hindu money-lenders were murdered.<sup>79</sup> Beyond Keriya, at the remote oases of Charchan and Charlik, bloodless risings are reported

77. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3108.1933 (letter, HMCCK-GOI, 6/4/1933). cf. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.3109.1933 (Kashgar Diaries, March 1933), para. 33.

78. Figure given by Fitzmaurice in IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3108.1933.

79. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4045.1933 (letter, HMCCK-GOI, 25/5/1933). Nearly all the Hindu money-lenders in Sinkiang during the early Republican period came from Shikarpur in Sind. See also Ambolt, Nils, Karavan, Travels in Eastern Turkestan (London & Glasgow, 1939), p. 169.

to have taken place after a small Tungan force owing allegiance to Ma Shih-ming advanced into the region by means of the little-used desert track between Karashahr and Lop.<sup>80</sup> Meanwhile, Uighur forces under the Karakash rebel leader Ismā'īl Khān Khoja blocked the main Yarkand-Khotan road at Tokhta Langar and turned back all but two of a group of Uighur notables sent from Kashgar by Ma Shao-wu in an attempt to negotiate with the rebel leadership at Khotan. Nothing further was heard from the two begs permitted to proceed to Khotan, and with the failure of their mission the whole south road from the eastern fringes of the Guma Oasis to distant Lop Nor passed out of Chinese control. The rebel leadership at Khotan secured their position against possible counter-attack from Kashgar by destroying the roadside wells in the desert to the east of Guma, and proceeded to set up an overtly Islamic administration in the "liberated areas".<sup>81</sup>

By mid-March, 1933, Ma Shao-wu's political control was effectively limited to a triangular-shaped territory roughly defined by the garrisons at Kashgar, Maralbashi and Yarkand. Morale, already low, was not improved by the refusal of the British Indian government to send troops to the assistance of the Chinese administration at Kashgar despite an official request made to the British Consul-General by Ma Shao-wu on February 25th.<sup>82</sup> It was all too apparent that no help would be forthcoming from Urumchi;

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80. ibid., cf. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5370.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 13/7/1933); for developments under the Uighurs at Chira (where the insurgent leader was called "Amir" 'Abd al-Kādir), see Ambolt, pp. 170-2.

81. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.2652.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 9/3/1933), PZ.2336.1933; PZ.2794.1933.

82. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.1322.1933 (Telegram, HMCGK-GOI, 25/2/1933). The British Indian Government declined to send troops to put down 'an internal revolutionary movement' (PZ.1395.1933, Note by Political Department on Situation in Chinese Turkestan), but offered to consider requests for munitions on receipt of payment (PZ.1398.1933, telegram, GOI-HMCGK, 10/3/1933).

after the cutting of telegraph links between Kashgar and Urumchi at Aksu, Ma Shao-wu received three telegrams from Chin Shu-jen via the Soviet Union. The first confirmed Ma in his position as commander-in-chief of the provincial forces in the south; the second related to the winding up of the estate of Chin's late brother, Chin Shu-chih; and the third directed Chin's Kashgar representative to remit a large sum of money to Tientsin where the provincial chairman maintained a personal bank account.<sup>83</sup>

Despite the reinforcement of Yarkand by troops under the command of Col. Chin (subsequently sent to the front at Guma), rampant inflation continued unchecked and a sense of panic developed amongst the Chinese officials stationed in the region.<sup>84</sup> In response the Chinese amban at Yarkand New City, described by Fitzmaurice as a classical scholar, ordered the amban and all Chinese residents of Yarkand Old City to withdraw to the fortified New City, the walls of which were hurriedly repaired and stocked with heavy stones to throw on the heads of besieging rebel forces;<sup>85</sup> 500 dummy figures were subsequently added to these defences 'in order to give the impression of a well-manned rampart'.<sup>86</sup> Meanwhile, on about March 21st, the insurgent forces at Tokhta Langar resumed their advance on Yarkand. Colonel Chin's forces seem to have made no attempt to resist the rebel attack, but instead looted Guma, and fell back on Khotan via a hill-track by-passing Karghalik and Posgam. En route they are reported to have killed a large number of Uighurs and one Hindu.<sup>87</sup> The

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83. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.2794.1933. Le Fèvre, F., An Eastern Odyssey, p. 263.

84. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.2336.1933.

85. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.2653.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 2/3/1933).

86. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.2794.1933.

87. According to Fitzmaurice, the Chinese troops killed 'between 150 and 410, including one British Hindu', IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3398.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 20/4/1933). For the route of Chin's retreat see: IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3245.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 13/4/1933).



rebel forces, who were probably still under the command of Ismā'īl Khān Khoja, seized Karghalik on March 24th and proceeded to kill nine further Hindus, all British citizens, including the British Aksakal.<sup>88</sup> The property of the dead Hindus was looted, their houses burned, and their bodies thrown into a well. On March 25th the rebels reached Posgam, where three more Hindus suffered a similar fate. Towards the end of March a group of 150 Chinese troops who had succeeded in fleeing the rebels at Khotan arrived in Yarkand; a further 300 Chinese troops were reported to have arrived in the oasis on April 2nd.<sup>89</sup> No doubt these troops were employed to strengthen the garrison at Yarkand New City, sadly depleted by fighting on the Maralbashi front.<sup>90</sup> Meanwhile large numbers of insurgents had massed on the east bank of the Yarkand River; although reportedly ill-armed and untrained, the rebels crossed the river in early April and advanced against Yarkand itself. On April 11th Yarkand Old City fell to a force of insurgents from Khotan, Karghalik and Posgam; an estimated 100 Han Chinese who were still outside the fortified New City were caught and massacred. According to British sources Afghan citizens from Badakshan present in Yarkand took part in the attack on the Old City yamen.<sup>91</sup> During the afternoon of April 11th the bazaar between Yarkand

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88. Ak-sakal (Tk. "white beard") - term used for locally-based representatives of foreign governments (British, Afghan, formerly Khokandi, etc.) in Sinkiang. For details of the "Karghalik Outrage" see IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, pZ.3108.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 6/4/1933); cf. 'Rising in Chinese Turkestan', The Times, April 20th, 1933; for Indian attitudes to killing of Hindus see: 'Reign of Terror and Destruction in Chinese Turkestan', The Daily Herald (Lahore), 26th July, 1933.

89. IOLR, L/P&S/12/1331, pZ.3108.1933.

90. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, pZ.2794.1933.

91. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, pZ.3398.1933; cf. 'A Turkestan Massacre', The Times, May 3rd, 1933.

Old and New Cities was set on fire and destroyed; the shops of Chinese money-lenders were destroyed and their property looted, and Yarkand New City came under siege. On April 12th rebel forces advanced beyond Yarkand to Kokrobat, one stage on the road to Kashgar; meanwhile reinforcements from Khotan began to stream into the Yarkand oasis.<sup>92</sup>

By early April Ma Shao-wu's position was almost untenable. His only hope lay in reaching an agreement with the attacking forces of his fellow Hui, Ma Chan-ts'ang or failing that in the militarily competent but politically unreliable Kirghiz levies raised in March after the withdrawal of Chinese units from the western frontier at Sarikol and elsewhere. Negotiations with Ma Chan-ts'ang were duly opened through the medium of Fitzmaurice, the British Consul-General at Kashgar;<sup>93</sup> these appeared

92. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3398.1933.

93. Fitzmaurice sent the following letter to Ma Chan-ts'ang after consultations with Ma Shao-wu:

The Commander of the New Troops, Aksu

Kashgar 21st March

Sir, I am informed that your troops have approached near to Maralbashi, and that there has been severe fighting with the Chinese forces, in the course of which many men have been killed. If this fighting continues, not only will many more men be killed, but the farmers will be unable to cultivate their fields and there will be shortage of food. Many of the sufferers, either in fighting or from famine, will be Moslems. Brother will be injuring brother. In the hope of avoiding unnecessary loss of life, and of preserving peace at Kashgar, I am writing to you to enquire whether it would be agreeable to you that your troops should remain temporarily in their present positions on the condition that the Chinese forces likewise do not advance from their present positions, so that negotiations may be held with a view to a friendly settlement of the peoples' grievances. Since your followers are Muslims, and the Hsing Cheng Chang of Kashgar (Ma Shao-wu) is also a Muslim, I think it should not be difficult for you to arrive at an understanding with him. If representatives of both sides meet at Chiutai, or at some convenient spot, much trouble and suffering might be avoided. If I can be of assistance in preventing further hostilities, I shall be glad to do what I can with this object in view.

Compliments, etc.,

N. Fitzmaurice, Consul-General.

(IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.2794.1933). This letter undoubtedly paved the way to a future alliance between Ma Chan-ts'ang and Ma Shao-wu - see below, p. 200.

promising, but Ma Chan-ts'ang could not speak for his ally Timūr, relations with whom may have been becoming strained. Unfortunately for Ma Shao-wu, his harsh action against the Kirghiz rebels under Cīd Mirāb in the previous summer had made Kirghiz cooperation in the maintenance of Chinese power a vain hope.<sup>94</sup> On April 5th a large force of Kirghiz levies mutinied at Sugun Karaul, some 65 miles north-west of Kashgar. Almost simultaneously peasant risings broke out amongst the Uighurs at Artush, some 15 miles north-west of Kashgar, and at Faizabad, approximately 40 miles due east of Kashgar.<sup>95</sup> Correctly calculating that the mounted and well-armed Kirghiz posed a more immediate threat to Kashgar than either the Khotan troops, still largely occupied in the siege of Yarkand New City, or the forces of Ma Chan-ts'ang, with whom he was still discreetly conducting negotiations, on April 13th Ma Shao-wu ordered Brigadier Yang and the troops on the Maralbashi front to fall back on Kashgar.<sup>96</sup> Before withdrawing from Maralbashi Yang's troops looted and burned the town, after which

They set out on their way to Kashgar with a large number of carts laden with refugees or loot or both; but this proved to be the last straw. The troops made slow progress, and in the meantime the whole countryside, incensed beyond endurance, rose against the Chinese. A bridge was broken at Kara Yulgun and, while the column was halted, the column was set upon by a vast horde of rebels.<sup>97</sup>

As a result of this attack Brigadier Yang was wounded and taken prisoner; of his original force, estimated by Fitzmaurice at well over 1000 men, a

94. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3245.1933. See above, p. 180.

95. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.3834.1933 (Kashgar Diaries, April 1933), para 54; IOLR, L/P&S/12/2356, PZ.8042.1932 (Memorandum Respecting Sinkiang Rebellion, 1933), p. 2.

96. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3398.1933.

97. ibid.

mere 65 had straggled back to Kashgar by April 27th.<sup>98</sup> Meanwhile the main force of the Kirghiz mutineers had advanced to Artush by April 15th; from here they menaced Kashgar whilst other Kirghiz bands attacked Kizil Ui and Ulugchat on the road to Irkeshtam and demolished the Chinese post at Bulunkul in Sarikol.<sup>99</sup> With the disintegration of Yang's Maral-bashi force Kashgar was completely isolated.

Ma Shao-wu, no doubt still hoping to reach an agreement with Ma Chan-ts'ang, remained in residence at the Old City yamen, but took the precaution of putting Kashgar New City, with its comparatively small Uighur population, into a state of defence. Guns were accordingly set up on the New City walls, the city gates were kept almost permanently closed, and freedom to enter or leave was restricted to residents carrying official passes.<sup>100</sup>

At this stage, with the Chinese administration supine and apparently awaiting the coup de grace, trouble began to develop between the invading Tungan forces and the various Turkic Muslim factions. It appears that Ma Chan-ts'ang, apparently worried by reports of Uighur insurgency at Khotan

98. Brigadier Yang was subsequently converted to Islam, and his daughter married Ma Chan-ts'ang. Numbers of his officers from the Maralbashi front were later seen in the green uniforms of the Tungan forces serving under Ma Chan-ts'ang during his occupation of Kashgar, IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.3834.1933. Yang's daughter was later killed by Ma Chan-ts'ang, who reportedly shot her "with his own hand", IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.6273.1933 (Kashgar Diaries, July 1933).

99. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3245.1933. According to the British political agent stationed at Gilgit, insurgents (presumably Kirghiz and not Tajiks) captured Tashkurgan, the capital of Sarikol, on 19th May, killing all the Chinese in the town. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3054.1933 (British Political Agent Gilgit - GOI, 22/5/1933). See also: 'Moslem Revolt in Turkestan', The Times, 27th April, 1933.

100. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3559.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 27/4/1933).

and beyond which clearly owed no loyalty to his own Tungan forces,<sup>101</sup> determined to reach an agreement with Ma Shao-wu (who had already indicated a willingness to compromise) by which Tungan power might be established at Kashgar, the military and economic key to all southern Sinkiang. He accordingly sent a message to the besieged tao-yin via the British Consul-General at Kashgar in which he offered assurances that the sole objective of the Tungan forces in Sinkiang was the overthrow of the tyrannical Chin Shu-jen and the reform of the provincial administration.<sup>102</sup> Having thus distanced himself from the Turkic Muslims, whose apparent aim was complete secession from the Chinese Republic, Ma Chan-ts'ang advanced on Kashgar in the company of Timūr and his Uighur forces.<sup>103</sup>

Meanwhile, in Kashgar Old City, pan-Turanian elements most prominently represented by a group referred to in British diplomatic sources as the Young Kashgar Party (YKP) had become suspicious of Ma Chan-ts'ang's motives, and were anxious to prevent collusion between the Kansu Tungsans and Ma Shao-wu - a development which the Uighur nationalists feared would lead to Tungan domination of Kashgar and the replacement of a Han Chinese

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101. It must be remembered that, in contrast to the situation at Kumul, Tungan forces in southern Sinkiang were associated with the Han Chinese administration. Ma Chan-ts'ang must have become increasingly aware of Turkic Muslim hostility to his forces as he advanced ever deeper into the Tarim Basin. There is every reason to believe that the Uighur rebels on the Khotan front were in fact attempting to pre-empt a Tungan advance into their region; Kazak Fuad, op.cit., p. 19.

102. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3398.1933 (includes text of letter from Ma Chan-ts'ang to Fitzmaurice, dated Aksu, 10/4/1933).

103. At this stage of the rebellion Timūr, a man described by Fitzmaurice as 'easily swayed' (IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3715.1933; letter, HMCCK-GOI, 11/5/33), seems to have had no clear political purpose, and probably accompanied Ma Chan-ts'ang's forces without realising that in so doing he was aiding the Tungsans against his own Uighur people. At Kashgar he came under the influence of the pan-Turanian Young Kashgar Party, and rapidly dissociated himself from Ma Chan-ts'ang with disastrous consequences for his own future. See below, p. 219.

colonial regime by a Tungan Chinese colonial regime. Accordingly seven leading members of the YKP set out from Kashgar to persuade Ma Chan-ts'ang that Ma Shao-wu was determined to offer resistance. The YKP representatives met the Aksu leaders at Faizabad, where consultations were apparently being held with <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali, the leader of the Kirghiz mutineers. On hearing that Ma Shao-wu was not prepared to surrender but had armed all the Chinese in the oasis, the rebel leaders agreed that <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali should attack and attempt to capture Kashgar Old City. Ma Chan-ts'ang doubtless agreed to this move in the hope that the elimination of Ma Shao-wu - who had remained at his yamen in the Old City - would open the way to a deal with some more compliant Tungan leader in the better fortified New City.<sup>104</sup>

Following the rebel conference at Faizabad the attack on Kashgar Old City went ahead as planned. Early in the morning on May 2nd a considerable force of Kirghiz under the command of <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali approached Kashgar from the direction of Artush. After crossing the Tumen River the mounted Kirghiz opened a swift attack on the Old City. According to eye-witness reports reaching the British Consul-General:

They took up positions opposite each of the four gates of the city and at the same time sent parties to call up the country people (Uighurs). These appeared from all sides in thousands, armed with clubs and sticks, and there was a great display of enthusiasm...firing continued until about two in the afternoon, when the Kirghiz either forced an entry or were admitted by the Tushik Gate.<sup>105</sup>

Most of the non-Chinese garrison reportedly went over to the side of the rebels, into whose hands the whole city, with the exception of the yamen, rapidly fell. At the yamen Ma Shao-wu and his bodyguard continued to hold out, and many Han Chinese caught in the old city by the speed of the Kirghiz

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104. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3715.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 11/5/1933).

105. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3558.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 4/5/1933).

attack were able to take refuge in this stronghold. Meanwhile a letter from <sup>c</sup>Uthmān <sup>c</sup>Ali had been delivered to the British Consulate-General (which was situated at Chini Bagh between the Old and New Cities); the tone of this letter indicates that the Kirghiz leader had come under the influence of the YKP, and is worth quoting in full as an apparently unique example of <sup>c</sup>Uthmān <sup>c</sup>Ali's (stated) political aims:

Letter from the Commander of the Kirghiz forces

To: The exalted and honourable Consul-General  
(Received May 2nd 1933)

Sir, We, the citizens under the tao-yin's jurisdiction beg to remind you that you, who are highly civilised and progressive, are aware how much tyranny has been practised by the dishonest Chinese government towards the ignorant people under them. Now the Muslims of Kumul, being jealous of their honour and unable to endure any longer the atrocities of the tyrannical and dishonest Chinese, have risen to effect a revolution against Chinese tyranny, to punish the Chinese and to be free. The eyes of the misled people of this country are now opened. We are the only people in the world who had no civilisation. We want to see the progress made by Europeans, to bring here experts from other countries, to become as civilised as other people of the world are, to make machinery and factories, and thus by this revolution to make ourselves their equals and to become independent.

At present we have Chinese education. You are aware that for the last 15 years Ma tao-yin has battered on the possessions of us helpless people. He claims to be a Muslim. He did not open schools or build hospitals for the benefit of the people, but exported all the gold and silver from our country. Can such a dishonest government be permitted in the world? We demand our rights before exalted consuls like yourself. In the name of politics our blood was shed for no reason. We Muslims of Kashgar show our resentment of the tyrannical wrongs done to us by the tao-yin's orders, and in proof of his dishonesty we have prepared (this) note stating our proofs and reasons.

We hope that you, our honourable guest, will pay attention to our note and help us, who had lost the way, to obtain our independence.

<sup>c</sup>Uthmān <sup>c</sup>Ali.  
(undated)

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The Kirghiz, having secured the Old City, prevented the Uighur peasantry from looting and ordered them to return to their villages. The reason for this unexpected display of restraint became clear on the morning of May 3rd when the Kirghiz, left in sole possession of the Old City, proceeded to sack and loot it themselves. According to the British Consul-General, about 100 Chinese were killed, as well as the Turkic wives and mistresses of any Chinese on whom the Kirghiz could lay their hands. The looted property of the unfortunate Chinese was either carried off or auctioned on the streets.<sup>107</sup>

During the afternoon of May 3rd about 300 Uighurs under the command of Timūr arrived at Kashgar and were admitted to the Old City 'without question' by the Kirghiz; on the same afternoon the advance guard of Ma Chan-ts'ang's Tungan forces also arrived, but instead of joining the victorious Kirghiz and Uighurs in Kashgar Old City, they marched to the walls of Kashgar New City, some two-and-a-half miles distant, and after brief negotiations were admitted by the Chinese defenders. No doubt, as Fitzmaurice speculated, the latter thought it 'better to surrender to the Tungsans than to be slaughtered by the Kirghiz'.<sup>108</sup> With the fall of Kashgar New City, on May 3rd, 1933, Han Chinese power in southern Sinkiang - except at the besieged garrison of Yarkand New City, which continued briefly to hold out - was effectively brought to an end.<sup>109</sup>

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107. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4602.1933 (Kashgar Diaries, May 1933); IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3558.1933.

108. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4602.1933. For a more accessible account of the arrival at Kashgar by Ma Chan-ts'ang's forces see: 'The Rising in Chinese Turkestan', The Times, May 25th 1933.

109. The status of Yangi-hissar is not clear at this time, but it may have been occupied by Khotan forces (IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4045.1933). Certainly its Chinese inhabitants had been forced to adopt Islam, for on May 6th a group of 180 soldiers under Ahmad, a Uighur owing allegiance to Timūr, are reported by the British aksakal to have looted the town and left the Chinese "converts" with nothing but 'their turbans and their lives'. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3715.1933.



### 5.3 The Turkic-Tungan Struggle at Kashgar and Yarkand

Four days after the fall of Kashgar New City, on May 7th, Ma Chan-ts'ang and the main body of Tungan troops from Aksu arrived at Kashgar. The Tungan commander soon learned that he had been misled by the Young Kashgar Party at Artush, and that Timūr, who had come under the influence of this pan-Turanian organisation,<sup>110</sup> was no longer a reliable ally. During the period between the initial capture of Kashgar Old City and the arrival of Ma Chan-ts'ang at Kashgar the Kirghiz, no doubt involved in negotiations with Timūr over the distribution of the spoils of their victory, had made no serious attempt to storm the Old City yamen where Ma Shao-wu was still holding out. Ma Chan-ts'ang, whose troops retained undisputed control of Kashgar New City, realised that the influential (and still legitimate) tao-yin would make an invaluable ally against the Turkic nationalists who controlled Kashgar Old City and much of the rest of southern Sinkiang. He accordingly entered the Old City yamen shortly after his arrival and began negotiations with Ma Shao-wu. The latter, who through Fitzmaurice had already indicated a willingness to compromise, readily entered into an agreement with the Tungan commander. As a result of this, on May 8th, Ma Chan-ts'ang had notices posted announcing that the tao-yin and all other ambans of the former regime should retain their official posts. This move 'caused a sensation' amongst the Turkic Muslims, who did not share Ma Chan-ts'ang's professions of loyalty to Nanking. The Kirghiz accordingly closed the Old City gates and manned the walls in preparation for a trial of strength with the Tungan forces. At this point the diplomatically far-sighted Ma Shao-wu temporarily defused the situation by

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110. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3715.1933.

resigning as tao-yin and handing over his seals of office to Ma Chan-ts'ang.<sup>111</sup> The latter did not assume the office of tao-yin, but retained control of the Old City yamen as well as the New City, and kept Ma Shao-wu under his protection as a possible ally in his unfinished struggle with the Turkic nationalists.

Ma Chan-ts'ang's strategy seems to have been to drive a wedge between <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali's Kirghiz and Timūr's Uighurs before a unified Turkic alliance, possibly including the Khotan forces, might be formed. He was also concerned to limit the influence of the pan-Turanian Young Kashgar Party, which seems to have been as anti-Tungan as it was anti-Chinese.<sup>112</sup> On May 10th he ordered the arrest of the most prominent YKP activist, <sup>C</sup>Abd al-Rahīm Bai Batcha, who was only released after agreeing to supply the Tungan forces with 1,000 uniforms at his own expense.<sup>113</sup> Following this attack on the YKP, Ma Chan-ts'ang attempted to neutralise the Uighur forces by seizing Timūr, who had been proclaimed commander-in-chief of the combined Muslim armies at Kashgar on May 7th.<sup>114</sup> Timūr was accordingly invited to a meeting at the Old City yamen on the evening of May 17th and placed under arrest shortly after his arrival. Had Ma Chan-ts'ang been able to transfer the captive Uighur commander to the Tungan stronghold of Kashgar New City, his plan might have worked. As it was, he had insufficient troops to defend both New and Old Cities, and when he attempted to seize control of the latter by locking out Timūr's leaderless Uighur forces and <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali's Kirghiz, the Turkic Muslims (led by the Kirghiz, who made excellent

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111. ibid.

112. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3883.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 18/5/1933);  
IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4602.1933.

113. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3715.1933.

114. ibid.

irregular fighters), scaled the city walls and forced Timūr's release.<sup>115</sup>

With the failure of his attempt to hold Timūr, Ma Chan-ts'ang had revealed his purpose to the Turkic Muslims and had largely confirmed the YKP in their claims that he intended to set up a Tungan administration at Kashgar. On May 18th the incensed Kirghiz (who, as a result of Tungan participation in the suppression of the ʿĪd Mirāb rebellion of 1932 had always been more anti-Tungan than Timūr's Uighur forces from Aksu), launched a surprise attack on the Old City. They avoided the Old City yamen where Ma Chan-ts'ang and Ma Shao-wu remained under the protection of a powerful Tungan force armed with artillery and machine-guns,<sup>116</sup> but during the course of the day sought out and murdered any Tungan (or surviving Chinese) residents of the Old City on whom they could lay their hands. Heavy firing continued until the evening, and Fitzmaurice recorded that casualties were probably heavier than they had been on May 2nd, when the Kirghiz had originally seized the Old City from Ma Shao-wu.<sup>117</sup>

As a result of the Kirghiz attack, Ma Chan-ts'ang agreed to hand over control of Kashgar affairs to Timūr and ʿUthmān ʿAlī. On May 19th a very inconclusive truce was agreed by which Timūr was confirmed as commander-in-chief with his headquarters at Kashgar Old City and ʿUthmān ʿAlī was given the rank of general in command of the Kirghiz forces. Ma Chan-ts'ang was given no official position, but retained control of the Tungan forces and on May 22nd, accompanied by his fully-armed troops from the Old City yamen, withdrew to the Tungan stronghold at Kashgar

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115. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3883.1933. See also 'Turkestan Muslims Capture Strategic Cities', Star of India (Calcutta), 3rd June 1933.

116. ibid.

117. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4602.1933.

New City. Ma Chan-ts'ang's chief-of-staff, Su Chin-shou, and Yūnus Beg of Kumul were appointed joint tao-yin of Kashgar, whilst Ma Shao-wu was permitted to leave the Old City yamen and to take up residence at a nearby country house under the formal protection of Timūr and Ma Chan-ts'ang.<sup>118</sup>

Following the truce of May 19th, Kashgar subsided into an uneasy peace, with the Tungans in firm control of the New City (including its treasury and important arsenal) and the Turkic Muslims controlling the Old City and tao-yin's yamen. Fitzmaurice records that 'Ma Chan-ts'ang, Timūr and <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali all settled down to the congenial business of accumulating wealth and wives',<sup>119</sup> whilst the Young Kashgar Party continued its intrigues against the Tungans, organised a "parliament" of 40 members (subsequently greatly expanded), and sent two delegates to Khoja Niyās Hājji, the Uighur leader at Kumul.<sup>120</sup> Timūr seems to have passed completely under YKP influence, as a result of which he began to issue passports styling himself "Timūr Shāh"; these documents employed only the Islamic Hijrī date, the Chinese Republican date having been dropped in a clear repudiation of Nanking's authority.<sup>121</sup>

Meanwhile on the southern rim of the Tarim Basin, in an area untroubled by the invading Tungans and free from the complication of Kirghiz involvement, Khotan had emerged as a centre of exclusively Uighur influence. Ismā<sup>C</sup>īl Khan Khoja, the leader of the rebellious gold-miners at Karakash, was soon eclipsed by the pan-Turanian Committee for National Revolution (CNR)

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118. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4045.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 25/5/1933); IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4602.1933.

119. ibid.

120. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3715.1933; PZ.3883.1933.

121. ibid.

which had been founded in Khotan at the beginning of 1932 by Muḥammad Amīn Bugra (plate 13), a Muslim scholar in his mid-thirties,<sup>122</sup> together with his two younger brothers, Ḥ Abdullāh and Nūr Aḥmad, and a number of like-minded friends.<sup>123</sup> At the beginning of 1933 this group was joined by Ḥ Abd al-Bāqī Ṣābit Dāmullāh, a school teacher and former qādi (judge) from Kulja who had travelled extensively in the Soviet Union, Turkey, Egypt and India.<sup>124</sup> The political philosophy of the CNR was, like that of the YKP, uncompromisingly pan-Turanian; however it stood further to the right, being pronouncedly anti-communist and anti-Christian as well as anti-Chinese and anti-Tungan. The CNR leadership apparently favoured the establishment of an Islamic theocracy in Sinkiang, probably with Muḥammad Amīn Bugra as head of state. Links had been established between the Khotan Muslim revolutionaries and Khoja Niyās Ḥājji of Kumul after the latter had visited southern Sinkiang in 1927, and it is possible that the subsequent Kumul and Khotan rebellions were co-ordinated to some slight extent.<sup>125</sup>

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122. Fitzmaurice describes Bugra as a tālib al-Islām (Ar. "Student of Islam") of about 35 years of age. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3398.1933.

123. Hayit, B., Turkestan zwischen Russland und China (Amsterdam, 1971), p. 301, citing Bugra's son's book, published in Turkish: Bugra-Khan, Emin Muḥammad (Muḥammad Amīn Bugra), Doğu Turkistan (Eastern Turkistan). Istanbul, 1952), p. 29. Nyman, (op.cit., p. 105), appears to be mistaken in asserting that there were only two Bugra brothers; cf. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.6273.1933.

124. Hayit, op.cit., p. 301; cf. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2392, Ext. 4910.1941. (Who's Who in Sinkiang, April 1940).

125. Khoja Niyās is reported by the Swedish missionary Arell to have stopped Khotan on his way back to Kumul after completing the ḥājj in 1927. Here he held discussions with the local Muslim leadership amongst whom the Bugra brothers 'played a key role'. The basic planning and co-ordination for the coming rebellion was allegedly planned at this meeting. Arell, G.A., et al., Din broders blod ropar (Stockholm, 1935), pp. 16-17; cited in Nyman, op.cit., p. 105.

# THE KHOTAN AMĪRS



A group of Khotanlik 'ulamā',  
1933. The Amīr Muḥammad Amīn  
is in foreground in black chapan.



The Khotanlik Armed Forces in  
1933. Muḥammad Amīn Bugra, the  
Khotanlik Commander-in-Chief,  
is again in the foreground.

According to Hayit, Muḥammad Amīn Bugra was working in Khotan as a mudarris, or teacher at a Qur'ānic College, at the time of the Karakash and Surghak risings in February, 1933. On February 20th, the CNR leadership met at Khotan, probably in the Old City, and formed a provisional government with Muḥammad Niyās A<sup>C</sup>lām, the qādi of Karakash, as president, Ṣābit Dāmullāh as prime minister, and Muḥammad Amīn Bugra as commander of the armed forces.<sup>126</sup> The elder Bugra, who appears to have been the most powerful member of the new administration, took the title "Amīr al-Islām", whilst his younger brothers styled themselves "Amīr <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh Khān" and "Amīr Nūr Ahmad Jān" respectively.<sup>127</sup> As a result of these somewhat grandiose titles, the Khotan Islamic Government (as the CNR provisional government was subsequently renamed)<sup>128</sup> is more generally referred to in contemporaneous sources as the "Government of the Khotan Amīrs".

The religious intolerance of the Khotan Amīrs was revealed in their capture of Khotan New City on March 16th as a result of which an estimated 266 Chinese were forced to accept Islam.<sup>129</sup> Following this event numerous Hindu money-lenders were murdered, and the Swedish missionaries resident at Khotan were ordered to leave southern Sinkiang - 72 orphans living at the Swedish missions were later taken away and entrusted to the care of the local ulama.<sup>130</sup> At some time in March or April the conservative nature of the Amīrs' regime was reinforced by the arrival in Khotan of Janīb Beg, well-known Basmachi leader who, after fleeing from the Soviet

126. Hayit, op.cit., p. 301.

127. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3398.1933; PZ.3558.1933; PZ.5573.1933 (letter, HMCCK-GOI, 27/7/1933). British diplomatic sources sometimes call Nur Ahmad "Nūr Muḥammad", perhaps confusing him with the eldest Bugra brother.

128. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4125.1933 (Chinese Turkestan: Internal Situation).

129. For reports on the fighting at Khotan and the religious intolerance of the "Amīrs" see Ambolt, op.cit., pp. 169-73; 181-2.

130. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3558.1933.

Union to Kashgar, had been banished to the Keriya Oasis by Ma Shao-wu in 1931.<sup>131</sup> Janīb Beg made common cause with the Khotan Amīrs and, probably in recognition of his military experience during the Basmachi struggle, was placed in charge of a large body of Khotanlik rebel forces.

Following the consolidation of their hold on the Khotan Oasis, the Amīrs began to extend their influence both eastwards, towards Lop Nor, and westwards, towards Kashgar. In response to an appeal from the Uighurs of Charchan who had risen against their Tungan "liberators",<sup>132</sup> a force of 100 Khotanliks was despatched to that oasis to guard against the Karashahr Tungans (who appear to have remained in control of the Charklik Oasis throughout the period from 1933 to 1937).<sup>133</sup> Meanwhile, on the western front, Khotanlik forces had seized Guma, Karghalik, Posgam and Yarkand Old City by April 11th,<sup>134</sup> and an estimated 2,000 Han Chinese and Tungans were besieged in Yarkand New City.<sup>135</sup>

On April 24th the Amīr <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh Khān, styling himself wālī al-hakūma of the Khotan Islamic Government (a post approximating to vice-regent), arrived in Yarkand to prosecute the siege of the New City. According to Fitzmaurice the Khotan forces, who had already organised a band, were attired in red uniforms (the officers sporting red velvet tunics) in contrast to the less flamboyant, but more practical, green favoured by the Tungan troops of Ma Chan-ts'ang.<sup>136</sup> Amīr <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh was reportedly greeted

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131. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4418.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 1/6/1933). The report of Janīb Beg's execution in the Kashgar Diary of November 1931 is incorrect; see: IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.3384.1933.

132. See above, p. 190

133. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5408.1933.

134. See above, pp. 191-2.

135. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.3834.1933 (Kashgar Diaries, April 1933).

136. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3558.1933. For Khotanlik forces see plate 14.



with great ceremony, with some of the Yarkand begs and other Turkic officials who had served under the Chinese being dragged through the streets in chains as a public spectacle.<sup>137</sup> On April 27th he gave orders for the arrest of the Swedish missionaries stationed at Yarkand. After they had been bound and brought before him, <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh kicked and beat them himself, announcing that by their teaching the missionaries had 'destroyed' the religion of Islam, and that it was therefore his duty to kill them. The missionaries were only saved from the firing squad by the intervention of the former British aksakal of Khotan and his colleague from Yarkand; following this reprieve they were imprisoned and subsequently expelled from the country.<sup>138</sup>

<sup>C</sup>Abdullāh next turned his attention to the siege of Yarkand New City where the attacking Khotanlik forces had cut the water supply and were attempting to pierce the walls by tunnelling.<sup>139</sup> On April 27th three delegates from Ma Shao-wu arrived at Yarkand and attempted to negotiate with the Amīr. <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh had a prisoner shot in their presence 'to bring them to a proper state of mind' and then sent them into the besieged New City to inform the defenders that their lives and personal property would be spared if they agreed to accept Islam and to surrender their arms.<sup>140</sup> The besieged Chinese, under the command of Colonel Chin (who had retreated from Guma in March) agreed to accept these terms, and May 12th was set for the final surrender. Shortly before this date the first Tungan and Turkic

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137. ibid.

138. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4964.1933 (Information on Yarkand Situation from the Swedish Mission, Yarkand, June 6th 1933); cf. Arell et al., op.cit., pp. 34-5, 78-81 (cited in Nyman, op.cit., p. 111); also Ambolt, Travels in Eastern Turkestan pp. 117-20. The British aksakals, Khan Sahib and Rahim Bakshi Khan, although Indian, were Muslims and hence escaped the fate of many of their Hindu compatriots.

139. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3558.1933.

140. ibid.

troops, fresh from their victory at Kashgar, began to arrive in the Yarkand Oasis.<sup>141</sup> The Amīr <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh, who recognised that victory lay within his grasp and was, moreover, openly hostile to the Tungsans, made it clear to the newcomers that their assistance was neither needed nor appreciated.<sup>142</sup> Faced with Khotanlik hostility, the small but well-armed Tungan force - which owed allegiance to Ma Chan-ts'ang, and through him to Ma Chung-ying - followed the example of their fellow-Tungsans at Kashgar and entered the besieged New City, thus strengthening the Tungan element amongst the defending garrison and causing renewed resistance to the Amīrs' forces.<sup>143</sup> The Tungan action obviously caught <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh unprepared, and his hostility towards these hardened Chinese Muslim troops can hardly have been diminished by their action on May 18th, when they led a sortie from the New City, briefly capturing the Altin and Khankah Gates of Khotan Old City and subsequently setting fire to the surrounding areas before retreating, apparently in good order, to their original base.<sup>144</sup>

The Uighur troops from Aksu and Kashgar, under Timūr's commander, Hāfiz, together with a number of Kirghiz irregulars, seem to have remained neutral until May 22nd, when news of the Tungan-Turkic split at Kashgar first reached Yarkand. Following this development, the two Turkic armies co-operated in the siege of the New City, but did not merge into <sup>a</sup>single unit - indeed Hāfiz and <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh remained bitter rivals.<sup>145</sup> Faced with a united Turkic attack and realising that there was no possibility of

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141. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4602.1933.

142. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3883.1933.

143. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4602.1933.

144. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4418.1933.

145. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4602.1933.

relief from Kashgar, the Chinese in Yarkand New City surrendered on May 26th under the terms originally offered by <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh for the 12th. The surrender was incomplete, however, as the besieged Tungans insisted on retaining their arms and on being allowed to proceed to Kashgar to join Ma Chan-ts'ang.<sup>146</sup> The victorious Turkic forces are reported to have relieved the Chinese garrison of 540 rifles. These were later divided between the forces of <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh and Ḥāfiẓ, with the latter apparently obtaining the majority of the serviceable modern weapons, a development which caused increased friction between the two rival commanders.<sup>147</sup>

The defeated Chinese and the still defiant Tungans were divided into two parties, each about 1,000 strong, and given permission to proceed to Kashgar. Neither party was ever to reach its destination, however. The first column, which was predominantly Tungan and consisted of 400 cavalry (300 of whom were Tungan), together with 600 non-combatants (including 200 women and children) and numerous cart-loads of money, property and munitions, was attacked in the desert near Kizil. The attacking force, which consisted of Kirghiz irregulars apparently owing allegiance to <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali supported by a large body of Khotanliks under the command of Amīr Nūr Aḥmad Jān,<sup>148</sup> cut the column of refugees to pieces in what subsequently became known as the "Kizil Massacre".<sup>149</sup> About 190 horsemen,

146. ibid.

147. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4602.1933.

148. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4418.1933. It is difficult to establish with any certainty <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali's part in this attack, but there can be no doubt that the Kirghiz bore the brunt of the fighting against the Tungans, and Fitzmaurice records that <sup>C</sup>Umār <sup>C</sup>Ali, <sup>C</sup>Uthman <sup>C</sup>Ali's brother, 'a bloodthirsty young walking arsenal', scarcely attempted to conceal his satisfaction over the massacre. ibid.

149. For a contemporary account of the "Kizil Massacre" see: 'War in Chinese Turkestan: Refugees Killed in Desert', The Times, June 22nd, 1933. Also IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4418.1933; L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.5508.1933 (Kashgar Diaries, June 1933); L/P&S/12/2356, PZ.8042.1933, p. 3. Particularly unsavoury details of the massacre are given in Ambolt, Karavan, p. 182.

almost certainly mainly Tungan cavalry, succeeded in reaching the fringes of the Yangi-hissar oasis where they were put to death either by the Kirghiz or by the Uighur troops of Ahmad, Timūr's commanding officer at Yangi-hissar.<sup>150</sup> The victorious Kirghiz also killed all the Chinese and Tungan residents of Yangi-hissar at this time.<sup>151</sup> The second column of Chinese refugees from Yarkand New City was attacked and looted by a mixed force of Uighurs under Hāfiz and Kirghiz irregulars before it could leave the Yarkand Oasis; on this occasion no general massacre occurred, possibly because the attack took place near a major urban centre rather than in the desert, as at Kizil.<sup>152</sup>

When news of the events at Yarkand New City and Kizil reached Kashgar, Su Chin-shou, the Tungan joint tao-yin, left the Old City yamen in protest at the treatment of his fellow-Tungans and joined Ma Chan-ts'ang in Kashgar New City.<sup>153</sup> The fall of Yarkand New City this signalled not only the final collapse of Chinese authority in southern Sinkiang, but also the complete alienation of Tungan Muslims from their Turkic co-religionists.<sup>154</sup> Following the Kizil Massacre Ma Chan-ts'ang's Tungan troops - still the best armed

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150. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4418.1933. 32 officers and men, accompanied by 12 women and children, reportedly escaped the original massacre at the hands of the Kirghiz and Uighurs and were taken back to captivity in Yarkand. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.5508.1933.

151. 46 Chinese and Tungans were reportedly killed. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4418.1933.

152. ibid.

153. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4604.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 15/6/1933).

154. On May 31st the Uighurs of Aksu, led by one Ismā'īl Beg, attacked Ma Chan-ts'ang's remaining Tungan forces in that town and drove out the tao-yin. Ismā'īl Beg, who is believed to have been under the influence of the Khotan Amirs, became the new tao-yin. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ. 5156.1933(letter, HMCGK-GOI, 6/7/1933).

and most disciplined force in the south of the province - remained securely within their fortress at Kashgar New City, making occasional sorties against the various Turkic factions holding the Old City and surrounding countryside, whilst awaiting the arrival of Tungan reinforcements from Turfan or Kansu.<sup>155</sup>

#### 5.4 Turkic Factionalism at Kashgar and Yarkand

With the temporary withdrawal of Ma Chan-ts'ang and his Tungan troops from the struggle for control of southern Sinkiang, tension between the rival Turkic regimes at Khotan and Kashgar increased substantially. Following the fall of Yarkand New City on May 26th, Timūr's representative Ḥāfiẓ attempted to conciliate the Khotan Amīrs, who were still smarting from his inequitable distribution of the captured weapons, by handing over the New City granary and a quantity of old arms and ammunition found in the New City yamen to the Amīr <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh.<sup>156</sup> Relations between the rival commanders remained strained, however, so Ḥāfiẓ expanded his original forces, estimated at 400, by conscripting 200 Dulanis from Merket.<sup>157</sup> The Khotan Amīrs responded by transferring command of their Yarkand forces to the Amīr Nūr Aḥmad Jān, newly returned from the "Kizil Massacre" in which he is reported to have played a leading role.<sup>C</sup>Abdullāh took charge of a force of 2,000 Khotanliks and set out for Kashgar, presumably with the intention of coming to terms with Timūr rather than with his representative, Ḥāfiẓ, who had proved unwilling to compromise. Meanwhile a separate

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155. Kazakh, op.cit., p. 20.

156. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4604.1933.

157. ibid.

column of approximately 1,000 Khotanliks, under the command of the ex-Basmachi leader Jānib Beg, arrived in Kashgar on June 11th.<sup>158</sup>

Jānib Beg's sudden arrival at Kashgar, albeit with very poorly-armed troops, caused consternation both amongst the local Turkic leadership and at the Soviet Consulate-General, where it was feared that the influence of the strongly anti-Soviet ex-Basmachi leader would swing the revolution sharply to the right. Soviet concern must have redoubled when it became known that Jānib Beg had made his headquarters in the garden of the pan-Turanian activist <sup>C</sup>Abd al-Rahīm Bai Batcha, thus raising the spectre of an alliance developing between the Khotan Amīrs and the Young Kashgar Party, elements of which had come to favour cooperation with the USSR.<sup>159</sup> Kashgarlik feeling at this time was strongly pro-Amīr, and Fitzmaurice doubted whether Timūr's troops would have obeyed an order to fire on the Khotanlik forces. <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali was also disturbed by the arrival of Jānib Beg; his Kirghiz followers were reportedly angered by the increasing amount of time he was devoting to his opium pipe and newly-acquired harem,<sup>160</sup> and saw in the former Basmachi guerilla a possible new leader.<sup>161</sup> On July 4th the Khotanlik presence at Kashgar was considerably strengthened by the arrival of the Amīr <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh, accompanied by the 600 troops under his own command, 300 troops under his subordinate officer,

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158. 'Chinese Turkestan Revolt: New Rebel Leader's Intervention', The Times, July 8th, 1933. See also: IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.5508.1933 (Kashgar Diaries, June 1933).

159. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5370.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 13/7/1933); PZ.4418.1933.

160. According to Fitzmaurice, writing at the beginning of the 1933 rebellion, <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali was 'about thirty years of age and a heavy opium smoker'. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4045.1933.

161. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.5508.1933.

Qādir Beg, and Ṣābit Dāmullāh, prime minister and Shaykh al-Islām of the Khotan Islamic Government.<sup>162</sup> ḤAbdullāh's forces were very poorly equipped. British diplomatic sources indicate that about 300 of his followers were armed with Russian rifles, whilst another 300 had antiquated muzzle-loaders and the remainder bore cudgels.<sup>163</sup> Nevertheless, their presence posed a serious threat to both Timūr and ḤUthmān ḤAli, neither of whom wished to share the large stocks of food, money and arms held in Kashgar New City with the Amīrs - always assuming that they could be captured from besieged Ma Chan-ts'ang.<sup>164</sup> Timūr therefore made a show of welcoming ḤAbdullāh, and installed him in a garden between the Old and New Cities pending a suitable opportunity to move against this troublesome new rival.<sup>165</sup>

Meanwhile, at Yarkand, negotiations continued between Ḥāfiz and the Amīr Nūr Ahmad Jān. Ḥāfiz advanced Timūr's claim to all the territory west of the Yarkand River, an area which included both Yarkand Old and New Cities; Nūr Ahmad Jān, on behalf of the Khotan Islamic Government, countered with a claim to both Maralbashi and Kashgar.<sup>166</sup> After several minor incidents between the two rival Turkic armies, Nūr Ahmad Jān took action against a number of Yarkandlik Begs who had petitioned Ḥāfiz to intervene on their behalf against the Amīrs' forces. The offending notables were executed, and their heads exhibited in the streets in an open

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162. 'Another Rebel Leader in Turkestan: Glut of Armies at Kashgar', The Times, July 24th, 1933; cf. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.6273.1933 (Kashgar Diaries, July 1933). ḤAbdullāh left about 1300 of the troops he had set out with from Yarkand at Yangi-hissar.

163. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5156.1933.

164. Fitzmaurice noted on 6th July that both the Khotan Amīrs and Timūr were 'desperately anxious' to lay their hands on the New City treasury and arsenal. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5156.1933.

165. ibid.

166. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.5508.1933.

challenge to Ḥāfiz.<sup>167</sup> When news of this incident reached Kashgar, Timūr, who was 'irritated beyond endurance by the Amīrs' attitude and claims', decided to move against the Khotanlik forces at Kashgar. According to Fitzmaurice, Timūr 'played his cards well'. He won the support of ʿUthmān ʿAlī by stressing Jānib Beg's threat to the Kirghiz leader's command, and reportedly bought off most of the lesser Kirghiz leaders. In mid-July ʿUthmān ʿAlī and his Kirghiz made ostentatious preparations to leave for the hills, thereby lulling the Khotan leaders into a false sense of security. It was therefore with the element of complete surprise that Timūr, on the morning of July 13th sent a force of 700 or 800 troops to arrest Jānib Beg at his headquarters in ʿAbd al-Raḥīm Bai Batcha's garden. After a small fight the former Basmachi leader was taken into custody. The Amīr ʿAbdullāh, on hearing this news, sent 100 of his men to assist Jānib Beg, but they arrived too late and were in turn arrested and disarmed.<sup>168</sup>

Following their successful move against Jānib Beg, Timūr and ʿUthmān ʿAlī moved in unison against ʿAbdullāh, arresting the Amīr and disarming many of his troops. Realising that he too was in danger of imminent arrest, the Khotanlik Shaykh al-Islām Ṣābit Dāmullāh fled towards Artush, but was apprehended by troops loyal to Timūr and ʿUthmān ʿAlī and brought back to the Old City yamen where the Amīr ʿAbdullāh was also being held captive. Casualties during Timūr's action against the Khotanlik forces were low on both sides,<sup>169</sup> and on the evening of the 13th, with the supremacy of Timūr and ʿUthmān ʿAlī at Kashgar clearly established, both

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167. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5408.1933.

168. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ. 5370.1933.

169. ibid. British diplomatic sources indicate that during Timūr's action against the Amīr and Jānib Beg only four of his own men and six Khotanliks were killed.



the Amīr <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh and Ṣābit Dāmullāh were permitted to return to their garden.<sup>170</sup> In marked contrast, Jānib Beg was kept in custody, lending weight to Fitzmaurice's theory that the Soviet Consulate-General had planned and financed Timūr's coup in a bid to remove the strongly anti-Soviet ex-Basmachi from the political stage of southern Sinkiang.<sup>171</sup>

The new balance of power in southern Sinkiang was confirmed at a conference held in Kashgar on July 4th and attended by all the Muslim leaders except Jānib Beg and, of course, Ma Chan-ts'ang. As a result of this conference it was agreed that both Yarkand Old and New Cities should be included within Timūr's area of administration, whilst the jurisdiction of the Khotan Islamic Government (still controlled by the Amīr Muḥammad Amīn Bugra, who remained in Khotan) should extend eastwards from the Yarkand River.<sup>172</sup> When news of this agreement reached Yarkand, Ḥāfiz, emboldened by the success of Timūr and <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali in disarming the Khotanliks at Kashgar, ordered the Amīr Nūr Aḥmad Jān to withdraw from Yarkand New City on July 17th. The Amīr, who felt constrained to comply, left immediately for Yarkand Old City; however in so doing he caused panic to break out amongst his untrained troops, many of whom, fearing an attack by the victorious Ḥāfiz, "stampeded, either riding ponies or donkeys or on foot".<sup>173</sup> Ḥāfiz immediately sent 200 men to hold the ferries

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170. Fitzmaurice notes that Timūr 'seems not to have wished to humiliate them too greatly'. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5370.1933. Timūr may have hoped to retain the Amīr <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh and his forces as subordinate allies in the struggle against Ma Chan-ts'ang, still besieged in Kashgar New City.

171. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4472.1933; PZ.5370.1933.

172. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5408.1933.

173. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5573.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 27/7/1933). Ḥāfiz had received reinforcements under <sup>C</sup>Isa Ḥājjī sent by Timūr from Kashgar on July 7th (IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331; PZ.5370.1933). Their number is not known, but combined with the news of the Amīr <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh's defeat at Kashgar, they doubtless contributed to the panic felt by the Khotanlik troops at Yarkand.

across the Yarkand River to cut off their retreat. The fleeing Khotanliks were subsequently relieved of their arms before being permitted to cross the river into the territory allotted to the Khotan Amīrs by the Kashgar conference of July 14th.<sup>174</sup> The Amīr Nūr Aḥmad Jān was captured in Yarkand Old City, and, like his brother <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh at Kashgar, was placed under house arrest.<sup>175</sup>

With the retreat of the Khotan Amīrs following so closely upon the withdrawal of Ma Chan-ts'ang to Kashgar New City, the victorious Turkic leaders <sup>C</sup>Uthmān and Timūr seemed well-placed to extend their influence over the whole of the western Tarim Basin. Such a development might indeed have been possible had the two leaders proved capable of sustained co-operation against the besieged Tungans. As it was, <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali, who by now styled himself "Amīr al-Muslimīn, Conqueror of Kashgar, al-Ghāzi <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali lu-chang",<sup>176</sup> was keen to press the attack against Ma Chan-ts'ang with whom he had particularly bad relations.<sup>177</sup> Timūr, on the other hand, had never been overly anxious to attack his former ally, and when news reached Kashgar in mid-July of Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī's realignment with the provincial authorities against Ma Chung-ying, Timūr is reported to have objected strongly both to the truce and to cooperation with the Chinese against the Tungans.<sup>178</sup> Probably because of Timūr's vacillation and

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174. This is not to suggest that Ḥāfiz respected the Yarkand River frontier; shortly after his rout of the Amīr Nūr Aḥmad Jan's forces, his own troops marched on Karghalik, which they captured on July 20th. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5573.1933.

175. ibid.

176. As reported in IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5370.1933. The title is a strange amalgam of Arabic, English, Turkish and Chinese - though Fitzmaurice very probably translated the section "Conqueror of Kashgar" into English. Translated in full, the title means "Commander of the Muslims, Conqueror of Kashgar, the Holy Warrior General <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali".

177. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4045.1933.

178. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4689.1933.

possibly because he also wished to re-assert his authority in the Kirghiz highlands, <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali withdrew to the hills with most of his forces on July 18th.<sup>179</sup> Shortly after <sup>C</sup>Uthmān's departure, on July 26th, a party of Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī's officers, accompanied by an escort of 30 men, arrived in Kashgar from the north-east and presented Timūr with an official seal and letter recognising his position as commander-in-chief at Kashgar.<sup>180</sup> According to Fitzmaurice, Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī's delegates also put strong pressure on Timūr to attack Ma Chan-ts'ang's Tungan forces in Kashgar New City. Timūr still had 'no wish to participate in operations against the Tungsans', but he agreed nevertheless to invite <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali to return to Kashgar with a view to possibly opening joint operations against the besieged Tungsans.<sup>181</sup>

Accordingly, at the beginning of August, <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali returned from the hills with a large force of Kirghiz.<sup>182</sup> However, it soon became clear that Timūr still had no intention of participating in an attack against his former Tungan allies, and on August 8th the Kirghiz leader once again withdrew from Kashgar 'in protest' at Timur's attitude.<sup>183</sup>

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179. ibid. Seemingly, by August, 1933, Kirghiz forces were in full control of the Tien Shan and Pamir regions to the west of Kashgar. The Ismā'īlī Tajiks of Sarikol suffered badly at the hands of the sunni Kirghiz (by whom they were regarded as rafizi, or "heretics"), moreover they feared possible reprisals at the hands of the Chinese should they return. The Tajiks accordingly sent a telegram to their spiritual leader, the Aga Khan Muhammad Shāh, stressing that they had 'taken no active part' with one side or the other and simply wanted to live peacefully. The Aga Khan subsequently appealed to the British Government to safeguard Ismā'īlī interests in Sarikol. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5281.1933. (letter of Aga Sultan Sir Muhammad Shah (Aga Khan) to India Office, 17/8/1933).

180. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4851.1933; PZ.5573.1933.

181. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.7339.1939 (Kashgar Diaries, August, 1933). (Timur had always professed loyalty to Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī, as had the Khotan Amīrs; see IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4851.1933).

182. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5041.1933 (letter, HMCCK-GOI, 3/8/1933).

183. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.7339.1933.

Timūr presumably saw this as an ideal time to eliminate his erstwhile ally <sup>C</sup>Uthmān, thereby emerging as the sole Turkic commander of consequence at Kashgar - a development which would probably have led to his attempting to reach an accommodation with Ma Chan-ts'ang's Tungans. He therefore collected together most of his troops and ordered them to pursue and disarm <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali and his Kirghiz.<sup>184</sup> That Timūr's untrained Uighur troops should overtake and disarm <sup>C</sup>Uthmān's mounted Kirghiz, all of whom were experienced fighters, was clearly a vain hope. Nevertheless, on August 9th, Timūr left Kashgar Old City by car to see how his troops were faring. Shortly after his departure, a force of some 500 Tungans debouched from Kashgar New City and rapidly overran the ill-defended Old City. Timūr, who had made the mistake of alienating one Turkic leader after another without openly aligning himself with the Tungans, was intercepted by Ma Chan-ts'ang's troops on his way back to the Old City. He was shot without ceremony, following which his head was cut off and exhibited on a spike outside the <sup>C</sup>Id-gā Mosque in Kashgar Old City.<sup>185</sup>

As a result of Timūr's execution the Uighur forces at Kashgar were left leaderless. Both Jānib Beg and the Amīr <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh took advantage of the confusion to escape from imprisonment, but neither was anxious to fall into Ma Chan-ts'ang's hands, and both fled towards Yarkand.<sup>186</sup> Ma Shao-wu also took advantage of Turkic confusion to leave his country house

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184. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5258.1933 (letter, HMCCK-GOI, 10/8/1933); PZ. 6106.1933 (letter, HMCCK-GOI, 10/8/1933).

185. ibid. For a contemporary account of Timūr's death see: 'Turki Chief be-headed', The Times, 25th August, 1933.

186. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6106.1933. Nothing more is heard of Jānib Beg, who, having decided that the situation in southern Sinkiang had become most unsafe (he was still actively sought by the Soviets, as well as by the Tungans), reportedly fled across the frontier into neighbouring Afghanistan. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941 (Who's Who in Sinkiang), p. 6.

and to join Ma Chan-ts'ang in Kashgar New City.<sup>187</sup> The Tungan forces made no serious attempt to fortify the Old City, but removed all captured arms and ammunition to the New City arsenal, leaving a small garrison to guard the Old City against possible attack. On August 11th, 12th and 13th, <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali and his Kirghiz gradually returned to Kashgar. <sup>C</sup>Uthmān approached Ma Chan-ts'ang with a request for some of the weapons captured from Timūr, as well as with a demand for the return of arms taken by the Tungsans from <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh Beg, a Kirghiz commander, during the fighting on August 9th. When Ma Chan-ts'ang refused to comply, the Kirghiz attacked the Old City, capturing it from the Tungsans on August 16th. During the fighting <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali's younger brother <sup>C</sup>Umar was killed, whilst about 150 more Kirghiz lost their lives during an abortive attack on Kashgar New City.<sup>188</sup> Following his recapture of Kashgar Old City, <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali assumed Timūr's titles and position as commander-in-chief of the Turkic forces at Kashgar,<sup>189</sup> but the Kirghiz forces, 'who did not see why they should bear the brunt of every attack' are reported to have become 'somewhat half-hearted' in their continuing operations against the Tungsans.<sup>190</sup>

Meanwhile, on being informed of Timūr's death, Ḥāfiz halted his advance against the Khotanliks (which had reached Guma), and returned to his headquarters at Yarkand New City.<sup>191</sup> Following Ḥāfiz's with-

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187. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6106.1933. It is noted in this despatch that Ma Shao-wu sent a letter to Fitzmaurice informing him that he had kept Ma Chan-ts'ang informed as to Timūr's movements and was a party to this Tungan coup against the Turkic forces.

188. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5431.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 17/8/1933).

189. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6634.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 31/8/1933).

190. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.7339.1933.

191. ibid.

drawal, the dispirited and leaderless Khotan forces began a very tentative advance on Yarkand, reaching Karghalik on or about August 29th.<sup>192</sup> During the latter half of August the situation at Kashgar remained unchanged, with <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali's Kirghiz controlling Kashgar Old City and the surrounding countryside, whilst Ma Chan-ts'ang and Ma Shao-wu remained securely within the fortified New City and awaited the arrival of Tungan reinforcements from the north-east. Turkic morale, which had fallen badly following the execution of Timūr and the heavy losses sustained by the Kirghiz during the fighting with Ma Chan-ts'ang on August 16th, received a much needed boost on August 28th when two 'influential representatives' of Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī arrived in Kashgar from Kuchar.<sup>193</sup> The two newcomers, identified by Fitzmaurice as <sup>C</sup>Ali Akhund and Ḥājjī Muḥammad Niyās A<sup>C</sup>lām Akhund, were 'bitterly anti-Tungan but conciliatory towards the Chinese', and stressed Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī's desire that Kashgar New City, with its important treasury and arsenal should be taken as swiftly as possible.<sup>194</sup> At their prompting <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali's Kirghiz renewed the attack on Ma Chan-ts'ang besieged forces; moreover they were once again assisted by Timūr's Uighur troops who, dispirited after the execution of their leader on August 9th, were re-organised under the command of Tawfiq Bey, an Arab adventurer who had served for a time as an official of King <sup>C</sup>Abd al-<sup>C</sup>Azīz ibn-Sa<sup>C</sup>ūd,<sup>195</sup>

192. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6582.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 14/9/1933).

193. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.7339.1933.

194. ibid., cf. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5907.1933 (letter. HMCGK-GOI, 3/8/1933).

195. Tawfiq Bey, who styled himself "Sayyid Ahmad Tawfiq Bey Sharīf Effendi", first arrived in Kashgar from India in 1932. He was subsequently deported by Ma Shao-wu, but returned to Sinkiang during the 1933 rebellion in the south, possibly by way of Afghanistan. See Appendix I, 'Who Was Who in Republican Sinkiang'.

and who arrived unexpectedly at Kashgar on August 26th.<sup>196</sup>

Khoja Niyās Ḥājji who clearly aspired to the unification of all the Turkic factions in southern Sinkiang under his own command, also sent delegates from Kuchar to Yarkand in a bid to arrange a truce between Ḥāfiz and the Khotan Amīrs. The Khoja's representatives arrived at Yarkand on August 29th, apparently with the intention of securing the release of the Amīr Nūr Ahmad Jān, who was still held captive by Ḥāfiz and then proceeding to Khotan for talks with the senior, Amīr, Muḥammad Amīn Bugra.<sup>197</sup> Before this plan could be put into effect, however, the Amīr ḤAbdullāh, who had escaped from Kashgar on August 9th, arrived at Yarkand with a number of followers and captured the Old City, which was apparently undefended. Following the re-appearance of ḤAbdullāh, the disorganised Khotanlik forces at Karghalik rallied to his command and began a siege of Yarkand New City, still held by Ḥāfiz and a mixed force of about 600 Uighurs and Dulanis.<sup>198</sup> In a move which may have been intended to reassure the besieged forces with a view to bringing them to the conference table,<sup>199</sup> the amban appointed by Ḥāfiz to administer

196. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.7739.1933.

197. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6582.1933 (letter, HMCCK-GOI, 14/9/1933).

198. ibid.

199. With the death of Timur on August 9th, Ḥāfiz had lost his commanding officer and had no further reason (beyond self-preservation) for continuing his struggle with the Khotan Amīrs; moreover, on September 10th, Tawfiq Bey, who had replaced Timūr at Kashgar, informed Fitzmaurice that he had written to the Khotan Amīrs attributing previous misunderstandings to the 'folly of Timūr', stressing that there would be no further trouble from Ḥāfiz, and inviting the Khotanliks to participate in the attack on Ma Chan-ts'ang at Kashgar New City (IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6582.1933). It is also possible that ḤAbdullah was prevented from launching an all-out attack on Yarkand New City by anxiety for the safety of his brother Nūr Ahmad Jān, who may still have been held captive by Ḥāfiz. Unfortunately it is not clear whether Nūr Ahmad Jān was freed by ḤAbdullāh during the latter's capture of Yarkand Old City on September 3rd, or on the surrender of Yarkand New City on September 26th. It is clear, however, that Nūr Ahmad Jān did survive his period of imprisonment, and went on to resume command of a section of the Khotan forces.

Yarkand Old City was permitted to retain his post, although <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh underlined his committment to the separatist programme of the Khotan Islamic Government (and thereby his political differences with the now dead Timūr) by changing this official's title from the Chinese "hsien-kuan" to the Turkic "wālī".<sup>200</sup> <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh's conciliatory tactics seem to have worked, for on September 26th Yarkand New City surrendered to the Khotanlik forces and Ḥāfiz, together with about 500 Uighurs, was permitted to leave the oasis unharmed.<sup>201</sup>

Meanwhile, at Kashgar New City, the Tungan forces of Ma Chan-ts'ang continued to beat off the combined Turkic forces of Tawfiq Bey and <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali with comparative ease. Ma Chan-ts'ang was also capable of offensive action - on the evening of September 7th a strong force of Tungsans made a sortie from the New City and inflicted a severe defeat on their Turkic enemies at the village of Sekes Tash; during the engagement an estimated 200 Uighurs and Kirghiz were killed, with the Tungsans withdrawing to their stronghold in good order.<sup>202</sup> A similar surprise attack was launched against the Turkic forces in Kashgar Old City on September 21st, the result being, in Fitzmaurice's judgement, 'a moral if not a material success in Ma Chan-ts'ang's favour'.<sup>203</sup> During the course of September the besieging forces received substantial reinforcements in the form of 300 Uighurs from Aksu under a commanding officer called Idrīs and, at the end of the month, the 500 Uighurs commanded by Ḥāfiz who had been expelled from Yarkand New City by the Amīr <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh on

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200. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6582.1933.

201. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6711.1933 (telegram, HMCGK-GOI, 5/10/1933). According to this telegram, Ḥāfiz and his troops were 'disarmed and maltreated' by the Khotanliks before being allowed to leave for Kahsgar.

202. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6583.1933.

203. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.7224.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI 28/9/1933).



September 26th. A rather mysterious force of some 300 "Andijani" Uzbeks,<sup>204</sup> reported by Fitzmaurice to have come from the Yarkand area, also arrived in Kashgar at this time. Their commander, Sātibaldī Jān, was a 25 year old Uzbek from Margelan in Western Turkestan who was widely suspected of being pro-Soviet, and who was mistrusted by the other Turkic leaders as a consequence.<sup>205</sup>

With this heterogenous and ill-armed Turkic force C<sup>U</sup>thmān C<sup>A</sup>li and Tawfiq Bey attempted to maintain pressure on Ma Chan-ts'ang's Tungans, but to little or no avail. Attempts to mine the New City walls ended in failure, as did attempts to reduce the besieged garrison through starvation.<sup>206</sup> C<sup>U</sup>thmān C<sup>A</sup>li, who was clearly felt that his Kirghiz forces were doing more than their fair share of the fighting, had three Uighurs executed at the Kashgar ammunition workshop for filling cartridges with sand instead of powder,<sup>207</sup> and instituted a drive against suspected "communist sympathisers" in the Kashgar area.<sup>208</sup> Despite such measures, local enthusiasm for the struggle against Ma Chan-ts'ang continued to decline, and the Turkic commanders felt obliged to hang publicly three Uighurs outside the C<sup>I</sup>d-gā Mosque for having sold supplies to the besieged Tungans. By the end of September the morale of the Kashgarliks had fallen to such an extent that the Turkic authorities refused to issue passports to prospective ḥājjīs, a restriction believed by

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204. British consular sources from Kashgar habitually refer to members of Sinkiang's tiny Uzbek community as "Andijanis" (see, for example, IOLR, D.226, 'Who's Who in Sinkiang corrected up to 26th July 1938'), p. 3. ('Usbegs or Andijanis').

205. Hayit, op.cit., p. 313; IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6634.1933; L/P&S/12/2364 (Sinkiang, Internal Situation: Mail Reports, 15th Nov. 1933 - 12th Nov. 1936), PZ.7903.1033 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 26/10/1933). See also Appendix I, 'Who Was Who in Republican Sinkiang'.

206. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6634.1933; PZ.7031.1933.

207. ibid. Burge comments that 'many Turki and Kirghiz bullets have been misfiring; one wounded Turki (Uighur) being treated at the mission hospital said that 18 of his 20 bullets had misfired'.

208. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.7224.1933; according to Burge, C<sup>U</sup>thmān C<sup>A</sup>li was 'reliably reported' to have executed four Russians in secret at night during this period.

the British Consulate-General 'to have been imposed owing to a wholesale departure of all and sundry in an endeavour to give Kashgar a miss until the return of more peaceful conditions'.<sup>209</sup> To add to the difficulties of the Turkic Muslim forces, on September 26th Tawfiq Bey was seriously wounded in the stomach during an abortive attack on the New City and took no further part in the fighting.<sup>210</sup> <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali had clearly become disillusioned with the siege, and on October 2nd he resigned his post as commander-in-chief of the Turkic forces at Kashgar and 'departed hurriedly to the hills, being followed by Sātībaldī and other local leaders'.<sup>211</sup>

With the resignation of <sup>C</sup>Uthmān, the last member of the triumvirate that had originally cooperated in the overthrow of Ma Shao-wu in May and had subsequently halted the advance of the Khotan Amīrs at Yarkand, disappeared from the political stage.<sup>212</sup> The resulting power vacuum was filled by Ṣābit Dāmullāh who, as prime minister of the Khotan Islamic Government, had come to Kashgar at the invitation of Tawfiq Bey following the death of Timūr.<sup>213</sup> In this way the whole of southern Sinkiang, with the important exception of Kashgar New City, passed under the control of the Khotan Amīrs almost by default.

209. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.7031.1933.

210. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6711.1933 (Minute Paper. Secret. Political Dept: Sinkiang Rebellion, Latest Reports).

211. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6711.1933 (Telegram, HMCCK-GOI, 5/10/1933).

212. The other members of the triumvirate being, of course, Timūr and Ma Chants'ang. <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali was to re-appear at Kashgar as an independent Kirghiz leader, but never again participated in the administration of the lowland oases.

213. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6582.1933. Ṣābit Dāmullāh is not mentioned by name in this consular despatch, but since the Amīrs Muhammad Amīn, <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh and Nūr Ahmad Jān remained in (respective) control of Khotan, Yarkand and Yangi-hissar, whilst Ṣābit arrived in Kashgar, it must be assumed that he was sent by the Khotan administration in response to Tawfiq Bey's request.

CHAPTER 6SINKIANG, 1933-34: TUNGAN INVASION, TURKIC SECESSION AND SOVIET INTERVENTION

Ma Chung-ying was one of those types of Inner Asian ruler who are wont to appear every hundred years or so and of whom Chinggis Khan and Timur are the most famous. He was one of those types - half field-marshal and half gangster - who, when successful, are historic heroes, and when unsuccessful end their lives in some dungeon.<sup>1</sup>

6.1 Ma Shih-ming's attack on Urumchi and the overthrow of Chin Shu-jen

As has been shown, following his wounding at Liao-tun during the autumn of 1932, Ma Chung-ying withdrew with the bulk of his forces to his old fief in north-western Kansu.<sup>2</sup> Here he set up headquarters at An-hai and, through his subordinates, began greatly to expand his forces through extensive conscription. The British missionaries Cable and French were resident in the neighbouring oasis of Tun-huang at this time, and have left a graphic account of Ma Chung-ying's recruiting methods. Shortly after the arrival of Tungan forces at Tun-huang:

The town was robbed of everything in the nature of food, goods and money...next to food the most coveted possessions of the oases were the young, vigorous, hardy men...These were the men whom Ma Chung-ying wanted for gun-fodder, and orders were issued to the press-gang to fetch them in from every farm of the neighbourhood, and collect them in Tunhwang City. Every day we saw them being

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1. 'Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien', Berichte des Asien Arbeitskreises, 1 (1939), p. 6. An anonymous article undoubtedly written by Georg Vassel, a German national who knew Ma Chung-ying personally and witnessed his invasion of Sinkiang during 1933.
  2. See above, pp. 162-4.

rounded up. The ropes which they themselves had twisted from desert grass were used to tie their hands behind their backs, and to noose their necks in a running-knot. Roped together in droves of twenty to thirty, according to the success of the raid, they were brought to town by captors who rode the horses levied from these boys' own stables. Thrust behind the high palings of temple courtyards, the imprisoned youths lined the barriers, looking out for some passers-by who might belong to their own group of farmsteads and would take a report home that son or husband had been captured.<sup>3</sup>

After initial training at Tun-huang these raw recruits were taken to An-hsi where further intensive discipline awaited them. No doubt similar methods of forced recruitment were applied at An-hsi itself and elsewhere in north-western Kansu, with the result that Ma's army grew at a prodigious rate.<sup>4</sup>

Cable and French were also ordered to An-hsi, where they were instructed to treat Ma Chung-ying's wounds and to care for those Tungans who had been injured by the antiquated "fire arrows" used by the defenders during the siege of Kumul Old City. Every day the missionaries were taken to Chung-ying's private rooms, and as a result of their treatment 'within a short time he was able to ride again'.<sup>5</sup>

Meanwhile, in Sinkiang, following his failure to crush the Uighur rebellion at Kumul and faced with continued Tungan intervention in the Turfan area, Chin Shu-jen turned increasingly to the Soviet Union for assistance.<sup>6</sup> In September, 1931, he bought two biplanes from the Soviet Union

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3. Cable and French, The Gobi Desert, pp. 238-9.

4. ibid., p. 239.

5. ibid., p. 241.

6. As Dallin points out in his Soviet Russia and the Far East (New Haven, 1948, pp. 94-5), Chin, isolated from China by the Tungan warlords of Kansu and from British India by geographical factors, could only turn to the Soviet Union for assistance. Moscow agreed to back Chin for a number of reasons including financial advantage; fear of the possible impact of Muslim insurgency in Sinkiang on Soviet Central Asia; opposition to Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang government after the CCP/KMT split in 1927; and opposition to Ma Chung-ying, characterised by several sources as being virulently anti-Soviet, and frequently denounced in Soviet propaganda as a puppet of the Japanese and the British.

at a price of 40,000 Mexican silver dollars each. These planes, which were equipped with machine-gun mountings and bomb-dropping apparatus, were flown by two Russian pilots who were lent to the Sinkiang government as part of the deal.<sup>7</sup> A few days later, on October 1st, 1931, Chin signed a secret trade agreement with the U.S.S.R. as a result of which eight Soviet trading agencies were established throughout Sinkiang, at Urumchi, Chuguchak, Kulja, Kashgar, Aksu, Kuchar, Yarkand and Khotan.<sup>8</sup> Customs duties on Soviet goods - which already dominated the Sinkiang market - were reduced, and new Sinkiang-Soviet telegraph and radio communications were opened.<sup>9</sup> Chin signed this agreement illegally, without authorisation from the national government at Nanking and without reporting it to the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.<sup>10</sup> As a result of this treaty, Chin received substantial economic and military assistance from the Soviet Union, including, in July 1932, a further eight aircraft which were flown from Chuguchak to Urumchi by Chinese pilots from Peking.<sup>11</sup>

Despite this Soviet military assistance, Chin's provincial forces - with the exception of Pappanegut's White Russian detachment - remained ill-trained and poorly-officered. Following the relief of Kumul Old City and Ma Chung-ying's withdrawal to Kansu, Chang P'ei-yüan, the provincial commander-in-chief and military governor of Ili was ordered to proceed to Urumchi.

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7. The biplanes were of Soviet manufacture, but were powered by American-made "Liberty" radial engines. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933 (HMVCGK Watts - GOI, 21/10/32), p. 9.
  8. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 67; Cheng Tien-fong, A History of Sino-Russian Relations, p. 170.
  9. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 67; Nyman, op.cit., pp. 81-2.
  10. Cheng Tien-fong, op.cit., p. 170; Wu Ai-chen, China and the Soviet Union, pp. 254-6. The text of the treaty together with four annexes is given in Wu's Appendix B.
  11. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5443.32 (Information supplied by H. French Ridley of the China Inland Mission, Urumchi).

Apparently Chin did not altogether trust Chang P'ei-yüan, perhaps reasoning that the victory at Kumul might have awakened dangerous ambitions in the mind of the latter. This lack of trust seems to have been mutual, for on receiving notice of his transfer to the provincial capital, Chang chose to disobey the order and to return to Ili in a move approaching open rebellion. Chin responded by appointing Sheng Shih-ts'ai, Chang P'ei-yüan's chief-of-staff during the Kumul campaign, to the position of provincial commander-in-chief.<sup>12</sup> This action was to prove of major importance both in Chin Shu-jen's own future, and for the future of Sinkiang.

Sheng Shih-ts'ai, who as Chin Shu-jen's successor was to rule Sinkiang from 1933 to 1944, was born in 1895 at Liaoning in southern Manchuria, the son of a small landowner and member of the local gentry (see plate 18). In 1917 he travelled to Japan to study political economy at Waseda University in Tokyo, returning to China in 1919 in time to participate in the May Fourth Movement as a representative of the Liaoning students. During this period Sheng began to develop radical and anti-Japanese political sentiments<sup>13</sup> as a result of which, according to his biographer Chan Fook-lam, he became convinced of the 'futility of book-learning' and determined to take up a military career.<sup>14</sup> He accordingly attended military training

12. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 236.

13. Sheng was to claim in an interview with Allen S. Whiting during 1954 that he had become a Marxist in 1919. This claim must be treated with reservation, as he failed to join the Chinese Communist Party which was founded in the same year. He later declined to join the Kuomintang, although a serving member of Chiang Kai-shek's staff, a decision he explained to Whiting in terms of his 'Marxist beliefs'. Whiting and Sheng, Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot? (Michigan, 1958), part I, p. 15. A study of Sheng's Red Failure in Sinkiang (op.cit., part 2), suggests that Sheng was, in fact, a shrewd political opportunist much influenced by progressive concepts emanating from the Soviet Union after 1917, but who was too cautious (and probably too cynical) to commit himself absolutely to any one party.

14. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 227.

school in Kwantung Province and later enrolled in the Northeastern Military Academy. Sheng entered active military service under Kuo Sung-ling, deputy of the powerful Northeastern warlord Chang Tso-lin, and rapidly rose to become a staff officer with the rank of lieutenant colonel. In 1924 Kuo sponsored Sheng's admission to the Shikan Gakko (Military Academy) in Japan for advanced military studies. Sheng returned briefly to the Northeast during Kuo's abortive attempt to overthrow Chang Tso-lin, but although implicated in the anti-Chang coup he was later able to return to Japan with the support of Feng Yu-hsiang and Chiang Kai-shek. Sheng left Japan for China in 1927 and participated in the Northern Expedition as a staff officer attached to Chiang Kai-shek's field headquarters. Following the completion of the Northern Expedition he was made chief of the war operations section of the general staff at Nanking; however, in 1929 he resigned after a disagreement with his superiors.<sup>15</sup> After this apparent setback to his career Sheng is reported to have remained at Nanking and to have interested himself in the question of strengthening China's border defences.<sup>16</sup>

Shortly after Sheng's resignation a delegation from the Sinkiang provincial government visited Nanking in search of financial aid. Chin Shu-jen had instructed one of the delegates, the deputy general secretary of the Sinkiang administration, Kuang Lu, to find an able young officer who could assist in the reorganisation of the provincial military forces. Kuang Lu made discreet enquiries and was duly introduced to Sheng Shih-ts'ai. As

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15. Boorman and Howard, Biographical Dictionary of Republican China, Vol. III, pp. 120-121. Lattimore's explanation of Sheng's resignation - that following Chang Hsueh-liang's adherence to the Nationalist cause Chiang Kai-shek had no further need of a young Northeastern warlord - is very plausible. (Pivot of Asia, p. 70).

16. See, however, Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 229. esp. fn. 19 and 20.

a result of this meeting Sheng, whose experience and qualifications were clearly far greater than Kuang Lu could have hoped for, was appointed to Chin Shu-jen's staff and travelled to Sinkiang via the Soviet Union, arriving in Urumchi during the winter of 1929-30.<sup>17</sup> By all accounts his initial welcome in Sinkiang was somewhat cool. Chin Shu-jen was suspicious of the well-qualified overseas graduate, and doubtless regarded him as a potential threat. Moreover, the provincial commissioner for military affairs, Chin's brother Chin Shu-hsin, was less than pleased at the appointment of a young officer whose military knowledge and experience were clearly far greater than his own. Despite these doubts Chin Shu-jen, whose military position in the province was far from secure, appointed Sheng Chief of Staff of the Sinkiang Frontier Army and subsequently made him chief instructor at the provincial military college. Chan Fook-lam argues that in accepting Sheng's services Chin Shu-jen 'buried a time bomb under his bed and brought about his own doom'.<sup>18</sup> In fact, through his venality and incompetence Chin had already ensured his own downfall. Sheng Shih-ts'ai had simply to wait for the explosion and then to pick up the pieces.

In spite of both British and Soviet military assistance, Chin Shu-jen's grip on the province continued to slip. During his convalescence at An-hsi, probably in or about May, 1932, Ma Chung-ying sent his adjutant, Ma Shih-ming, to take charge of the continuing Tungan military operations at Turfan.<sup>19</sup> As has already been shown, Ma Fu-ming, the provincial commander at Turfan and himself a Tungan, went over to the side of the rebels during the autumn. At the time of Chang P'ei-yüan's insubordination and his own subsequent promotion to commander-in-chief, Sheng Shih-ts'ai was based at Kumul directing an unsuccessful campaign against the Uighur insurgents of the Kerlik Tagh.

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17. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 121.

18. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 233.

19. See above, pp. 177-8.



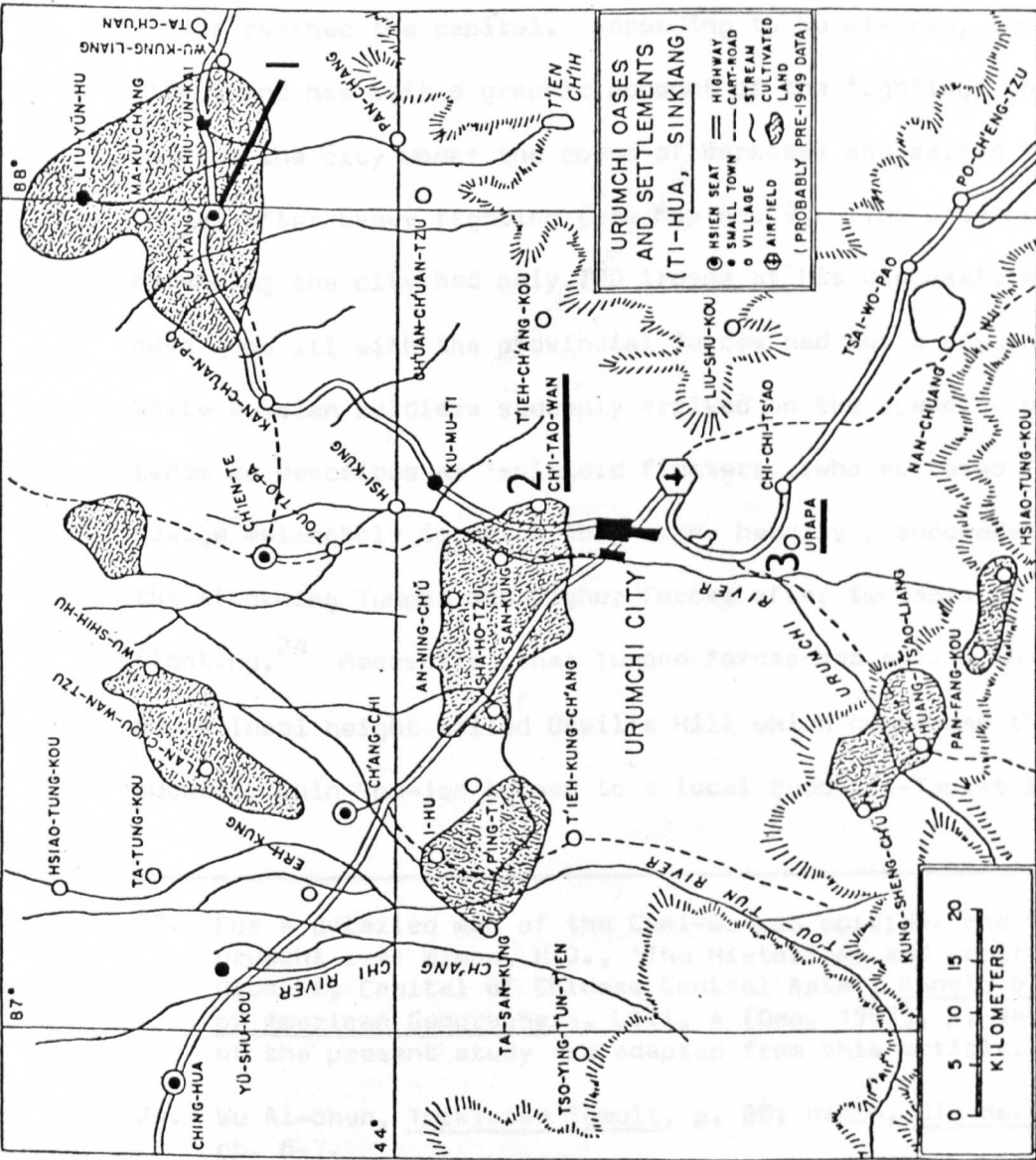
Following Ma Fu-ming's defection and the Tungan capture of Turfan, Sheng marched westward from Kumul in a bid to prevent the combined Muslim forces from marching on Urumchi. After a bloody two-day battle he succeeded in recapturing the city of Turfan, but not the whole oasis.<sup>20</sup> In any case, Sheng's victory seems to have had little effect on the Tungan forces of Ma Shih-ming, who had already transferred his headquarters to Karashahr.

During the bitterly cold Central Asian mid-winter Ma Shih-ming and his Tungan cavalry, aided by the forces of the "renegade general" Ma Fu-ming and large numbers of Turkic insurgents, began their advance on Urumchi. According to Hedin a force of provincial troops sent from Urumchi by Chin to guard the Dawan Ch'eng Pass was surprised by the Tungans and decisively defeated. Meanwhile full-scale rebellions had broken out at Kuchar (under Timūr) and at Khotan (under the "Amīrs") in the south of the province. Chin responded by expanding Pappengut's White Russian contingent from its original strength of 250 to an estimated strength of 1,500.<sup>21</sup> Once again the White Russians, most of whom came from the Ili Valley, had no alternative but to enlist. According to Nicholas Vakar, who described Chin's conscription of Russian exiles in the Slavonic Review of 1935, besides threatening the White Russians with deportation to the Soviet Union, Chin ordered the arrest of many Russian women to compel their husbands to enlist in Pappengut's forces.<sup>22</sup> These White Russian "volunteers" were to

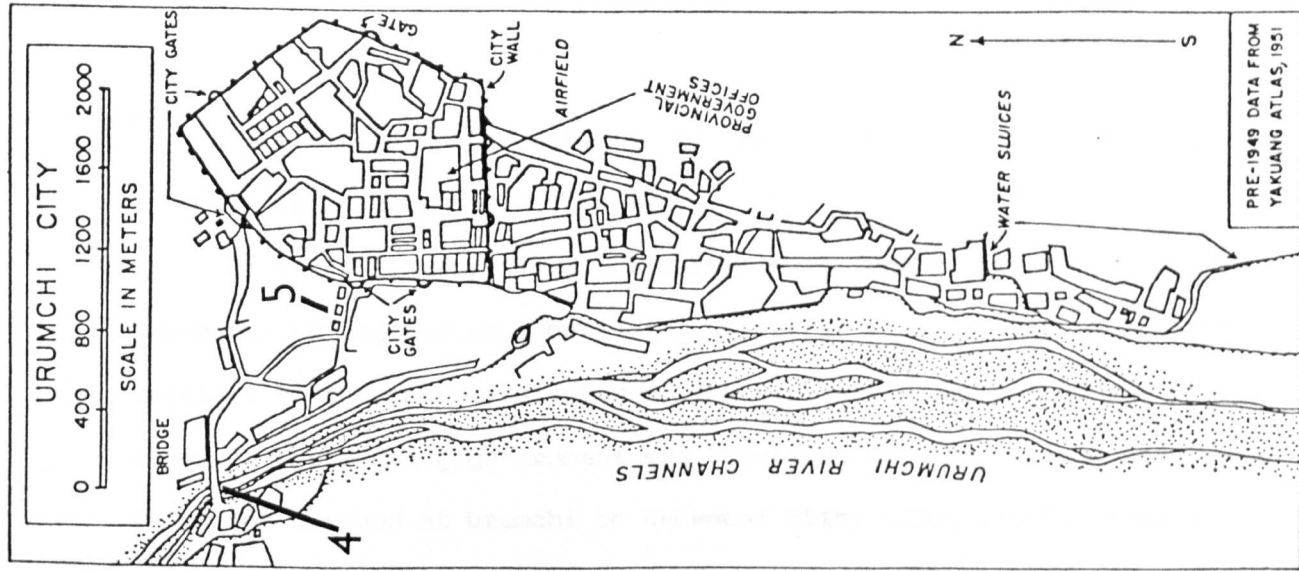
20. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol III, p. 121.

21. Cheng Tien-fong, A History of Sino-Russian Relations, p. 170; cf. Beloff, M., The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia, Vol I, p. 232. According to Beloff, the White Russian troops were sent from Kulja to Urumchi under the command of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, but this is at a variance with Howard and Boorman's Biographical Dictionary of Republican China, which states that Sheng remained at Turfan after his capture of that city in the winter of 1932 (op.cit., Vol III, p. 121). The dictates of geography make Howard and Boorman's version of events the more credible of the two alternatives.

22. Vakar, N., 'The Annexation of Chinese Turkestan', The Slavonic and East European Review, XIV, 40 (1935), p. 121.



Map 8



Map 9

Maps 8 and 9: Urumchi, region and city

- 1 Fu-k'ang
- 2 Ch'i-tao-wan
- 3 Urupa (Uruba)
- 4 Great West Bridge
- 5 Street of the "Lesser Teaching"

play a vital role in the defence of Urumchi, as well as in the overthrow of their persecutor, Chin Shu-jen.

By early January, 1933, Ma Shih-ming's Tungan forces had crossed the Dawan Ch'eng and were operating almost at will in the Chai-wu-pao corridor to the immediate south of the capital.<sup>23</sup> Wu Ai-chen, a political envoy of the Nanking government who travelled to Sinkiang via the Soviet Union and arrived at Urumchi on December 25th, 1932, reports that on January 29th, 1933, the city gates were suddenly closed. There followed a month of growing food shortages and racial tension between Chinese and Muslim, but it was not until February 21st that Ma Shih-ming's Tungan troops reached the capital. According to Wu Ai-chen, who survived the attack and has left a graphic account of the fighting, the Tungs advanced towards the city under the cover of darkness and seized the Great West Bridge after heavy fighting (see Map no. 9). The provincial commander defending the city had only 700 troops at his disposal, and things would have gone ill with the provincial forces had not a detachment of 300 White Russian soldiers suddenly arrived on the scene. The White Russians (whom Wu describes as 'splendid fighters...who suffered from moods of savage melancholy in which they drank heavily') succeeded in driving back the attacking Tungan and Uighur forces after two days of hand-to-hand fighting.<sup>24</sup> Meanwhile other Tungan forces had seized the radio station and a local height called Devil's Hill which commanded the Urumchi suburbs. Chin Shu-jen turned to a local Buddhist-Taoist temple for advice,

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23. For a detailed map of the Chai-wu-pao corridor and the area around Urumchi see: Wiens, H.J., 'The Historical and Geographical Role of Urumchi, Capital of Chinese Central Asia', Annals of the Association of American Geographers, LIII, 4 (Dec. 1963), p. 444-5. Maps 8 and 9 of the present study are adapted from this article.

24. Wu Ai-chen, Turkistan Tumult, p. 80; Hedin, Big Horse's Flight, pp. 6-7.

and according to Wu was informed that for those ordained to die, flight offered no escape, whilst for those fated to survive all places were of equal safety:

"Safe is the home and safe is the country," said the oracle; "but how shall one born for disaster seek to escape?"<sup>25</sup>

The Chinese authorities, fearing to admit further Muslim civilians to the fortified Old City, kept the city gates firmly closed against the large numbers of refugees from the suburbs who gathered outside the walls, particularly at the West Gate (see Map. no. 9). Outside the West Gate ran the "Street of the Lesser Teaching" (Ch. Hsiao-chiao chieh, a condescending euphemism for Islam).<sup>26</sup> During the Tungen attack in late February, 1933, the West Gate became the focus of the most severe fighting. Wu Ai-chen who witnessed this struggle, records that:

In times of peace this street was one of the most prosperous in the city, but now it was crowded with innocent fugitives, whose plight was terrible indeed. There was worse to come, however, for now the advancing rebels came to this quarter and seizing the houses made loop-holes in the walls. On the flat roofs they set up machine-gun posts which could enfilade Government positions on either side of them. I could see for myself that the situation was desperate and that our troops would be penned against the walls. General Pai, who was in command, did not hesitate. He gave the order that the street of the small religion should be set on fire.

Then followed a scene so frightful that the reader's imagination must suffice. As the flames swept down the long lane of wooden structures they became an inferno of horror, for the roar of the conflagration was added to the rattle of gun-fire, and the hideous shrieks of those who were trapped. The rebels sought safety in flight, and as they

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25. ibid., p. 81. In fact, despite the enigmatic words of the oracle, Chin was born both for disaster and escape, as will be shown.

26. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 82. cf. the application of the term 'Hinayāna' ("Lesser Vehicle") to Theravāda Buddhism by followers of the 'Mahayāna' ("Greater Vehicle").

crossed the open were machine-gunned from the Red Mountain; but the fugitives had nowhere to fly to and perished to the last man, woman and child. Nevertheless the city was saved, and when at last the flames died down the approach to the West Bridge was strewn with the bodies of our assailants.

On the evening of the second day I had completed ten thousand words of copying. I asked how many were dead. I was told 'at least two thousand'. Once again I returned to my task, reflecting that a human life had been taken at every fifth word.<sup>27</sup>

Following this defeat, the Muslim forces were forced to fall back from the immediate vicinity of the West Gate; however they retained their hold on the Great West Bridge, a mere half-mile to the north-west, and 'after dark were capable of amazing boldness. Several were killed while attempting to scale the walls under the very mouths of the guns'.<sup>28</sup> The White Russian troops who provided the backbone of the defence succeeded in holding the city walls and in making occasional sorties against the attackers,<sup>29</sup> but Urumchi would certainly have fallen had not Sheng Shih-ts'ai, at the head of a strong force of provincial troops from Turfan, marched to the relief of the city. With the approach of Sheng's comparatively disciplined and well-equipped forces, the Muslim insurgents broke off their attack and withdrew to the surrounding countryside, most of which had fallen under their control. Fearing that the melting of the snows would lead to an outbreak of cholera, the Chinese authorities took advantage of the respite gained by Sheng's arrival to bury the dead. Wu Ai-chen, who participated in the burials has left a harrowing description

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27. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 82; cf. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4641.1933 (Report of R.H. Joyce, China Inland Mission, Urumchi, dated April 18th, 1933).

28. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 83.

29. Wu notes that the White Russians ambushed and killed nearly 600 "Turban-heads" (the Chinese colonial idiom for Uighurs) in a defile outside the city during one such sortie; Turkistan Tumult, p. 83.

of conditions in the city at this time. More than 1,000 bodies were buried in a single mass grave in the suburbs,<sup>30</sup> and the final death toll was probably in excess of 6,000 Chinese and Muslims.<sup>31</sup>

Following Sheng Shih-ts'ai's relief of Urumchi the insurgent forces consolidated their hold on much of the surrounding countryside. The strategic Dawan Ch'eng was taken, the district of Fu-k'ang, some 25 miles north-east of the capital, fell into rebel hands, and in the neighbouring district of San-to-pao an estimated 900 Han Chinese were killed, whilst large stocks of rice which would normally have provisioned Urumchi were captured and burned.<sup>32</sup> The rebels were able to operate with impunity within a few miles of the capital, and on March 1st a detachment of about 100 provincial troops was decimated at Ch'i-tao-wan, a mere three miles to the north of the capital, by a column of Muslim insurgents reported by Wu to have been more than 1,000 strong.<sup>33</sup> Meanwhile the situation elsewhere in the province continued to deteriorate; to the south Ma Shao-wu was isolated at Kashgar, whilst to the north a Kazakh rebellion had broken out in the Shara Sume region under the leadership of one Sharīf Khān.<sup>34</sup> The Dzungarian Tungsans were also restive, and a rising at Manass under the leadership of a mutinous lieutenant in the provincial forces was only put down with difficulty.<sup>35</sup>

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30. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 88. See also Wu's Chapter VII, 'We Gather Our Dead', and his plate facing p. 82.

31. Hedin, Big Horse's Flight, p. 7.

32. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 83-4, 89.

33. ibid., p. 84.

34. Hayit, Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China, p. 301. According to Hayit, who draws heavily on Bugra's Doğu Turkistan, trouble between the Tungsans and Kazakhs of Shara Sume led to the outbreak of a struggle between Chinese Muslims and Turkic Muslims in northern Dzungaria which paralleled that developing in southern Sinkiang. In fact, tensions between Tungan and Turkic Muslim in Dzungaria were primarily of economic origin, as Tungsans tended to act as landlords and "flock-lords" over Uighur and Kazakh tenants in that region. See Barnett, A., China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover (London, 1963), p. 273.

35. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 92.

The Kazakh rising at Shara Sume seems to have finally convinced the Soviet leadership that the administration of Chin Shu-jen, whose ineptitudes they had watched with increasing misgiving, could not survive the Muslim insurgency which had spread across the whole of Sinkiang. A decision was accordingly taken, apparently with the knowledge and support of Nanking, to send reinforcements to the provincial government at Urumchi.<sup>36</sup> By fortuitous chance - from Stalin's point of view - a force of approximately 2,000 battle-experienced Chinese troops had been forced across the Heilungkiang-Siberia border by the Japanese during the latter's attack on Manchuria in 1931. These troops, who had been interned by the Russians, were now transported by the Trans-Siberian and Turk-Sib Railways to the Sinkiang frontier at Chuguchak.<sup>37</sup> Chen notes that this force, known as the Northeast National Salvation Army, was composed of 'regular soldiers, well-disciplined, well-trained, and full of fighting spirit'.<sup>38</sup> The arrival of these Northeastern troops in Urumchi on March 27th, 1933, substantially strengthened the position of the provincial administration, and more particularly the position of the provincial commander-in-chief, Sheng Shih-ts'ai, who was a fellow Northeasterner.<sup>39</sup>

Under the command of Sheng, the reinforced provincial army succeeded in pushing back the invading Tungan forces of Ma Shih-ming, who appears to

36. ibid., p. 89-90.

37. Beloff, The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia, Vol I, pp. 232-33; cf. Chen, 'The Road to Power', p. 238. (Beloff is certainly mistaken in putting the size of the forces transferred from Heilungkiang to Sinkiang at 7,000; cf. Chen, op.cit., p. 238, fn. 42. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 69, puts the total number of Northeastern troops at 'over 1,000').

38. Chen, 'The Road to Power', p. 238; cf. Teichmann, Sir Eric, Journey to Turkistan (London, 1937), p. 20 ('a strong body of Chinese troops expelled by the Japanese from Manchuria'), and p. 187 ('the timely arrival of...relatively efficient Chinese troops from Manchuria').

39. Chen, 'The Road to Power', p. 238.

have retreated over the Dawan Ch'eng to his headquarters at Karashahr. The Uighur insurgents were undoubtedly dismayed by these new developments, and Khoja Niyās Ḥājji, who controlled a wide belt of territory extending from the vicinity of the Sinkiang-Kansu frontier to Turfan, is reported to have sent an urgent appeal for assistance to Ma Chung-ying, still convalescing at An-hsi in north-western Kansu.<sup>40</sup> Meanwhile Chin Shu-jen, who had played no part in these successes and whose authority was seriously undermined (whilst Sheng's was strengthened) by the arrival of the troops of the Northeast National Salvation Army,<sup>41</sup> was faced by increasing unrest in the capital. During the defence of Urumchi in February and March the White Russian forces, although bearing the brunt of the fighting, had been irregularly paid and provided with the worst of the horses and ammunition.<sup>42</sup> Moreover Chin's unpopularity amongst all nationalities including the Han Chinese was not improved by the actions of his brother, Chin Shu-hsin, and his former batman, Ts'ui Chao-chi, who had succeeded in cornering grain supplies whilst the city was under siege and were reportedly manipulating the market for personal gain.<sup>43</sup>

Following the withdrawal of the insurgent forces Pappengut and the other White Russian officers approached the leaders of the Northeast National Salvation Army with an account of their grievances against Chin Shu-jen, and having been assured of the Northeasterners' support, mounted

40. ibid.

41. As Lattimore pointed out in his Pivot of Asia (p. 70): 'Ever since the regime of China's first modern warlord, Yüan Shih-k'ai, a provincial governor who does not control his own troops has usually been overshadowed by the commander of the military forces'. This was increasingly the case in Sinkiang in 1932, even before the arrival of some 2,000 of Sheng's fellow-provincials in March, 1933.

42. Hedin, Big Horse's Flight, pp. 8-9.

43. ibid., p. 8. Howard and Boorman, op.cit., Vol I, p. 382.



a coup against Chin on the night of April 12th. About 400 Russians were involved in the fighting, 200 of whom seized the city gates and chairman's yamen, whilst the remainder mustered outside the city walls in a show of strength.<sup>44</sup> Chin who must have been prepared for this eventuality, succeeded in escaping over the city walls and in fleeing to the Soviet Union via Chuguchak. From here he returned to China by way of the Turk-Sib and Trans-Siberian railways.<sup>45</sup> His younger brother, Chin Shu-hsin, was captured and later executed.<sup>46</sup>

Sheng Shih-ts'ai, who was encamped at Uruba (Urupa on map 8) at the time of the coup, insists in his memoirs that the Chin's overthrow was engineered by the Soviet Union and that he had no foreknowledge of the event.<sup>47</sup> In fact Sheng's wife, Ch'iu Yü-fang, the ambitious and intelligent daughter of a trusted subordinate of the Northeastern warlord Kuo Sung-ling,<sup>48</sup> is reported to have entered into negotiations

44. For a detailed first-hand description of the coup see Wu, Turkistan Tumult, pp. 100-118.
45. Following his arrival in China Chin Shu-jen was arrested by the Nationalist government and charged with illegally signing the 1931 treaty with Soviet Russia. In April 1935 he was sentenced to three-and-a-half years imprisonment, but was subsequently pardoned on 10th October of the same year. He was later visited by George Hogg living in retirement near Lanchow in his native Kansu, 'a scholarly old gentleman named Chin Shu-jen, who began and is ending his life as a gardener'. (Hogg, G., I See a New China, pp. 118-9). Chin may well have bought his pardon with the large sums of money transferred illegally from Sinkiang to his personal bank account in Tientsin. Certainly he paid a light penalty for his years of misrule in Sinkiang. See Appendix I, 'Who Was Who in Republican Sinkiang'.
46. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 117; Hedin, Big Horse's Flight, p. 9.
47. Sheng Shih-ts'ai, Red Failure in Sinkiang (Part II of Whiting and Sheng, Sinkiang, Pawn or Pivot?), p. 159. cf. Sheng Shih-ts'ai, 'Hsin-chiang shih-nien hui-i-lu', Tzu-li wan-pao, 6th October, 1952 (cited in Chen, 'The Road to Power', p. 240).
48. Ch'iu Yü-fang's father was Ch'iu Tsung-chun. His connections with the Northeastern militarist leadership must have strengthened Sheng's hand during negotiations with the Northeast National Salvation Army during 1933. See Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 242.

with the leadership of the Northeast National Salvation Army several days before the coup, and to have obtained their backing for her husband in his move by proxy against Chin Shu-jen.<sup>49</sup> Following the coup d'état a message was sent to Sheng at Uruba requesting him to return to the capital.<sup>50</sup> In the negotiations which followed Liu Wen-lung, formerly Minister of Education under Chin Shu-jen, was appointed Provincial Chairman,<sup>51</sup> whilst Sheng Shih-ts'ai, who protested that he was 'only a common soldier'<sup>52</sup> (but who enjoyed the full backing of both the White Russians and the Northeast National Salvation Army),<sup>53</sup> was confirmed in the all-powerful position of tupan, or Border Defence Commissioner, as de facto ruler of the province.<sup>54</sup>

## 6.2 The Second Invasion of Ma Chung-ying

Following Ma Shih-ming's failure to capture Urumchi and Khoja Niyās Hājji's renewed plea for assistance, Ma Chung-ying determined to re-enter

49. ibid. Chen implies that Ch'iu Tsung-chun was also in Sinkiang at this time, and negotiated with the Northeast National Salvation Army on behalf of his son-in-law.

50. In his memoirs Sheng states that the message was brought from Urumchi to Uruba by Li-Hsiao-t'ien aboard a plane. Although possible, it should be noted that Uruba is no more than 7 miles from Urumchi, and in Wu's account of the coup mention is made of sending a junior Kuo-mintang commissioner, Pei, on horseback to Sheng at Uruba. (cf. Sheng Shih-ts'ai, Red Failure in Sinkiang, pp. 159-60, and Wu, Turkistan Tumult, pp. 107-8). This discrepancy casts further doubt on Sheng's version of events and reinforces the theory that he was a party to the coup.

51. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 109; Chen, 'The Road to Power', p. 241.

52. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 118.

53. Wu, Hsin-chiang chi-yu fu Su-lien yu-chi, p. 78.

54. According to Chang Ta-chün Sheng 'surrounded' the assembly hall where negotiations were being held with soldiers brought back with him from Uruba, and thus engineered the result he desired. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 242.

Plates 15 and 16:

## THE TUNGAN INVADERS OF SINKIANG



Turkic conscripts near Kumul  
1933.



Tungan troops in winter clothing  
c. 1933.

the fray in person. There can be little doubt that, far from being down-cast at Ma Shih-ming's reverses, Ma Chung-ying was delighted at the ease with which his adjutant had crossed the Dawan Ch'eng and almost seized Urumchi - a factor which, combined with Ma Chan-ts'ang's seizure of Kashgar New City in southern Sinkiang, convinced the young Tungan warlord that Sinkiang was his for the taking. Moreover, whilst Chin Shu-jen's position appeared to be hopeless,<sup>55</sup> Ma Chung-ying's position had been considerably strengthened by 18 months' recuperation in north-western Kansu during which time his army had been restructured and greatly expanded through widespread conscription. Ma's personal prestige had also been much enhanced, for early in 1932 the Nanking government, probably motivated by news of Chin Shu-jen's illegal treaty with the Soviet Union, recognised his Tungan forces as the 36th Division of the National Army of China, with Chung-ying as commanding officer.<sup>56</sup>

Following Ma Chung-ying's treatment at An-hsi by the British missionaries Cable and French, he transferred his headquarters to Soochow, probably in April or May, 1932. Here he continued to train and expand his army, witnessed by the German engineer Vasel, whose descriptions of the young Tungan warlord indicate very clearly the latter's unstable character. In conversation with Vasel, Ma professed his admiration for Napoleon, Bismarck and Hindenburg. He was frequently to be seen running at the head of his troops during training, even in sub-zero temperatures. Military training was pursued with a 'spartan rigour...pushed to the verge of utter ruthlessness'. Desertion was punishable by death, and on one occasion Vasel saw

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55. According to Wu (Turkistan Tumult, p. 136) Ma Chung-ying did not learn of the successful coup against Chin Shu-jen until after he had launched his new invasion.
56. Cable and French, The Gobi Desert, p. 227; Hedin, Big Horse's Flight, p. 6; Kazak, op.cit., p. 18, fn. 47; As Wu points out in his Turkistan Tumult (p. 70), following this appointment Ma Chung-ying would have been able to draw on central government funds to pay for his army.

Ma personally behead five such offenders. On another Vassel recalls seeing Ma:

In one of those sudden fits of exuberance that were typical of him, snatching up casually some hand grenades, which he had made himself, and hurling them, one by one, against the lofty clay-coloured walls of the city. And then he laughed heartily when he saw his men fling themselves flat on the ground as splinters of steel hurtled in all directions. He scorned to seek safety by throwing himself on the ground, and was quite delighted when he saw that I too did not seek cover.<sup>57</sup>

During the spring of 1933 Ma Chung-ying continued his preparations for the forthcoming invasion of Sinkiang. The Swede Bexell, who was working in the Kansu-Tsinghai frontier region at this time, records that in preparation for the invasion Ma pushed taxation of his own fief in north-western Kansu to the limits of the peasants' endurance; moreover he sent detachments of soldiers into Tsinghai illegally to tax an area which owed allegiance to the Tsinghai authorities at Hsi-ning.<sup>58</sup> During May, 1933, Ma Chung-ying's army withdrew from Soochow and advanced on Yü-men. Vassel has left a description of the 36th Division's departure:

A dark mass of human beings, camels and oxen, was pouring out of the city gate towards the west amid clouds of dust. There were hundreds of heavily-laden camels, the bells on their necks clanging monotonously, their drivers easily discernible by their gaudy headgear. In the rear followed high-wheeled ox-carts, flanked on either side by infantry. Behind them again came a company of cavalry, which presently galloped past the lumbering camels and oxen along the track through the desert... and now I had an opportunity of seeing at close range General Ma's famous cavalry riding past me and keeping its post at the head of the marching columns. This was the famous white

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57. Vassel, G., My Russian Jailers In China, pp. 52-5.

58. Bexell, G., 'Geological and Palaeontological Investigations in Mongolia and Kansu, 1929-34', The Sino-Swedish Expedition, Vol IV, pp. 239, 244.

cavalry regiment of which General Ma was especially proud. The broad iron swords of the dragoons clanked as they rode along on their magnificent white horses, while on their shoulders they carried carbines of the most varied and antiquated patterns. Next came the brown regiment, while in the rear followed the black regiment, comprising some two thousand horsemen.

A short distance behind the cavalry came the infantry - regiment after regiment, headed by the Chinese (Kuomintang) standard. On they swept, platoon after platoon, followed by their officers, with their mausers at the ready. The columns strode along, keeping perfect time with their shrill, high-pitched, mournful, Asiatic marching songs.

Sandwiched between some of these trained and trustworthy soldiers I saw large drafts of recruits who had been compelled to join General Ma's forces. These raw levies were constantly kept under very close observation.<sup>59</sup>

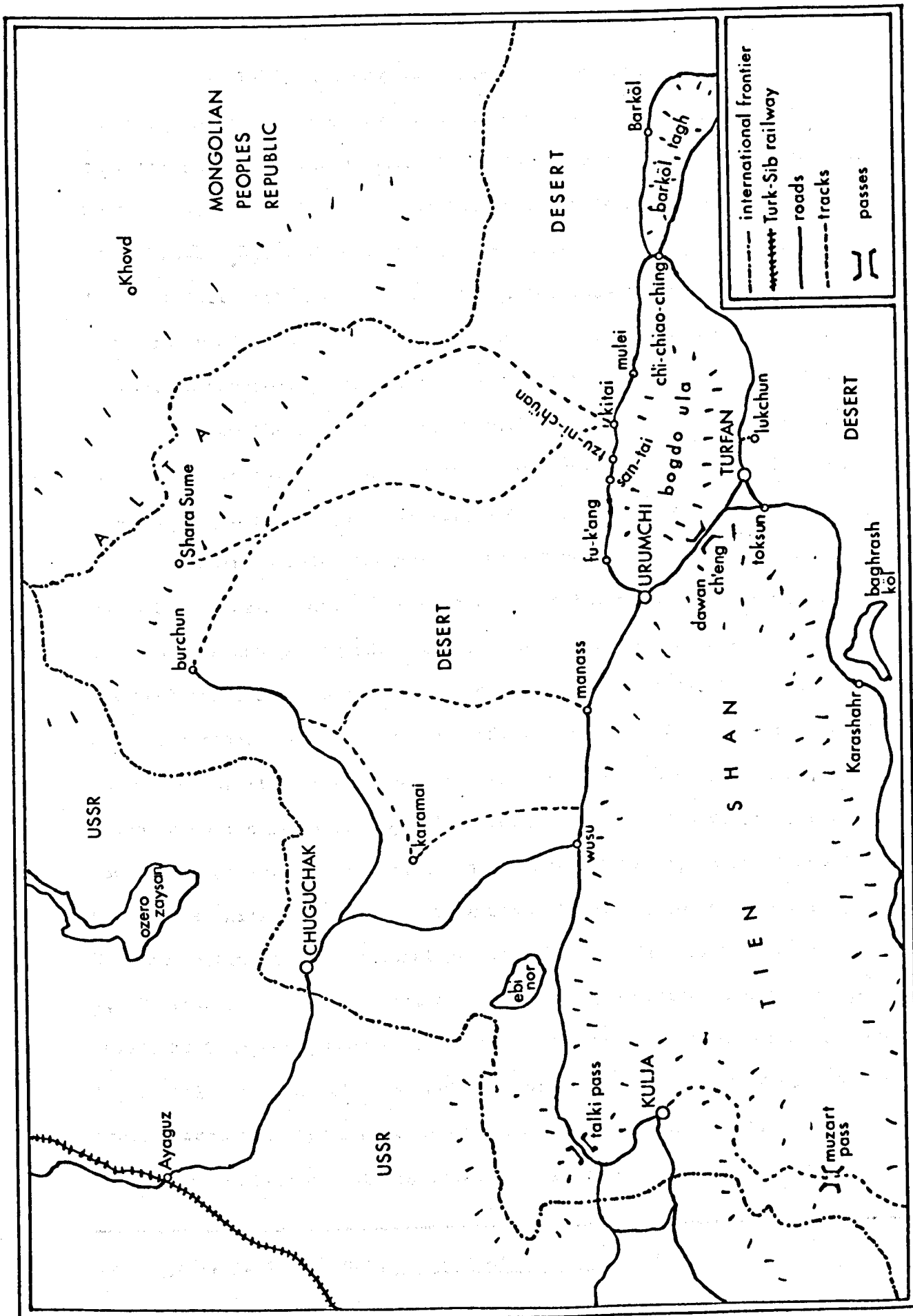
Although accurate statistics giving the full size of Ma Chung-ying's reorganized army during his second invasion of Sinkiang do not, apparently, exist, there can be no doubt that it was substantially stronger than during his first invasion in 1931 (perhaps by as much as ten times).<sup>60</sup> It was also better trained, better armed, and better paid.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, following Ma Chung-ying's arrival in north-eastern Sinkiang, large numbers of young Uighur men were conscripted into his ranks (see plate 15). The threat posed to the provincial authorities at Urumchi was, therefore, substantial.

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59. Vasel, op.cit., pp. 101-2. For details of troop movements in north-western Kansu following Ma's renewed invasion of Sinkiang, see Bexell, op.cit., pp. 245-6.

60. According to Hedin, who was briefly held captive by the 36th Division, Ma's troops were 'several thousand strong' (Big Horse's Flight, p. 12); According to Cable and French (The Gobi Desert, p. 228) Ma's forces totalled 3,000 men, a figure also given in Boorman and Howard's Biographical Dictionary of Republican China, Vol II, p. 464. The anonymous article 'Recent Events in Sinkiang', JRCAS, XXI, 1 (1934), p. 85, states that Ma had 4,000 men at his command, all of whom were poorly-armed, and only 1,000 of whom were Tungans. In fact it seems probable that Ma had at least 2,000 Tungan cavalry at his disposal, in addition to the cavalry already in Sinkiang under Ma Shih-ming's command. Together with infantry his initial invasion force can hardly have numbered less than 4,000. According to Fuad Kazak, op.cit., p. 19, by the summer of 1933 the strength of Ma's army had reached 10,000.

61. See, for example, Wu's Turkistan Tumult, pp. 136; 152-6.



MAP 10: DZUNGARIA and the ILI VALLEY

In May, 1933, Ma Chung-ying despatched a force of about 2,500 Tungans, under the command of his younger brother, Ma Chung-chieh, to take the ruined town of Kumul. This was achieved with little fighting, most of the area being firmly in the hands of Ma Chung-ying's ally, Khoja Niyās Hājjī. Whilst Ma Chung-chieh issued bilingual proclamations to the effect that the people of Kumul had been freed for ever from the tyranny of Chin Shu-jen (who, by this time, was safely in the Soviet Union), Ma Chung-ying travelled from An-hsi to Kumul by lorry, remote, for once, from the front line fighting.<sup>62</sup> Meanwhile Sheng Shih-ts'ai, who had hardly been able to secure his own position before facing the renewed Tungan challenge, hurriedly prepared a force of about 5,000 Sinkiang, White Russian and Northeastern troops to the north of the Dawan Ch'eng at Urumchi.<sup>63</sup> Having rejoined the main force of his troops at Kumul, Ma Chung-ying advanced, unopposed, on Ch'i-chiao-ching, the furthest point west reached during his invasion of 1931. Instead of advancing along the main road to Turfan, the Tungan forces next crossed the narrow defile between the Kuruk Tagh and the Bogdo Ula ranges, and advanced on the provincial garrison town of Kitai. The first clashes took place at Mulei, a few miles to the east of Kitai, on about May 15th. On May 17th Kitai was attacked by a mixed force of Tungans and Turkic Muslims estimated by the local provincial commander, Li Hai-ju, to be 4,000 strong. Once again, the commanding Tungan officer was Ma Chung-chieh, Ma Chung-ying apparently choosing to stay in the background. On May 26th Sheng Shih-ts'ai set out from Urumchi at the head of some 5,000 troops, more than 1,000 of whom were White Russian conscripts. He had informed Wu Ai-chen that his intention was to hold San-tai, half-way

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62. ibid., p. 137; Hedin, Big Horse's Flight, p. 11.

63. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 138.



between Kitai and Urumchi, but following bitter fighting during which Ma Chung-chieh was killed, Kitai fell to the invading forces.<sup>64</sup> Sheng Shih-ts'ai retreated to Urumchi, arriving in the capital on the night of June 1st. At this time his fortunes were at their lowest ebb. Still unsure of Nanking's reaction to the coup d'état against Chin Shu-jen,<sup>65</sup> his position was threatened to the east by Ma Chung-ying, who had set up his headquarters at Kitai, and to the west by Chang P'ei-yüan, the military governor of Ili, whose loyalty remained questionable and who was secretly negotiating with the Tungan invaders.<sup>66</sup>

Meanwhile Ma Chung-ying, whose forces were within striking distance of the capital, unexpectedly halted his attack and sent a telegram to the provincial authorities offering to come to terms.<sup>67</sup> Ma's unexplained failure to advance, which may have been due to his realisation that Chin Shu-jen had been overthrown and had fled the province, enabled Sheng to reorganise his defences. A peace mission, under the leadership of the Nanking representative Wu Ai-chen, was despatched to Kitai, whilst Pappengut's White Russians were sent to hold a new front line at Fu-k'ang.<sup>68</sup> Despite

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64. According to Wu, Tungan losses during the capture of Kitai were 1,000 killed or wounded. Ma Chung-chieh was reportedly killed in a moment of 'inspired but utterly reckless bravery' when attempting to scale the walls in the face of machine gun fire. (Turkistan Tumult, pp. 138-9; 152). There would appear to be no substance in the claims made by the JRCAS that Ma's troops were largely unarmed before their attack on Kitai, or that they were subsequently defeated by provincial forces to the west of Kitai on May 29th. ('Recent Events in Sinkiang, JRCAS, XXI, 1, 1934, p. 85).

65. Sheng can have been in little doubt that Nanking welcomed the overthrow of Chin Shu-jen, but must have feared that Chiang Kai-shek had chosen Ma Chung-ying, recently promoted to the command of the KMT 36th Division and (unlike Sheng) said to have been a KMT member, as Nanking's protégé in Sinkiang. This uncertainty doubtless played at least some part in Sheng's decision to turn to the Soviet Union, rather than to Nanking for assistance.

66. Hedin, Big Horse's Flight, p. 12; Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 246.

67. ibid., p. 244.

68. For details of Wu's mission, in which he encouraged Ma Chung-ying to seize control of southern Sinkiang, whilst leaving Dzungaria to Sheng Shih-ts'ai see Turkistan Tumult, pp. 148-60 (Chapter XI, 'I See Big Horse').

initial promise of success, Wu's peace mission failed to achieve its purpose. Ma Chung-ying assured the provincial delegates that he would observe a cease-fire, and that there would be no further fighting between his forces and those of Sheng Shih-ts'ai. However, according to Wu, shortly after his return from Kitai to Urumchi aerial reconnaissance reports indicated that Tungan troops were once again on the move, advancing westward towards San-tai. Sheng immediately left Urumchi for Fu-k'ang, where he took personal command of the provincial forces and advanced to meet Ma Chung-ying at the hamlet of Tzu-ni-ch'üan. During the subsequent battle, which took place during mid-June, the provincial forces gained the upper hand following the onset of severe weather conditions for which the lightly-clothed Tungans were ill-prepared.<sup>69</sup> The Uighur forces of Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī, who were present in the region at the time of the battle, took no part in the fighting.<sup>70</sup> The defeat of the Tungans at Tzu-ni-ch'üan, although a serious setback for Ma Chung-ying, was not, however, a complete rout. The defeated troops succeeded in withdrawing in good order and in retreating, via Kitai, to Ch'i-chiao-ching. From this point they advanced westward to Turfan, where they joined up with the remnants of the Tungan forces under Ma Shih-ming, and proceeded to extend their authority towards the southern end of the Dawan Ch'eng.

It was also during mid-June that Huang Mu-sung, a "pacification commissioner" sent by the national government in Nanking, arrived by air in Urumchi. Huang's mission was ostensibly to establish a lasting peace between the provincial authorities and Ma Chung-ying, both of whom

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69. ibid., pp. 174-6. According to Wu, the provincial forces seized 1,000 rifles and four machine guns from the retreating Tungans; cf. Cable and French, The Gobi Desert, p. 280.

70. Kuang Lu, 'Hsin-chiang li-shih', in Ling Shun-sheng, Pien-chiang wen-hua lun-chi (Cultural Essays on the Frontier Region, Taipei, 1954), III, pp. 330-33.

professed at least nominal allegiance to the Nanking government. Sheng remained suspicious of Huang's motives, however, clearly feeling that Nanking might lend its backing to the Tungan forces whom, especially after his victory at Tzu-ni-ch'üan, he still hoped to defeat.<sup>71</sup> His reaction was accordingly swift and harsh. Abandoning all pursuit of Ma's forces, Sheng returned to Urumchi and placed Huang Mu-sung under house arrest. Shortly thereafter three leading officials of the Sinkiang government whom Sheng accused of plotting with Huang Mu-sung, Chang P'ei-yüan and Ma Chung-ying to effect his overthrow were arrested and executed by firing squad.<sup>72</sup> Having thus distanced himself from Nanking, Sheng followed the example of his predecessor, Chin Shu-jen, by turning increasingly to the Soviet Union for aid in his continuing struggle with the various Muslim rebel forces.<sup>73</sup>

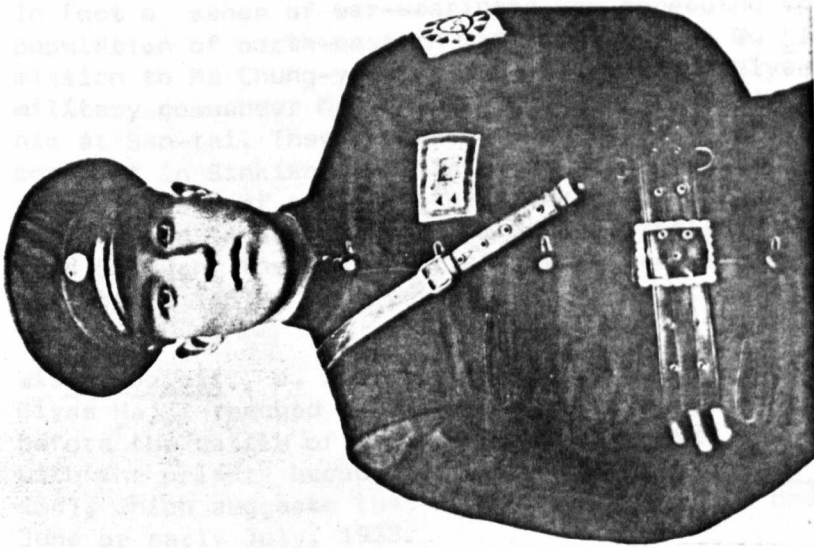
During the summer and early autumn of 1933, Ma Chung-ying remained in the Turfan region reorganising his forces, whilst Sheng devoted his energies to securing his position at Urumchi and elsewhere north of the Tien Shan. During July and August provincial authority was restored at Shara Sume, which had been looted and burned by Kazakh rebels during April,<sup>74</sup> and also,

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71. Doubtless Sheng still retained feelings of bitterness towards Nanking dating from the time of his resignation from Chiang Kai-shek's staff in 1928.
72. Details in Wu, Turkistan Tumult, pp. 181-3. According to Japanese diplomatic sources, Huang Mu-sung was in fact an agent of Chiang Kai-shek's political rival, Wang Ching-wei, who was anxious to bring about the downfall of Chiang's old protégé, Sheng, and thus to strengthen his own position within the KMT. Miscellaneous Documents Relating to the Political and General Situation in Sinkiang (in Japanese), Japanese Foreign Office Archives, cited in Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang (Part 1 of Whiting & Sheng, Sinkiang, Pawn or Pivot?, p. 24). The three leading officials of the Sinkiang government executed by Sheng Shih-ts'ai were T'ao Ming-yueh, Ch'en Chung and Li Hsiao-t'ien.
73. See below, pp. 265-74.
74. According to Wu Ai-chen, Shara Sume fell to the rebel Kazakhs on April 18th, when the local tao-yin, having received news of Chin Shu-jen's overthrow, erroneously assumed that Urumchi had fallen to the rebels. He accordingly destroyed his records, set fire to the administrative buildings, and fled to Soviet territory with the other Chinese residents of Shara Sume, leaving the town undefended. (Wu, Turkistan Tumult, pp.132-3).

# THE RIVAL WARLORDS



Sheng Shih-ts'ai  
probably c. 1928.



Ma Chung-ying in KMT  
36th Division uniform  
c. 1933.

according to Hayit, in the border region of Chuguchak.<sup>75</sup> Meanwhile Khoja Niyās Hājji, the most influential of the Kumullik rebel leaders, had grown increasingly uneasy in his alliance with the Tungan forces of Ma Chung-ying.<sup>76</sup> At some stage during late June or early July, probably following the battle of Tzu-ni-ch'üan, he opened secret negotiations with Sheng Shih-ts'ai which resulted in his recognition of the new provincial authorities and appointment to the position of "Chief Defence Commissioner for Southern Sinkiang".<sup>77</sup> Following this volte-face he marched his Uighur troops across the Dawan Ch'eng and occupied Toksun only to be attacked and badly defeated by the Tungan forces of Ma Shih-ming.<sup>78</sup> As a result of these developments, by late July Khoja Niyās Hājji and his ramshackle army had completely disappeared from the political stage in north-eastern Sinkiang, having been forced to retreat via Karashahr to Kuchar, into a region owing at least nominal allegiance

75. Hayit, Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China, p. 302.

76. In fact a sense of war-weariness was spreading throughout the Turkic population of north-eastern Sinkiang. During Wu Ai-chen's peace mission to Ma Chung-ying in May, 1933, Khoja Niyās Hājji, his military commander Mahmud, and a group of Muslim akhunds met with him at San-tai. They expressed their desire to avoid a wide-scale conflict in Sinkiang and, in marked contrast to the Uighur secessionists of south-western Sinkiang, stated that they would be prepared to support the new administration at Urumchi now that Chin Shu-jen, the oppressor of Kumul, had been overthrown. (Turkistan Tumult, p. 146).

77. Wiens, op.cit., p. 242. According to Hayit, op.cit., p. 303. Khoja Niyās Hājji reached an agreement with Sheng on 9th June, 1933 (i.e. before the battle of Tzu-ni-ch'üan); however this is at a variance with the primary account of Wu Ai-chen (Turkistan Tumult, pp. 146; 234), which suggests that Khoja Niyās may have changed sides in late June or early July, 1933.

78. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 234.

to the rebel forces at Kashgar and Khotan.<sup>79</sup>

Meanwhile Nanking's peace commissioner Huang Ma-sung had secured his release from house arrest in Urumchi by wiring Nanking with the recommendation that Sheng Shih-ts'ai and Liu Wen-lung be confirmed in their posts as chief military and civil authorities in Sinkiang.<sup>80</sup> Nanking, presented with a fait accompli and fearing the further growth of Soviet influence in Sinkiang, had no alternative but to comply with Huang's recommendation. On September 2nd Lo Wen-kan, Nanking's foreign minister, arrived in Urumchi by air. His brief was formally to confirm Sheng in office (which he did at an official ceremony on September 7th), and then to mediate between Sheng Shih-ts'ai and Ma Chung-ying on the clear understanding that Nanking recognised the former as the legitimate tupan of Sinkiang. As a result of Lo's mission, Ma Chung-ying was offered the post of Garrison Commander of Eastern Sinkiang - an appointment which he agreed to accept, duly assuming legitimate authority over a region which included Kumul, Barköl, and part of the Turfan Depression.<sup>81</sup> Shortly after Lo Wen-kan's departure from Sinkiang in early October, however, Sheng announced the discovery of a new "plot" against him. The figure-head Provincial Chairman, Liu Wen-lung, was accused of conspiring with Ma Chung-ying, Chang P'ei-yüan, and , through Lo Wen-kan, with Nanking,

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79. It was as a result of his defeat and withdrawal to Kuchar that Khoja Niyās Hājji sent representatives to Kashgar and Yarkand advocating a policy which was 'bitterly anti-Tungan but conciliatory towards the Chinese' (see above, p. 221 ). According to HMCGK these representatives left Kuchar for Kashgar on July 29th. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ. 6634.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 31/8/1933). Yulbārs Khān, the other prominent Kumullik leader, who was probably at Kumul or Bardash during this period, chose to remain aligned with Ma Chung-ying. Howard and Boorman, op.cit., Vol IV, p. 59.

80. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 245; cf. Fleming, P., News From Tartary (London, 1942), p. 250.

81. Howard and Boorman, op.cit., Vol III, p. 122; IOLR, L/P&S/12/2356, PZ.4894.1934 (Notes Respecting the Sinkiang Rebellion), p. 1.



to overthrow Sheng Shih-ts'ai. Liu was accordingly forced to resign, and was replaced as provincial chairman by Chu Jui-hsi, a still more pliable cipher.<sup>82</sup>

Whilst Sheng was thus occupied in strengthening his grip on the provincial government at Urumchi, his enemies in the rest of the province were preparing for a final, all-out attempt to unseat him. Ma Chung-ying, apparently encouraged by Ma Shih-ming's successes against Khoja Niyās Hājji, decided on a 'lightning stroke' against the capital, and in December, 1933, swiftly moved his forces across the strategic Dawan Ch'eng to attack Urumchi.<sup>83</sup> In response to this move Chang P'ei-yüan, the military governor of Ili, finally determined to throw his support behind the invading Tungans. He accordingly led his troops across the Talki Pass into Dzungaria, and attacked the provincial forces stationed at Wusu.<sup>84</sup> Meanwhile, encouraged by the advance of the Kansu Tungan forces, the indigenous Tungans of Dzungaria rose en masse and flocked to Ma Chung-ying's banner.<sup>85</sup> In late December a detachment of the 36th Division, led by the indefatigable Ma Shih-ming, bypassed the capital and attacked the

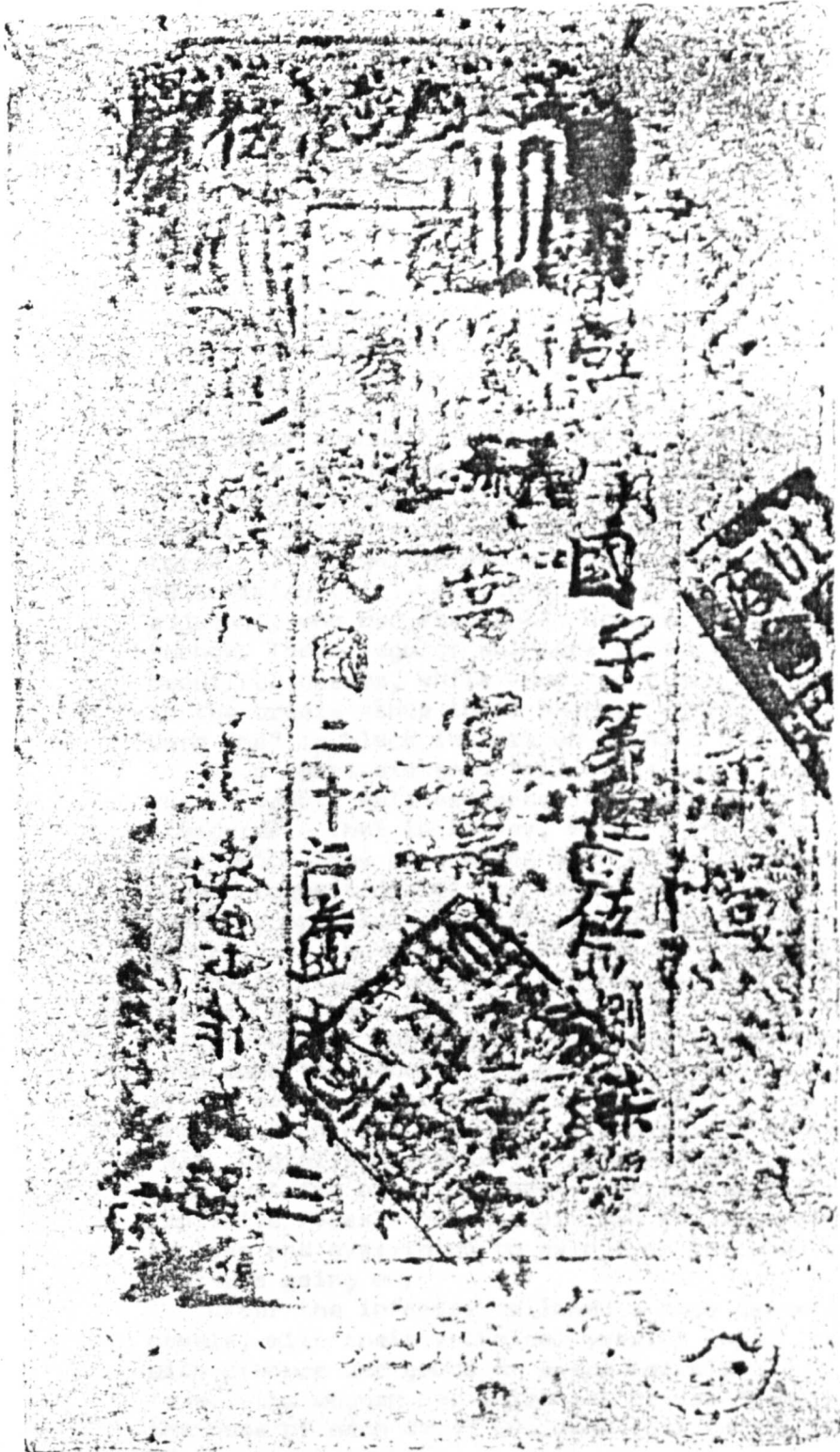
82. Howard and Boorman, op.cit., Vol III, p.122; when Chu died early in 1934, he was replaced by another figurehead provincial chairman, Li Yung.

83. According to Wu Ai-chen (Turkistan Tumult, p. 234), Ma 'advanced again to the pass Dawan Ch'eng...working his way through the hills he evaded the forces sent to check him'. In fact, Ma already held Dawan Ch'eng, and had repelled a provincial attack on his positions in September, 1933. Kuang Lu, 'Hsin-chiang Li-shih' in Ling Shun-sheng, Pien-chiang wen-hua lun-chi (Cultural Essays on the Frontier Region), Taipei, 1954), III, p. 333. In October, 1933, Wu Ai-chen left Sinkiang via the Soviet Union. From this time his account ceases to be an invaluable primary source, and although still useful becomes less reliable. Kuang Lu, however, remained in Sinkiang on Sheng's staff at this time, and is therefore a more reliable primary source (see Appendix I, 'Who Was Who in Republican Sinkiang').

84. Kuang Lu, op.cit., pp. 333-4.

85. Hedin, Big Horse's Flight, p. 196; Vassel, My Russian Jailers in China, pp. 164-5; Nyman, op.cit., p. 108; Wu, Turkistan Tumult, p. 233.





Five-liang note issued by  
Ma Chung-ying, Turfan, 1933

border town of Chuguchak. By coincidence Georg Vassel, who had witnessed the departure of the KMT 36th Division from Soochow in May, was sheltering in the local Soviet consulate during its attack on Chuguchak. His description of the Muslim army's appearance and composition after an advance of more than 1,500 miles once again merits quotation in full:

The sun's rays, by this time, were shining obliquely across the street and showed us the Tungan army entering the town. They looked more like a horde of Asiatic mercenaries whom the political upheaval had swept along from their mountain fastnesses and arid deserts than like conquerors. Stirrup to stirrup, the young regular soldiers in their smart uniforms looked a well-disciplined, trim and efficient force. I recognised one of their officers - Ma Schiming (sic), the commander-in-chief's adjutant, who had frequently been my guest in Suchow. These regular soldiers rode past on beautiful horses, while huge red flags floated in the breeze above their heads, bearing the word "Ma" in black letters on a white ground.

At a short distance followed a horde that was tolerably well equipped according to Asiatic standards - that is to say, many of the fire-arms which they bore along with pride would have been welcome trophies for many a museum. I saw needle-guns, blunderbusses and Muzzle-loaders galore. On these crude warriors came, mounted on their little, unkempt, big-headed Mongolian horses. In their rear dense clouds of dust, which shut out the light, billowed onward, and then came the infantry, a motley mob who looked like a mixum-gatherum (sic) of all the brigand armies of China - men with wild eyes and matted hair, brutalised and bestial-looking wretches, with lust for blood and booty written in their repulsive faces - nomads, outlaws who had nothing to lose and everything to gain from the upheaval that was going on.

After the infantry followed a huge horde of camels, with their rythmical swaying gait, laden with produce and goods of every conceivable type...the wooden peg which was driven through the nose of each camel was made fast to the saddle of the beast just ahead of it. The breath came from their mouths like smoke - their necks were craned forward, and their heads kept bobbing up and down. 86

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86. Vassel, My Russian Jailers In China, pp. 172-3. Vassel was a National-Socialist and a convinced member of the Herrenvolk, and these attitudes are apparent in his writing. His descriptions of Ma Chung-ying's forces are nonetheless very evocative as well as uniquely detailed.

As a result of the Tungan advance into Dzungaria and Chang P'ei-yūan's defection to the side of the rebels, by the mid-winter of 1933 Sheng Shih-ts'ai's position at Urumchi appeared all but untenable. Meanwhile, in the south of the province, the secessionist movement of the "Khotan Amīrs" had entered a new and potentially decisive phase.

### 6.3 The "Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan"

During September and October 1933, whilst the armies of the rival warlords Sheng Shih-ts'ai and Ma Chung-ying continued their struggle for power in northern and eastern Sinkiang, the rebel forces in southern Sinkiang maintained their siege of Ma Chan-ts'ang's Tungan forces in Kashgar New City whilst gradually consolidating their control over a wide swathe of territory which stretched from Charchan in the east to Aksu in the north. Following the execution of Timūr and the withdrawal from Kashgar of the Kirghiz leader, <sup>C</sup>Uthmān <sup>C</sup>Ali, by the beginning of October the Khotan Amīrs had emerged as the leaders of the south Sinkiang Muslim rebellion 'almost by default'.<sup>87</sup> In marked contrast to the Kumullik leaders Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī and Yulbārs Khān, neither of whom had (as yet) announced their intention to secede from the Chinese Republic,<sup>88</sup> the Khotan Amīrs were committed to just such a secessionist policy, and to the establishment of a conservative, theocratic Muslim state in southern Sinkiang.<sup>89</sup>

Following his defeat by the forces of Ma Shih-ming and subsequent

87. See above, pp. 212-25.

88. Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī was later to commit himself, albeit briefly, to the separatist cause. Yulbārs Khān appears to have remained loyal to the nationalist authorities at Nanking (and later on Taiwan) until his death. See Appendix I, 'Who Was Who in Republican Sinkiang'.

89. i.e. in "Eastern Turkestan".

retreat from Toksun to Kuchar in late July, 1933, Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī, the spiritual leader of the Uighur forces in both north-eastern and southern Sinkiang, found himself on the periphery of the secessionist region ruled by the government of the Khotan Amīrs. Since the Khoja had but recently agreed to recognise the administration of Sheng Shih-ts'ai and had accepted the title of "Chief Defence Commissioner for Southern Sinkiang", his position was, to say the least, somewhat anomalous. According to Muhammad Amīn Bugra, the eldest Khotan Amīr, a decision was taken to woo the Khoja (and his sizeable army)<sup>90</sup> away from the provincial authorities in Urumchi by offering him the presidency of their secessionist Islamic state.<sup>91</sup> Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī, a pragmatist of little political vision who was, no doubt, mindful of the Turkic secessionist armies to his west as well as of the Tungan armies to his east, promptly accepted this offer, proclaiming a "Republic of Eastern Turkestan" with himself as President, either at Kuchar or Aksu, on September 10th, 1932.<sup>92</sup> Although by this action the Khotan Amīrs succeeded in driving a wedge between Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī and his erstwhile Chinese allies, nothing came of the resultant "Republic of Eastern Turkestan", which remained purely notional until November 12th, 1933, when, perhaps in desperation at the behaviour of Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī (who, from his new headquarters at Aksu, was reportedly negotiating for aid from the Soviet Union) Ṣābit Dāmullāh, the shaykh al-Islam of the Khotan government, proclaimed a "Turkish-Islamic Republic

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90. The Khoja's army, although no match for the regular troops of Sheng Shih-ts'ai or Ma Chung-ying, was nevertheless large. According to Hedin (Big Horse's Flight, p. 152), the Khoja's army consisted of 15,000 men, 60,000 sheep and 40,000 cows.

91. Bugra, Doḡu Turkistan, p. 43, cited in Hayit, op.cit., pp. 303-4.

92. ibid.

of Eastern Turkestan" (Tk. Şarki Türkistan Türk-Islam Cumhuriyeti) or TIRET.<sup>93</sup>

The policies of the TIRET were closely aligned with the original principles of the Khotanlik Committee for National Revolution, being staunchly anti-Chinese, anti-Tungan,<sup>94</sup> and anti-Soviet. Moreover the leadership of the new republic, with the exception of Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī who was permitted to retain his honorary position as President, was clearly based on the Islamic fundamentalist leadership of the CNR in alliance with a number of anti-Soviet Muslim refugees from Soviet Central Asia (see Table 4, p. 333). Thus, according to Hayit, Şābit Dāmullāh became Prime Minister of the TIRET capital at Kashgar Old City, whilst Nūr Aḥmad Jān Bugra was confirmed as a "Khotan Amīr" with ministerial rights at Kashgar, Muḥammad Amīn Bugra remained in control of both Old and New Cities at Khotan, and <sup>C</sup>Abdullāh Bugra retained control of both cities at Yarkand.<sup>95</sup>

The nascent republic rapidly took on the unwieldy trappings of full

93. *ibid.* See also Hai, Badruddin Wee-liang, Muslim Minority in China, pp. 105-6. According to HMCCK the TIRET was 'probably founded without Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī's knowledge', IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.98.1934 (separate paper submitted with PZ.98.1934, entitled 'Comments on the Local Situation at Kashgar').

94. According to Chang Ta-chün part of Şābit Dāmullāh's declaration of independence stated quite explicitly that:

The Tungsans are no less our enemy than the Han Chinese. Our people are now still under the oppression of the Tungsans although the Chinese yoke has already been thrown off...Neither the Han Chinese nor the Tungsans have any legitimate claim to Eastern Turkestan. We, the people of Eastern Turkestan, no longer need foreigners to be our masters.

(Ssu-shih-nien-tung-luan Hsin-ch'iang, Hong Kong, 1956, pp. 52-3)

95. Hayit, *op.cit.*, p. 302, fn. 6; cf. Hayit's 'Ost Turkistan: Machtkampf zwischen China und Russland', Das Parlament, XXVIII (1963), p. 341. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.8033.1933 (letter, HMCCK-GOI, nd).

statehood, with a cabinet of 13 ministers (including two deputy prime ministers) and a national assembly. The Chinese Republican legal system was replaced by Islamic sharī'a law, and a constitution of some complexity was promulgated.<sup>96</sup> In a reaffirmation of the Islamic identity of the new state, a "national flag" consisting of a white star and crescent on a blue ground was widely displayed at Kashgar.<sup>97</sup> Sinkiang provincial currency (at this time being issued by both Sheng Shih-ts'ai and Ma Chung-ying - see plates 19 and 20) ceased to be "legal tender", and TIRET bank notes were issued at both Kashgar and Khotan.<sup>98</sup> TIRET policies, which were supposedly based on the Qur'ān and Hadīth, were described by the British Consul-General at Kashgar as being essentially five in number, viz:

- 1) To form an independent Muslim state.
- 2) To seek freedom from the 'Soviet stranglehold'.
- 3) To restore peace and put down lawlessness.
- 4) To encourage and restore trade.
- 5) To seek friendly relations with the British government and to obtain its aid as far as was possible.<sup>99</sup>

In many ways the TIRET was the direct spiritual successor of the Amīrate founded by Ya<sup>C</sup>qūb Beg in the mid-nineteenth century, which was also

96. For details of the administration and constitution of the TIRET - such as it was - see Appendix IV, 'The Constitution and Composition of the "Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan" '.

97. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.8339.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 16/11/1933). According to Wu (Turkistan Tumult, p. 247); the flag of the TIRET 'showed a crescent moon and a star on a white ground, on which there were also written certain texts from the Koran'. According to the Flag Institute at Chester, England, the flag of the TIRET was triangular, of sky blue, with a border of red tongues (cf. the flag of the Khotan Amīrs, plate 14); in the upper hoist was a crescent and star. The Flag Institute, Chester, 'Notes on the Vexillology of Chinese Turkestan' (Ms., 1980).

98. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.98.1934 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 23/11/1933).

99. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.98.1934.

centred on Kashgar. Like Ya<sup>C</sup>qūb Beg, the TIRET leadership looked to British India and to Turkey for aid and recognition in its struggle against the Chinese, the Russians and the Tungans; however unlike Ya<sup>C</sup>qūb Beg, who was to succeed in winning recognition and some degree of aid from both London and Constantinople, the TIRET leadership was to fail completely in this aim. Approaches were made to the British through the medium of Thomson-Glover, the new British Consul-General at Kashgar, who arrived November 1933, in the same month as the independence of the TIRET was announced by Ṣābit Dāmullāh. Thomson-Glover, who was ardently anti-Soviet and possibly somewhat inexperienced, reported to the Government of India that:

The Moslem spirit from Khotan (amounting to fanaticism)...has alone made any attempt to stem the overwhelming tide of Soviet domination...The threat to India of complete Soviet control right up to the passes leading to India via Gilgit and Chitral is not imaginary, and unless the opportunity arises and is at once seized upon of supporting a friendly Moslem state it will only be a short time before the threat is translated into an accomplished fact.<sup>100</sup>

Thomson-Glover felt that, were any lasting unity between Khotan, Kashgar, and Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī to emerge, then:

With nominal allegiance to Nanking it might be possible for a friendly power to extend practical sympathy and help to the new and struggling Republic.<sup>101</sup>

The Government of India lost no time in reminding Thomson-Glover that the British recognised Nanking as the sole authority in Sinkiang, and that all moves to counter Soviet penetration of the area should be based, as usual, on a policy of support for the Chinese authorities in the province. A

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100. ibid.

101. ibid.

telegram was duly sent to Kashgar on 11th December, 1933, which stated flatly:

You should give no encouragement or assistance to the new administration if they attempt to send representatives to India to seek help. It would be impossible for the Government of India to give any help whatsoever, as being inconsistent with the attitude of strict neutrality which is being observed by His Majesty's Government and Government of India in present disturbances in Sinkiang.<sup>102</sup>

The TIRET leadership also attempted to win recognition and aid from Turkey and Afghanistan, again with little success. In November, 1933, two Turkish citizens, Dr Mustafa <sup>C</sup>Ali Bey of Izmir and a military officer called Mahmud Nedim Bey, appeared in Kashgar as "advisers" to the new republic.<sup>103</sup> Reports of the developments in Sinkiang were initially greeted by the Turkish press with some exuberance. The Turkic rebels were represented as 'true Turks', and the TIRET as 'a modern state which will advance along the road to perfection'.<sup>104</sup> A New Year's telegram which was sent by Mustafa <sup>C</sup>Ali Bey to the Turkish government at Ankara conveying greetings from the 'blue flag of newly-liberated Eastern Turkestan to the red flag of beloved Turkey' was widely circulated by the Anatolian News Agency,<sup>105</sup> but no

102. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2356, PZ.8340.1933 (telegram, GOI-HMCGK, 11/12/1933). At the beginning of February, 1934, two representatives of the TIRET did, in fact, arrive at New Delhi seeking British recognition. They were immediately rebuffed, and The Times commented: 'So far as Delhi is concerned, the Republicans have gone to the wrong address. Sinkiang is the province of a State with which the British Government are on good terms and the delegates will get no more than the advice to settle their differences with Sinkiang before worse befalls them'. 'Chinese Turkestan and Autonomy', The Times (London), 7th February, 1934; 'Chinese Turkestan', The Times (London), 22nd February, 1934.
103. According to Beloff, these Turks were 'anti-Kemalist exiles'. The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia, Vol 1, p. 234.
104. Nyman, op.cit., p. 114; IOLR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.1390.1933 (British Ambassador at Angora/Ankara to FO, 12th February, 1934).
105. ibid.



material support for the TIRET was forthcoming from Ankara, and the Turkish Foreign Minister, Tawfiq HÜSTÜ Bey, warned that nations which were neighbours of Soviet Russia, must, above all, be on good terms with the Soviets 'who alone can be of use to her neighbours in the way of development'.<sup>106</sup>

In Afghanistan the government of Muḥammad Zāhir Shāh regarded the Islamic rebels in southern Sinkiang with some sympathy, and sent its congratulations to Şābit Dāmullāh and Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī on the foundation of the TIRET in November, 1933.<sup>107</sup> As a result of this apparent recognition the TIRET leadership sent a "permanent mission" to Kabul and attempted to purchase munitions, thus putting the Afghans in a difficult position vis-à-vis their Soviet neighbours, who viewed the emergent anti-communist regime in Kashgar with considerable distaste and were determined that it should be overthrown as swiftly as possible. In the event the rebel leadership was unable to acquire a significant amount of munitions through Kabul, and it seems probable that, faced with Soviet diplomatic pressure, the Afghan government felt unable to provide the TIRET with anything more than discreet moral support.<sup>108</sup>

It can thus be seen that all attempts made by the rebel leadership in southern Sinkiang to win diplomatic or material support in their attempt to set up a secessionist Islamic state ended in failure. In effect the TIRET was doomed from the moment of its inception, for having adopted an uncompromisingly conservative pan-Turanian line, it had deprived itself of allies whilst ensuring itself of the enmity of the three most powerful forces in Sinkiang - the Tungans, the provincial authorities, and the Soviet Union.

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106. ibid.

107. Nyman, op.cit., p. 115.

108. ibid.

#### 6.4 Soviet Intervention in Support of Sheng Shih-ts'ai

As has already been shown, by the beginning of January, 1934, Sheng Shih-ts'ai was beleaguered in the provincial capital at Urumchi whilst the Tungan forces of Ma Chung-ying ranged almost at will across Dzungaria. Sheng could expect no assistance from Nanking, whose envoys he had accused of plotting his downfall, and from whose forces Sinkiang was, in any case, isolated by a wide swathe of territory under the control of Ma Chung-ying's fellow Tungans belonging to the "Five Ma" warlord clique. To compound Sheng's isolation, the strategic Ili Valley was under the control of forces owing allegiance to the renegade general Chang P'ei-yuan, who was himself threatening Urumchi from Wusu, whilst the greater part of southern Sinkiang was under the control of the avowedly secessionist "Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan". It was at this eleventh hour that the Soviet Union, which had become increasingly disturbed by the continuing turmoil in Sinkiang, finally determined, in response to an urgent appeal from Sheng Shih-ts'ai, to intervene directly in support of the provincial authorities at Urumchi.

It is not known when Sheng Shih-ts'ai first approached the Soviets with a request for aid. Certainly, in October, 1933, Sheng despatched Ch'en Te-li and Yao Hsiung as his personal representatives to the Soviet authorities in Moscow. In his memoirs Sheng claims that the purpose of their mission was to urge the Soviets to supply the provincial authorities with weapons which they had promised to Chin Shu-jen in 1931, but which had not been delivered.<sup>109</sup> It is interesting to note, however, that shortly after the April 12th coup d'état, the provincial council which replaced Chin Shu-jen determined to send a messenger to Nanking to inform the

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109. Sheng, Red Failure, in Whiting and Sheng, op.cit., pt. 2, p. 163.

national government of developments in Sinkiang. According to Wu Ai-chen, who held an influential position on this provisional council, Sheng Shih-ts'ai's chief-of-staff, Ch'en Chung, was chosen to be the council's representative and was duly despatched to Nanking by way of Chuguchak and Moscow. Before his departure Ch'en Chung was 'royally feasted' by Sheng and a wealthy White Russian called Gmerkyn.<sup>110</sup> Nothing was heard from Ch'en throughout the months of April and May, though on June 3rd a message was received in Urumchi which announced that the special envoy to Nanking would shortly be returning to Sinkiang. Wu Ai-chen was greatly puzzled by the speed with which Ch'en Chung had completed his mission, and went to meet him at Urumchi airport on his return. Here he learned that Ch'en had only travelled as far as Moscow before returning to Sinkiang having forwarded his report to Nanking by mail - a task which could easily have been performed, by air, from Urumchi itself. Wu's account of his conversation with Chen concludes thus:

I was too well trained in tact to ask him by whose order he had altered his movements - it was certainly not on our council's instructions that he had done so. Something, it was clear, was going on behind the scenes.<sup>111</sup>

In retrospect it seems probable that Ch'en Chung travelled to Moscow on the orders of his commanding officer, Sheng Shih-ts'ai, and that whilst in Moscow he began negotiations with the Soviet authorities on Sheng's behalf. When news of Chin Shu-jen's arrest and imprisonment by the Nanking authorities reached Sheng, he must have become doubly cautious in his dealings with the Soviet Union, none of which were sanctioned by the national government of China. Sheng's hostility towards the Nanking

110. Wu, Turkistan Tumult, pp. 119-20.

111. ibid., p. 141.

emissaries Huang Mu-sung and Lo Wen-kan might well have been based on his fear that Nanking had learned of these secret negotiations with Moscow, and had determined to install the anti-Soviet Ma Chung-ying in his place as de facto governor of Sinkiang.<sup>112</sup> By October, 1933, however, Sheng had effectively burned his bridges with Nanking,<sup>113</sup> and was in serious military difficulties at Urumchi, with the greater part of Sinkiang in rebel hands. He therefore had no alternative but to follow the path taken by his predecessor, Chin Shu-jen, in turning to the Soviet Union for military and financial aid. Accordingly, with Ma Chung-ying's troops in command of the strategic Dawan Ch'eng and threatening the capital, Sheng sent Ch'en Te-li and Yao-hsiung to Moscow in a last, desperate plea for assistance.

Sheng's emissaries to the Soviet Union were received with sympathy in Moscow. The Soviet leadership was disturbed by two aspects of the developments in Sinkiang. In the south, they viewed the emergence of an anti-Soviet, pan-Turanian republic (the TIRET) with deep concern. Although the TIRET itself posed no military threat to the Soviet Union, there was always the possibility that, with British or Japanese support, the TIRET might manage to survive as an autonomous unit, providing a haven

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112. This theory is strengthened by the subsequent fate of Ch'en Chung, who, within a few days of his return from Moscow and the almost simultaneous arrival of Huang Mu-sung in Urumchi, was arrested by Sheng and executed, together with two other prominent officials, by firing squad (see above, p. 250 ). At the time Ch'en was accused by Sheng of plotting, together with Nanking, Ma Chung-ying and Chang P'ei-yuan, to effect his overthrow (Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, pp. 181-3). In his reminiscences Sheng neatly reverses the charge to one of conspiring with Moscow to effect his overthrow (Sheng, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, pp. 160-61).

113. Although Nanking's Foreign Minister, Lo Wen-kan, officially installed Sheng as tupan of Sinkiang on September 7th, 1933, this action represented Nanking's reluctant acceptance of the status quo rather than overt approval of Sheng's position. In a word, Sheng forced Nanking's hand by detaining Huang Mu-sung in Urumchi. Besides, as has already been indicated, Nanking was in no position to offer Sheng assistance even if it had wished to do so.

for discontented Muslim elements from Western Turkestan and a general focus for anti-Soviet activities in Central Asia. More seriously, the Soviet Union appears to have feared that Ma Chung-ying, who was on the verge of capturing Urumchi, was under Japanese influence. In March, 1932, only 18 months before Ma Chung-ying's forces reached the Sino-Soviet frontier at Chuguchak, the Japanese Kwantung Army had invaded Northeast China and had set up the puppet state of "Manchukuo"; moreover in February, 1933, Japanese forces had pushed westward into the Chinese province of Jehol. It is in this wider international context that Soviet policy towards Sinkiang in the mid-1930s must be considered.

As has already been shown, by 1931 the Soviet Union had effectively attained "most favoured nation" status in Sinkiang. The external trade of the province was almost wholly with the Soviet Union, and the provincial chairman Chin Shu-jen had gone so far as to sign a secret agreement permitting the Soviets to establish eight trading agencies at various locations throughout the province.<sup>114</sup> In return the Soviet Union had provided Chin with limited logistical and financial backing, though not with direct military support. Following Chin's overthrow and the continued Japanese aggression in Northeast China, however, the Soviet Union became increasingly anxious about the situation in Sinkiang - especially after a Japanese national attached to Ma Chung-ying's staff, by name Tadashi Onishi, was captured by Sheng Shih-ts'ai's forces after their victory at Tzu-ni-ch'uan in June, 1933.<sup>115</sup> Tadashi appears to have been no more than an 'adventurous forerunner' of Japanese imperialism in Sinkiang, and to have had no official backing from the Japanese Foreign Office which, when

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114. See above, p. 228.

115. Tadashi Onishi was apparently using a Chinese name, Yu Hua-heng, as a pseudonym, Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 239; An Ning, Hsin-chiang nei-mu (Behind the Scenes in Sinkiang), (Singapore, 1952), p. 48.

approached by Nanking, denied all knowledge of his existence.<sup>116</sup> Despite this Japanese disavowal, however, the Soviet Union was seriously disturbed by the capture of a Japanese "agent" attached to Ma Chung-ying's staff and, through Pravda, denounced the incident as a further manifestation of Japanese imperialism in Central Asia.<sup>117</sup>

Seemingly the Soviet Union was less concerned with British economic competition in the Kashgar region, and although publicly chastising the British for attempting to create "a Greater Tibetan Empire" which was supposedly to include southern Sinkiang,<sup>118</sup> the Politburo must have drawn comfort from Britain's refusal to have dealings with the pan-Turanian "Turkish Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan".<sup>119</sup> Of more concern to the Soviets were reports of tentative Japanese contacts with the TIRET,<sup>120</sup>

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116. Miscellaneous Documents Relating to the Political and General Situation In Sinkiang (in Japanese), A.6.1.3:4, Vol II, June, 1930 - December, 1933, Japanese Foreign Office Archives. Ariyoshi to Hirota, November 20th, 1933. (Cited in Whiting and Sheng, op.cit., part I, p. 40). According to Lattimore (Pivot of Asia, p. 72): 'There is...no doubt that Ma Chung-ying had Japanese agents at his headquarters - agents who can be described as adventurous forerunners rather than acknowledged representatives of Japanese policy'.
117. Pravda, December 8th, 1933. Cited in Whiting and Sheng, op.cit., part I, p. 40.
118. Nyman, op.cit., p. 116; Beloff, The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia, Vol I, p. 234; cf. Izvestiya, March 17th, 1934 (translation in IOLR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.2076.1934).
119. It must have been clear to Moscow that Britain, already deeply concerned by Islamic unrest in many parts of her extensive empire, could never lend support to an overtly pan-Turanian movement in southern Sinkiang. Because both Britain and Russia controlled extensive Muslim territories in south and Central Asia, support for pan-Turanian and pan-Islamic movements in the area remained the exclusive preserve of Germany and Japan.
120. Anon., 'Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien', pp. 5-6; The Soviets were disturbed by the presence in Tokyo of Prince Abd al-Karim, the grandson of the late Sultan Abd al-Hamid of Turkey, whom they feared as a possible future Japanese puppet ruler of Sinkiang (much as the ex-Emperor Pu-yi served Japanese interests in Manchukuo). According to British diplomatic sources the prince was a French passport holder, born in Constantinople but domiciled in Beirut. Between 1930 and 1933 he travelled through India, Ceylon and Malaya attempting to raise money from local Muslim rulers (he was reported by the Colombo CID to be 'slightly insane'). His arrival at Tokyo in 1933 provoked strong Soviet protests. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.1681.1934 (Passport Dept. Warning Control Circular S24424). In fact Japanese activities in Sinkiang remained minimal throughout the Republican period.

and of visits by TIRET representatives to the embassy of Nazi Germany in Kabul.<sup>121</sup> Already wary of German and Japanese intentions on her western and far eastern frontiers, the Soviet leadership had no intention of permitting either Berlin or Tokyo to extend their influence to the remote Central Asian frontiers of the USSR, be it either through the medium of the pan-Turanian TIRET, or through the medium of the ambitious and politically unpredictable Ma Chung-ying.<sup>122</sup> The official Soviet attitude towards developments in Sinkiang during 1933 may best be summed up by the contemporary warning of a Soviet diplomatic mission to Nanking which was reportedly as follows:

We do not mind if you Chinese develop Turkestan (sic). But if you permit Turkestan (sic) to become a second Manchuria, we must act to protect ourselves.<sup>123</sup>

Thus it was that in late 1933, following Sheng Shih-ts'ai's urgent appeal for assistance, the Soviet Union determined to intervene directly in Sinkiang - for Sheng, although manifestly unreliable, was at least known to be convincingly anti-Japanese.<sup>124</sup>

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121. The German Minister in Kabul is known to have received visits from TIRET envoys (Nyman, op.cit., p.115); moreover the Soviet Union accused a German national resident in Kabul of planning to send munitions to the TIRET at Kashgar. The German Foreign Office denied this accusation. AA IV Chi 270/10.2.1934; Deutsche Botschaft, Moskau, 8.2.34. Cited in Nyman, op.cit., p. 155, fn. 27.
122. According to Dallin (Soviet Russia and the Far East, p. 95), Moscow 'backed Ma's opponents from the very beginning'. Note, however, Ella Maillart's contemporary report that whilst Izvestiya was inveighing against Ma Chung-ying as a puppet of the Japanese, Pravda Vostoka, the Tashkent organ of the CPSU, represented him in 1932 as a peasant leader in revolt against the militarist feudal system of Sinkiang. (MAILLART, FORBIDDEN JOURNEY, p. 217).
123. White, T., 'Report from Turkestan', Time, 25th October, 1943, p. 27. According to Wu (Turkistan Tumult, p. 236), the Soviet press at Tashkent stated that were the Japanese in control of Sinkiang, the oil-fields of Baku would be within reach of their bombers.
124. 'There can be no doubt that Sheng Shih-ts'ai...was genuinely opposed to Japanese imperialism - which, like many Chinese who had studied in Japan, he thoroughly understood'. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 72. Sheng was, of course, a Northeasterner, and his home province of Liaoning had been incorporated in the Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo.

Accordingly, when Ch'en Te-li and Yao-hsiung returned to Sinkiang from Moscow in December, 1933, they were accompanied by G. Apresoff, an experienced Soviet diplomat, who was to be the new Soviet Consul-General at Urumchi.<sup>125</sup> Shortly after Apresoff's arrival, Sheng conducted a purge of his armed forces - about 20 officers of the Northeast National Salvation Army were arrested and shot,<sup>126</sup> as were a number of senior officers from the White Russian "volunteer" force, including its commanding officer, Pappengut. The White Russian unit was subsequently reorganised under the command of Soviet officers.<sup>127</sup> At the same time between 40 and 50 senior Chinese officials suspected of holding anti-Soviet sentiments were removed from office<sup>128</sup> and a secret police force, reportedly under the supervision of a senior Soviet official called Pogodin, was established.<sup>129</sup> There are also a number of unconfirmed reports that Sheng signed a secret agreement with the Soviet Union by which they were granted further economic concessions in Sinkiang, as well as the right to build a railway from Ayaguz (Sergiopol), through Chuguchak, to Urumchi.<sup>130</sup> To complete his alignment with the Soviets, Sheng announced his "Six Basic Policies" of: (a) anti-imperialism, (2) kinship to

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125. Whiting, A.S., Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, 1933-49 (Part 1 of Whiting & Sheng, op.cit., p. 25). G.A. Apresoff was a Soviet specialist in Central Asian affairs who had formerly served as Soviet consul in Mashhad, and who had worked with the Tudeh (Iranian Communist Party).

126. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol III, p. 122; cf. Beloff, The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia, Vol I, pp. 234-5.

127. Serebrennikov, J., Veliki Otkhod (The Great Exodus, Harbin, 1930), p. 262; Cheng Tien-fong, op.cit., pp. 171-2; Beloff, op.cit., pp. 234-5.

128. Dallin, op.cit., pp. 97-8.

129. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 247. Sheng's secret police was the Pao-an Chu (Bureau of Public Security). It worked closely with the GPU, which was also active in Sinkiang at this time. Nyman, op.cit., p. 124.

130. Cheng Tien-fong, op.cit., p. 171; Fleming, P., News from Tartary (London, 1936; 13th impression, 1942), p. 251; Dallin, op.cit., pp. 97-8.



Sovietism, (3) racial or national equality, (4) "clean" government, (5) peace, and (6) reconstruction.<sup>131</sup>

The Kremlin was clearly satisfied with these moves, for early in January, 1934, without the approval of the Chinese national authorities at Nanking, two brigades of GPU troops, numbering an estimated 7,000 men and supported by tanks, planes and artillery, moved across the Sino-Soviet frontier and attacked rebel positions at Kulja and Chuguchak.<sup>132</sup> The Soviet forces, who had been ordered to 'clear the roads and liquidate the rebellion',<sup>133</sup> rapidly overcame the provincial forces of Chang P'ei-yuan, who is reported to have committed suicide.<sup>134</sup> The Tungan forces of Ma Shih-ming put up much fiercer resistance and, although forced to retreat from the Chuguchak region, succeeded in blocking the Soviet advance on Urumchi. According to Alexander Barmine, the Soviet official who was in charge of the supply of Soviet arms to Sinkiang at this time, continuing Tungan resistance prevented for some time the despatch of planes and munitions from the Soviet frontier to Urumchi:

Finally the command of the Red Army Force operating there took charge of this shipment. They "delivered" our cargoes, con-

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131. This was in addition to Sheng's "Eight Points" (promulgated shortly after Chin Shu-jen's overthrow in the summer of 1933), viz. (1) racial equality, (2) religious freedom, (3) immediate rural relief, (4) financial reforms, (5) administrative reforms, (6) extension of education, (7) realisation of self-government, and (8) judicial reform (Sheng, Red Failure, p. 165). As can be seen, the "Eight Points" and the "Six Basic Policies" are essentially similar, and indeed overlap at some points.
132. Beloff, op.cit., p. 235.
133. Barmine, A., One Who Survived, (NY, 1945), p. 231.
134. According to Wu (Turkistan Tumult, p. 235), Chang committed suicide in Dzungaria after sustaining a crushing defeat near Wusu. Hedin's account of Chang's defeat, which is both more detailed and more plausible, indicates that the defeated commander returned to Ili, and was attempting to flee across the Muzart Pass to Aksu when caught by a violent snowstorm. When he realised that there was no escape, he committed suicide (Big Horse's Flight, p. 14). Certainly a number of Tungans in the Ili area managed to flee across the Tien Shan to Nan-lu. Nyman, op.cit., p. 108.

signed to the governor, by dropping the bombs on the rebel forces gathered around the capital, and by landing the planes right on the airfield of the besieged fortress. I was instructed to send the bill for the bombs, as well as the other goods, to the governor.<sup>135</sup>

According to Vasel, the Tungan forces managed to beat back repeated attacks by the numerically and technically superior Soviet units for a period of some 30 days, on one occasion foiling a Soviet pincer attack by 'crawling through the snow, camouflaged by reversed sheepskins, and storming, from a very short distance, Soviet machine gun posts whilst wielding the characteristic curved sword of Islam'.<sup>136</sup> The main battle between the Tungan and the GPU troops reportedly took place on the frost-bound banks of the Tutun River, some 30 miles north-west of Urumchi. According to The Times' correspondent, Peter Fleming, the Battle of the Tutun River

raged for several days; but the Tungan's unskilled ferocity was no match for a mechanised foe, and the troops - who were all peasants from parts of China as yet but little inured to the blessings of modern civilisation - were badly demoralised by gas bombs dropped by the Soviet airmen.<sup>137</sup>

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135. Barmine, op.cit., p. 231.
136. 'Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien' (an anonymous report of the German Foreign Office Work/study Group on Asia, clearly penned by Georg Vasel), p. 10.
137. Fleming, P., op.cit., p. 252. Beloff, (op.cit., p. 235) is mistaken in claiming that: 'Fleming's assertion that the Soviet troops used gas is unconfirmed by any other source'. Possible primary sources for the Soviet employment of gas are to be found in Kuang Lu, op.cit., pp. 333-4; IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4216.1934 (Kashgar Diary, April 1934); IOLR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.3418.1934 (letter, HMCCK-GOI, 12/4/1934). Use of gas is also mentioned in 'Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien', p. 10 and, relying on secondary sources, in Wiens, op.cit., p. 453, and Nyman, op.cit., p. 108.

Both Soviet and Tungan forces suffered serious losses,<sup>138</sup> but ultimately the GPU units prevailed, and Ma Chung-ying withdrew from Urumchi to the Dawan Ch'eng, closely pursued by a mixed force of provincial Chinese, White Russian and Soviet troops.<sup>139</sup> At the Dawan Ch'eng the Tungans attempted to make another stand when, according to Vassel, a detachment of Soviet troops supported by an unspecified number of armoured cars was attacked by a force of some 500 Tungans. After savage hand-to-hand fighting the Soviet forces were driven back, and their armoured cars were rolled off the mountainside by the victorious Tungans. At this juncture, by a strange twist of fate, the surviving Soviet troops were relieved by a force of White Russian "volunteers", and Ma Chung-ying was forced to continue his retreat through Toksun to Korla.<sup>140</sup>

138. Tungan losses were estimated by Wu at 2,000 (Turkistan Tumult, p. 237). Soviet losses were naturally unpublicised, but Bosworth Goldman, a reporter on the staff of the Evening Standard, happened to chance on a 'hospital for the injured from the Manchurian war' when in Novosibirsk shortly after the Soviet intervention. His curiosity naturally aroused, he entered the building:

Men were sitting about in a gloomy hall, many of them with some part of their body hidden in bandages; they ranged in nationality from Laplanders to pure Mongols...I asked some of them where they had been, and they replied that they had been fighting in the southern Altai, in co-operation with some Chinese, against 'anti-social elements' disturbing the advance of the class warfare banner into Sinkiang... Later, other men with whom I spoke about this struggle often told me that they had never heard of a hospital at Novosibirsk. On the other hand, an occupant of the one I visited told me it was 'the best of the three'.

(Goldman, B., Red Road Through Asia, London, 1934, pp. 132-3).

139. The Soviet GPU troops did not wear Red Army uniform, but 'discreetly garbed in uniforms without insignia or identifying markings, the Red forces mixed with White Russian units already in Sinkiang as "the Altai Volunteers"' (Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, in Whiting & Sheng, op.cit., part I, p. 26.) The GPU alias ties in well with Goldman's account of the Novosibirsk hospital noted in fn. 138 immediately above.
140. 'Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien', p. 10; Hedin, Big Horse's Flight, p. 15.

Meanwhile in southern Sinkiang, the Soviet Union was actively attempting to destabilise the already distinctly shaky "Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan". On the one hand, in a move apparently designed to protect the Soviet frontier and to insulate Soviet Central Asia from pan-Islamic influences emanating from Kashgar, a Soviet-backed force of irregulars known as the "Tortunjis" was set up at Ulugchat under the command of one Yūsuf Jān.<sup>141</sup> On the other hand, in a move clearly designed to isolate the ultra-conservative "Khotan Amīrs" who effectively controlled the TIRET, the Soviets entered into negotiations with Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī who, although titular president of the TIRET, had remained at Aksu with the bulk of his army.<sup>142</sup> As a result of these negotiations the Khoja acquired a limited supply of Soviet armaments - though scarcely enough to make him a threat to any faction other than his supposed TIRET colleagues at Kashgar<sup>143</sup> - whilst a wedge was successfully driven by the Soviet Politburo between the "president" of the TIRET at Aksu and his virulently anti-Soviet "cabinet" at Kashgar.<sup>144</sup>

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141. IOLR D.226 (Confidential), Who's Who in Sinkiang (corrected up to 26th July, 1938), p. 15, no. 156; cf. Robertz, G., En ekumenisk nattvard-shögtid i Centralasien (Stockholm, 1944), p. 251 (cited in Nyman, op.cit., p. 155).
142. According to Yulbārs Khān (op.cit., pp. 115-21), the Soviets first approached Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī at Kumul in 1931, as a result of which the Kumullik rebels received 500 rifles, 100,000 rounds of ammunition, and 40,000 silver taels. It is difficult to understand why the Soviets should have offered backing to the Khoja at this early stage, and Yulbārs' account must be treated with due caution. cf. Lee Fu-hsiang, The Turkic-Moslem Problem in Sinkiang, pp. 60-61; Hayit, Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China, p. 310.
143. According to Thomson-Glover, the Khoja received 'nearly 2,000 rifles with ammunition, a few hundred bombs and three machine guns'. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.1627.1933 (letter, HMCCK-GOI, 18/1/1934).
144. When Ṣābit Dāmullāh heard of the Khoja's deal with the Soviets, he informed Thomson Glover that Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī was 'no longer a champion of Islam, but a tool in the hands of the Russians and over-friendly to the Chinese'. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.1772,1934 (letter, HMCCK-GOI, 21/12/1933).

### 6.5 The Collapse of the TIRET and the Flight of Ma Chung-ying

Just how weak Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī's predominantly Uighur forces really were became clear in mid-December when, despite recent Soviet arms supplies, his headquarters at Aksu fell to an 800-strong advance guard of Ma Chung-ying's Tungans almost without offering resistance. Following this defeat Khoja Niyās withdrew westward, arriving at Kashgar with about 1,500 men on the evening of January 13th, 1934.<sup>145</sup> Despite the opposition of the "Khotan Amīrs" group to his policy of rapprochement with the Soviets, Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī was given an 'outwardly cordial welcome' by Ṣābit Dāmullāh, who went so far as to vacate the Old City yamen in his favour.<sup>146</sup> For a brief period of about two weeks Ṣābit and the Khoja cooperated in a series of increasingly desperate attacks against the Tungan forces of Ma Chan-ts'ang, still besieged in Kashgar New City, but on January 28th the last of these joint attacks was beaten back with heavy losses and the short period of cooperation between the Kumullik and Khotanlik factions within the TIRET came to an end. On February 5th, faced with the imminent arrival at Kashgar of Ma Chung-ying's Tungan forces, both Ṣābit Dāmullāh and Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī withdrew separately towards Yangi-Hissar, at this stage held by Nūr Aḥmad Jān, youngest of the Khotan Amīrs.<sup>147</sup> Within 24 hours the Tungan advance guard, still clad in the uniform of the KMT 36th Division and under the command of Ma Fu-yüan, entered the Kashgar oasis. They were met with little resistance, and according to Thomson Glover 'some 800 Tungans and 1,200 conscripts caused nearly 10,000 (Turkic) rebel troops to flee from Kashgar'.<sup>148</sup> Ma Fu-yüan was at pains to stress

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145. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.2850.1934 (Kashgar Diary, January 1934).

146. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.1627.1833 (letter HMCCK-GOI, 18/1/1934).

147. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.3045.1934 (Kashgar Diary, February 1934).

148. Thomson Glover, J., 'Present-Day Kashgaria', JRCAS, XXIV, 3 (1937), p. 445.

Tungan loyalty to Nanking, and on February 13th, one week after the relief of the besieged garrison of Kashgar New City, it was announced that Ma Shao-wu, the former tao-yin of Kashgar, had 'assumed senior military and civil control on behalf of the Chinese Republic at the request of Ma Chan-ts'ang and Ma Fu-yüan'.<sup>149</sup> Thus, in a development which emphasised the deeply conflicting interests of Turkic and Tungan Muslims in southern Sinkiang, the capital of the secessionist, pan-Turanian TIRET was recaptured for Nanking not by the provincial forces of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, but by the Muslim forces of Ma Chung-ying.

Following the Tungan capture of Kashgar, the administration of the TIRET - or what was left of it - was re-established under Şābit Dāmullāh and Nūr Ahmad Jān at Yangi-Hissar. In marked contrast Khoja Niyās Hājjī, who still held the titular presidency of the stillborn republic, fled to Irkeshtam on the Soviet frontier. Here, according to Hayit, he signed a treaty with the Soviets by which he agreed to dissolve the TIRET and to place his (predominantly Kumullik and Turfanlik) forces at the disposal of the provincial authorities in their struggle against the Tungsans and the Khotan Amīrs. In exchange, Khoja Niyās Hājjī was to become "Civil Governor for Life" of Sinkiang, under the military government of Sheng Shih-ts'ai.<sup>150</sup>

Meanwhile on February 14th, following an abortive Turkic attempt to recapture Kashgar,<sup>151</sup> the Tungan forces of Ma Chan-ts'ang and Ma Fu-yüan

149. IDLR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.2136.1934 (letter, HMCCK-GOI, 15/2/1934).

150. Jarcek (pseud. for Hayit Baymirza), 'Şarqī-Türkistan ve Rusya', Milli Turkistan, LXVIII (1950), p. 26, cited in Hayit, Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China, p. 310. For details of Khoja Niyās Hājjī's treaty with the Soviets see Appendix V, 'Selected Documents Relating to the Turkish Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan'.

151. IDLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.3045.1934 (Kashgar Diary, February 1934). During the Tungan counter attack on the morning of February 14th, the British Consulate General at Chini Bagh came under attack, resulting in several casualties, including the wife of Col. Thomson Glover who was shot through the lung but subsequently recovered. Thomson Glover, 'Present-Day Kashgaria', p. 444.

took their revenge on their Turkic co-religionists for the "Kizil Massacre" of June, 1933. For two days the Tungans systematically looted Kashgar Old City, whilst between 1,700 and 2,000 citizens were massacred.<sup>152</sup> Subsequently both Ma Chan-ts'ang and Ma Fu-yüan advanced on Yangi Hissar, where on March 28th they looted the Old City and bazaar whilst 'killing every living thing'.<sup>153</sup> In the face of this new Tungan advance, the Amīr Nūr Aḥmad Jān took refuge in the fortified citadel of Yangi Hissar New City, where he was soon closely invested by Tungan troops, whilst Ṣābit Dāmullāh fled towards Yarkand. Once within the fortified New City, the Amīr Nūr Aḥmad Jān put up unexpectedly fierce resistance, and it was not until April 2nd, when the Amīr ḤAbdullāh arrived from Yarkand with several thousand troops, that the Tungans were able to achieve any military success. Caught in the open, ḤAbdullāh's Khotanlik troops were no match for the Tungans, and many were killed. Finally ḤAbdullāh himself was killed - it is interesting to note that he was defended to the last by 'a few faithful Afghans' - and his head was sent to Kashgar to be exhibited outside the ḤId-ga Mosque.<sup>154</sup> The Khotanlik forces within the Yangi Hissar citadel continued to resist the attacking Tungans (who were armed only with rifles), 'conserving their scanty ammunition and rolling back the attackers scaling the walls by means of large stones and tree trunks'.<sup>155</sup> During the siege the Tungans are reported to have suffered

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152. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.3045.1934. According to Bugra (Doḡu Türkistan, p. 43), the Tungans killed more than 7,000 people during this massacre (Hayit, Turkstan Zwischen Russland und China, p. 304).

153. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4216.1934 (Kashgar Diary, April 1934).

154. ibid.; cf. Thomson-Glover, op.cit., p. 446; also IOLR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.3589.1934: 'Those who remained longest with him (ḤAbdullah) and who were the last to be killed with him were Afghans'.

155. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.3418.1934 (letter, HMCCK-GOI, 12/4/1934).

several hundred casualties,<sup>156</sup> but on April 12th, following the successful mining of the citadel walls, the New City fell to the attacking Tungan forces and about 500 defenders, including the Amīr Nūr Aḥmad Jān, were put to the sword.<sup>157</sup>

Approximately four weeks before the Tungan attack on Yangi Hissar, probably on or about March 1st, Ṣābit Dāmullāh and the TIRET cabinet received notice from Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī that he had reached an agreement with the Soviets at Irkeshtam, and that the secessionist TIRET should be dissolved. At a special meeting of the TIRET cabinet on March 2nd, Ṣābit and his colleagues rejected the Khoja's instructions and declared their erstwhile president a traitor.<sup>158</sup> When news of this decision reached Khoja Niyās, he marched from Irkeshtam to Yarkand, where Ṣābit Dāmullāh and certain prominent officials of the TIRET were conferring with Muḥammad Amīn Bugra, the eldest and only surviving Khotan Amīr. Khoja Niyās arrived at Yarkand in mid-April, several days before the Tungan forces of Ma fu-yūan and Ma Chan-ts'ang, and arrested Ṣābit Dāmullāh. The sole surviving Amīr managed to evade the Khoja's forces, and fled back towards Khotan.<sup>159</sup> Khoja Niyās proceeded to collect all the gold he could find - a good deal of which was reportedly in the house of the deceased Amīr ḤAbdullāh - and then withdrew, taking Ṣābit as his prisoner, through Merket and Maralbashi towards Aksu. The Tungsans arrived at Yarkand on April 20th, and immediately set off in pursuit of the Khoja, whilst other Tungan forces left Kashgar for Faizabad in an apparent attempt to prevent the Khoja from reaching Aksu,

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156. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4216.1934.

157. ibid; cf. Thomson-Glover, op.cit., p. 446.

158. Hayit, Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China, pp. 310-12. See also Appendix V, 'Selected Documents Relating to the Turkish Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan'.

159. Hayit, Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China, p. 313; IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4216.1934.



which had fallen to provincial forces on or about 12th.<sup>160</sup> Despite these last minute attempts to capture Khoja Niyās, he managed to evade the Tungan pursuit and to arrive safely at Aksu, where he handed over Şābit Dāmullāh to the provincial authorities. Both Şābit Dāmullāh and the TIRET Justice Minister, Sharīf Qārī, were subsequently hanged at Aksu in July.<sup>161</sup> It should be noted that, in their "struggle" against the secessionist TIRET, the provincial authorities had to do little more than tie the rope around Şābit Dāmullāh's neck. The TIRET capital at Kashgar fell to the Tungan Muslim armies of Ma Chung-ying, and the TIRET leadership was finally dispersed or arrested by the predominantly Uighur Muslim army of the Kumullik leader Khoja Niyās Hājji.<sup>162</sup>

Meanwhile, on April 6th, 1934, the Tungan commander-in-chief Ma Chung-ying had arrived at Kashgar.<sup>163</sup> His forces, totalling an estimated 10,000 men (some 60% of whom were Turkic conscripts), were reportedly more than a match for the provincial forces in hand-to-hand fighting, but had been badly demoralised by Soviet bombing. The Tungan army had been closely pursued as far as Aksu by the provincial forces (now composed primarily of Chinese, White Russians and Mongols, few GPU troops having advanced beyond Turfan), but after the fall of Aksu the pressure of the pursuit had slackened.<sup>164</sup> Ma Chung-ying had accompanied the rear-guard

160. ibid; IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4791.1934 (Kashgar Diary, May 1934).

161. Hayit, Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China, p. 313; Vakar, 'The Annexation of Chinese Turkestan', p. 122 (according to Vakar the two TIRET leaders were shot).

162. According to Hayit (Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China, p. 313, fn. 19), amongst those TIRET leaders who managed to escape were: the Foreign Minister, Muhammad Qāsim Jān Hājji (fled to Karachi) and the Defence Minister, Sultān Beg Bakhtiar Beg (lived until 1960 in Ta'if, Saudi Arabia). The Health Minister, 'Abdullāh Khān, died in his flight across the Himalayas. See also Appendix I, 'Who Was Who in Republican Sinkiang'.

163. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4216.1934.

164. ibid; Thomson Glover, op.cit., p. 445; Hedin, Big Horse's Flight, p. 228; Whiting & Sheng, op.cit., part I, p. 26.

of his army, and arrived at Kashgar in a lorry which he had requisitioned from Sven Hedin's Sino-Swedish Expedition at Korla.<sup>165</sup>

Following his arrival at Kashgar, Ma denounced Sheng Shih-ts'ai as a puppet of the Soviet Union and stressed his loyalty to the Chinese national government at Nanking - indeed he went so far as to lecture his Turkic fellow-Muslims after Friday prayer at the central 'Id-ga Mosque on the importance of loyalty to Nanking.<sup>166</sup> Meanwhile Tungan troops occupied Sarikol<sup>167</sup> and, having rejected peace overtures from the Amīr Muḥammad Amīn,<sup>168</sup> continued their advance in Khotan which was occupied, without fighting, on June 12th. In marked contrast to their behaviour at Kashgar and Yangi-Hissar, the Tungans refrained from looting Khotan, but sent a detachment of troops in pursuit of Muḥammad Amīn, who had escaped, together with about 3,000 followers, towards Keriya.<sup>169</sup> The Amīr succeeded in evading his pursuers and, having doubled back towards Khotan, 'fled with several pony loads of gold towards Shahidullah',<sup>170</sup> Although with the flight of the last of the "Khotan Amīrs" the secessionist "Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan" came finally to an end, the conservative pan-Turanian ideals which the TIRET had embodied continued to live on in southern Sinkiang, nurtured, to some considerable degree, by an aura of martyrdom and myth of near success which came increasingly to surround the "Khotan Amīrs" after their defeat.

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165. Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, pp. 145-53 (chapter 9, 'Ma Chung-ying takes our lorries').
166. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.4815.1934 (letter, HMCCK-GOI, 7/6/1934).
167. Sarikol was occupied by the Tungans on May 7th, 1934. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.4253.1934 (letter, HMCCK-GOI, 17/5/1934).
168. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4791.1934.
169. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.5269.1934 (letter, HMCCK-GOI, 5/7/1934).
170. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.5557.1934 (letter, HMCCK-GOI, 19/7/1934). Muḥammad Amīn Bugra arrived safely at Leh in Kashmir (IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.7370.1934, Kashgar Diary, August 1934). He subsequently entered Afghanistan where he made contact with the Japanese Ambassador Kitada (see below, p. 308).

Following the overthrow of the secessionist TIRET and the (largely symbolic) restoration of Nanking's authority in southern Sinkiang, Ma Chung-ying was able to turn his attention more fully to the continuing struggle with his arch-rival Sheng Shih-ts'ai. At the time of his arrival at Kashgar Ma had clearly hoped to obtain munitions and possibly diplomatic support from the Government of India. Accordingly, on April 6th, he visited the British Consulate-General where he explained to Thomson Glover that he had come to Kashgar 'to try and save south Sinkiang from Russian influence' and continued to stress his loyalty to Nanking.<sup>171</sup> Thomson Glover was clearly impressed with Ma Chung-ying, for he informed New Delhi at some length of his discussion with the Tungan commander-in-chief adding: 'his version of current affairs...from all other evidence available... appears to more or less represent the course events are taking'.<sup>172</sup> Meanwhile, on the military front, Ma Chung-ying established defensive lines at Maralbashi and Faizabad and placed his half-brother (or brother-in-law) Ma Hu-shan in command of the main Tungan force opposing the provincial advance.<sup>173</sup>

During May and June, 1934, it gradually became clear to Ma Chung-ying that, despite some manifestation of British sympathy for his position,<sup>174</sup>

171. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4216.1934.

172. ibid.

173. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4791.1934. L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.5269.1934. For Ma Hu-shan's relationship with Ma Chung-ying see Appendix III, 'The "Five Ma" Warlord Clique'.

174. The GOI went so far as to suggest to the FO that 'we should explain the circumstances at Kashgar to the Nanking Government and suggest that they should (1) accord recognition and support to Ma Shao-wu, particularly as he is their old tao-yin, and (2) restrain the Urumchi forces from further attacking Ma Chung-ying. An "oral communication" was subsequently made to Nanking, IOLR, L/P&S/12/2356 (Chinese Turkestan: Internal Situation and Affairs, December 1933 to 1936), unnumbered minute paper, dated 14/6/1934.

'both on account of neutrality and the physical difficulties of the routes to India and Afghanistan' he could expect no direct intervention on his behalf by the Government of India.<sup>175</sup> Following this realisation, Ma Chung-ying's visits to the Soviet Consulate at Kashgar became increasingly frequent, and he reported to Thomson Glover, perhaps in a last bid to win British support, that the Soviets had approached him 'to find out how much he would require to be bought off'.<sup>176</sup> Certainly Ma seems to have reached some accommodation with the Soviets, for following heavy provincial bombing attacks against his forces at Maralbashi towards the end of June, Ma Chung-ying ordered the Tungan armies to evacuate Kashgar and to proceed to Khotan, announcing that he would be accompanying them in person.<sup>177</sup>

What happened next remains something of a mystery. On the 4th, 5th and 6th of July the Tungan armies streamed out of Kashgar towards Khotan, apparently expecting Ma Chung-ying to follow with the rear guard, as he had during the retreat from Korla to Kashgar. What actually happened, in the words of the British Consul-General Thomson Glover, was that:

Ma Chung-ying left Kashgar for Irkeshtam early on 7th July with three or four of his officers... and an escort of some 50 Tungs and one or more members of the USSR Consulate or Trade Agency. Arrived near the border to Russia the escort were met by Russian or Russian-employed troops. The Tungan escort dispersed or handed over their arms to some of Khoja Niyās' levies, and Ma Chung-ying disappeared into Russia.<sup>178</sup>

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175. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.5997.1934.

176. ibid; also PZ.4216.1934.

177. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.5997.1934.

178. ibid. Ma Chung-ying was accompanied by M. Konstantinov, the secretary of the Soviet Consulate at Kashgar, as far as Ming Yol, the first stage on the road to Irkeshtam (IOLR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.5557.1934).

Why the young Tungan warlord should have chosen voluntarily to put himself in the hands of the foreign power which was providing support for his rival Sheng Shih-ts'ai remains a mystery. Ma's position at Kashgar was not under serious military pressure from the provincial forces, as can be seen from the fact that the city was not occupied by Sheng's troops until almost two weeks after Ma's journey to the Soviet Union. Moreover Ma could have accompanied his forces to Khotan, which his half-brother Ma Hu-shan was to hold successfully for a further three years before returning safely to his native Kansu.<sup>179</sup> Soviet motives in offering Ma sanctuary are easier to understand, however. With Ma Chung-ying dead, a fugitive in India, or safely back in his fief in north western Kansu, Moscow's protégé Sheng Shih-ts'ai would assume full power over Sinkiang and, although no doubt duly grateful to the Soviet Union for their assistance, might well feel able to re-assert his independence.<sup>180</sup> On the other hand, with Ma Chung-ying safely removed from the political stage in Sinkiang and living in the Soviet Union as "honoured guest", the Kremlin would retain a card which might be played to great effect against a possibly recalcitrant Sheng

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179. Nonetheless, M.C. Gillett, HMVCGK who travelled extensively in "Tunganistan" in 1937 and who interviewed Ma Hu-shan, reported that Ma Chung-ying went to the Soviet Union 'as a hostage to prevent the further punishment of his troops'. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2336; PZ.4094.37 (Report by Vice-Consul M.C. Gillett, Kashgar, on his Tour to Keria), p. 6. It is, perhaps, just possible that the USSR agreed to restrain Sheng from attacking the remnants of Ma Chung-ying's forces on the understanding that Ma should travel to the Soviet Union. It may be that the Soviet Politburo saw the Tungans as a useful counterbalance to Sheng in southern Sinkiang - or possibly that Stalin wished to avoid offending the Government of India at a time of rising tension in Europe.

180. Moscow's doubts concerning Sheng's reliability were shown to be well-founded in 1942 when, following Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union in 1941, Sheng seized the opportunity to break with his former ally (see below, pp. 349-56).

Shih-ts'ai,<sup>181</sup> or indeed, should the necessity arise, against a hostile Nanking or an expansionist Japan.

Almost nothing is known of Ma Chung-ying's movements after his crossing of the Soviet frontier at Irkeshtam. G. Apresoff, the Soviet Consul-General at Urumchi, told Sven Hedin that Ma had been arrested and disarmed on entering Soviet territory.<sup>182</sup> Later Grosskopf, the German Consul at Novosibirsk, reported that Ma had been taken from Irkeshtam to Alma Ata, where it was presumed that he was being held in captivity.<sup>183</sup> In January, 1935, it was reported in the Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society that Ma had travelled to Moscow, but had died on arrival.<sup>184</sup> In the summer of 1935, however, The Times, correspondent Peter Fleming was shown a picture of Ma Chung-ying:

posed in an arresting attitude. His hair was long, like a foreigner's (all the Tungans crop their heads); and he wore the uniform of a cavalry officer in the Soviet Red Army. It appeared that internment on Soviet soil was not without its compensations.<sup>185</sup>

Ma was again reported to have been seen in Moscow at the beginning of 1936,<sup>186</sup> and a British diplomatic source dating from April, 1940, still

181. In this context it is pertinent to note that following Ma's flight to Soviet territory, Sheng pressed for his extradition through Apresoff, but 'the Soviet Government, acting in the spirit of the Soviet constitution, did not find it possible to accede to the request of the Sinkiang Provincial Government'. Izvestiya, July 14th, 1934 (cited in Degras, J., Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, 1917-1941, London, 1953, III, p. 85.
182. Hedin, Big Horse's Flight, pp. 240-41.
183. ibid.
184. Anon, 'The Rebellion in Chinese Turkestan', JRCAS, XXII, 1 (1935), p. 102.
185. Fleming, News From Tartary, p. 301; cf. Maillart, E., Forbidden Journey (London, 1937), p. 232: 'The photograph of Ma Chung-ying in Soviet cavalry uniform was under our eyes. He was a tall, well-built man, and contrary to Tungan custom, wore his hair long'.
186. Hedin, Big Horse's Flight, p. 247.

placed him in that city before advancing the (unlikely) theory that he had been sent by the Soviets on several occasions to Kansu.<sup>187</sup>

Ma Chung-ying's ultimate fate remains unknown, though according to one report he was executed on Stalin's orders following Sheng Shih-ts'ai's visit to Moscow in 1938.<sup>188</sup> Certainly the young Tungan warlord was never seen again, and in retrospect it seems likely that, as predicted by Vassel, Ma ended his life 'in some dungeon'.<sup>189</sup>

Almost two weeks after Ma Chung-ying's precipitate departure for the Soviet Union a unit of 400 Chinese troops under the command of General Kung Cheng-han, Urumchi's Pacification Commissioner for Southern Sinkiang, arrived at Kashgar. He was accompanied by a force of some 2,000 Uighurs under the command of Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī's former chief-of-staff, a Turfanlik Uighur known simply as Maḥmūd shih-chang.<sup>190</sup> Kashgar thus passed peacefully under the control of the provincial authorities at Urumchi for the first time in almost a year. Meanwhile Ma Chung-ying's command passed to his half-brother, Ma Hu-shan, who set up Tungan headquarters at Khotan whilst his troops fanned out through the oases to the south of the Taklamakan, eventually establishing their control over a region which extended from Karghalik in the west to Charklik and the frontiers of Kansu in the east.<sup>191</sup> The provincial forces, probably for

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187. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941 (Who's Who in Sinkiang) corrected up to 15th April, 1940), p. 7, no. 41.

188. Boorman and Howard, Biographical Dictionary of Republican China, II, p. 464; see also the present author's 'Ma Chung-ying' in the new edition of the Encyclopaedia of Islam, Vol V, *forthcoming*.

189. See Vassel's quotation at the beginning of this chapter.

190. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.5997.1934 (Ch. shih-chang = divisional commander).

191. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.6835.1934 (Kashgar Diary, August 1934).

want of Soviet backing, made no attempt to advance against Ma Hu-shan and his sizeable Tungan army, and in September 1934, following the visit of Tungan delegates to Kashgar, an armistice was signed which brought hostilities between the Tungans and the provincial authorities temporarily to an end.<sup>192</sup>

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192. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.7370.1934 (Kashgar Diary, September 1934).

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- 2. *[Faint, illegible text]*



CHAPTER 7SINKIANG, 1934-44: THE MUSLIMS UNDER SHENG SHIH-TS'AISheng Shih-ts'ai to Stalin:

(In a rush of excitement): Once a new Sinkiang Comes into being with all nationalities enjoying a happy and prosperous life, it will prove that communism is the saviour of mankind. All religious groups, including Moslems and Buddhists, might then see that by developing our economy in this fashion their fanciful paradise in heaven can come into reality on earth.

Stalin to Sheng Shih-ts'ai:

(Smiling sympathetically): You are quite right. (Molotov and Voroshilov nod agreement).<sup>1</sup>

7.1 The Hui Satrapy of "Tunganistan"

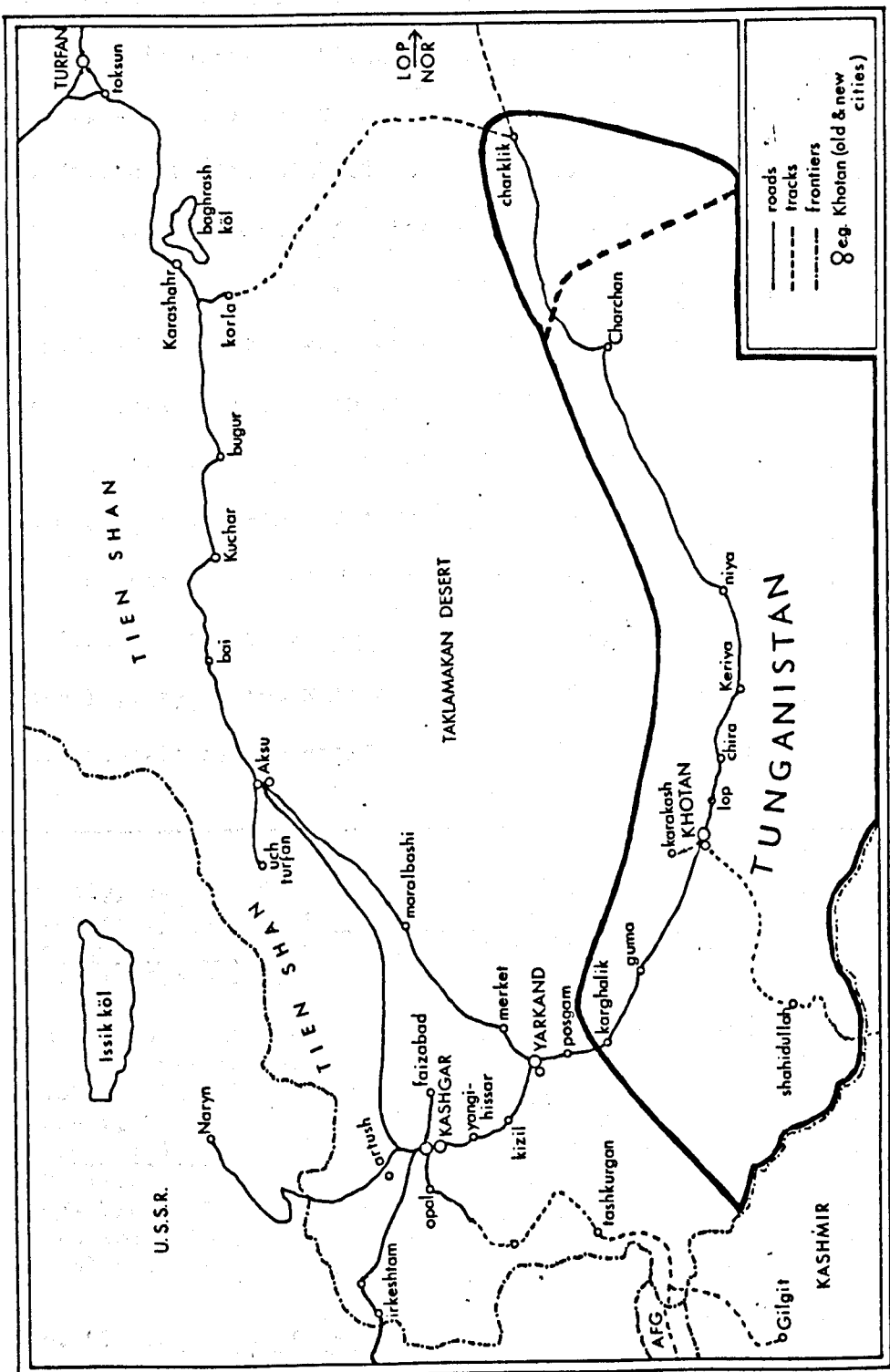
Following the armistice of September, 1934, the strife-torn province of Sinkiang entered a brief period of peace, with the secessionist TIRET overthrown and its leaders dead or in exile, but with power still divided between the provincial authorities under Sheng Shih-ts'ai at Urumchi, and the Tungan KMT 36th Division under Ma Hu-shan at Khotan.

Following his withdrawal to Khotan in July, 1934, Ma Hu-shan (see Plate 21) gradually consolidated his hold over the remote oases of the southern Tarim Basin, effectively establishing a Tungan satrapy where Hui Muslims ruled as colonial masters over their Turkic Muslim subjects - a system which well serves to illustrate the traditional relationship between Tungan and Turkic Muslim in southern Sinkiang.<sup>2</sup> The territory thus

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1. Sheng Shih-ts'ai, Red Failure in Sinkiang, pp. 200-201.

2. With the exception that, before this time, Tungan power in southern Sinkiang had always served Han Chinese power in Urumchi.



MAP 11: "TUNGANISTAN" (SOUTH SINKIANG, 1934-37)

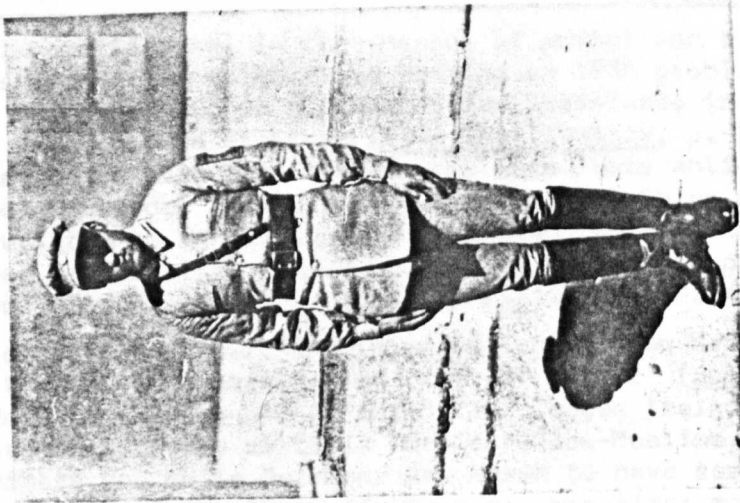
administered from 1934 to 1937 was given the entirely appropriate name of "Tunganistan" by Walther Heissig.<sup>3</sup>

Little is known of "Tunganistan", which was surrounded on two - eventually three - sides by the provincial forces of Sheng Shih-ts'ai and, on the fourth, by the high Tibetan plateau.<sup>4</sup> The only presses in this isolated region were used for the printing of money. Thus no internal literature or news sheets were produced - or, at least, are known to have been produced - and our knowledge of the period is based almost exclusively on the accounts of two or three travellers,<sup>5</sup> as well as on the diplomatic report made by HMVCGK Gillett following his official visit to Khotan and Keriya during the spring of 1937.<sup>6</sup> From these sources it is clear, however, that Ma Hu-shan - who ruled "Tunganistan" as a complete autocrat, known to his Turkic subjects as padishah (Ir. "king") - consistently stressed his ultimate loyalty to the Nationalist authorities at Nanking, and indeed regarded himself as the standard-bearer of Chinese nationalism in Sinkiang,

3. Heissig, W., Das Gelbe Vorfeld (Berlin, 1941), p. 130 (map); both Filchner (A Scientist in Tartary, London, 1939) and Maillart (Forbidden Journey, London, 1937) style the region under Ma Hu-shan's control "Tungania".
4. The remote south-eastern oasis of Charklik was originally in Tungan hands, permitting access to Tsinghai and Kansu (IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.6835.1934; Fleming, News From Tartary, p. 263). By mid-1936, however, Charklik had passed into provincial hands (Filchner, A Scientist in Tartary, p. 222). A sketch map drawn by HMCGK Packman 'to illustrate political in Sinkiang up to 1st September, 1937' (IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357, Chinese Turkestan: Internal Situation, 1937-1938), marks the allegiance of Charklik with a question mark, but the oasis was almost certainly in provincial hands at this time.
5. i.e. Fleming, News From Tartary; Maillart, Forbidden Journey; and Filchner, A Scientist in Tartary.
6. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2336, PZ.4094.1937 (Report by Vice-Consul M.C. Gillett, Keshgar, on his Visit to Keriya).

Plates 21, 22 and 23:

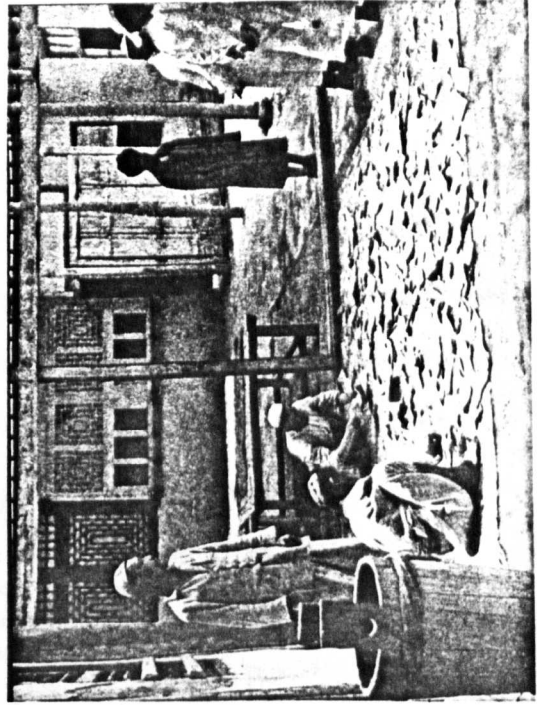
"TUNGANISTAN"



Ma Hu-shan  
1937.



Khotan, 1935. Making soldiers.



Khotan, 1935. Making money.

Sheng Shih-ts'ai having become, in Tungan eyes, a Soviet puppet.<sup>7</sup> At no time did Ma Hu-shan consider seceding from the Chinese Republic and setting up "Tunganistan" as an independent state. Nor did Islam ever play an important role in the politics of "Tunganistan" beyond providing a vague spiritual focus for shared Tungan and Turkic opposition to the "Sovietization" of Dzungaria and the northern Tarim Basin.<sup>8</sup> In effect, "Tunganistan" represented a Tungan warlord enclave transplanted from Kansu to the remote far west - a bastion of Chinese colonialism, and not of Muslim separatism, in Sinkiang. Thus, when Gillett first visited Ma Hu-shan's Tungan fief in January, 1937, he wrote:

My first impression of the Tungans was that their mode of government was almost Fascist, being a young men's government (there is no one holding an important post under the 36th Division who is over 45), an authoritative government and a militaristic government. My next impression was that they were, in some measure, colonists. They all endeavour to live as Chinese a life as possible, have brought with them Chinese cooks and have established, in the larger places, Chinese baths. In all the district towns street names were put up in Chinese as well as in Turki, and the police had set up crude lamps that were lit at night, refuse bins and entirely inadequate water butts for

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7. According to Fleming, in the absence of postal and telegraphic facilities Ma Hu-shan sent an emissary to Nanking in 1935 proclaiming his allegiance to the Chinese Republic and asking for assistance in his struggle against Soviet influence in Sinkiang (News From Tartary, p. 263). It is also interesting to note that the Tungans were 'very anti-Japanese' and that 'most of the stock anti-Japanese slogans from China proper (were) to be found written up in the streets of Khotan (whilst) "Resistance to Japanese Imperialism" formed one of the six simple principles of government' (of "Tunganistan"). (IOLR, L/P&S/12/2336, PZ.4094.1937, p. 6).
8. Nyman's statement that 'the isolated Tunganistan preserved a spirit of jihād through an unparalleled reign of terror' (op.cit., p. 109) cannot be permitted to pass unchallenged. The Tungan 'reign of terror' was directed exclusively at their Turkic fellow-Muslims, whilst non-Muslim Han Chinese and White Russians are known to have served in KMT 36th Division ranks in southern Sinkiang at this time; moreover Ma Hu-shan's civil administration favoured Han Chinese appointees over Turkic Muslims (IOLR, L/P&S/12/2336, PZ.4094.1937, pp. 4-5). In fact the 'reign of terror' in Tunganistan was of typical warlord type, and was quite unrelated to Islam and the concept of jihād.

use in case of fire, all of which things were duly labelled in Chinese. These first impressions suggested that the Tungsans might have developed some administrative ability.<sup>9</sup>

After a stay in "Tunganistan" of about two months duration Gillett was to alter his initial evaluation somewhat:

Subsequent experience and investigations...showed that the Tungsans were still fulfilling their historic role of a fine fighting force, but even so a purely destructive force and one completely unable adequately to administer the territory it controls by force of arms. What I had first taken for Fascism turned out to be an attempt to modify martial law into something that would work in times of peace...The whole aim of the government is to provide the military with the necessary money and supplies, while the needs of the people are entirely disregarded. Education is utterly neglected; and taxation is cruelly heavy. Taxation falls hardest on the cultivators, and then only on the poorer among them, the taxes being collected through the Begs and other rich men, who are largely exempt. Of these taxes the hardest are the levies in kind - grain, fodder and fuel - for military purposes: these are collected by the military, not through the civil authority, and, in the Karghalik district, are so heavy that many people have to go to Posgam (i.e. to the zone under provincial control) to buy stuff in the market there with which to pay these levies.<sup>10</sup>

Certainly Tungan rule was a heavy burden for the people of the southern oases (known to the Turkic peoples of Sinkiang as Astin Yol, or "the Lower Road"). Filchner reports that the administration of Ma Hu-shan assessed the oasis of Charchen 'at the immense sum of 1,000 lot of gold, the equivalent of 180,000 silver dollars'. Every inhabitant of the oasis was expected to make a contribution of 90 dollars (180 in the case of property-owners), all payable exclusively in gold. Those who could not pay were initially beaten, and then imprisoned until relatives

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9. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2336, PZ.4094.1937, p. 4.

10. ibid.

or friends agreed to buy them out. Faced with these conditions, one third of the population of Charchan had fled towards Charklik or into the mountains.<sup>11</sup> Fleming, who visited Keriya Oasis in the heart of

Astin Yol, recorded similar impressions:

There was no doubt that Tungan rule lay heavily on the oases; the Turkis were groaning under the weight of other people's military ambitions. Almost all the activity that was going on was for the benefit of the garrison; the donkeys trotting in from the outskirts of the oasis with loads of fodder or fuel, the men who were levelling the new parade ground - these and other signs of forced labour abounded. Both farmers and merchants were victimized by exactions. On the day we were in Keriya the Tungsans commandeered, without paying for them, no less than 6000 eggs, 300 measures of vegetable oil, and 140 bricks of tea; these they beat up and fed to their horses. We heard that they used to do this once or twice a month to make a change in their animals' diet of maize...<sup>12</sup>

Ma Hu-shan's rule represented a vicious circle for the Uighurs under his control. With an estimated minimum strength of 10,000 soldiers and a similar number of horses, the KMT 36th Division was the single most powerful armed force in Sinkiang during the mid-1930s.<sup>13</sup> To maintain

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11. Filchner, op.cit., pp. 254-5; Filchner puts the sums involved into perspective by indicating that, at the time of his visit to Charchan, 1 lot of gold (or 180 silver dollars) was adequate to buy 'a fine farmstead, with cattle, gardens and vineyards'.
12. Fleming, op.cit., p. 288.
13. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2336, PZ.4094.1937, p. 5; cf. Fleming's estimation of troop strength in "Tunganistan" in 1935: 'their effective strength is probably in the neighbourhood of 15,000 rifles, but they could put into the field a very much larger force of auxiliaries armed with swords. About 80% of the troops are cavalry, extremely well mounted; there are several machine guns and a few light cannon. The units are officered by Tungsans, but in some the majority of the rank and file are Turkis. The Tungsans, who are born fighters, keep their troops intensively trained and undoubtedly constitute the most formidable fighting force in the province'. (News from Tartary, p. 263).

this sizeable force (which was entirely unproductive, being occupied solely in military training), Ma Hu-shan held white the string of oases under his control. The resulting Turkic discontent could only be suppressed by the widespread maintenance of large military garrisons, which in turn necessitated further exactions in tax. Moreover, Ma Hu-shan nurtured ambitions to extend his control over the whole of Sinkiang, and accordingly conscription by press-gang was a common phenomenon. This served further to alienate the Uighur subjects of "Tunganistan", and adversely affected agricultural production in the region. Those minor industries which "Tunganistan" possessed were also badly hit. The production of raw silk dropped, the manufacture of finished silk stopped, and work in the jade mines ceased altogether. Even the internationally-renowned Khotan carpet industry was affected - in 1937 Gillett noted that: 'the government carpet factory has abandoned the traditional designs and makes mostly carpets of blatantly Chinese design, characterised by shoddy workmanship and unstable dyes'.<sup>14</sup>

The resources of the small area under Tungan control were strictly limited, and it was clear that it could only be a matter of time before Ma Hu-shan, having exhausted the oases of Astin Yol, was forced to move onwards.<sup>15</sup> In 1935, following his retreat to Khotan, Ma would have been able to return to his native Kansu by way of Charklik and Tun-huang, together with most of his forces - indeed communications are known to have been established with Ma Pu-fang, the warlord of Tsinghai and

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14. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2336, PZ.4094.1937, p. 4; cf. Maillart, op.cit., p. 226. The carpet industry had not fully recovered by the time of Krishna Menon's visit to Khotan in 1944 (Delhi-Chungking, Bombay, 1947), p. 105.

15. cf. Ma Chung-ying's occupation of north-western Kansu, aptly described by Cable and French as 'the way of the locust'. See above, p. 150.



western Kansu, shortly after the Tungan takeover of Khotan.<sup>16</sup> Ma Hu-shan showed no inclination to return to Kansu, however, and clearly intended resuming his struggle with Sheng Shih-ts'ai at the earliest opportunity. To this end the whole of "Tunganistan" was maintained as an armed camp, with military training grounds attached to each oasis, however small,<sup>17</sup> whilst at Khotan itself:

bugles were always blowing somewhere, and all day the fierce Moslem songs rolled about the city like the sound of an angry sea. I have never seen troops in China train so hard.<sup>18</sup>

It seems certain that Ma Hu-shan intended to strike westward, towards Kashgar,<sup>19</sup> but delayed doing so in the hope that his charismatic half-brother would reach some agreement with the Soviet leadership before returning to Khotan to lead the attack on Sheng's forces. The Soviets, who were anxious to maintain a Tungan presence in southern Sinkiang as a counterbalance to Sheng Shih-ts'ai, but who had no desire

16. In 1935 an embassy from Ma Pu-fang visited Khotan carrying a message 'under sealed orders' (Fleming, op.cit., p. 264). According to Maillart (op.cit., p. 232), the delegation carrying this message arrived at Khotan from Hsi-ning in circa June, 1935. The contents of Ma Pu-fang's message remains a mystery, but its delivery confirms that, at least in mid-1935, the road from Khotan to Kansu remained open.
17. At the small oasis of Chira, to take one example, there was a parade-ground just outside the bazaar 'equipped, as were all Tungan parade grounds, with a hundred-foot-high wooden tower on which scaling parties might practise assaults (though heaven knows there are few enough walls of that height in the Province). From the summit of this tower an officer with a megaphone was drilling two or three hundred cavalry. The fine Badakshani horses were divided, in the Cossack fashion, according to their colours - one troop of greys, one troop of blacks, and so on. The drill consisted of making your horse lie down and taking cover behind him'. (Fleming, op.cit., p. 291.)
18. ibid., p. 302. See also plate 22.
19. Ma Hu-shan informed Peter Fleming that he intended to send his main forces towards Yarkand and Kashgar, whilst a smaller detachment would advance on Aksu across the Taklamakan by following the banks of the Khotan Darya. (News from Tartary, p. 300).

to see a renewed outbreak of hostilities before they could consolidate their position at Urumchi and in the rest of the province, were careful to encourage Ma Hu-shan's belief that Ma Chung-ying would shortly return. To this end regular letters were despatched "from Ma Chung-ying" in Soviet territory to Ma Hu-shan at Kashgar. Each of these letters bore the personal seal of the exiled leader, and was read out to the troops of the KMT 36th Division to boost morale.<sup>20</sup>

It seems that for the best part of two years Ma Hu-shan chose to believe the contents of these letters - though he must surely have had some doubts as to their authenticity. What Hu-shan may not have perceived, however - at least until it was too late - was that beneath this continuing Soviet deception lay a deeper strata of diplomatic purpose, for by 1937, when Ma Hu-shan seems finally to have despaired of Ma Chung-ying's return to Sinkiang,<sup>21</sup> Soviet control had been firmly established over Sheng Shih-ts'ai, whilst the military inactivity of the Tungan armies had undermined the very fabric of "Tunganistan" from within.

The first indications of stress within "Tunganistan" developed as early as mid-1935, when the oasis of Charklik was racked by a Uighur rising which was put down by the Tungans with great severity.<sup>22</sup> Later in the same year, and more seriously for Ma Hu-shan, the Tungan garrison at Charklik mutinied, possibly because of their proximity to Kansu.<sup>23</sup>

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20. ibid., p. 264.

21. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2336, PZ.4094.1937, p. 6.

22. When Fleming visited Charchan in June, 1935, 'a kind of independence movement had just been suppressed at Charklik and more than a hundred people executed; the family of the Turki leader had been sent to Khotan as hostages'. (News from Tartary, p. 267; cf. Maillart, op.cit., p. 194).

23. Fleming, op.cit., pp. 284-5; cf. Maillart, op.cit., plate facing p.194.

Relations between the Tungans and the Turkic Muslims grew steadily worse as Ma Hu-shan's occupation of the oases of Astin Yol continued. Prices rose steadily,<sup>24</sup> and the Tungans flooded the region with unbacked and almost worthless currency. When Maillart visited Khotan in mid-1935 the mint was the only industry in "Tunganistan" running at full capacity:

It was a Chinese house, like any other in the main street, except that there was an orderly on guard. On the flags of the courtyard thousands of coloured squares were drying in the sun. They were the bank notes of the Tungan Republic. Squatting youths were arranging them in bundles of a hundred. Inside, behind the paper windows, in rooms where the atmosphere was alcoholic with the exhalations from the colours, men went on indefatigably printing notes on mulberry-bark paper with blue, black, red and green stamps. The director told us that they had been turning out some thirty thousand a day for a year past, but he added that it was not enough; they needed as many more again.<sup>25</sup>

To meet this additional need, Ma Hu-shan re-issued the notes of the defunct TIRET, on each of which was superimposed the seal of "Tunganistan".<sup>26</sup> These worthless notes were used to pay the Tungan rank-and-file, who in turn forced them into circulation at the point of a bayonet. Faced with these conditions relations between the Turkic Muslims and their Tungan masters continued to deteriorate,<sup>27</sup> whilst unrest within the ranks of the KMT 36th Division increased proportionately. As early as mid-1935 Fleming had noticed Tungan discontent and a desire

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24. Filchner, op.cit., p. 300.

25. Maillart, op.cit., pp. 227-8; cf. Fleming, op.cit., p. 302.

26. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.6835.1934.

27. According to Gillett the Tungans referred disparagingly to their Turkic fellow Muslims as ch'an-t'ou ("turban heads") and nao-tzu chien-tan ("simple-minded"). By this time Sheng Shih-ts'ai had forbidden the use of the insulting epithet ch'an-t'ou in the remainder of Sinkiang, where the Turkic Muslims were known by their national groupings (Uighur, Kazakh, etc.). See also Fleming's description of Tungan insensitivity towards leading Uighur citizens (op.cit., p. 308).

to return to Kansu. In a "poor inn" at Lop he had shared his quarters with an itinerant Tungan patrol:

There was something medieval about the spectacle of its commander - the overweening sullenness of his face enhanced in sleep - being fanned by a pretty Turki girl lest the flies should disturb his rest. One of his men (the noun is a courtesy title, for he was very young) poured out his woes to us in a low voice. He had been pressed into the service of of Ma Chung-ying three years before, hated a soldier's life and the company of soldiers, and yearned to see again his family in Tunghwang. There must be many in the Tungan armies like him.<sup>28</sup>

By 1937, when it finally became clear to the Tungan leadership that Ma Chung-ying would not be returning to Sinkiang from the Soviet Union, and that immediate military action was imperative, "Tunganistan" was already on the verge of collapse. Turkic opposition to consistent Tungan requisitioning had led to fighting in the streets,<sup>29</sup> and desertion from Tungan ranks had reached major proportions, with Ma Hu-shan, like his half-brother before him, personally executing miscreants in public.<sup>30</sup>

## 7.2 The 1937 Muslim Rebellion in Southern Sinkiang

Following the collapse of the secessionist TIRET and Sheng Shih-ts'ai's Soviet-assisted victory over the Tungan forces of Ma Chung-ying, an uneasy peace descended over those areas of Sinkiang which had passed under provincial control. Sheng's victory had not been complete, however, and he still required substantial Soviet assistance and the good will of his Turkic Muslim subjects to counter the ever-present threat of Ma Hu-shan's powerful armed forces billeted in "Tunganistan".

Accordingly, in late 1934, shortly after Ma Chung-ying's flight to Soviet territory, Sheng declared that the provincial government of

28. Fleming, op.cit., p. 294.

29. Filchner, op.cit., p. 315.

30. ibid., pp. 292, 310.

Sinkiang had nine chiefs duties to perform. These were:

1. To eradicate corruption.
2. To develop economy and culture.
3. To maintain peace by avoiding war.
4. To mobilise all manpower for the cultivation of land.
5. To facilitate communications.
6. To keep Sinkiang a Chinese province forever.
7. To start the work of anti-imperialism and anti-Fascism, and to maintain a close relationship with the Soviet Union.
8. To construct a "New Sinkiang" (Ch. Hsin Hsin-chiang).
9. To protect the position and privileges of religious leaders.<sup>31</sup>

In Sheng's eyes, the most important of these "duties" was clearly the maintenance of a close relationship with the Soviet Union.<sup>32</sup> The Soviet government responded by extending substantial financial and material aid to Urumchi, including a five-year loan of five million "gold roubles" (in fact, Sheng received silver bullion), agreed without Nanking's consent on May 16th, 1935.<sup>33</sup> At about this time Soviet geologists began a survey of Sinkiang's mineral resources (again, without the permission of the Chinese government), as a result of which, later in 1935, Soviet oil rigs began drilling at Tu-shan-tze, near Wusu, to the north of the Tien Shan.<sup>34</sup>

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31. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 255.

32. cf. clause 2 ("kinship to Sovietism") of Sheng's "Six Basic Policies" (pp. 271-2 above).

33. Unlike his predecessor Chin Shu-jen, Sheng did inform Nanking of his negotiations with the Soviets. However, despite repeated requests from the Chinese authorities, Sheng failed to submit a draft of the contract for their inspection. In fact the loan was at 4% p.a. interest, repayable in local Sinkiang produce. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, pp. 28-9; Cheng Tien-fong, op.cit., pp. 173-4; Chan, 'The Road to Power', p.251. According to Oguchi Goro there were no other conditions attached to this loan ('Seihoku ni okeru Kan-Kai no tairitsu ijjo', Moko, IX, 9 (1942), pp. 17-18; similarly Tu Chung-yüan, Sheng Shih-ts'ai yu Hsin Hsin-chiang, (Hankow, 1938), pp. 93-4.

34. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, pp. 55-6.

Writing of these events after his flight from the Soviet Union to the United States, Alexander Barmine, the Soviet official in charge of supplying arms to Sheng Shih-ts'ai, recorded that:

According to Stalin's plan, Sinkiang was to become a sphere of exclusive Russian influence and to serve as a bulwark of our power in the east. We had to equip 10,000 Sinkiang troops completely, from boots to Kuomintang insignia. Soviet advisers, who actually exercised the authority of ministers, were placed at the governor's elbow. A commission headed by Stalin's brother-in-law, Svanidze, was sent to Sinkiang to draw up a plan of reconstruction for the province. My trust (the Auto-Moto-Export Trust, a Soviet automobile export trust which acted as a front organisation for arms exports) was instructed to send engineers to build roads, airdromes and hangars all over Sinkiang. Sinkiang was soon a Soviet colony in all but name.<sup>35</sup>

Ties between Sinkiang and the Soviet Union may have been further strengthened through a secret agreement said to have been signed on January 1st, 1936, and which reportedly included a Soviet guarantee to come to the aid of Sinkiang 'politically, economically and by armed force... in case of some external attack upon the province'.<sup>36</sup> Whatever the truth of this claim, by early 1936 considerable numbers of Soviet specialists were active in Sinkiang, working in such fields as construction, education health and military training. Russian replaced English as the foreign language taught in Sinkiang's schools, whilst hundreds of Muslim youths - and a number of Muslim girls - were sent to study in Soviet Central Asia. Within Sinkiang itself, Muslim women were encouraged to appear in public unveiled, and a vigorous atheistic propaganda campaign was instituted.<sup>37</sup>

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35. Barmine, op.cit., pp. 231-2. Svanidze makes no reference to his supposed role in Sinkiang in his memoirs, My Uncle, Joseph Stalin (N.Y., 1953)

36. Anon., 'Russian Penetration into Sinkiang', MW, XXVI, 4 (1936), pp. 414-5.

37. Dallin, op.cit., p.100; Cheng Tien-fong, op.cit., pp. 174-5; Cable, M., 'The New "New Dominion"', JRCAS, XXXV, 1 (1938), p.16

In Urumchi and those regions of the province most securely under Sheng's control, social clubs known as uyushma were opened. According to one source:

These clubs became the centres of Soviet propaganda and proved a great help in increasing Soviet influence. The smoking of hashish and opium was forbidden but drinking araq and vodka was encouraged, probably in order to undermine Moslem traditions... At the same time the Soviets tried to liquidate the remnants of the "reactionary" Moslem and nationalist leaders in Sinkiang, some of whom were refugees from Soviet Asia. They also tried to destroy the power of Islam. The mosques were closed or converted into clubs and theatres. The mullahs were publicly ridiculed and persecuted.<sup>38</sup>

These radical policies seem to have been accepted with equanimity, though certainly not with enthusiasm, in both Ili (where Soviet influence had been consistently predominant from the early 1920s) and in Urumchi, where, according to Sven Hedin, the Soviet Consul-General Apresoff was 'more powerful than Sheng tupan' himself.<sup>39</sup> Sheng's pro-Soviet policies seem to have been less acceptable to the feudally-organised and fiercely independent Kazakhs of northern Dzungaria, however, and by early 1937 Sinkiang's Altai region was once again in a state of open rebellion against the provincial authorities.<sup>40</sup>

Still more serious for Sheng, however, was the situation in southwestern Sinkiang where pan-Islamic and pan-Turanian sentiment remained strong, and where GPU troops remained few in number.<sup>41</sup> Following the

38. McLean, N.L.D., 'Sinkiang Today', International Affairs, XXIV, 3 (July, 1948), pp. 380-81.

39. Hedin, S., The Silk Road (London, 1938), p. 166.

40. Sheng Shih-ts'ai, Red Failure in Sinkiang, p. 178.

41. See above, p. 280.

collapse of the TIRET and the retreat of Ma Hu-shan to "Tunganistan" in the autumn of 1934, Sheng attempted to conciliate the Turkic Muslim population of Sinkiang by appointing various Kumullik and Turfanlik Uighurs to positions of considerable authority in the new administration. These Uighurs belonged to the non-secessionist group of rebels which had followed Khoja Niyās Hājjī - thus Yūlbars Khān, despite his long association with Ma Chung-ying, was named district magistrate and garrison commander at the north-eastern oasis of Kumul. Similarly Khoja Niyās Hājjī's military commander, Mahmūd shih-chang, was appointed divisional commander at Kashgar Old City, with a force of about 2,000 Turkic troops under his command, whilst Khoja Niyās himself was given the rank of vice-chairman of the provincial government, and remained at Urumchi with Sheng Shih-ts'ai.<sup>42</sup> Both Yulbars and Khoja Niyās belonged to the conservative Kumullik aristocracy, and can have had little enthusiasm for Sheng's anti-Islamic and pro-Soviet policies. However from their posts at Urumchi and Kumul, both of which were strongly garrisoned with Soviet-supplied (and in some cases, Soviet-officered) troops, neither was in a position to offer serious opposition to the reforms of the new provincial administration. In Kashgar, however, isolated from the main Soviet power base in Sinkiang by the Tien Shan, and doubtless reassured by the proximity of both Ma Hu-shan's anti-Soviet fief and the British Indian frontier, Mahmūd shih-chang was better placed to offer resistance to the more radical innovations instituted by the provincial administration at Urumchi.

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42. Anon., 'Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien', p.13; Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol IV, p. 59; IOLR, D.226 (Who's Who in Sinkiang, Corrected up to 26th July, 1938).



Little is known of Mahmūd shih-chang. According to HMCCK Packman, he was 'a wealthy but intriguing and unreliable ex-merchant from Turfan',<sup>43</sup> whilst Packman's predecessor, Thomson Glover, records that Mahmūd 'was a simple and kindly man, and a zealous Mohammedan.... (who) might have walked on stage without any make up and taken the part of Henry VIII'.<sup>44</sup> Certainly Mahmūd seems to have been something of a patriarch, and following the arrest or flight of the local TIRET leadership, many sections of the Kashgarlik Muslim population looked to him for leadership.

As has already been shown, following the flight of Ma Chung-ying to Soviet territory in early July, 1934, Kashgar was occupied by provincial troops under the command of Mahmūd shih-chang and Kung Cheng-han on 20th July. Partly to reassure the local populace, and partly to allow himself further time to consolidate his hold on the north and the east of the province, Sheng appointed Mahmūd overall military commander of the Kashgar region (Ch. ssu-ling), and reappointed the Yunnanese Hui Muslim, Ma Shao-wu, to the position of tao-yin at Kashgar New City. Sheng was clearly uneasy with Muslim officials in charge at Kashgar, however,<sup>45</sup> and within a month had despatched a fellow north-easterner, Liu Pin, to assume the position of GOC Kashgar.<sup>46</sup> Following Liu Pin's arrival at Kashgar on August 7th, 1934,

43. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357 (Chinese Turkestan: Annual Confidential Report, June 1937-38), p.9.

44. Thomson Glover, 'Present-Day Kashgaria', p.442.

45. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.6835.1934. It is, perhaps, misleading to bracket Mahmūd and Ma Shao-wu together. Sheng may have suspected the former of Secessionist tendencies, but in marked contrast he certainly feared the latter for his loyalty to Nanking and his well-known antipathy towards the Soviet Union.

46. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2369 (General Liu Pin, Defence Commissioner, Kashgar), passim.

Mahmūd lost his elevated position as ssu-ling, but was permitted to retain his former rank as divisional commander, together with authority over the 2,000 Turkic Muslim troops garrisoning Kashgar Old City, Yangi Hissar and Yarkand. In contrast Ma Shao-wu was reportedly ordered to travel to Urumchi - instructions which, if complied with, would almost certainly have resulted in his imprisonment or execution. Mahmūd seems to have accepted this blow without open complaint, though his support for Sheng's administration can hardly have been strengthened by his demotion. Ma Shao-wu, however, was less cooperative. He had been ordered to Urumchi on several occasions in the past, but had always contrived to avoid answering the summons.<sup>47</sup> Seemingly the shrewd old Yunnanese tao-yin demurred once again. On this occasion, however, he was no longer dealing with the incompetent Chin Shu-jen and, probably as a direct result of his procrastinations, he was seriously wounded in an assassination attempt and forced to travel to the Soviet Union for treatment.<sup>48</sup> With Ma Shao-wu's fall from power the last of the old-style feudal mandarins best represented by Yang Tseng-hsin left the political stage of Sinkiang.

Even before Mahmūd's demotion and the attempted assassination of Ma Shao-wu, power at Kashgar had effectively passed to Han Chinese appointees of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, foremost amongst whom was Liu Pin, a staunch Chinese nationalist and a Christian. Liu, although apparently an upright official, seems to have understood little of local Muslim sensibilities, for almost his first act was to order that a picture of Sun Yat-sen, the father of modern Chinese nationalism, should be hung in the Cīd-ga Mosque in Kashgar Old City.

47. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.6835.1934.

48. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357 (Annual Confidential Report, 1937-38), p.5; Maillart op.cit., pp. 254-5; Fleming, op.cit., pp.326-7; see also Appendix 1, "Who Was Who in Republican Sinkiang".

A Uighur notable who objected to this (clearly sacriligious) act was arrested and put on trial for 'disrespect to the founder of the Chinese Republic'. The Kashgarliks greeted this development with dismay, and according to the British consul-general: 'many murmurs were heard that the Bolsheviki had taken over the country and were bent on destroying religion'.<sup>49</sup>

Kashgarlik disaffection with the new administration at Urumchi was further increased as a result of a series of ill-considered and over-hasty educational reforms - thus many teachers, including women, were brought in from Soviet Central Asia, and it was made compulsory for the Turkic Muslims to send their daughters, as well as their sons, to school. In itself this might have proved acceptable, but simultaneously Qur'ānic studies were cut back, military drill was introduced, and an attempt was made to replace Turkic numerals with those employed in Russia and the West.<sup>50</sup> To complete the alienation of the pan-Islamic and traditionalist south-west, Urumchi forced new currency notes into circulation whilst refusing to honour those which had been issued by Ma Shao-wu following the relief of Kashgar New City and the collapse of the TIRET. A police force composed largely of pro-Soviet Kirghiz was set up under the command of a Uighur communist called Qādir Beg,<sup>51</sup> and Kashgarliks who refused to accept the newly-issued Urumchi currency notes were beaten up and, in some cases, nailed by their ears to the walls of the Cīd-ga Mosque.<sup>52</sup>

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49. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.6833.1934.

50. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2367 (Chinese Turkestan: Retuer's Special News Correspondent in Kashgar), PZ.5875.1935, part 2. Confusingly, the numbers presently used in the West and throughout the greater part of the world are, of course, known as Arabic numerals, whilst those employed in the Arab World (and, until recently, amongst the Muslims of Sinkiang) are quite different.

51. HMCGK Packman noted that 'Qadir Haji (Qādir Beg), the ruthless chief of police' was a 'Russian-trained enthusiast... who is bitterly hated by most Turkis'. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357, PZ.4740.1937 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 3/6/1937)

52. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.7370.1934 (Kashgar Diary, September 1934), cf. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2367, PZ.5875.1935, part 1.

Opposition to the new regime crystallised, once again, around the pan-Islamic and pan-Turanian elements who had traditionally dominated Turkic Muslim politics in the Kashgar region. Outside the province, in Afghanistan, a few survivors of the TIRET began to assemble in Kabul, where they lobbied the Afghan government and certain foreign embassies - most notably the Japanese - for support. The Japanese ambassador to Kabul, Kitada Masamoto, who had previously served in Cairo and was 'deeply interested in all aspects of Islamic culture as well as of Central Asian politics',<sup>53</sup> provided a willing audience for these pan-Turanian exiles, especially after being informed by the Afghan foreign minister that - in the opinion of the Afghan government - Soviet moves in Sinkiang stemmed from continuing widespread Muslim unrest in the Soviet Union, and that some 600,000 Turkic and Iranian Muslim refugees had fled to Afghanistan from the Soviet-controlled north during the first half of the 1930s.<sup>54</sup>

Amongst Kitada's pan-Turanian visitors was Tawfiq Bey, in whose name an appeal was forwarded to the Japanese Foreign Office in May, 1935, claiming that:

Moslems in the vast area east of Kashgar to Ha-mi (Kumul) have anti-Soviet, pro-Japanese sentiment which may enable Japan to make an ideological drive into Sinkiang. For this armed invasion is unnecessary. Such an ideological drive might disturb the situation in Soviet Turkistan, the weak point of Soviet Russia.<sup>55</sup>

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53. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p.35

54. ibid.

55. Miscellaneous Documents Relating to the Political and General Situation in Sinkiang (in Japanese), Vol IV, 'Interview with Tewfik Sherif Pasha reported by Kitada to Hirota, May 7th, 1935'. Cited in Whiting, op.cit., pp. 35-6.

Also in mid-1935, Kitada was visited by Muhammad Amīn Bugra, the last of the "Khotan Amīrs", who had travelled to Afghanistan in disguise and under an assumed name, via Leh and Chitral. Once in Kabul, he was awarded a monthly allowance of 500 Afghanis (c. 125 Indian rupees) by the Afghan government, an action which would seem to confirm the existence of earlier links between the administration of the "Khotan Amīrs" and Kabul.<sup>56</sup> Paralleling Tawfiq Bey's proposals, Muhammad Amīn Bugra submitted a detailed plan proposing the establishment of an "Eastern Turkestan Republic" under Japanese sponsorship, with munitions and finance to be supplied by Tokyo. Following Japanese penetration of Sinkiang, an armed revolt by the local Muslim population would, the Amīr assured Kitada, 'disturb the rear, assisting the advance of Japanese troops'. The Amīr's final goal was, purportedly, the establishment of an "independent" Sinkiang, which would offer special economic and political privileges to Japan. Perhaps most revealing of all the Amīr's proposals, however, was the identity of the Turkic Muslim he suggested as the future leader of this proposed Central Asian "Manchukuo" - none other than Mahmūd shih-chang, the divisional commander of the Kashgar region.<sup>57</sup>

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56. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2386 (Chinese Turkestan: Activities of the ex-Amirs of Khotan and the Tunqans, 1935-43), PZ.523.1937; also IOLR, EXT.495 (1942).

57. Miscellaneous Documents, etc., (in Japanese), Vol IV, 'Kitada to Hirota, undated', cited in Whiting, op.cit., p. 36. In his fn. 42 Whiting speculates that Kitada's visitor, who styled himself "Amir of Khotan", was Sabit Damullah. In fact, Sabit was probably dead by this time - according to Hayit (Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China, p. 313) he was hanged in Aksu in July 1934; British diplomatic sources simply note that he was 'removed to Urumchi in 1934, subsequent fate not known' (IOLR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1942). It is clear, therefore, that Kitada's visitor must have been Muhammad Amīn Bugra.

Meanwhile, within Sinkiang, following the extension of Sheng Shih-tsai's atheistic propaganda campaign to the south of the province during the latter half of 1936,<sup>58</sup> opposition to the pro-Soviet government in Urumchi had indeed crystallised around the ample figure of Mahmūd shih-chang who, besides being a 'zealous Mohammedan', was also 'a man of property (who) resented and was keenly apprehensive of the increase in Russian influence in South Sinkiang'.<sup>59</sup> Mahmūd made use of his position as the leading Uighur official in the south to form a semi-secret group around himself, 'ostensibly for the protection of Islam, but actually in the hope of checking the increase of Russian influence in the Kashgar area'.<sup>60</sup> Sheng Shih-ts'ai moved against Mahmūd with caution, no doubt fearing that any hasty action on his part might cause the Turkic leader to make common cause with Ma Hu-shan in the neighbouring oases of "Tunganistan". In fact Sheng need not have worried, for Kashgarlik affection for the Tungsans, never strong even at the best of times, had not been strengthened by hostile reports brought to Kashgar from Khotan by Uighur refugees fleeing the continuing deprivations of Ma Hu-shan. Nevertheless, Sheng made no move to arrest Mahmūd, but took steps to undermine the latter's position through the appointment of a significant number of Soviet-trained officers to subordinate but influential positions within the Kashgar garrison.

58. Hedin, The Silk Road, p. 300

59. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357 (Annual Confidential Report, 1937-38), p.10

60. ibid.

As a result of this process, by the beginning of 1937 Sheng felt strong enough to order Mahmūd to Urumchi "to attend the April 12th celebrations" which marked the anniversary of Chin Shu-jen's overthrow. Mahmūd had no intention of travelling to Urumchi, however, and at his instigation the Turkic Muslims of Kashgar Old City staged large-scale street demonstrations which caused Sheng to rescind his orders. Despite this temporary success, however, Mahmūd remained understandably ill at ease, and his fears are reported to have reached a peak when it was rumoured in Kashgar that Sheng Shih-ts'ai had despatched a high-ranking military official from Urumchi to effect his arrest. Mahmūd's nerve seems finally to have broken in late March, 1937, and on April 2nd of that year he fled to India via Yangi Hissar and Yarkand.<sup>61</sup>

Unfortunately for Sheng, Mahmūd's precipitate departure for India - though in itself, no doubt, eminently desirable - was to prove the spark which touched off yet another large-scale Turkic Muslim rebellion in southern Sinkiang. Shortly after Mahmūd left Kashgar for India his exasperated troops, fearing that Soviet influence would now become predominant in Sinkiang's Muslim traditionalist south-west, rose against the provincial authorities at Yarkand and Yangi Hissar and proceeded to execute all officials who were either Soviet-trained or suspected of harbouring pro-Soviet sentiments. Subsequently an "independent" Turkic administration was set up in the rebel area under the command of two of Mahmūd shih-chang's officers, Kichik Akhund and <sup>c</sup>Abd al-Niyas.<sup>62</sup>

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61. ibid., pp.10-11; Anon., 'Islam in Kashgar', JRCAS, XXIV, 4 (1937), p. 729. For details of Mahmud's later activities see Appendix I, "Who Was Who in Republican Sinkiang".

62. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357 (Annual Confidential Report, 1937-38), p.11; Isma'il M.S., and Isma'il, M.A., Moslems in the Soviet Union and China, pp. 12-13; Hayit, Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China, p. 314

Faced with these unwelcome developments Liu Pin, who had only 700 reliable north-eastern troops at his command but who remained in control of the whole Kashgar Oasis, sent an urgent appeal for assistance to Sheng at Urumchi. At the same time he used a squadron of nine Soviet planes to bomb both Yangi Hissar and Yarkand, though apparently to little effect.<sup>63</sup> Meanwhile Ma Hu-shan and his Tungan forces, who had completely exhausted the oases under their control and were anxious to expand the frontiers of "Tunganistan", watched the developing situation with interest.

Possibly emboldened by Liu Pin's failure to move against them, the Turkic Muslim rebels attacked the Kashgar airfield on May 20th, only to be repulsed with slight losses.<sup>64</sup> Ten days later a much larger force of approximately 1,500 Uighurs and Tungan irregulars under the leadership of Kichik Akhund attacked and seized Kashgar Old City, where they were welcomed by the local populace as liberators.<sup>65</sup> This new rebellion seems once again to have been pan-Islamic and anti-Soviet in nature, for Kichik Akhund let it be known that he was fighting "in the defence of Islam" - and in case any local Turkic Muslim missed this point, each of his troops sported an arm band bearing the legend fi sabīl-illāh (Ar. "in the way of God").<sup>66</sup>

63. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357 (Annual Confidential Report, 1937-38), p.13

64. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357 (Confidential Memorandum of Events Connected with the 1937 Rebellion in Sinkiang, nd.), p.2

65. ibid; IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357, PZ.4740.1937, p.2

66. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357, PZ.4740.1937 (letter, HMCCK-GOI, 3/6/1937), p.1



Sheng Shih-ts'ai responded to this new rebellion by recalling Liu Pin to Urumchi and appointing Chiang Yü-fen, Liu's former Chief-of-Staff, to the position of GOC Kashgar.<sup>67</sup> Sheng was clearly unwilling to commit fresh troops to the Kashgar front whilst Ma Hu-shan's Tungsans remained uncommitted, and moreover were capable of striking not only at Kashgar, but more directly towards Urumchi via the Taklamakan and Aksu, or even by way of Charchan in the east.<sup>68</sup> To make his position still less enviable, the rebellion in south-western Sinkiang was shortly followed by a Kirghiz rising in the mountains above Kuchar,<sup>69</sup> and more seriously, by renewed Muslim unrest in the strategic oasis of Kumul.<sup>70</sup>

For almost two months following Mahmūd shih-chang's flight to India Ma Hu-shan remained at Khotan watching the situation. Eventually, however, the counsels of his Chief-of-Staff, Pai Tzu-li, and of Ma Ju-lung, the commander of the Tungan 1st brigade stationed at Karghalik, persuaded Ma Hu-shan to strike northwards against Kashgar.<sup>71</sup> Accordingly on June 2nd, only three days after Kichik Akhund's capture of Kashgar Old City, the Tungan

67. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941, p 5.

68. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357, PZ.4740.1937, p. 1

69. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357 (Annual Confidential Report, 1937-38), pp.15, 19.

70. ibid.; cf. 'Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien', pp. 14-15

71. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357 (Annual Confidential Report, 1937-38), p.13. It is interesting to note that in his report on "Tunganistan" HMVCGK Gillett recorded that Ma Hu-shan 'relies much upon the opinions of his Chief-of-Staff Pai Tzu-li, an intelligent, rusé man of about 40 who was formerly secretary to Ma Chung-ying'. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2336, PZ.4094.37, p. 5

1st brigade under Ma Ju-lung arrived at Kashgar "to put down the rebels".<sup>72</sup> In fact there seems to have been some understanding - though not a full alliance - between the Tungan and the Turkic rebels, thus on June 3rd, when Ma Hu-shan arrived to take possession of Kashgar Old City, Kichik Akhund and his forces moved off towards Aksu without fighting. At about the same time the Tungan 2nd brigade under Ma Sheng-Kuei occupied the Faizabad-Maralbashi area.<sup>73</sup> Ma Hu-shan clearly intended to let the Turkic Muslim rebels bear the brunt of the fighting with Sheng Shih-ts'ai's provincial forces whilst consolidating his own hold on southern Sinkiang. Accordingly, his troops surrounded Kashgar New City (which was still in the hands of north-eastern troops under Chiang Yu-fen), and messages were sent to the British Consulate-general explaining that the Tungan forces - still officially the KMT 36th Division - were 'acting in covenant with the Turkis with a view to overthrowing the Provincial Government and replacing it by an Islamic Government offering strict allegiance to Nanking'.<sup>74</sup>

Ma Hu-shan's caution was well-founded. For one thing, his troops had done no serious fighting for almost three years, and although well-trained, were badly in need of more arms and ammunition.<sup>75</sup> Another important factor was Soviet backing for Sheng Shih-ts'ai. The Red Army had intervened against Ma Chung-ying in 1934, and was almost certain to renew this intervention if its zone of traditional influence in Ili or

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72. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357 (Annual Confidential Report, 1937-38), p. 14

73. ibid.

74. ibid., p.15.

75. ibid.

its new economic investments in Dzungaria were once again threatened by Tungan armies. Besides, control of the Kashgar-Khotan area offered Ma Hushan and his advisers a safe escape route to British India if things went wrong for them. Sinkiang was not their home province, and a steamer from Calcutta would return them safely to the China coast and, ultimately, to their native provinces of Kansu and Tsinghai, where the "Five Ma" warlord clique still reigned supreme.

In fact, unknown to Ma Hushan, the decision to intervene had been taken by the Kremlin even before Tungan forces moved northwards against Kashgar. In late May, 1937, some 5,000 Red Army troops backed by an air unit and an armoured regiment moved across the Soviet-Sinkiang frontier at Sheng Shih-ts'ai's request.<sup>76</sup> With the intervention of this powerful force the fate of the Turkic Muslim rebels in southern Sinkiang was sealed. Towards the end of August provincial forces backed by regular units of the Red Army fell on Kichik Akhund's troops before Aksu. The rebels suffered a severe defeat, although both Kichik Akhund and Abd al-Niyas evaded capture and fled towards Kashgar with about 200 men.<sup>77</sup> Following this débaçle the Tungan administration in southern Sinkiang collapsed like a house of cards.

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76. Statement of Sheng Shih-ts'ai in interview with Allen S. Whiting, May, 1954. Cited in Whiting, op.cit., p. 51. For a Turkish account of the renewed Soviet intervention (giving grossly exaggerated figures both for Soviet troops and for Turkic casualties) see: Karahoca, Amaç, Doğu Türkistan - Çin "müstemlikesi" (East Turkestan, a "colony" of China), Istanbul, 1960, p. 16.

77. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357 (Annual Confidential Report, 1937-38), p. 16.

Shortly after the rout of Kichik Akhund, Ma Sheng-kuei, the commander of the Tungan 2nd brigade stationed at Faizabad about 60 miles east of Kashgar, turned against Ma Hu-shan and declared his support for the provincial forces of Sheng Shih-ts'ai.<sup>78</sup> His reasons for taking this action are not clear, but would seem to have been founded on a mixture of political dissatisfaction with the Tungan administration at Kashgar, and military realism in the face of advancing provincial and Red Army units.<sup>79</sup> Having announced this change of allegiance - and apparently with the full support of the Tungan 2nd brigade - Ma Sheng-kuei marched on Kashgar, arriving in the oasis on September 1st, 1937, only to find that Ma Hu-shan, Ma Ju-lung and Pai Tzu-li had withdrawn to Karghalik at the head of the Tungan 1st brigade. The mutiny of the Tungan 2nd brigade signalled the final downfall of Tungan power in Sinkiang. On September 7th Ma Hu-shan, accompanied by Ma Ju-lung, Pai Tzu-li, and various other high-ranking officers of the Tungan 1st brigade, deserted their men at Karghalik and fled across the mountains to India.<sup>80</sup>

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78. ibid., p. 16; 'Rebellion in Sinkiang: The Tungsans lose Kashgar', The Times (London), 5th January, 1938.
79. British diplomatic sources also suggest that Ma Sheng-kuei may have been bribed by Sheng Shih-ts'ai. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357 (Annual Confidential Report, 1937-38), p. 16
80. ibid.; IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357, (Confidential Memorandum of Events Connected with the 1937 Rebellion in Sinkiang, nd.), p. 3. According to IOLR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941 (Who's Who in Sinkiang to 15th April, 1940), Pai Tzu-li was 'said to have been shot on the road by Ma Hu-shan', and did not reach India. Ma Hu-shan and Ma Ju-lung arrived at Leh on 26th September, 1937. Ma Hu-shan left India for China in February, 1938, and subsequently resumed his career as a petty militarist in the Kansu-Tsinghai area. After the communist victory in 1949 Ma Hu-shan led an anti-communist guerilla group in the hills around T'ao-chou in southern Kansu. In 1954 he was captured - according to anti-communist sources, by treacherous means - and executed in the city of Lanchow. Kao Han-jen, The Imam's Story (Hong Kong, 1960), pp. 93-8, 'Fate of a Hero'. See also Appendix I, 'Who Was Who in Republican Sinkiang'.

With the arrival of the Tungan 2nd brigade at Kashgar, the siege of the New City, which had lasted since the end of May, was lifted. General Chiang Yü-fen, who remained GOC Kashgar, immediately launched his forces in pursuit of the retreating Tungan 1st brigade, whilst provincial forces advancing in a second column from Maralbashi drove the retreating forces of <sup>c</sup>Abd al-Niyās and Kichik Akhund towards Yarkand.<sup>81</sup> According to K.C. Packman, the British Consul-General in Kashgar at this time, the provincial forces were assisted in these actions by planes of the Red airforce operating directly from bases in Soviet Central Asia.<sup>82</sup> By September 9th Yarkand had fallen to Sheng's forces, and on September 15th <sup>c</sup>Abd al-Niyās was captured and killed in the same area.<sup>83</sup> Subsequently provincial forces moved to occupy Khotan and the hinterland of "Tunganistan" whilst the remnants of the KMT 36th Division melted away into the wastes of Tsinghai and southern Tibet.<sup>84</sup> The fate of Kichik Akhund is not known, but with the disbandment of the mutinous Tungan 2nd brigade at Kashgar on October 12th and the transfer of Ma Sheng-kuei to a subordinate post at Khotan,<sup>85</sup> both the Turkic Muslim rebellion of 1937 and the Hui satrapy of "Tunganistan" were effectively brought to an end.

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81. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357 (Annual Confidential Report, 1937-38), p. 17.
82. ibid., pp. 16-17.
83. ibid., p. 17; Hayit, Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China, p. 314
84. 'Rebellion in Sinkiang: The Tungsans lose Kashgar', The Times (London), 5th January, 1938.
85. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941 (Who's Who in Sinkiang to 15th April, 1940). The same source records that 'an unconfirmed report states that he (Ma Sheng-kuei) has found his way to Kansu'.

### 7.3 1937-42: Sinkiang as a Soviet Satellite

Following the collapse of the Turkic Muslim rebellion in southern Sinkiang and the flight of Ma Hu-shan to India, Sheng moved quickly to restore his authority elsewhere in the province. By the beginning of October, 1937, the disturbances at Kumul had been brought to an end by the arrival of Red Army troops in that oasis and the flight of Yulbars Khān to Kansu.<sup>86</sup> Shortly thereafter provincial troops were also sent to the mountains above Kuchar to deal with the recalcitrant Kirghiz of that area.<sup>87</sup> As a result of these operations, by the end of October the Muslim opposition in Sinkiang was bereft of leadership and in complete disarray,<sup>88</sup> whilst Sheng's writ, for the first time, ran throughout the length and breadth of the province.

86. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357 (Annual Confidential Report, 1937-38), p. 17; Boorman and Howard, Biographical Dictionary of Republican China, IV, p. 59. Yulbars succeeded in evading his pursuers, and shortly afterwards was seen by Georg Vassel 'sitting on a straw mat on the bug-ridden kang of a caravanserai in Suchow - instead of on the valuable Khotan carpet of his seraglio in Hami' ('Durchdringungspolitik', p.23). Yulbars subsequently made his way to Nanking, where he was given the rank of lieutenant general in the national forces and appointed to a sinecure by Chiang Kai-shek pending the reassertion of KMT authority in Sinkiang.

87. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357 (Annual Confidential Report, 1937-38), p. 19

88. Khoja Niyās Ḥājji, who had been reduced to a powerless figurehead in Urumchi and took no part in the 1937 rebellion, was nevertheless arrested and executed by Sheng in the winter of 1937-38. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941.

It soon became apparent, however, that the price of Sheng's supremacy was to be the almost complete domination, both politically and economically, of Sinkiang by the Soviet Union. The most striking indication of this increased Soviet influence came shortly after the renewed military intervention of the Red Army in May, 1937, when Garegin Apresoff, the Soviet Consul-General in Urumchi, "informed" Sheng Shih-ts'ai that a self-contained task force was to be stationed at the strategic oasis of Kumul, on the main trunk road between Sinkiang and China proper. This unit, to be known as the Red Army Eighth Regiment, was to remain in Sinkiang "indefinitely".<sup>89</sup> It has been argued with some justification that the Soviet Union took this action 'to guard the eastern approaches to Sinkiang against the possibilities of a motorized Japanese raid through Inner Mongolia'.<sup>90</sup> Certainly the Soviet military command was wary of Japanese intentions towards Central Asia, particularly since the Japanese Army had demonstrated its ability to mount a fast-moving, motorised advance by its ten-day conquest of the Chinese province of Jehol in February, 1933.<sup>91</sup>

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89. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, 1933-49, p. 51; cf. Cheng Tien-fong, A History of Sino-Russian Relations, p. 176; Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 80.

90. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 80; cf. Lattimore, O., 'The Kimono and the Turban', Asia, XXXVIII (May, 1938), pp. 274-5; also 'Sinkiang's Place in the Future of China' (introduction to Norins, M., Gateway to Asia, N.Y., 1944), pp. 16-17. A similar argument is advanced in Eleanor Lattimore, 'Behind the Sinkiang Incident', Far Eastern Survey, May 3rd, 1944, pp. 80-81.

91. Clubb, O.E., Twentieth Century China (N.Y., 1963), pp. 172-3

It is important to note, however, that the stationing of a Soviet regiment at Kumul in 1937 was undertaken without the permission of the Nationalist government at Nanking,<sup>92</sup> as well as (if Sheng Shih-ts'ai is to be believed) without the permission of the provincial authorities at Urumchi.<sup>93</sup>

In fact, Soviet motives for garrisoning Kumul were probably at least four in number. Besides wishing to pre-empt a possible (though hardly likely) Japanese thrust into Sinkiang, Moscow undoubtedly sought to limit and even totally to exclude Nanking's influence from China's westernmost province;<sup>94</sup> to prevent further incursions by the Tungan soldiery of the "Five Ma" warlord group who still controlled neighbouring Kansu, Tsinghai and Ningsia;<sup>95</sup> and finally, to inhibit further rebellion by the indigenous Muslim peoples of Sinkiang against the rule of Stalin's protege, Sheng Shih-ts'ai.<sup>96</sup>

92. The Nationalist government eventually lodged a protest (from Chungking, in 1940), against the continued presence of "uninvited" Soviet troops in Sinkiang. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 51; cf. Chiang Kai-shek Soviet Russia in China: A Summing-up at Seventy (N.Y., 1957) pp. 99-103.

93. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 51

94. According to Sheng Shih-ts'ai: 'Soviet advisers in my province repeatedly declared that "The peoples along the Sino-Soviet frontier are all bretheren. The racially related populations will one day be united as citizens of the same nation. This cleavage at present is like a water-melon cut into two halves which sooner or later will again combine as a single entity" '(Red Failure in Sinkiang, p. 168). Whilst there are no indications that Stalin sought actively to detach Sinkiang from China, there can be no doubt that, should China have fragmented completely, he intended Sinkiang to become either a fully-integrated part of the Soviet Union, or alternatively a Soviet satellite state. (Precedent for the former may be found in Tannu Tuva, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finnish Karelia, and eastern Poland; for the latter in the Mongolian People's Republic).

95. See Appendix III, 'The Wu Ma ("Five Ma") Warlord Clique'.

96. This point was stated clearly by the Soviet Consul-General Pushkin during an altercation with Sheng Shih-ts'ai in 1942. According to Sheng, Pushkin stormed into his office, protesting in an angry voice; 'Why do you demand the withdrawal of the Russians?... The Red Army is here to help you quell rebellion' (Red Failure in Sinkiang, p. 256).



Moreover, the stationing of a Red Army regiment at Kumul in the first half of 1937 proved to be merely the first, albeit probably the most significant, manifestation of a permanent Soviet military presence in Sinkiang. Shortly after the establishment of the Red Army advanced base at Kumul, following the "Marco Polo Bridge incident" of July 7th, 1937, open hostilities broke out between Nanking and Tokyo. During the summer of 1937, although war had not been officially declared by either side, Japanese forces rapidly overran most of north China. The Soviet leadership, deeply alarmed by the speed of the Japanese advance, determined to come to China's aid - no doubt with the intention of halting the Japanese war machine before it could advance to threaten the inner Asian frontiers of the Soviet Union.<sup>97</sup> As a result of this decision, a Sino-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact was signed on August 21st, 1937, and the Soviet Union advanced substantial credits to the Nanking authorities to finance the purchase of war matériel.<sup>98</sup> Moscow also sent five air wings of Soviet planes and pilots to assist the Chinese, and a sizeable military mission which at its peak numbered some 500 men, including such formidable military figures as Generals Grigori K. Zhukov and Vasili I. Chuikov.<sup>99</sup>

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97. Moscow's hostility towards Japanese expansionism in eastern Asia must have been redoubled by the signing of the 1936 German-Japanese Anti-Comintern Pact, an agreement which pointed ultimately to a two-pronged attack on the Soviet Union from Europe and the Japanese-controlled puppet "state" of Manchukuo.
98. The Soviet Union provided credits worth \$100 million in 1938, followed by a further \$150 million in 1939. These credits were to be paid for by exports of Chinese tungsten, wool and tea, to be transported to the Soviet Union overland, via Sinkiang. Clubb, Twentieth Century China, pp. 219-20.
99. Clubb, op.cit., p. 220. Zhukov was later to be the Soviet Marshal who captured Berlin, whilst Chuikov defeated the Germans at Stalingrad.

Stalin's chosen route for the supply of war matériel to Nanking lay through Sinkiang and Kansu, via Chuguchak, Urumchi, Kumul and Lanchow. Fuel and other heavy supplies crossed Sinkiang and Kansu by road, carried either by Soviet lorries, or by huge camel caravans.<sup>100</sup> Still more significantly, of the 885 aircraft supplied to the Chinese authorities by the Soviet Union, nearly all flew via Sinkiang.<sup>101</sup> To maintain these aircraft, Moscow agreed to provide a complete aeroplane assembly plant on Chinese soil. The Nationalist authorities at Chungking (Nanking having fallen to the advancing Japanese in December, 1937) requested that this plant should be established in Kansu, but the Kremlin was adamant that it should be set up in Sinkiang.<sup>102</sup> Under immediate threat from the Japanese, the Chinese government was in no position to quarrel with Moscow over the presence of Soviet troops in Sinkiang, and accordingly the aeroplane assembly plant was constructed at T'ou-t'ung-ho near Urumchi.<sup>103</sup> Under the guise of the Sinkiang "Agricultural Implements Factory", this assembly plant was surrounded by heavy fortifications

100. Wu, China and the Soviet Union, pp. 257-8, 269; Lattimore, O., 'China's Turkestan-Siberia Supply Road', Pacific Affairs, XIII (Dec. 1940), 393-412 passim; Strong, A.L., 'Airplane from the USSR', Asia, Jan. 1942, pp. 24-31.

101. Liu, F., A Military History of Modern China, 1924-1949 (Princeton, 1956), p. 168.

102. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 62

103. Sheng, Red Failure in Sinkiang, p. 258

and manned by more than 1,500 Soviet troops equipped with a force of about twenty tanks.<sup>104</sup> At about this time, the Soviet Union also established a flying school for Chinese pilots at an airfield near Kulja.<sup>105</sup>

As a corollary to this increased Soviet military presence in Sinkiang, the Soviet economic hold on the province - already clearly predominant over both Chinese and British commercial interests - was expanded to become a virtual monopoly. With the defeat of Ma Chung-ying following the Red Army intervention of 1934, the Soviet Union had achieved almost total domination over the foreign trade of both northern and eastern Sinkiang; following the intervention of 1937 and the collapse of "Tunganistan", decisive steps were taken to extend this dominance over the southern part of the province as well.

Shortly after the extension of provincial control to the oases of southern Sinkiang in September, 1937, Sheng Shih-ts'ai, doubtless acting at the behest of his Soviet patrons, took steps to diminish British influence and prestige in this traditionally Anglophile region.<sup>106</sup>

104. Whiting, *op.cit.*, p. 62; in his Red Failure in Sinkiang, p. 258, Sheng states that in the autumn of 1942 there were 'eight tanks and dozens of airplanes stationed within the compound of the so-called Agricultural Implements Manufacturing Factory at T'out'ungho'.
105. Whiting, *op.cit.*, p. 62. Very few westerners were permitted to visit Sinkiang during this period, and Ili remained particularly cut off from (non-Soviet) outsiders. One exception, however, was the Norwegian refugee Wilfred Skrede, and it seems very likely that the 'frisky, strapping' Russian girls whom he saw playing basket-ball at an aerodrome near Kulja were attached to this establishment. Skrede, W., Across the Roof of the World (Trans. from the Norwegian Over Verdens Tak), London, 1954, pp.48-9.
106. Contemporaneous warmth towards Great Britain was probably derived from British recognition of the Amirate of Kashgar proclaimed by Ya<sup>c</sup>qub Beg in the mid-nineteenth century (see above, pp. 68-9). Against this must be set the considerable hostility felt by the Turkic Muslim population of southern Sinkiang towards the British Indian money-lenders resident throughout their region.

Although Britain had never wavered in her support for Chinese control over Sinkiang, and had remained consistently aloof from the various Muslim rebel groups who had seized control of Kashgar and the surrounding oases since the death of Yang Tseng-hsin,<sup>107</sup> the British authorities were accused of complicity in the rebellion of 1937 and the British Consul-General at Kashgar was effectively boycotted.<sup>108</sup> At the same time, an anti-British trade embargo was introduced,<sup>109</sup> the consular mails between India and Kashgar were interfered with,<sup>110</sup> and British Indian nationals long resident in Khotan and Yarkand were expelled from the province and forced to attempt a crossing of the Himalayas in the depth of winter.<sup>111</sup> In a related move, steps were also taken to force the closure of the Swedish missions at Yarkand and Kashgar Old City. An anti-Swedish boycott was instituted during the winter of 1937-38 on the orders of the provincial government, with the result that by February, 1938, all Swedish missionary work in Sinkiang had been effectively brought to a halt.<sup>112</sup> Meanwhile, Soviet goods in plentiful supply and at

107. British diplomatic sources held in the IOLR uniformly indicate that this basic policy never varied (in this context, see the official response to HMCCK Thomson Glover when he suggested that some form of aid or recognition might be extended to the "Turkish Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan", above, p. 263 ; also Teichman, Sir E., Journey to Turkistan, pp. 191-2). Unfortunately Britain has been accused, without adequate substantiation, of aiding and abetting the "TIRET" by numerous observers of the Sinkiang scene including Basil Davidson (Turkestan Alive, pp. 110-111) and Jack Chen (The Sinkiang Story, p. 184). These serious charges would appear to be entirely without foundation.

108. Wu Ai-chen, China and the Soviet Union, p. 258.

109. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357 (Annual Confidential Report, June 1937-38) p. 5.

110. The Times (London), March 25, 1939.

111. The Times (London), June 1, 1939.

112. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357, Section 8 ('Relations with Sweden').

cheap prices flooded the markets of southern Sinkiang, although across the border in Soviet Central Asia the great cities of Samarkand and Tashkent were experiencing acute shortages of consumer supplies.<sup>113</sup> These Soviet moves to drive out British competition in Sinkiang, both by decree and by special pricing, were so successful that by June, 1938, K.C. Packman, the British Consul-General at Kashgar, was constrained to report to Delhi that

Soviet Russia has at last regained in full the influence Russia used to exercise in Imperial days, and which was temporarily lost, as a result of the Russian revolution, during the period 1917-1931. Russian methods, Russian ideas and Russian trade predominate throughout the province; most of the important posts in the province are filled by Russophile officials (often Russian-trained and speaking Russian); and both provincial and local authorities frequently seek the advice and assistance of the Russian Consular establishments in the province, to which advice and assistance they attach great weight.<sup>114</sup>

Despite these commercial successes, it is evident, however, that the Soviet Union's major economic goal in Sinkiang was not control of the province's trade, but exploitation of its mineral resources. As has already been indicated, following the Red Army intervention of 1934, Soviet geological specialists began extensive surveys of Sinkiang without obtaining the permission of the Chinese authorities at Nanking.<sup>115</sup> Because of the veil of secrecy surrounding these surveys, little information is available as to their nature and extent. According to Allen S. Whiting, however, a large Russian map, drawn in 1935 and held in the personal archives of Sheng Shih-ts'ai on Taiwan, identifies numerous deposits of manganese, copper, lead, tin, wolfram and oil in Sinkiang. According to the map, few of these resources were then in production, although many are identified 'on the basis of survey'.<sup>116</sup>

113. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 65

114. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357, pp. 4-5

115. See above, p. 300.

116. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 65

It is pertinent to note that 'a particularly rich cluster of minerals'<sup>117</sup> is identified by this map as lying in the northwestern part of Sinkiang, near the Soviet frontier. It was in this region, near the town of Wusu, that Soviet technicians began drilling for oil in mid-1935.<sup>118</sup> According to later Chinese Nationalist sources, actual production from these oil fields began in 1939.<sup>119</sup> Although initial production was low, a refinery with an estimated capacity of 50,000 tons of crude oil per annum was subsequently established by the Soviets at Tu-shan-tzu.<sup>120</sup> Moreover, according to observers in Sinkiang at the time of Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union in April, 1941, following the initial Soviet débaclé in Europe, production at Tu-shan-tzu 'increased markedly... with constant truck convoys travelling between the fields and the Soviet frontier'.<sup>121</sup> According to Whiting, in addition to Soviet exploitation of Sinkiang's oil reserves, large amounts of tungsten were extracted from 'well-engineered' mines located along Sinkiang's north-western frontier in an operation which enabled the USSR to cut back in tungsten imports from other parts of China.<sup>122</sup> Similarly, according to

117. ibid.

118. See above, p. 300.

119. Su-lien tui Hsin-chiang ti ching-chi ch'in-lüeh ('Soviet Economic Aggression Against Sinkiang', Taipei, 1950), pp. 78 ff. (cited in Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 66).

120. Huang, T.K., et al., Report on Geological Investigation of Some Oil Fields in Sinkiang (Nanking, 1947); cf. Soviet Economic Aggression, p. 82 (both cited in Whiting, op.cit., p. 66).

121. Whiting, op.cit., p. 66.

122. ibid.

O.E. Clubb, a 'joint mining enterprise' was established near the Borotala River in western Dzungaria 'engaged, it was widely believed, in the exploitation of a deposit of uranium ore'.<sup>123</sup>

Although specific details of contemporaneous Soviet mineral exploitation in Sinkiang are generally unavailable, there is one major exception to this rule - namely, the 1940 Tin Mines Agreement - which clearly indicates that Moscow's commercial relationship with Sinkiang during this period, far from being based on "fraternal solidarity", was based on nakedly exploitative criteria which effectively reduced Sinkiang to little more than an economic colony of the Soviet Union. Valid for 50 years, the "Sin-tin" agreement granted the Soviet Union 'exclusive rights for the prospection, investigation and exploitation of tin and its ancillary minerals' within Sinkiang.<sup>124</sup> With this monopoly, the Soviet Union gained exclusive control over power supply, road transport, and telegraph and radio communications in all zones (and areas leading to such zones) under "Sin-tin" management. Similarly, Soviet personnel received unlimited entry privileges and unrestricted right of movement anywhere within Sinkiang. The agreement further stipulated that "Sin-tin" should have the right to establish 'without hindrance', 'branch offices, sub-branch offices, and agencies within the whole territory of Sinkiang'; that the corporation was to be

123. Clubb, O.E., China and Russia: The Great Game (N.Y. and London, 1971), p. 320. O. Edmund Clubb became the first American Consul to Urumchi in 1943. He also held diplomatic posts at Vladivostok, Mukden, Changchun, Chungking, and subsequently became Director of the Office of Chinese Affairs in the U.S. Department of State from 1950 to 1952.

124. Whiting and Sheng, Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot? Appendix B ('Agreement of Concessions Signed by the Representatives of the Government of USSR and Governor of Sinkiang') p. 280.

provided with land 'on application' and 'without delay'; and that the Sinkiang government should 'remove all the population residing in such areas' as had been allotted to "Sin-tin".<sup>125</sup> In effect, these clauses enabled the Kremlin to establish control over large areas of a neighbouring sovereign state, and to do so without recourse to the Chinese Nationalist authorities at Chungking. As if to emphasise the existence of this state within a state, armed guards controlled by the corporation excluded all outsiders from "Sin-tin" premises, including the Sinkiang provincial police.<sup>126</sup>

In exchange for this remarkable series of concessions, the economic benefits accruing to Sinkiang were minimal, whilst the Soviet Union profited greatly. All exports of "Sin-tin" produce were to be duty-free, compensated for only by a 2% ad valorem charge. Rent for land was to be paid in kind at the rate of 5% of production; this was then to be sold to the Soviet Union at prevailing world prices.<sup>127</sup> No share in net profits and no participation in management was given to either the Sinkiang or the Chinese Nationalist authorities. On the contrary, the Sinkiang government was expressly forbidden to 'inspect, supervise, investigate, or audit the various operations of production, finance, and commerce' of "Sin-tin".<sup>128</sup> In return, Sinkiang (not "China"), was to receive all the corporation's facilities, 'without compensation', after a period of fifty years.<sup>129</sup>

125. ibid., pp. 282-3.

126. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 67.

127. After five years payment for land was to rise to 6%, still in kind, and still to be sold to the Soviet Union at prevailing world prices. Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot? Appendix B, p. 283

128. ibid., p. 284.

129. ibid., p. 285.



If Sheng's own account of his discussions with the group of officials sent from Moscow to "negotiate" the Tin Mines Agreement is accurate, then it is clear that in seeking to establish an effective Soviet monopoly over the mineral resources of Sinkiang, Stalin was finally demanding repayment (with interest) for his interventions on Sheng's behalf in both 1934 and 1937. Not unnaturally, Sheng was dissatisfied with the original text of the Tin Mines Agreement. Accordingly, he pointed out to the principal Soviet negotiator, Bakulin, that the text had been drawn up without prior consultation with the Sinkiang authorities; that certain clauses were totally unacceptable; and that important revisions would have to be made before the agreement could be signed. Bakulin informed Sheng 'in curt, clipped tones' that:

When we were preparing to leave Moscow for Sinkiang, Comrade Stalin told us that the contents of this secret agreement on the Soviet lease of tin mines must not be revealed to anyone except Commissioner Sheng, who is to put his signature on it ... Both contracting parties must sign the agreement tomorrow, or the day after tomorrow at the latest.

Sheng continued to object, but was 'rudely interrupted' by Bakulin:

Although it is our wish to hear your opinions on the agreement we must call your attention to the fact that when we were given our mission Comrade Stalin said that Commissioner Sheng must sign the agreement as it is and not a single word of it is alterable.<sup>130</sup>

Sheng records that he could no longer restrain his temper, and spoke from his heart, likening the Tin Mines Agreement (with considerable justification) to Japan's infamous Twenty-One Demands. Nevertheless,

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130. Sheng, Red Failure in Sinkiang, pp. 219-21.

Sheng realised that he was in no position to oppose the will of his Soviet backers, and accordingly signed the agreement on 26th November, 1940.<sup>131</sup>

Although the "Sin-tin" agreement represents a considerable landmark in Moscow's establishment of de jure economic control over Sinkiang, it is important to note that, long before the signing of that agreement, the province had already become a de facto political appendage of the Soviet Union. It must have been clear to Sheng that the price of the Soviet intervention of 1934 would be the establishment of a pro-Soviet, anti-Japanese government in Sinkiang, and indeed it seems likely that Sheng, driven from his north-eastern homeland by the invading Kwantung Army, was only too pleased to commit Sinkiang wholeheartedly to the anti-Japanese cause. It is difficult to understand, however, just why Sheng threw himself so enthusiastically into the arms of the Soviet Union - even Stalin must have been (pleasantly) surprised.<sup>132</sup>

131. According to Sheng, Bakulin implicitly stated that not only the future of Sinkiang, but also Sheng's personal future, would be at risk if the Tin Mines Agreement were not signed (Red Failure in Sinkiang, p. 224). Sheng argues unconvincingly that by signing the agreement, but by failing to affix the seals of the Sinkiang Provincial Government and of the Border Defence Commissioner's Office, he succeeded in tricking the Soviet Government and in invalidating all its clauses. Sensu strictu this may be correct, but pettifoggery of this kind did not prevent the exploitation of Sinkiang's mineral wealth by the Soviet Union, and does not excuse Sheng's actions.
132. Neither Sheng's subsequent claim to have become a Marxist in 1919 (Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 15), nor the presence of his arch-rival Ma Chung-ying in Moscow (Sheng, Red Failure in Sinkiang, p. 193) can fully explain Sheng's unrestrained support for contemporaneous Soviet policies. It may be that both these factors, taken together with Sheng's 'Chameleon' political nature (Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, pp. 69-81) combined to bring about, at least for a few years, a sycophancy towards the Kremlin unmatched almost anywhere outside the frontiers of the Soviet Union.

As has already been shown, following the Soviet intervention of 1934 and the subsequent flight of Ma Chung-ying, Sheng Shih-ts'ai implemented a series of policies ostensibly designed to create a "New Sinkiang" (Ch. Hsin Hsin-chiang) which was to be closely allied to the Soviet Union.<sup>133</sup> In line with this declared objective, Sinkiang's armed forces were re-designated the "Anti-Imperialist Army" (with Japan and Britain as the perceived imperialists), whilst an "Anti-Imperialist Society" was established as a supposed alternative to political parties.<sup>134</sup> Indications of the closeness of the "New Sinkiang's" ties with the Soviet Union may be found in Sheng's adoption of a six-pointed red star as the emblem of the province,<sup>135</sup> and less symbolically but more practically, in the transfer of provincial traffic from left-hand drive (as in the rest of China) to right-hand drive (as in the USSR).<sup>136</sup> Of more serious consequence for the various peoples of Sinkiang, however, was the establishment in July, 1934, of the Pao-an-chü, or Security Preservation Bureau, and of its sinister offshoot the Pao-an-tui, or Security Preservation Corps, a Soviet-style secret police force modelled on the NKVD and controlled by an NKVD Brigadier-General called Pogodin.<sup>137</sup>

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133. See above, pp. 271-2; 299-302.

134. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., III, p. 122.

135. Clubb, China and Russia: The Great Game, p. 286.

136. Dallin, Soviet Russia and the Far East, p. 102

137. According to Clubb, Pogodin was assisted by one Tseng Hsiu-fu, 'the alias of the communist Wang Li-hsiang, who had long served in Outer Mongolia'. Similarly, the Pao-an-chü was placed under the control of one Chang I-wu 'with an able deputy in the person of Chang Hsien-ch'ang, who had been Borodin's interpreter at the time of the Northern Expedition'. Clubb, O.E., China and Russia: The Great Game, pp. 289-90.

In 1936 this secret police network was expanded and strengthened by the creation of an Office of Border Affairs, with Sheng Shih-ts'ai assuming the position of its commander-in-chief. From this time onward, both entry to and exit from Sinkiang, as well as travel within the province, came under increasingly tight control.<sup>138</sup> Sheng also made extensive use of censorship to maintain his monopoly of power.<sup>139</sup>

Dramatic proof of Sheng Shih-ts'ai's involvement with the NKVD was forthcoming in 1937, when, following the collapse of "Tunganistan", the Great Purge which had been sweeping the Soviet Union since 1936 was extended to Sinkiang at Stalin's behest.<sup>140</sup> In his apologia Red Failure in Sinkiang Sheng Shih-ts'ai, writing in a style reminiscent of the Stalinist idiom of the 1930s, describes his discovery of a 'far-reaching conspiracy extending from Tokyo to Berlin, linked by the international Trotskyist movement'.<sup>141</sup> After the manner of Yezhov's NKVD purges, 'the mastermind behind the Trotskyite plot was none other than the Soviet consul general in Tihua (Urumchi), Garegin Apresoff'.<sup>142</sup> The goal of the "Fascist-Trotskyite plotters" was 'nothing less than the assassination of Sinkiang's

138. ibid., p. 290; cf. Teichman, Sir E., 'Chinese Turkistan', JRCAS, XXIII 4 (Oct. 1936), p. 570.
139. Cable, M., 'The New "New Dominion"', JRCAS, XXV, 1 (1938), 13; IOLR, L/P&S/12/2357, section 4.
140. The Great Purge (known in Russia as the yezhevshchina after N.I. Yezhov, the contemporary head of the NKVD), was extended to Soviet Central Asia in 1937 following the "discovery" of a "nationalist plot" in Uzbekistan. Wheeler, G., The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia (London, 1964), pp. 140-42.
141. Sheng Shih-ts'ai, Red Failure in Sinkiang, p. 176.
142. ibid., p. 177. Apresoff was subsequently executed for "Trotskyite plotting". Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot? p. 277.

political and military leaders, overthrow of the provincial government, and armed uprising throughout the Soviet Union'.<sup>143</sup>

Sheng Shih-ts'ai and his Soviet backers used the twisted logic and rhetoric of the Great Purge as a vehicle for the indictment of a "Trotskyist network" of no less than 435 persons, including such unlikely bedfellows as the Tungan Ma Hu-shan, the Uighurs Khoja Niyās Hājji and Mahmūd shih-chang, the loyal nationalist official Ma Shao-wu, various prominent Kazakhs, Mongols and Tatars, and the Han Chinese Huang Han-chang, Secretary-General of the Sinkiang Provincial Government.<sup>144</sup> Sheng called in NKVD officials to 'take part in the investigation',<sup>145</sup> following which the alleged conspirators were either executed or imprisoned within Sinkiang, or sent across the frontier to the Soviet Union for further interrogation by the NKVD.<sup>146</sup> In retrospect, it is clear that the only factor linking the ethnically and politically diverse "Fascist-Trotskyite plotters"<sup>147</sup> was their opposition - or perceived potential opposition - to the Soviet-sponsored status quo in Sinkiang and,

143. Sheng, Red Failure in Sinkiang, p. 178

144. ibid., pp. 179-80. One of the accused was the Tatar Burhān Shahīdi, a great political "survivor" in Sinkiang politics, who was subsequently to become, in direct succession, both the last KMT and the first CCP head of the Sinkiang Provincial Government. See Appendix I, 'Who Was Who in Republican Sinkiang'.

145. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 52.

146. Sheng, Red Failure in Sinkiang, pp. 179-80; Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 52.

147. cf. Stalin's trial and execution of "Rightists and Trotskyites" in Uzbekistan during 1937 and 1938. Wheeler, "The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia, p. 142; similarly, Bennigsen and Lemercier-Quelquejay, Islam in the Soviet Union (London, 1967), p. 151.

more particularly, to Sheng Shih-ts'ai himself. Thus, as Allen S. Whiting has indicated:

The purge may have served Sheng, as it did Stalin, to destroy rival centers of potential power. In addition, Sheng seems to have shared the Georgian dictator's paranoid tendencies. Seen in this light, the purge of 1937 appears as an extension of Stalinism into Sinkiang, with Sheng acting as the willing executioner of both policy and people.<sup>148</sup>

Following the Soviet intervention of 1937 and the subsequent NKVD-style purges, Sheng Shih-ts'ai found himself isolated from the remainder of China and almost completely dependent upon the Soviet Union. In a possible attempt to offset this dangerous imbalance, Sheng approached two high-ranking Chinese communists en route from Moscow to Yen-an with a formal request that he should be permitted to join the CCP.<sup>149</sup> According to Sheng, this request was conveyed to the CCP Politburo in Yen-an, but was subsequently referred to Moscow for approval - an indication, if correct, of how closely Sinkiang, although still theoretically an integral part of the Chinese Republic, had become bound to the USSR.<sup>150</sup>

148. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 53

149. According to Sheng Shih-ts'ai (Red Failure in Sinkiang, p. 186), the two senior-ranking members of the CCP, by name K'ang Sheng and Chen Shao-yu (alias Wang Ming), stopped over in Urumchi at an unspecified time during 1937. According to Alan S. Whiting, this has been corroborated by Chiang Kai-shek during an interview (Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 60, fn. 21). A letter sent by Sheng to Chiang in July, 1942, states that K'ang Sheng and Ch'en Shao-yu passed through Urumchi 'as early as the beginning of our war of resistance' i.e. in July, 1937); Su-lien tui Hsin-chiang ti ching-chi ch'in-lueh (Taipei, 1950), pp. 67-8.

150. Sheng, Red Failure in Sinkiang, pp. 186-8; Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 68.

Stalin clearly had no desire to enhance CCP influence and prestige in Sinkiang at the expense of the CPSU, and is accordingly reported to have vetoed Sheng's application.<sup>151</sup> This development, possibly coupled with the contemporaneous reinforcement of Soviet garrison troops in the neighbouring Mongolian People's Republic,<sup>152</sup> seems finally to have convinced Sheng that the expanding tide of Soviet influence in Central Asia was irreversible. Accordingly, the ruler of Sinkiang followed his natural inclination to flow with the tide; thus the chameleon war-lord became redder than red.

The period of Sheng's closest alignment with the Kremlin began in October, 1938, when, together with his family, Sheng travelled to Moscow for consultations with the Soviet leadership. He arrived at Moscow incognito,<sup>153</sup> but immediately began a round of intensive discussions at the Kremlin, culminating in a drinking party at Molotov's dacha 'in the pleasant countryside far from the gray Moscow environs'.<sup>154</sup> During his

151. ibid.

152. Clubb, O.E., China and Russia: The Great Game, pp. 313-5.

153. Sheng notes in his memoirs that 'my visit escaped general notice, and even the Chinese ambassador to Russia apparently did not learn of my pilgrimage to the Kremlin' (Red Failure in Sinkiang, p. 197).

154. Sheng notes discreetly that: 'although we Chinese are known for our generous toasts and the flow of wine at meals, the Russian capacity for drinking put us to shame as the dinner progressed' (Red Failure in Sinkiang, p. 205). Needless to say, this equivocation is really intended to convey Sheng's distaste for the inebriety of the Soviet leadership. For further details in this context, see Milovan Djilas, Conversations With Stalin (Harmondsworth, 1962), pp. 63-4; 117-8. It is interesting to note that after dinner at Molotov's dacha, Sheng was shown a film entitled 'Eslj zavtra voina...' ('If War Should Come Tomorrow...'), which he found 'sober and moving' (Red Failure, p. 205) Seven years later, after a similarly over-indulgent dinner, Djilas was shown the same film. He writes:

The war in that film was waged with the help of poison gas, while at the rear of the invaders - the Germans - rebellious elements of the proletariat were breaking out. At the end of the film Stalin calmly remarked, "Not much different from what actually happened, only there was no poison gas and the German proletariat did not rebel". (Conversations with Stalin, p. 82)

stay in Moscow, Sheng expressed his wish to strengthen the links between Sinkiang and the Soviet Union and, having assured Stalin of his "devotion to Marxism-Leninism", he further stated his desire 'to receive party training and indoctrination immediately'.<sup>155</sup> Stalin promptly agreed to this request, and before leaving Moscow Sheng was enrolled as a member of the All-Union Communist Party.<sup>156</sup> In other words, Sheng Shih-ts'ai, although a Chinese national and the military governor of Sinkiang province, voluntarily became a member of the CPSU, and not of the CCP as he claims to have originally intended.<sup>157</sup> Sheng further records that he left Moscow 'in an aura of cheer and optimism', noting with great satisfaction that:

I had seen Stalin not once, but three times. I had been dealt with by the most important men in the Kremlin as though I were head of China, instead of being merely governor of a province, and a rather undeveloped province at that.<sup>158</sup>

Following his visit to Moscow, Sheng's foreign policy became a virtual carbon copy of the Kremlin's, whilst at home the survival of his regime became still more dependent upon Soviet advisers and police controls.<sup>159</sup>

155. Sheng, Red Failure in Sinkiang, p. 201.

156. Party membership card no. 1859118. Red Failure in Sinkiang, p. 206.

157. In his apologia Red Failure in Sinkiang (pp. 206-7), Sheng offers various excuses and justifications in an attempt to explain 'mechanical details' concerning his party membership, most notably: 'By enrolling ... in the Russian Communist Party, I could flatly and honestly deny to questioners any connection with the Chinese Communists in Yen-an'(!).

158. Sheng, Red Failure in Sinkiang, p. 206.

159. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 69.



The power of his Soviet backers was seemingly amply confirmed by General Zhukov's crushing defeat of a section of the Japanese Kwantung Army at Nomonhan in May-August, 1939.<sup>160</sup> Sheng subsequently endorsed the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of August 23, 1939; applauded Stalin's absorption of the Baltic States; supported the Soviet Union in its war with Finland; and hailed the Nazi-Soviet partition of Poland as the 'glorious mission of the great and courageous Red Army ... to help the White Russian and Ukrainian peoples inside the Polish border, saving them from falling under German fascist oppression ... (and) bringing them over from the dark camp of the old world to the bright new world'.<sup>161</sup> By 1939 it may therefore fairly be said that Sinkiang, though still nominally a part of China, had become a virtual dependency of the Soviet Union, differing hardly at all from the neighbouring Mongolian People's Republic.

160. At the battle of Nomonhan (Khalkhin Gol), situated on the Mongolian side of the MPR-"Manchukuo" frontier, General Zhukov's Soviet Far Eastern First Army Group (comprising 35 rifle battalions and 20 cavalry squadrons, supported by an estimated 500 tanks, 500 armoured cars, and 500 planes) defeated the Japanese Special Sixth Army (comprising 25 infantry battalions and 17 cavalry squadrons). The battle of Nomonhan, which reached a climax in August, 1939, resulted in the destruction of the Japanese forces and the effective elimination of the Japanese threat to Outer Mongolia. Japanese losses at Nomonhan are put at 55,000, compared with an estimated 10,000 for the combined Soviet-Mongol forces. The significance of this Soviet victory on the political situation in Sinkiang, and more particularly on the psyche of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, can hardly be over-estimated. Garthoff, R.L., Sino-Soviet Military Relations (NY, 1966), pp. 36-9; cf. Coox, A., 'High Command and Field Army: The Kwantung Army and the Nomonhan Incident, 1939', Military Affairs, XXXIII, 2 (October, 1969), 302-11; Young, K.H., 'The Nomonhan Incident: Imperial Japan and the Soviet Union', Monumenta Nipponica, 22 (1967), pp. 82-101.
161. Sheng Shih-ts'ai, Liu ta-cheng ti chiao-ch'eng ('The Six Great Policies Study Manual', Urumchi, 1942), I, p. 48 (cited in Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 72).

#### 7.4 The Muslims of Sinkiang During Sheng's "Progressive" Period

As a direct result of Sheng Shih-ts'ai's adoption of a stridently pro-Soviet line during the years 1934-42, his policies became associated, in the eyes of numerous contemporary writers, with the anti-fascist "peace camp" dominated by Stalin and the Comintern from Moscow. Yet whilst the opportunistic foreign policy and domestic repression of the Stalinist era in the Soviet Union have long since been recognised by dispassionate scholarship as incontrovertible fact, the myth of Sheng Shih-ts'ai's "progressive" period has remained all but unchallenged.<sup>162</sup>

Much of Sheng's reputation as a progressive reformer during the first eight years of his rule is derived from Tu Chung-yüan's panegyric, Sheng Shih-ts'ai yu hsin Hsin-chiang (Sheng Shih-ts'ai and the New Sinkiang), the only detailed firsthand study of Sheng's rule, based on the author's experiences in Sinkiang circa 1937.<sup>163</sup> Although never translated into English,

162. In his Mestnaya Natsional'naya Avtonomiya v Kitayskoy Narodnoy Respublike (Na Primere Sin'tszyan-Uyqurskoy Avtonomoy Oblasti), (Moscow, 1959), a synopsis of which appeared under the title 'Sinkiang, 1928-59', in CAR, VIII, 4 (1960), 441-57, K.F. Kotov describes Sheng's ostensible support for national equality and democracy as a 'demagogic screen' for the real (reactionary) nature of his regime (op.cit., p. 442). Similarly Rossabi, in his China and Inner Asia (London, 1975), would appear to give little credence to Sheng's "progressive" policies.

163. Tu was a childhood friend of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, who visited Sinkiang during the early years of Sheng's rule before returning to Hankow to publish his Sheng Shih-ts'ai yü hsin Hsin-chiang (1938). He subsequently returned to Sinkiang (? in 1938), when he was appointed Chancellor of Sinkiang College. In 1943 he was accused by Sheng of being an agent of the CCP. A written "confession" was subsequently extracted under torture (reproduced in Appendix E of Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?), and Tu was executed. Writing of Tu's book in his memoirs, Sheng (no doubt hypocritically) comments: 'While the statistical data and the facts (Tu) included were accurate, he carefully refrained from a single word of criticism, although I would have been the first to admit shortcomings in my own regime'. (Red Failure in Sinkiang, pp. 210-11).

Tu's book provided the basis for Martin R. Norins' 1944 study of

Sinkiang: Gateway to Asia, which concludes that:

... Far from being a Soviet Russian "puppet", Sheng Shih-ts'ai has been one of the most far-sighted, enlightened, and independent military leaders of modern China. That he has ... brought to Sinkiang... much of the best qualities of both China and of neighbouring Soviet Russia is truly an amazing achievement, too long unappreciated by the outside world. 164

Similarly Owen Lattimore, in his 1950 study, Sinkiang: Pivot of Asia, draws heavily on the prima facie evidence of Tu Chung-yüan to prove that, at least during the years 1934-42, Sheng had 'embarked on a period of real reform'. Thus, where the Muslim and other non-Han peoples of the province were concerned:

Uighurs and Kazakhs were immediately appointed to high posts in their own districts. All non-Chinese nationalities were allowed to promote education in their own languages and schools. The number of students increased from 3000 in 1933 to 150,000 in 1936, and in addition 329 non-Chinese students were sent to the Soviet Union to study medicine, veterinary science, engineering and agriculture... The provincial newspaper Hsin-chiang Jih Pao... (was) published in seven languages. "Cultural Associations" began to function for Uighurs, Kazakhs, Tungans, Tatars, Russians and Chinese. Of these the most active was that of the Uighurs, the majority people, with 8 regional and 41 district branches, supporting 1736 primary schools with 124,174 students, and also conducting teacher training and adult education. 165

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164. Norins, M.R., Gateway to Asia: Sinkiang (NY, 1944), p. 101. Norins quotes very extensively from Tu Chung-yüan throughout this study; moreover, a 'selection of paraphrases' from Tu's Sheng Shih-ts'ai yü hsin Hsin-chiang is included as a separate appendix (op.cit., pp. 141-51). See also idem, 'The New Sinkiang: China's Link with the Middle East', Pacific Affairs, XV, 4 (December, 1942), pp. 457-70, passim.
165. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, pp. 72-3, citing Tu Chung-yüan, op.cit., pp. 80-84. It should be noted that Tu's figures are apparently uncorroborated by any independent source.

At a later point Lattimore comments that 'during the first period' (i.e. from 1934 to 1942), 'Sheng Shih-ts'ai ran Sinkiang very smoothly on the three wheels of friendly relations with the Soviet Union, democracy, and interests of the "nationalities" or ethnic groups of the province'.<sup>166</sup> These claims have been echoed in such later (and lesser) studies of Sinkiang as Basil Davidson's Turkestan Alive (1957),<sup>167</sup> and Jack Chen's The Sinkiang Story (1977).<sup>168</sup> Even Allen S. Whiting, whilst noting that Sheng Shih-ts'ai employed 'a crude compound of anti-imperialism and anti-capitalism, offered under the rubric of Marxism-Leninism... to equip him(self) with ideological pretensions fitting his visions of political leadership',<sup>169</sup> adds the caveat that Sheng 'genuinely aspired to make Sinkiang a model province', and that 'to deny this... is to overlook a major aspect of his policy'.<sup>170</sup>

To what extent, therefore, did the Muslim peoples of Sinkiang benefit from Sheng's "progressive" policies between 1934 and 1942? As Allen S. Whiting has indicated, 'most firsthand accounts, whether friendly or hostile, agree as to the construction of schools, medical facilities, and roads, as well as to the improved fiscal and enlightened cultural policies of his rule'.<sup>171</sup>

166. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, pp. 72-3

167. Davidson, B., Turkestan Alive, pp. 112-17.

168. Chen. J., The Sinkiang Story, pp. 186-92

169. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 127.

170. ibid., p. 137.

171. ibid.

Yet a careful examination of the available contemporaneous sources would seem to indicate continuing Muslim, and especially Kazakh, hostility towards Sheng throughout this period.

As has been shown, following the collapse of the 1937 Muslim rebellion in southern Sinkiang and the suppression of lesser disturbances in the Tien Shan and at Kumul (events which, in themselves, provide evidence of widespread Muslim hostility to Sheng's regime), Sheng Shih-ts'ai instituted an NKVD-backed police state which clearly owed more to the terror of the "yezhevshchina" than to any abstract ideals of democracy or national equality.

Much has been made of Sheng's appointment of Sinkiang Muslims to senior positions within his administration following the collapse of the secessionist TIRET in 1934,<sup>172</sup> yet these officials - perhaps best exemplified by such powerless figureheads as the hapless Khoja Niyas Hajji - had not long to survive. During 1937 Stalin's Great Purge swept across Soviet Central Asia, stunning the Muslim population and leaving scarcely a family untouched.<sup>173</sup> Anti-religious propaganda was stepped up, as was the hunt for "bourgeois nationalists" and pan-Turanianists of all description. Even apparently loyal communists in positions of great power and influence were not safe.

172. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 73; Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p.185; Norins, 'The New Sinkiang: China's Link With the Middle East', p. 463; idem, Gateway to Asia, p. 93; Barber, A., and N.D. Hanwell, 'The Emergence of China's Far West', Far Eastern Survey, VIII, 9 (April 26th, 1939), p. 103; Lee Fu-hsiang, The Turkic-Moslem Problem in Sinkiang: A Case Study of the Chinese Communists' Nationality Policy (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Rutgers University, 1973), p. 65; Chan Fook-lam, G., Sinkiang Under Sheng Shih-ts'ai, 1933-44 (unpublished MA thesis, University of Hong Kong, 1965), p. 165, etc.

173. Hayit, B., Turkestan im XX Jahrhundert (Darmstadt, 1956), cited in Wheeler, G., The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia, p. 143.

Thus Faizulla Khodzhayev, the Prime Minister of Soviet Uzbekistan, was accused of having buried his dead brother according to Islamic rites; he was subsequently dismissed from office, ordered to report to Moscow, and executed.<sup>174</sup> Similarly Akmal Ikramov, First Secretary of the Uzbek Communist Party, was accused in a newspaper article of being a Turkic nationalist, called to Moscow, and executed.<sup>175</sup> Stalin was anxious to crush all vestiges of Muslim independence in Central Asia - as indeed was his protégé, Sheng Shih-ts'ai, within Sinkiang. It was therefore entirely predictable that when the purges were extended from the Soviet Union to Sinkiang, the great majority of those executed or imprisoned by Sheng and his NKVD backers for allegedly plotting with Germany and Japan were Turkic Muslims.<sup>176</sup> Moreover it is clear that, following the 1937 purges, very few Turkic Muslims (and virtually no Tungans)<sup>177</sup> were permitted

174. ibid., pp. 142-3; Caroe, O., Soviet Empire: The Turks of Central Asia and Stalinism, p. 160; Maillart, E., Turkestan Solo (London, 1938), pp. 193-9.
175. Wheeler, The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia, p. 142. Bennigsen and Lemerrier-Quellejay have described Khodzhayev and Ikramov as 'the two most outstanding Muslim communists since Sultan Galiyev' (Islam in the Soviet Union, pp. 160-61). According to Wheeler (op.cit., p. 143), Ikramov was rehabilitated in 1956. Khodzhayev apparently remains 'an unperson'.
176. Whiting, Soviet Policy in Sinkiang, p. 53; cf. Sheng, Red Failure in Sinkiang, pp. 179-80. See also the list of Muslim "martyrs executed by hanging" in the year 1938-39, given by Isma'il, M.S., and Isma'il, M.A., in Moslems in the Soviet Union and in China, p. 13.
177. Even M. Norins, probably the most enthusiastic Western partisan of Sheng's "New Sinkiang" felt constrained to comment that:  
 The unfortunate omission of detailed information relating to the place or lack of place of the Tung-kans under (Sheng's) policy, leads one to feel that the Tung-kan question may not even yet have been solved in Sinkiang, and that in this respect the policy of "Racial Equality" as practised in the province may possibly be vulnerable to criticism. (Gateway to Asia, p. 93).

to hold high office in Sinkiang.<sup>178</sup> It thus seems probable that Sheng's continuing reputation for employing Muslim officials in senior positions under his administration rests almost exclusively on a number of token appointments made during the first three years of his rule, from 1934 to 1937. In this context it is instructive to note the comments of the Norwegian, Wilfred Skrede, who spent some time in Kulja during 1941. Skrede, who subsequently travelled to British India via Urumchi, Aksu and Kashgar, records that:

The wearing of uniform was confined to persons of one definite racial type out of all those in Sinkiang's very mixed population. That was easy to see. The members of the army and police all had the distinguishing marks of the Chinese. Thus, for all his communism, Comrade Shun (sic) was practising a sort of racial policy. Moslems of all kinds were kept out of it.<sup>179</sup>

As a result of Sheng's Draconian policies, following the defeat of the 1937 Muslim rebellion and the blood-letting of the subsequent purges, Muslim resistance to Sheng's regime seems to have been temporarily broken throughout most of the province. Accordingly, specifically anti-religious propaganda was slackened, whilst anti-British and anti-Japanese propaganda increased.<sup>180</sup> According to British diplomatic sources, during the years

178. Exceptions to this general rule were the Uighurs Abutu (Reconstruction Affairs Commissioner) and "Kuerpan" (presumably Qurban) Niyas (Vice-Director of the Police Department); the Kazakhs "Sarifuhan" (i.e. Sharif Khan, Administrator of the Altai Region) and Buhart, a tribal prince; and the Tungan Lan Yen-shou, a vice-commissioner of the provincial government. All were accused of conspiracy in September, 1940, and subsequently purged. (Sheng Shih-ts'ai, Red Failure in Sinkiang, pp. 216-7). Needless to say, people of all nationalities including Han Chinese and Russians were swept up in this purge, as in all Sheng's purges.

179. Skrede, Across the Roof of the World, p. 57.

180. McLean, N.L.D., 'Sinkiang Today', p. 382. In this context see also IOLR, L/P&S/12/2358, PZ.1236.1940 (Report of HMCCK Johnson on his visit to Urumchi, July-September, 1939). Johnson records that:

Another sign of the times in Urumchi was the deserted mosques and Chinese temples. Many of these buildings are falling into disrepair or have been converted to other uses... It is evident that religious observance of any kind is not intended by the powers that be to have any part in the future of Sinkiang (op.cit., p.4).

1937-1941, the indigenous population of the traditionally secessionist south of the province remained relatively quiescent, as, seemingly, did the population of Ili. Meanwhile in Urumchi itself, 'any observant visitor' could not fail to notice:

The large proportion of men in military or police uniform... the large number of Russians in the city... the cowed look of the Chinese and Moslem population, and the arrogant bearing of the Russians.<sup>181</sup>

During these years large numbers of Muslim people - in particular landowners, petty officials and mullahs, but also those caught reading religious books - were arrested and thrown into prison.<sup>182</sup> Those who escaped a summary bullet in the back of the head were sent to work in the gold mines of the Altai, or in some cases were forced to erect fortifications and dig air raid shelters outside the capital. Groups of prisoners in the latter category were transported through Urumchi each evening 'with their faces covered', thus providing a salutary warning to the populace of the fate in store for all opponents of Sheng's regime.<sup>183</sup> Police surveillance seems to have been all-pervasive, as a result of which in Kumul 'conversation was limited to the growing of melons, the weather and market prices',<sup>184</sup> whilst in Urumchi:

181. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2358, PZ.1236.1940, p. 3.

182. ibid.: cf. Mclean, op.cit., p. 381. For a description of Sinkiang prison conditions in Sinkiang under Sheng's rule written from personal experience, see Ahmad Kamal, Land Without Laughter (NY, 1940). A good secondary source is Chen, The Sinkiang Story, pp. 195-8.

183. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2358, PZ.1236.1940, p. 3.

184. Vasel, G., 'Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien', p. 14. A vivid account of the activities of Sheng's secret police in Kumul may be found in this work, pp. 14-15.



No person, whether official, military officer, soldier, or ordinary civilian (could) be exempt from the fear that he (might) suddenly be denounced by some secret agent and suddenly disappear. I was told that the friends of a person who had so disappeared were afraid to say so openly, and that the expression "gone to Chuguchak" was generally used in such cases.<sup>185</sup>

It is clear that the widespread purges carried out by the Pao-an-chü (under NKVD tutelage) between 1937 and 1942 inspired sufficient fear effectively to crush opposition to Sheng's regime, at least amongst the settled urban and rural population of Sinkiang.<sup>186</sup> As in the Soviet Union, however, police terror was to prove less effective when directed against nomadic Muslim peoples such as the Kirghiz, and more especially the Kazakhs.

Sheng's problems with the "religious tribes"<sup>187</sup> of the Altai and the Tien Shan date from the very beginning of his rule in Sinkiang,<sup>188</sup> and are closely linked with contemporaneous developments across the Soviet frontier where, in the name of collectivisation, Stalin was pursuing a policy which amounted to deliberate genocide. The Soviet government's collectivisation of the Kazakh steppe and its concurrent attempts to suppress nomadism have been catalogued elsewhere, as indeed has the fierce resistance of the Kazakh people to those policies.<sup>189</sup> Suffice it briefly to record that, according

185. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2358, PZ.1236.1940, p. 3.

186. This is hardly surprising, considering the NKVD involvement. As a result of the contemporaneous NKVD purges in Soviet Central Asia 'there has never been any further suggestion of a nationalist plot or movement' in that area, although many individuals have, of course, been accused of harbouring nationalist sentiments. (Wheeler, The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia, p. 143).

187. Sheng's own phrase. Red Failure in Sinkiang, p. 181.

188. As indicated above (pp.237-8 ), a Kazakh rebellion under the leadership of one Sharif Khān broke out in the Shara Sume region in early 1933. It is not clear whether the 1933 rebel leader is the same person as the Sharif Khan purged in 1940 (see fn. 178 above).

189. See, for example, Caroe, op.cit., pp. 162-72 ('Russianization') and pp. 173-88 ('Collectivization and the Suppression of Nomadism'); Wheeler, The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia, pp. 130-36.

to Soviet statistics, between 1926 and 1939 the Kazakh population of the USSR declined by approximately one-third,<sup>190</sup> whilst during the six years between Yang Tseng-hsin's assassination in 1928 and Ma Chung-ying's defeat in 1934, livestock losses in Soviet Kazakhstan ran to an estimated 73% of all cattle, 83% of all horses and 87% of all sheep.<sup>191</sup>

During the years of collectivisation (known to the Kazakhs as the Katl-i-aam, or "general massacre"),<sup>192</sup> many thousands of Kazakhs fled across the Sino-Soviet frontier to Sinkiang.<sup>193</sup> Here they set up their yurts in north-western Dzungaria and attempted to make good their losses in a zone still outside Soviet control. Following the Red Army intervention of 1934, however, and the subsequent gradual reduction of Sinkiang to Soviet satellite status, the Kremlin adopted a more forward policy towards the recalcitrant Kazakhs of Dzungaria, whom they attempted to bring under the direct control of the Urumchi administration.<sup>194</sup> To escape this interference a large group of Kazakhs, variously estimated at between 15,000 and 18,000 strong,

190. Caroe, op.cit., pp. 166-72, citing Soviet census statistics for 1926 and 1939, and Lorimer, F., The Population of the Soviet Union (League of Nations, 1946).

191. Holdsworth, M., 'Soviet Central Asia, 1917-1940', Soviet Studies, III, 3 (January, 1952), p. 266.

192. Caroe, op.cit., p. 172.

193. Wheeler, The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia, p. 131; cf. Lias, G., Kazak Exodus (London, 1956), pp. 61-2. Similarly, many Kirghiz fled from Soviet Kirghizia to the Pamirs and the Tien Shan (see above, pp. 179-181). Photographs of the fleeing Kirghiz and of the pursuing Red Army may be found in the account of Gustav Krist, an Austrian who accompanied the Kirghiz into the Pamirs during their flight. Krist, G., Alone Through the Forbidden Land (London, 1939), pp. 139-63; plates 19, 21-22.

194. McLean, 'Sinkiang Today', p. 381.

moved out of Dzungaria and began a long trek to the Kansu-Tsinghai-Sinkiang border area, where they settled in the region of Gez Kōl (Tk. "Lake Gez" see map No. 5).<sup>195</sup>

Information concerning subsequent Kazakh rebel activity is both sparse and unreliable, but according to Kazakh refugee sources emanating from Kashmir and Turkey, following the emigration to Gez Kōl, three separate centres of Kazakh opposition to Sheng's regime were to emerge. These were in the central Tien Shan, under the joint leadership of °Ali Beg Raḥīm and Yūnus Hājji;<sup>196</sup> at Gez Kōl itself, under Husayn Tājji and Sultān Sharīf;<sup>197</sup> and (most significantly) in the Altai, under °Uthmān Bātūr.<sup>198</sup> Seemingly, between 1936 and 1944 the Sinkiang Kazakhs fought a series of sustained but low-key guerilla actions against the Urumchi authorities.<sup>199</sup> Little is known of developments at Gez Kōl or in the Tien Shan during this period,<sup>200</sup> but it is

195. Lias, op.cit., pp. 71-2; Isma'il, M.S., and Isma'il, M.A., op.cit., p. 12 ('The Revolution of 1936').

196. Lias, op.cit., pp. 76-7, 92.

197. ibid., pp. 72-3.

198. ibid., p. 91; cf. Boorman and Howard, Biographical Dictionary of Republican China, Vol III, pp. 46-7.

199. Lias, op.cit., pp. 81-5 ('The Kazak Way of War').

200. Many Kazakhs (possibly between four and five thousand) eventually left Gez Kōl and continued their trek out of Sheng's sphere of influence. An estimated three thousand of these refugees eventually managed to reach Kashmir, apparently by way of western Tibet (Lias, op.cit., p. 73; Isma'il, M.S., and Isma'il, M.A., op.cit., p. 12). According to McLean (op.cit., p. 382) by 1948 the remnants of this Altai Kazakh band had scattered throughout many of the towns of north India, where they made their living by selling lambskin caps. For a rather fanciful description of events in the Tien Shan and Manass region, see Lias, op.cit., pp. 76-8.

at least clear that the Altai Kazakhs under ʿUthmān Bātūr proved to be a constant thorn in the side of the provincial administration. Thus Sheng, in his Red Failure in Sinkiang, accuses the Altai Kazakhs of complicity in the "Fascist-Trotskyite" conspiracy of 1937. Following the 1937 purges, troops were sent to 'crush the rebels of the Altai by force of arms',<sup>201</sup> yet despite Soviet assistance, Sheng was only partly successful in this aim. ʿUthmān Bātūr withdrew to the high Altai beyond the reach of the provincial forces, only to return in 1940 to lead a new Kazakh rising which broke out in September of that year, particularly in the districts of Kokotohai and Tsingho.<sup>202</sup> Once again Sheng sent troops to suppress this revolt, though apparently with little success. By November, 1940, unrest is reported to have spread throughout the three north-western border districts of Ili, Chuguchak and Shara Sume (Altai), as well as - for the first time since 1937 - to the southern, Uighur-inhabited oasis of Aksu.<sup>203</sup>

In sum, therefore, it seems that the benefits brought to the indigenous Muslim peoples of Sinkiang during Sheng's "progressive" years have been greatly exaggerated. On the credit side must be set Sheng's rapid extension of road and telephone communications within the province,<sup>204</sup> the partial stabilisation

201. Sheng, Red Failure in Sinkiang, pp. 178-9.

202. ibid., pp. 215-6.

203. ibid., p. 218.

204. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 75, apparently quoting Tu Chung-yüan. It is clear, however, that the Sinkiang road-building project was not intended specifically to benefit the population of Sinkiang. Rather it was undertaken, employing Soviet funds and Turkic labour, with the intention of improving links between the USSR and the Sino-Japanese war front. Thus to many Sinkiang Muslims, Sheng's road-building projects can have seemed to be little more than forced labour in a Soviet and Chinese cause. In this context, see Lias, op.cit., p. 78.

of provincial currency,<sup>205</sup> and certain much-vaunted educational and "cultural" reforms which should, however, only be examined in the context of contemporaneous educational and "cultural" reforms within neighbouring Soviet Central Asia.<sup>206</sup> Against this, following a painstaking examination of the available sources (none of which are truly non-partisan), there emerges a picture of police terror, military repression, and continuing Muslim resistance to Sheng's rule.

205. Seemingly the Sinkiang currency reforms were undertaken, at Sheng's behest, by Mao Tse-min, the younger brother of Mao Tse-tung, whom Sheng subsequently executed. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, pp. 74-5, fn. 46.
206. Tu Chung-yüan's impressive but unsubstantiated claims of Sheng's educational achievements (cited above, p. 338) give the misleading impression that, during these "progressive" years, many thousands of new primary schools sprang into existence. In fact it is clear that in most cases Sheng merely altered the curricula of existing Qur'anic schools (see Cable and French, 'The New "New Dominion"', pp. 13-14). Undoubtedly Sheng and his Soviet backers did institute a sweeping literacy programme between 1934 and 1942, though very much for their own purposes. Thus in the Soviet Union:

By 1930, all the languages of Central Asia had been provided with Latin alphabets, and these were used in the textbooks for the new schools being set up, and in the newspapers, journals and books published by newly-established presses. Many hundreds of thousands of adults and school children learning to read for the first time knew only the Latin alphabet. Unfamiliar with the Arabic script, they were cut off from the classic works that comprised the literary tradition of Central Asia. The Koran and its commentaries became closed books, as did the Persian poetry of Sa'di, Firdausi and Hafiz and the scholarly works produced during the golden days of learning in Samarkand and Bukhara. For the generations beginning their education in Soviet schools and adult education classes, the literary blackboard was wiped clean, ready for new writing. Bacon, E., Central Asians Under Russian Rule: A Study in Culture Change, NY, 1966), p. 191.

By the mid-1930s these Stalinist educational reforms, which were clearly something of a mixed blessing, had spread across the Sino-Soviet frontier to affect both the sedentary and nomadic populations of Sinkiang. (Emiloglu, A., 'Changes in the Uighur Script during the Past 50 years', CAJ, XVII, 1, 128-9; Lias, op.cit., pp. 74-5; cf. Winner, T.G., The Oral Art and Literature of the Kazakhs of Central Asia (NY, 1958), pp. 14-42).

7.5 1942-44: The Fall of Sheng Shih-ts'ai and the Emergence of Kuomintang Influence

As has been shown, by the time of the outbreak of the Second World War in September, 1939, Sinkiang had become a virtual territorial extension of the Soviet Union, whilst its ruler, Sheng Shih-ts'ai, although still a Chinese national, had become a member of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and was amongst the most vociferous (and sycophantic) of Stalin's foreign supporters. As a corollary to this development, a number of senior CCP members under the leadership of Chen T'an-chiu and including Mao Tse-tung's brother, Mao Tse-min, were despatched to Sinkiang early in 1938.<sup>207</sup> Once in Urumchi, they took up various important posts in the provincial administration, though it is clear that they remained suspicious of Sheng's bona fides, and that their loyalty lay ultimately with Yen-an.<sup>208</sup>

Soviet influence in Sinkiang undoubtedly reached a peak in November, 1940, when Sheng Shih-ts'ai ratified the infamous "Tin Mines Agreement", apparently at Stalin's demand.<sup>209</sup> The year 1941, however, saw two striking developments, both of which seriously affected the military and political position of Sheng's Soviet ally. Firstly, on April 13th, 1941, the Soviet Union and Japan signed a mutual non-aggression pact which was obviously detrimental to Chinese interests.<sup>210</sup> This development can hardly have

207. Clubb, China and Russia: The Great Game, p. 321.

208. ibid., p. 323; Sheng, Red Failure in Sinkiang, pp. 232-3.

209. According to Sheng, during the negotiations over the "Sin Tin" agreement, he was informed by the Soviet delegation that he was a member of the All Union Communist Party (CPSU), and that he should therefore obey the orders of the party (i.e. sign the agreement). Red Failure in Sinkiang, p.222.

210. Stalin is reported to have embraced Matsuoka, the Japanese Foreign Minister, and to have said: 'We are Asiatics, too, and we've got to stick together'. Werth, A., Russia At War, 1941-45 (London, 1964), p. 121.

pleased Sheng, who, although otherwise politically amoral, seems to have remained staunchly anti-Japanese throughout his long political career.<sup>211</sup> At the time of the signing of the Soviet-Japanese Non-Aggression Pact, however, Sheng was clearly in no position to express overt hostility towards a policy of détente with Japan. Accordingly, he seems to have "hedged his bets" by suggesting that the Soviet Union should institute a fully-fledged Soviet regime in Sinkiang,<sup>212</sup> whilst simultaneously opening secret negotiations with the Kuomintang authorities in an apparent move to bring Sinkiang back into the Nationalist Chinese fold.<sup>213</sup>

Sheng's political indecision was not to last long. Within two months of Stalin's reaching agreement with Japan, the political balance in Central Asia was once again radically changed by Hitler's June, 1941 blitzkrieg against the Soviet Union. Within days it became apparent that the supposedly invincible Red Army had suffered a series of cataclysmic defeats at the hands of the Germans, and was reeling back towards the Urals. In October, 1941, the severely over-strained Soviet Government informed Chungking that all shipments of military aid to China would have to be suspended,<sup>214</sup> whilst by November of the same year German forces had brought Leningrad under siege, were within some 30 miles of Moscow, and had thrust far into the Ukraine.

211. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 72. It should be remembered that Sheng's native province of Liaoning had been occupied by the Japanese Kwantung Army in September, 1931, and was subsequently incorporated in the Japanese puppet state of "Manchukuo".
212. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 80.
213. ibid., pp. 80-81. It is interesting to note that during April, 1941, Sheng was officially appointed Governor of Sinkiang by the Nationalist authorities. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 123.
214. North, R.C., Moscow and Chinese Communists (Stanford, 1953), p. 188.

By the end of the year these developments had served both to weaken Soviet influence and prestige in Sinkiang, and severely to diminish the attractions of the Soviet Union as an ally in the eyes of Sheng Shih-ts'ai. Meanwhile, the Kazakh revolt in the Altai continued to smoulder.<sup>215</sup>

On December 7th, 1941, a third factor entered the increasingly complicated equation of Central Asian politics with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour. As a result of this development, Chiang Kai-shek gained an powerful and committed ally in the United States of America, as well as a new source of military and financial aid to replace the hard-pressed Soviet Union. Kuomintang morale received a considerable boost as a result of this political windfall, and Chiang Kai-shek - now fully confident that Japan would lose the war<sup>216</sup> - took steps to strengthen his position within China in preparation for the KMT-CCP conflict which would inevitably follow Japan's defeat.<sup>217</sup> Sinkiang obviously figured prominently in Chiang's calculations. If the KMT wished to secure its rear and to isolate the main CCP base at Yen-an from the Soviet Union, it would clearly be necessary to wean Sheng Shih-ts'ai away from his Soviet and CCP advisers and back into the Nationalist camp. Meanwhile, 1,500 miles away in Urumchi, faced with spreading Muslim unrest and rapidly diminishing Soviet assistance, Sheng had reached a similar conclusion. It only remained for the negotiations to take place.

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215. Jackson, The Russo-Chinese Borderlands, p. 53; Isma'il, M.S., and Isma'il, M.A., op.cit., p. 14; Lias, op.cit., pp. 102-3.

216. Chiang Kai-shek, Soviet Russia in China, p. 103; Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 82.

217. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 82. Needless to say, a similar course of action was taken by the CCP. North, R.C., Chinese Communism (London, 1966), pp. 167-8.



Accordingly, in March, 1942, General Chu Shao-liang, commander of the Eighth War Area, with headquarters at Lanchow, flew to Urumchi to hold secret talks with Sheng Shih-ts'ai.<sup>218</sup> It seems highly probable that Chu, acting on Chiang Kai-shek's instructions, suggested to Sheng that he should break with Moscow and realign himself with Chungking. As Clubb has indicated, the quid pro quo would presumably have been Chiang's agreement to Sheng's continuation in power, together with the promise of a share in the financial aid already pledged to the KMT by the American Government.<sup>219</sup> Sheng apparently signalled his acceptance of Chiang's offer in April, 1942, when, in rapid succession, he stopped publication of the pro-Soviet monthly organ Fan-ti chan-hsien ("Anti-Imperialist War Front"),<sup>220</sup> and ordered the arrest of numerous "progressives" and CCP members working in Sinkiang. Amongst those arrested were Sheng's childhood friend, Tu Chung-yüan, and Mao Tse-min, brother of the CCP Chairman, Mao Tse-tung.<sup>221</sup> At about this time Sheng Shih-ts'ai's

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218. Wei, H., China and Soviet Russia (Princeton, 1956), citing a dispatch by Theodore White in Time, October 25th, 1943. According to Allen S. Whiting (Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 94, fn. 10), White's information has been corroborated 'by an American, well informed on events of this period through eyewitness contacts'. See also Clubb, China and Russia, p. 323. According to Lattimore (Pivot of Asia, p. 79), Sheng Shih-ts'ai had once been a subordinate of Chu Shao-liang.

219. Clubb, China and Russia, p. 323. See also: Esposito, B.J., 'China's West in the 20th Century', Military Review, LIV, 1 (1974), p. 72.

220. Chan Fook-lam, G., Sinkiang Under Sheng Shih-ts'ai, p. 163; Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 83.

221. According to CCP sources (Sinkiang Jih-pao, June 3rd, 1953, cited in Whiting, op.cit., p. 94, fn. 12), over 100 Chinese Communists were arrested during Sheng's Spring 1942 purge. Mao Tse-tung's biographer, Stuart Schram, would appear to be mistaken in dating Mao Tse-min's arrest to September, 1942. Schram, Mao Tse-Tung (Harmondsworth, 1966), p. 209.

own brother, Sheng Shih-ch'i, who commanded the motorised brigade at Urumchi, was shot and killed, apparently because of his pro-Soviet views.<sup>222</sup>

Negotiations between Sheng Shih-ts'ai and the Nationalist authorities at Chungking continued throughout the summer of 1942, with Chu Shao-liang acting as intermediary. Chu made a second, unofficial visit to Sinkiang in May, and a third, official visit in July.<sup>223</sup> Finally, accompanied by Madame Chiang Kai-shek and by Chaucer H. Wu, the Nationalists' Special Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, Chu flew into Urumchi on August 29th to finalise the agreement. According to Chinese Nationalist sources, Madame Chiang carried with her a letter from her husband promising Sheng 'not only forgiveness for past deeds, but <sup>accepting</sup> full responsibility for their consequences'.<sup>224</sup>

222. Considerable mystery surrounds the death of Sheng Shih-ch'i. According to Sheng Shih-ts'ai (Red Failure in Sinkiang, p. 240), Shih-ch'i was murdered by his wife, Chen Hsiu-ying, who was acting on Soviet and CCP instructions. A "written confession" to this effect was extracted from Chen Hsiu-ying, who was subsequently executed (Whiting and Sheng, Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?, pp. 293-301). According to Chang Ta-chün, however, the unfortunate Chen Hsiu-ying was tried in camera and held incommunicado until the time of her execution (Ssu-shih nien tung-luan Hsin-chiang, pp. 118-21). Allen S. Whiting has reviewed the available information surrounding the death of Sheng Shih-ch'i (Soviet Strategy, pp. 85-6), and concludes that, in all probability, Sheng Shih-ts'ai ordered his brother's execution because of the latter's pro-Moscow sympathies and hostility to the KMT. In this context, see also the pro-Soviet version recounted in: Anon., 'The Story of Sinkiang', Amerasia, December 15th, 1944, pp. 357-60.
223. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 84; Clubb, China and Russia, pp. 324-5.
224. Whiting, Soviet Strategy, p. 85; Clubb, China and Russia, p. 325; Chiang Kai-shek, Soviet Russia in China, p. 101. Lattimore, however, states that Mme Chiang and General Chu were accompanied by Wu Chung-hsin (See Appendix I) and not by Chaucer H. Wu (Wu Tse-hsiang). Pivot of Asia, p. 79)

Following the successful conclusion of Sheng's negotiations with the KMT and Sinkiang's official re-incorporation into the Chinese national fold, on October 5th, 1942, Sheng Shih-ts'ai sent a memorandum to the Soviet Consulate-General in Urumchi demanding the general withdrawal of all Soviet military and technical personnel within a period of three months.<sup>225</sup> Pushkin, the Soviet Consul-General, prevaricated.<sup>226</sup> The war in Europe was not going well for the Russians. Amongst other reverses, during the autumn of 1942 German armoured divisions rapidly overran the Kuban and struck deep into the Caucasus, raising the Swastika flag on Mount Elberus and threatening the strategically vital oil-producing region of Baku. Under these circumstances Stalin understandably was not anxious to relinquish Soviet control over the Sinkiang oilfields at Tu-shan-tzu.<sup>227</sup> He accordingly ignored Sheng's three month warning, and opened negotiations with the Nationalist authorities at Chungking in a vain attempt to salvage the Soviet position.<sup>228</sup> Meanwhile Sheng, in a move apparently designed both to impress Chiang Kai-shek and to pre-empt the possibility of a Soviet-sponsored coup in Urumchi, began a new

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225. Sheng, Red Failure in Sinkiang, pp. 255-6; Clubb, China and Russia, p. 326.

226. Sheng, Red Failure in Sinkiang, pp. 255-8.

227. Werth, op.cit., p. 474; cf. Norins, Gateway to Asia, p. 113, where the Tu-shan-tzu oil is described as 'quality oil comparable to the Baku product'.

228. Clubb, Russia and China, p. 327; Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, pp. 86-9.

and vicious purge of all "progressive" elements in Sinkiang. Amongst those tortured and executed at this time were both Mao Tse-min<sup>229</sup> and Tu Chung-yüan.<sup>230</sup>

Within a few months of this dramatic volte-face, however, it became apparent that Sheng had miscalculated badly. In early February, 1943, shortly after the linking of Sinkiang's currency to that of the Nationalist Government,<sup>231</sup> and just as the first KMT-appointed officials were arriving to take up their posts in Urumchi,<sup>232</sup> news reached Sinkiang of the crushing German defeat at Stalingrad. Seemingly the premise upon which Sheng had based his shift of allegiance in 1942 had been erroneous; the Soviet Union was not to be conquered by the Nazis after all.

During the spring of 1943 the Soviet armies began their reconquest of the Ukraine. As the German panzer divisions rolled back from the Caucasus, so the immediate importance to Stalin of the Tu-shan-tzu oilfields in Sinkiang diminished. Accordingly, on March 17th, the Soviet Union notified Chungking

229. According to G. Kessle, Sheng sent photographs of the dead bodies of Mao Tse-min and other prominent CCP members to Chiang Kai-shek in order to prove that the executions really had taken place. Myrdal, J., and G. Kessle, The Silk Road (London, 1980), p. 212. For a transcript of Mao Tse-min's "confession" see: Whiting and Sheng, op.cit., pp. 287-90.

230. Tu Chung-yüan does not appear to have been a member of either the CCP or the CPSU. For details surrounding Tu's activities in Sinkiang and his death at the hands of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, see two articles by Sa Kung-liao (an associate of Tu who fled Sinkiang in 1940) in Kuo Hsin (Hong Kong), NS I, 3 (Nov. 11, 1947) and 4 (Nov. 25, 1947), cited in Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 78. For a transcript of Tu's "confession", see: Whiting and Sheng, op.cit., pp. 291-2. For Sheng's rather unconvincing denial of Tu's murder, see: Whiting, Soviet Strategy, p. 94, fn. 13.

231. Clubb, China and Russia, p. 327.

232. Chiang Kai-shek, Soviet Russia in China, p. 101.

that all Soviet Personnel and equipment attached to the Urumchi aircraft factory and the Tu-shan-tzu oilfields and refinery would be withdrawn. One month later, on April 10th, a similar notification was passed to Sheng Shih-ts'ai which also promised the evacuation of Soviet geological teams from Sinkiang and the withdrawal of the Red Army Eighth Regiment from Kumul.<sup>233</sup> Stalin was clearly most unhappy at these developments, however. Final Soviet withdrawal from Sinkiang was not completed until October, 1943, almost one year after Sheng had first issued his "three month" ultimatum. Moreover, the period of withdrawal was a most unsettled one, with the Kremlin protesting to Chungking over Sheng's "hostility" whilst at the same time - according to Sheng - making threatening tank movements across the Ili frontier.<sup>234</sup> As the Soviets withdrew, they capped the Tu-shan-tzu oil wells and carried back across the frontier every bit of equipment which could be moved, from heavy plant to medical supplies.<sup>235</sup> Yet it is clear that this withdrawal was regarded as a purely temporary expedient, in indication of which Soviet geologists and engineers are reported to have frankly informed Chinese observers: "We'll be back in two years".<sup>236</sup>

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233. Whiting, Soviet Strategy, p. 89; Clubb, China and Russia, pp. 327-8.

234. Chiang Kai-shek, Soviet Russia in China, p. 102; Sheng, Red Failure in Sinkiang, pp. 264-6; Whiting, Soviet Strategy, pp. 86-91.

235. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 80; Clubb, China and Russia, p. 328.

236. Whiting, Soviet Strategy, p. 100.

Meanwhile Chiang Kai-shek had acted to strengthen Nationalist links with the "Five Ma" Tungan Warlord group in Northwest China by appointing Ma Pu-ch'ing, an uncle of Ma Chung-ying and potential rival of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, to the post of Pacification Commissioner for Western Tsinghai.<sup>237</sup> Sheng was thus in a very weak position when, in June, 1943, KMT troops under the command of General Chu Shao-liang began to enter Sinkiang from Kansu. Following the final withdrawal of the Soviets in October of the same year, it became clear that Sinkiang was slipping from Sheng's grasp, and that it could only be a matter of time before he was removed from power and the provincial administration passed fully under KMT control.

In fact, Sheng was to survive in power until the autumn of 1944. Moreover, during the intervening period, he was to make a last, desperate attempt to change sides once again. Sheng's last gamble began in the spring of 1944, at a time of rising KMT-CCP tensions within China, and of rapidly worsening Sino-Soviet relations in Central Asia.<sup>238</sup> Accordingly, in February, 1943, the Sinkiang warlord declared himself ill and began to absent himself from meetings with KMT functionaries in Urumchi.<sup>239</sup> Then in April of the same year, the Japanese suddenly launched their first large-scale anti-Chinese offensive of six years, driving swiftly south from the Lunhai railway line

237. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 79; Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol II, p. 474. For a general study of Chiang's policies towards the "Wu Ma" clique during this period, see Nohara Shiro, 'Chugoku ni okeru kaikyo seisaku' ('China's Muslim Policy'), Kindai Chugoku Kenkyu (Studies in Modern China), May, 1948, pp. 299-323.

238. Within China, pitched battles were being fought between the KMT and the CCP as the latter rapidly extended the areas under their control. Internationally, Soviet comment had become increasingly critical of the KMT war effort, whilst on the Sinkiang-MPR frontier small-scale fighting had developed between KMT and MPR forces. In April, 1944, the Soviet Union declared its support for the MPR in this border dispute. See Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 92.

239. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 80.

in Honan to roll up Nationalist positions as far south as Hainan Island and the frontiers of Indo-China. Sheng saw his opportunity, and in June began arresting 'numerous' students and teachers whom he suspected of holding Nationalist sympathies. Then, on August 11th, shortly after the fall of the Nationalist strongpoint of Heng-yang to the advancing Japanese, Sheng called an emergency meeting of provincial officials in Urumchi and promptly arrested all those KMT functionaries who were unwise enough to attend.<sup>240</sup> This move signalled the beginning of Sheng's fourth major purge, during which martial law was declared and over 300 KMT officials had their property seized and were imprisoned without trial.<sup>241</sup> Next, Sheng acted to confuse the KMT garrison forces stationed near Urumchi by informing the Nationalist commander that he had uncovered a "communist plot" to overthrow the Sinkiang administration, whilst at the same time secretly alerting his own military forces for action against the KMT garrison should this become necessary.<sup>242</sup> Finally, according to at least two sources,<sup>243</sup> Sheng sent a message to Stalin via the Soviet Consulate-General requesting that the Red Army

240. ibid; cf. Clubb, China and Russia, p. 329.

241. Clubb, China and Russia, p. 329; Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, pp. 80-81; Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 91.

242. Clubb, China and Russia, p. 329.

243. According to Chang Ta-chün (Ssu-shi nien tung-luan Hsin-chiang, pp. 138-9), Sheng offered the Soviet Union concessionary rights in the Altai goldmines and at the Tu-shan-tzu oilfields, together with 450,000 sheep, as an inducement to intervene in Sinkiang. According to Christopher Rand, however, Sheng went so far as to ask Stalin to incorporate Sinkiang into the Soviet Union (New York Herald Tribune, September 23, 1947. Cited in Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 81).

should once again intervene on his behalf - only on this occasion against the legally-constituted and internationally-recognised Government of China, and not against Muslim rebel forces. It is hardly surprising that this appeal failed to draw a Soviet response.<sup>244</sup>

As a result of Stalin's refusal to intervene, Sheng was left politically isolated and militarily defenceless before the superior power of the KMT. Accordingly, on August 29th, 1944, Sheng Shih-ts'ai was notified by the Nationalist Government that he had been transferred to the post of Minister of Forestry and Agriculture at Chungking. At the same time, General Chu Shao-liang was appointed Acting Chairman of the Sinkiang Government, whilst command of all troops in the province was transferred to the Nationalist Military Affairs Commission (headed by Chiang Kai-shek).<sup>245</sup> Shortly thereafter, on September 11th, 1944, Sheng flew out of Sinkiang for the last time to take up his sinecure in Chungking.<sup>246</sup>

244. Bearing in mind Stalin's dictum that: 'Military diplomacy should know how to use for the war aims ... even the devil and his grandmother' (Werth, op.cit., p. 492), it seems unlikely that Stalin was chiefly motivated by his distaste for Sheng (Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 81; Clubb, China and Russia, p. 330), though this may well have proved a secondary factor in the Kremlin's refusal to assist Sheng in 1944.
245. Clubb, China and Russia, p. 330; Chiang Kai-shek, Soviet Russia in China, p. 102.
246. According to Sa Kung-liao, 'Talks about Sinkiang', Wen Tsi, XXII, March 21, 1946 (cited in Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 74), Sheng paid the KMT a massive bribe of 500,000 Chinese ounces of gold to buy his sinecure and subsequent immunity (See also Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 201; Davidson, op.cit., p. 118). Lattimore agrees that 'Like many another official insuring himself against a fall from power, Sheng in his last years in Sinkiang put by an immense fortune' (op.cit., p. 74). Unfortunately Lattimore does not indicate his sources for supposing that Sheng only embezzled funds 'during his last years'. Certainly Tu Chung-yüan makes the claim in his 1938 panegyric that 'Sheng has set a leading example in governmental unselfishness by accepting a monthly salary of less than \$100 Chinese for his work (whilst) Mrs. Sheng, an administrator of a girl's middle school, gets about \$10 Chinese' (Norins, Gateway to Asia, p. 98), but in the light of our subsequent knowledge of Sheng's character, is this claim really credible?



During his ten years of absolute power in Sinkiang, Sheng Shih-ts'ai was responsible for the imprisonment of an estimated 100,000 people, many thousands of whom were subsequently tortured, sent into internal exile, or simply executed.<sup>247</sup> Inevitably, the great majority of these people were Turkic Muslims, whether "reactionary" victims of Sheng's pro-Soviet period, or "progressive" victims of his virulently anti-communist later years. As a result of this prolonged reign of terror (coupled with important Soviet military and financial assistance during the period 1934-42) Sheng was able permanently to break the power of the Tungans in Sinkiang, and temporarily to suppress Turkic Muslim separatism, particularly in the troubled south of the province. Yet Muslim opposition to Chinese rule in Sinkiang did not diminish as a result of Sheng's repressive policies; rather it went underground, where it developed in extent and maturity, only to re-emerge following Sheng's break with the Soviet Union and subsequent fall from power as the bitter legacy of Sinkiang's last warlord to his Kuomintang successors.

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247. According to Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 78, Sheng imprisoned 'about 80,000 people'; Clubb, China and Russia, p. 330, gives a figure of 100,000; Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 199, claims 200,000. According to Anna Louise Strong, unpublished CCP sources put the number of prisoners held by Sheng after his break with the USSR at 50,000 (cited in Whiting, Soviet Strategy, p. 94), whilst Kotov claims that during Sheng's rule (which he mistakenly refers to as KMT rule) 'over 12,000 of the best fighters in the people's cause' were executed or died in gaol (Kotov, p. 443). It is, of course, impossible to verify these figures.

## CHAPTER 8

SINKIANG, 1944-47: MUSLIM SEPARATISM UNDER THE KUOMINTANG

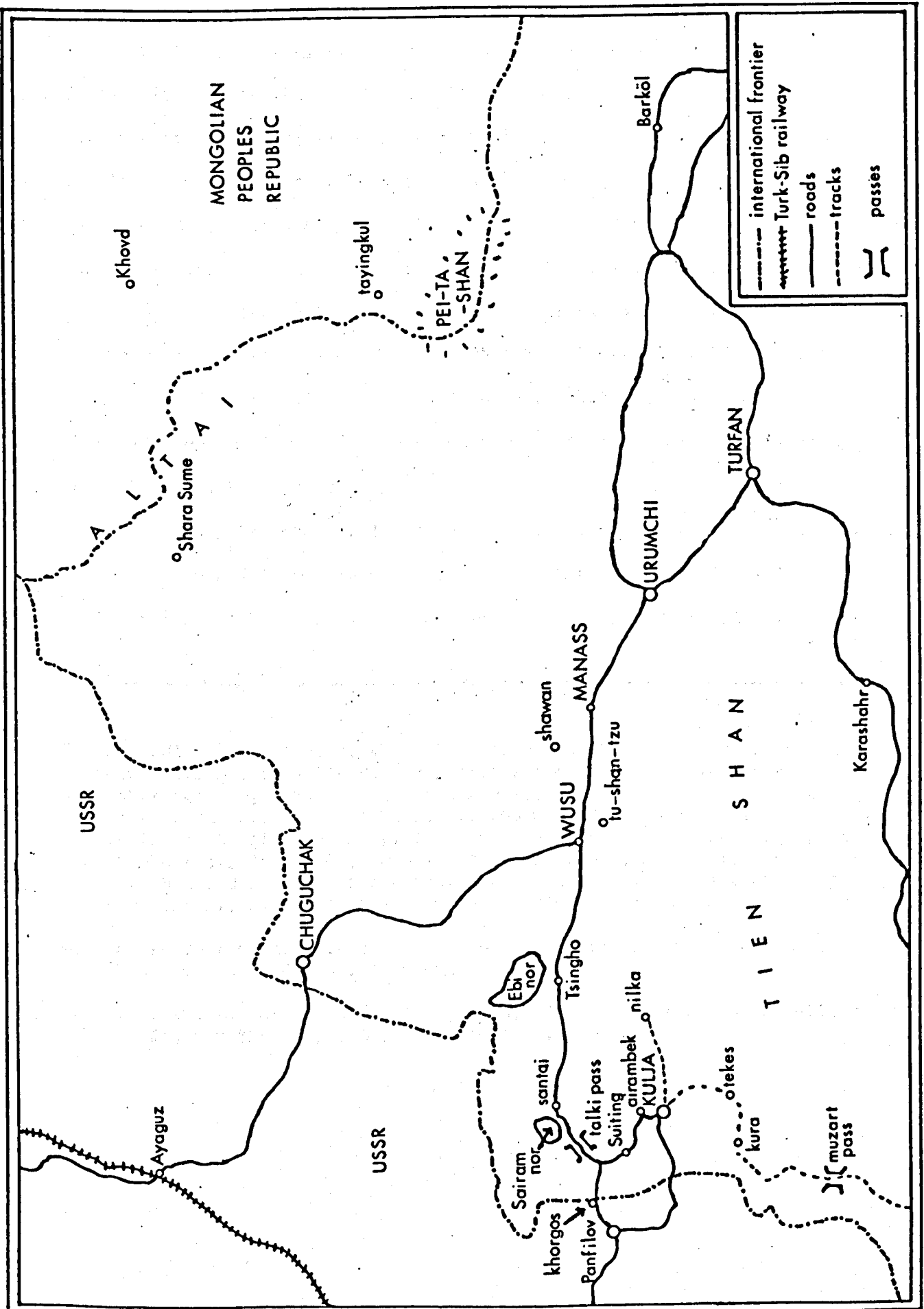
In the quick thunder of cavalry skirmish and squalor of ambush without mercy and in partisan wildness and in Kuomintang horror, in cruelty and counter-cruelty, this revolt of the Three Regions had the grandeur and misery of a true war of liberation.<sup>1</sup>

This "Revolution of the Three Regions" was a constructive part of the Chinese Revolution.<sup>2</sup>

8.1 KMT Policies in Sinkiang, 1942-45

With the transfer of Sheng Shih-ts'ai to Chungking in September, 1944, and with the concurrent appointment of General Chu Shao-liang to the post of Acting Chairman of the Sinkiang Provincial Government, direct central government control over China's far north-west was re-established for the first time since 1911. Whereas Yang Tseng-hsin and his successors, Chin Shu-jen and Sheng Shih-ts'ai, had established themselves in Sinkiang by force before being recognised by the central authorities as the "de jure"

1. Davidson, B., Turkestan Alive, p. 120.
2. Mao Tse-tung, in conversation with Yamamoto Mitsuru. See the latter's: 'Henkyo no Chugoku o yuku: Shinzian Uiguru Tabi Nikki shu' ('A Visit to the Chinese Frontier: Diary of Travels in the Sinkiang-Uighur Autonomous Region'), Chuo-koron (Tokyo), November, 1977, p. 167.



MAP 12: The Ili Rebellion and the "Pei-ta-shan Incident"

rulers of the province, following Sheng's deposition, power of appointment passed directly to the Nationalist Government in Chungking. In practice this was to mean that, from the autumn of 1944, effective control over the Sinkiang administration passed to Chiang Kai-shek, the KMT Generalissimo, and to his principal supporters within the KMT, the influential and authoritarian "C.C. Clique".<sup>3</sup> Between 1944 and 1948 the KMT was to appoint four officials in rapid succession to the post of Chairman of Sinkiang. These were the Han Chinese Wu Chung-hsin (1944-46) and Chang Chih-chung (1946-47), the Uighur Mas'ūd Sabri (1947-48), and finally the Tatar Burhān Shahīdī (1948-49), who was subsequently to become the first Chairman of Sinkiang under the CCP.<sup>4</sup>

Wu Chung-hsin, the first KMT appointee, flew into Urumchi on October 4th, 1944, after a brief interregnum during which Sinkiang was officially administered by the C.C. Clique-influenced General Chu Shao-liang.<sup>5</sup>

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3. According to Lattimore, the C.C. Clique was 'the "Tamanny" of the KMT, controlling more political machinery and more key appointments than any other faction, (which) was known for its impatient policy of direct repression, and its preference for the use of force in extirpating any challenge to its supremacy. Its strength came from the brothers Ch'en Kuo-fu and Ch'en Li-fu, nephews of an early political patron of Chiang Kai-shek and confidential secretaries to the Generalissimo who helped to engineer his original rise to power'. (Pivot of Asia, pp. 81-2).
  4. For further details regarding these four officials, see Appendix I, 'Who Was Who in Republican Sinkiang.'
  5. According to Lattimore (Pivot of Asia, p. 86), General Chu Shao-liang was working for the C.C. Clique at this time.

Wu was an experienced bureaucrat, formerly Governor of his native Anhwei, who, according to Lattimore, was also 'long associated with the C.C. Clique, long active in frontier affairs, and long distrusted by Mongols and Tibetans'.<sup>6</sup> That Wu was distrusted by China's national minorities was hardly surprising, for he was a follower of the "Great Han" school of thought, much beloved of Chiang Kai-shek and certain powerful factions of the KMT, which holds that all the inhabitants of China belong to one (Chinese) family, and that incidental differences of culture, religion and language are unfortunate aberrations, destined to be subsumed in a "Greater Han" Chinese whole.<sup>7</sup> As an adjunct to this belief, Wu actively supported the KMT policy of encouraging Han Chinese colonisation of national minority regions, particularly along China's long and vulnerable Inner Asian frontier.<sup>8</sup>

6. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 85.

7. According to Lattimore (Pivot of Asia, p. 83), amongst the most extreme exponents of this "Great Han" theory was Li Tung-fang, a historian patronised by the C.C. Clique, who taught that there was no difference of nationality between Sinkiang Uighurs and Han Chinese (in this context, see Li's 'Are the People of Sinkiang Turki?', in Altai (Chungking), I, 2 (April 25, 1945). For Chiang Kai-shek's "Great Han" views, see above, p. 37. For evidence that Wu Chung-hsin shared these views, see: IOLR, L/P&S/12/2359, EXT.2314.1945, Turrall, G., (HMCU), Sinkiang Situation: The First Months of the New Regime, p. 3.

8. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 86; see also Wu Ai-chen (Aitchan K. Wu), 'Will China Lose Its Far West?' Asia, XXXIX (1939), p. 675:

One might say that China is like a bankrupt family, which is so embarrassed financially that it can hardly continue to exist, but whose ancestors, fortunately, have left it an estate in the west. If need be, there is still this vast country to fall back on.

Wu's first months in Sinkiang were hardly auspicious, though the new regime was distinguished more by administrative incompetence and tactless paternalism than by the outright brutality of its predecessor. Possibly the KMT's first mistake was its delay in appointing a new governor, for during the brief 17-day interval between Sheng Shih-ts'ai's departure for Chungking and Wu Chung-hsin's arrival in Urumchi, Sheng's trusted lieutenant and Chief of Police, Li Yi-ch'ing, was able to conduct his own purge of Sinkiang's prisons, during which an estimated 400 to 500 political prisoners were 'liquidated' - an action which took place under KMT auspices, if without official KMT sanction.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, this mistake was compounded - whilst KMT complicity in the killings was surely confirmed in the eyes of most Sinkiang Muslims - by Wu's subsequent failure to have Li Yi-ch'ing arrested for this crime.<sup>10</sup> Following Wu's assumption of office, a number of political prisoners were released, with great fanfare, from the 14 or 15 major gaols which Sheng had maintained in Urumchi.<sup>11</sup> According to the newly-established British Consulate in Urumchi,<sup>12</sup> however, between October, 1944, and February, 1945, no more than 500 political prisoners were thus released, and most of these were KMT adherents or officials who had been detained by Sheng during his final, abortive purge of the preceding summer.<sup>13</sup> In marked contrast,

9. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2359, EXT.2314.1945, p. 2.

10. ibid., Li was subsequently dismissed and permitted to leave Sinkiang.

11. ibid.

12. Following Sheng's realignment with the KMT, American and British consulates were set up in Urumchi (in April and September, 1943, respectively) at KMT request. Lattimore, E., 'Behind the Sinkiang Incident', FES, May 3rd, 1944, p. 81.

13. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2359, EXT.2314.1945, p. 2; cf. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 86.

non-KMT political refugees who had fled Sinkiang to escape Sheng's dictatorial rule were forbidden to return by the new authorities;<sup>14</sup> similarly, none of Sheng's prisons were closed, and no attempt was made to dismantle his much-feared secret police force, which continued its surveillance activities as before, but under Wu Chung-hsin's orders.<sup>15</sup>

Meanwhile, inflation and corruption, both of which had been kept within manageable limits during Sheng's "progressive" years, spiralled upwards and out of control, so that the saying "One Sheng Shih-ts'ai went out, but two came in", became current throughout Sinkiang.<sup>16</sup> In effect, the economic collapse of the province began in 1942, following Sheng's break with the Soviet Union and the establishment of close fiscal and economic links between Sinkiang and Nationalist China. As Lattimore has shown, during periods of close economic co-operation between Sinkiang and the Soviet Union (as in 1934-42), the oases of southern Sinkiang, with their relatively large population and demand for consumer goods, bought more from the Soviet Union than they sold. Conversely, the predominantly nomadic region of Dzungaria, with its small population and large herds of livestock, sold more to the Soviet Union than it bought. The Dzungarian nomads were thus able to use some of the surplus cash derived from their profitable trade with the USSR

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14. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 86.

15. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2359, EXT.2314.1945, p. 7; see, however, Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 104.

16. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 86.

to buy arable products and other goods from the southern oases (and Ili). The pattern of Sinkiang-Soviet trade was therefore circular, with the main current flowing from Dzungaria to the Soviet Union, then from the Soviet Union to the southern oases surrounding the Tarim Basin, and, finally, from the southern oases back to Dzungaria.<sup>17</sup>

Following Sheng's break with the USSR, however, this trade cycle was ruptured, with disastrous consequences for Sinkiang in general, and for the southern oases in particular. By the end of 1942 trade with the Soviet Union, which had completely dominated the provincial economy for over a decade, had ground to a virtual standstill.<sup>18</sup> The only manufactured goods available in Sinkiang were cigarettes, imported from the Nationalist-controlled areas of China proper. According to Chen, practically no industrial goods could be bought in the shops or bazaars of the major towns, whilst in the southern oases iron had become a "precious metal", one pound of which could purchase several ten-yard bolts of locally-woven cloth.<sup>19</sup> To compound this economic disaster, in November, 1942, Sheng accepted a KMT plan for the linking of Sinkiang's currency to that of the Nationalist Government at an exchange rate which substantially overvalued the inflated Nationalist currency. Immediately, near worthless Nationalist dollars began

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17. ibid., pp. 175-6.

18. According to Wong Wen-hao, the Nationalist Minister of Economics, during mid-1942 some 90% of Sinkiang's exports went to the USSR (cited in Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 99); in marked contrast, according to Chen (The Sinkiang Story, p. 204), by early 1943 trade with the USSR provided no more than 3.5% of the provincial revenue.

19. Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 203.



to flood into Sinkiang, whilst valuable provincial produce was syphoned into China proper in exchange.<sup>20</sup> Inevitably, this process added to existing provincial inflation, so that by 1943 the Provincial Commercial Bank alone was receiving Nationalist currency notes at the rate of one million dollars per day.<sup>21</sup>

Sheng's break with the Soviet Union was also to have an important impact on his own, purely personal business activities, which both adversely affected the provincial economy, and pointed the way for the first of many KMT "carpet baggers" who began to arrive in Sinkiang from 1942 onwards. Even before 1942, during his "progressive" years, Sheng had dominated a large part of Sinkiang's trade through the misleadingly-named Provincial Trading Corporation, in fact a private company with a working capital of US\$2.5 million, which was owned by Sheng and run by various agents on his behalf.<sup>22</sup> In 1942, no doubt motivated by an increasing awareness of the insecurity of his own position, Sheng apparently determined to increase his share of the profits from the Sinkiang economy. Accordingly, a complete trading monopoly was granted to the Provincial Trading Corporation, through which Sheng purchased wool, livestock, cotton, furs and other local products at compulsory prices fixed well below the market price, transported them on his own trucks, and sold them, primarily to the Soviet Union, in exchange for Soviet manufactured goods. Moreover, in 1943, following the sharp decline in Sinkiang-Soviet trade and the introduction of Nationalist currency,

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20. Clubb, Russia and China, p. 327.

21. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 179.

22. ibid.

payment in manufactured goods was gradually phased out by the Provincial Trading Corporation, to be replaced by compulsory purchase, at fixed rates, in the grossly devalued paper currency pouring out of Sheng's own printing presses in Urumchi.<sup>23</sup>

Sheng's monopoly of provincial trade was to be short-lived, however, for following the establishment of a KMT provincial headquarters at Urumchi in January, 1943, the growth of Nationalist political influence in Sinkiang was closely paralleled by an expansion of KMT commercial interests throughout the province. The artificial exchange rate prevailing from November, 1942, strongly favoured merchants from China proper, who began to export local produce from Sinkiang to Kansu and all points east at high rates of profit. The chief beneficiaries of this transfer of trade from the USSR to China were the "Big Four Families" of the KMT, including the Chens of the C.C. Clique, the Soongs, the Kungs, and Chiang Kai-shek himself.<sup>24</sup> In a bid to regulate and control the flow of goods between Sinkiang and China proper, a "Northwestern Development Company" was established, under KMT auspices, at Lanchow in Kansu.<sup>25</sup> At the same time, economic pressures were brought to bear against indigenous trading companies operating from within Sinkiang; thus the passport fee for a merchant leaving the province was at first trebled, and then multiplied by ten.<sup>26</sup> Faced with economic discrimination on this scale, even firms

23. ibid.

24. Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 204.

25. Barnett, A. Doak, China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover (London, 1963), p. 240.

26. Yu Han, 'Sinkiang Memoir', Tu-chih wen-chai (Shanghai), I, 6 (July 16th, 1946), cited in Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 86, fn. 65.

like "Mussabayev's" (i.e. "Mūsa Bai's"), the largest and best-known Turkic Muslim trading company in Sinkiang, were hard pressed to survive.<sup>27</sup> As a result of these policies, by the end of 1944, inflation in Sinkiang was running in excess of 1,200% per annum,<sup>28</sup> whilst basic consumer goods had become all but unavailable. According to Jack Chen:

Tea became a luxury beyond the reach of the common people. Salt and sugar disappeared. Stocks of cheap manufactured cotton were soon exhausted. Islamic custom prescribes that a corpse be wound in a shroud, which requires up to twenty feet of cloth. Now there was nothing in which to bury the dead. This was the final affront, the final indignity.<sup>29</sup>

Staple foodstuffs were also seriously affected by inflation. According to Lattimore, the price index of wheat flour, taking June, 1940, as 100, had already increased to 865 by December, 1942. In 1945, during the administration of Wu Chung-hsin, it reached 75,000, whilst in 1947, under Wu's successor, Chang Chih-chung, it was to rise to an astonishing 517,500.<sup>30</sup>

Turkic Muslim discontent stemming from KMT economic mismanagement in Sinkiang was further exacerbated by the massive deployment of Han Chinese and Tungan troops throughout the province which accompanied the reassertion of central government authority after 1942. It has been estimated that, at the time of his break with the Soviet Union, Sheng Shih-ts'ai had 20,000 troops at his command,<sup>31</sup> of whom only the 2-3,000 troops formerly attached

27. Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 204.
28. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2359, EXT.2314.1945, p.4.
29. Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 204.
30. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 179.
31. Clubb, Russia and China, p. 328.

to the Northeast National Salvation Army were politically reliable or militarily competent.<sup>32</sup> During the period 1942-44, the number of troops at Sheng's command seems to have been expanded considerably,<sup>33</sup> whilst four divisions of the KMT's New Second Army were transferred to Sinkiang from Kansu. Finally, one year after Sheng's departure for Chungking, two divisions of Tungan cavalry from Tsinghai (the Fifth and Forty-Second Cavalry Armies, whose loyalty to the Nationalist cause remained wholly dependent upon the continuing marriage of convenience between the KMT and the "Five Ma" warlord clique) were transferred to strengthen the Nationalist garrison in Sinkiang.<sup>34</sup> By 1944-45, therefore, the KMT was maintaining an estimated 100,000 troops in Sinkiang, almost all of whom were of Han Chinese or Tungan ethnic origin.<sup>35</sup> It is hardly surprising that the indigenous population of Sinkiang regarded this huge force as an army of occupation - and, moreover, an army which they were obliged to maintain through greatly increased taxation (generally payable in kind, since the provincial government refused to accept its own, almost worthless currency) and through forced labour.<sup>37</sup>

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32. See above, p. 238.

33. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 84.

34. ibid.; Barnett, op.cit., p. 262.

35. Barnett, op.cit., p. 263.

36. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, pp. 178-9; Chen, The Sinkiang Story, pp. 204-5

37. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 85; Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 206.

Still more disastrous for the Nationalist administration in Sinkiang, however, was the official encouragement of Han Chinese emigration to the far north-west. In effect, this represented the reintroduction of a policy which had been instrumental in bringing about Chin Shu-jen's downfall, and which had subsequently been banned by Sheng Shih-ts'ai in an attempt to pacify Sinkiang's Turkic Muslim majority.<sup>38</sup> Renewed Han emigration to Sinkiang seems to have begun in late 1942, shortly after Chiang Kai-shek announced a "Northwest Development Movement" which, besides pledging large sums of money to finance the transfer of some 10,000 officials, together with their families, from China proper to Sinkiang,<sup>39</sup> also aimed to encourage the emigration of Han Chinese peasant farmers to the far north-west. Whilst no doubt unpopular, the mass movement of Han Chinese officials to Sinkiang (aptly characterised by Whiting as a 'subsidised migration'), was probably acceptable to an indigenous Muslim population long accustomed to living under an almost exclusively Han bureaucracy. Han Chinese land settlement, however, particularly when introduced with the clear intention of permanently altering the ethnic balance in Sinkiang, raised bitter memories of the annexation of Kumul, and was clearly unacceptable to the Muslim population as a whole. In fact, the number of Chinese migrants settled on the land in Sinkiang during the KMT period was never large. Moreover, most of the "colonists" thus settled were impoverished refugees fleeing famine and war in China proper,

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38. Lattimore, Eleanor, 'Report on Sinkiang', Far Eastern Survey, XIV, 7 (April 11th, 1945), p. 79.

39. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, pp. 99-100; Cheng Tien-fong, A History of Sino-Russian Relations, p. 178

and may thus be legitimately described as victims of China's internecine strife, in much the same way as those Muslims whose land they usurped. Nevertheless, deserving of sympathy though these Han settlers may have been, their plight in no way diminished the very real hostility which their arrival (frequently accompanied by KMT brutalities towards the indigenous population) engendered amongst the Muslim peoples of Sinkiang.

The first such Han settlers were victims of a severe famine in Honan, over 4,000 of whom arrived in Sinkiang during 1943.<sup>40</sup> In the early 1930s, Chin Shu-jen had attempted to settle Han immigrants on land which was already cultivated, and which belonged to sedentary Uighur agriculturalists, with disastrous consequences. The KMT clearly had no desire to repeat this experiment, besides which, during the intervening ten years, pressure on farming land had increased substantially due to population growth and resultant over-cultivation.<sup>41</sup> Accordingly, a decision seems to have been taken to settle the Honanese refugees on land occupied by Muslim nomads, initially near Kitai, and subsequently elsewhere in Dzungaria.<sup>42</sup> The chief victims of this new colonisation policy were the Sinkiang Kazakhs, numbers of whom were forcibly transported from their ancestral home in the Altai region,<sup>43</sup> whilst according to Lattimore, in some instances KMT troops used machine guns mounted on trucks to wipe out whole Kazakh encampments.<sup>44</sup>

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40. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 79; Dallin, Soviet Russia and the Far East, p.362

41. ibid., pp. 179-80

42. ibid., p. 79.

43. Clubb, Russia and China, pp. 364-5.

44. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 156.

Needless to say, during the period 1942-45 rampant inflation, official corruption, and renewed Han Chinese immigration combined to produce a deep-seated animosity towards KMT rule amongst all the Muslim peoples of Sinkiang. Even Mas<sup>C</sup>ud Sabri, a Uighur Turk living in Chungking whose political loyalties are reported to have lain with the C.C. Clique, and who was subsequently to become the third KMT governor of Sinkiang, felt constrained to write in 1945 that the main characteristics of Nationalist rule in Sinkiang were domination by a large number of troops who were regarded as "human-faced locusts", and promotion of the kind of Chinese colonisation that had contributed so much to the rising at Kumul in 1932.<sup>45</sup>

#### 8.2 The Kazakh Revolt in Dzungaria and the Birth of the "East Turkestan Republic" in Ili.

As has been shown, during his "progressive" years (1934-42), Sheng Shih-ts'ai was engaged in an almost continuous, though low-key, struggle with the Muslim Kazakhs of Dzungaria.<sup>46</sup> By 1940 Kazakh unrest had spread throughout Ili, Chuguchak and Shara Sume, the three northernmost administrative districts of Sinkiang, often referred to collectively in contemporary sources as "The Three Regions". Moreover, a clear leader of this nomadic revolt had emerged in the person of <sup>C</sup>Uthmān Bātūr (Tk. "Uthmān the Hero"), a powerfully-built and charismatic patriarch of the Kirei Kazakh tribe who is reported to have been born in an isolated Altai encampment in north-eastern Sinkiang some time during 1899.<sup>47</sup>

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45. *ibid.*, p. 84, citing an article by Mas<sup>C</sup>ud Sabri entitled 'Regarding Politics in the Northwest', published in Altai (Chungking), April 25th, 1945 (in Chinese).

46. See above, pp. 344-8.

47. Boorman and Howard, Biographical Dictionary of Republican China, Vol III, p. 46; cf. the rather fanciful account of Uthman's birth in Lias, Kazakh Exodus, pp. 23-4 ('Birth of a hero').

<sup>C</sup>Uthmān, who is reported to have taken part in guerilla raids against the Chinese even before his 13th birthday, was essentially a Kazakh freebooter whose activities in the Sinkiang-Russian-Mongolian border area might more accurately be described as banditry than as a struggle for Turkic or Kazakh national liberation. Certainly he was a political opportunist who shared none of the pan-Turanian ideals which motivated the "Khotan Amīr" to set up the secessionist "Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan" at Kashgar in 1933; nor, by all accounts, was he an over-zealous Muslim.<sup>48</sup> Yet in many ways it was the very absence of these ideals - which, although vague and nebulous in southern Sinkiang, had caused the rebellious Uighurs to establish provisional organs of government and a "capital" which presented an easy target for Chinese counter-attack - that made <sup>C</sup>Uthmān Bātūr and his Kazakh followers an elusive but persistent thorn in the side of the Chinese administration at Urumchi.

By the time of his break with the Soviet Union in late 1942 Sheng Shih-ts'ai had, with Soviet aid, succeeded in re-establishing his authority over the greater part of the "Three Regions". Even in the Kazakh stronghold of Shara Sume, provincial forces were in control, whilst <sup>C</sup>Uthmān and his followers had been driven to take refuge across the Sinkiang-Mongolian frontier in the remote fastness of the Mongolian Altai, where they are reported to have spent the winter of 1942-43 at Tayingkul, on the upper reaches of the Bulgan River (see Map No. 12)<sup>49</sup> Following Sheng's break with the Soviet Union, however, the alignment of forces in northern Sinkiang

48. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol III, p. 46; Lias, op.cit., passim.

49. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol III, p. 47.



changed dramatically as Stalin, in a bid to maintain Soviet influence over the mineral-rich "Three Regions" of northern Sinkiang, swung his support behind Sheng's Muslim opponents. As a result of this development, ʿUthmān Bātūr and his followers suddenly ceased to be targets for Soviet air and ground attack, and became instead political and military clients of the Mongolian People's Republic - itself, of course, a Soviet client state.

According to Kazakh refugee sources, talks between ʿUthmān Bātūr, Mongol representatives of the MPR, and two Soviet-sponsored Kazakh delegates from the nearby Kazakh SSR, took place at Tayingkul in mid-1943.<sup>50</sup> Little substantive information is available concerning these talks, but it seems that ʿUthmān was provided with a certain amount of arms and equipment via the MPR, as well as with a safe base area outside the frontiers of Sinkiang from which to harass Chinese forces in Shara Sume.<sup>51</sup> In exchange, the Kazakh leader is reported to have offered the MPR grazing rights within the Altai region of Sinkiang, as well as an unspecified amount of livestock.<sup>52</sup> Thus strengthened, ʿUthmān formulated a policy that called for Kazakh-Mongol cooperation within an autonomous Altai region, and for the barring of all Han Chinese military and civilian officials from that region.<sup>53</sup>

50. ibid.; cf. Lias, op-cit., pp. 103-11. Lias' fanciful claim that Marshal Choibalsang, the MPR dictator, attended these talks, would appear to be unfounded.

51. Boorman and Howard, op. cit., Vol III, p. 47; cf. Chiang Kai-shek, Soviet Russia in China, p. 102.

52. Hayit, Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China, p. 318.

53. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol III, p. 47.

Sheng Shih-ts'ai and his KMT backers responded by mounting renewed attacks against the Altai Kazakhs, their yurts, and their livestock, whilst Sheng asserted publicly that C<sup>U</sup>thmān was receiving Soviet aid and direction, and that Sinkiang would know neither peace nor prosperity until the Kazakhs had been suppressed.<sup>54</sup> Fighting between C<sup>U</sup>thmān's Kazakh horsemen and Sheng's predominantly Han Chinese troops flared up in December, 1943, and again in March, 1944, when the provincial forces suffered a severe defeat which left C<sup>U</sup>thmān in full control of the disputed area.<sup>55</sup> Urumchi blamed this defeat on the Soviet Union, and Chaucer H. Wu, the Nationalist's Special Commissioner for Foreign Affairs who was in Sinkiang at the time, cabled Chungking to report that Soviet aircraft and MPR troops were acting in conjunction with the Kazakh rebels.<sup>56</sup> Official protests by both Urumchi and Chungking met with a flat Soviet denial of interference in Sinkiang; however, on April 2nd, 1944, Tass announced from Ulan Bator that Chinese forces in pursuit of fleeing Kazakhs had crossed the Mongolian frontier and had been duly repelled by MPR troops.<sup>57</sup> In case the KMT should remain in any doubt as to the official Soviet stance, this message was followed up on April 3rd by a further Tass announcement, this time from Moscow, to

54. ibid.

55. Clubb, Russia and China, p. 366; Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 102.

56. ibid.; According to Cheng Tien-fong (formerly KMT Minister of Education): 'Under Soviet air cover and with the help of Outer Mongolian troops' C<sup>U</sup>thman 'succeeded in wiping out the entire Chinese garrison at Huihoko consisting of three regiments' (op.cit., p. 281).

57. Clubb, Russia and China, p. 366.

the effect that: 'China has moved troops along the Outer Mongolian border. Soviet Russia, on the basis of its mutual assistance pact with Outer Mongolia, is obliged to render assistance'.<sup>58</sup> Clearly Stalin intended that C<sup>U</sup>thmān should remain a thorn in the side of the Chinese authorities, and that his sanctuary in the MPR should remain inviolate.

Meanwhile, prompted by KMT colonisation policies in the Kitai region,<sup>59</sup> and by an order that 10,000 horses should be requisitioned for Nationalist cavalry forces,<sup>60</sup> the Kazakh revolt continued to spread. By the time of Sheng's departure from the provincial scene in September, 1944, the greater part of Shara Sume and much of Chuguchak administrative districts had become disputed territory, and C<sup>U</sup>thmān Bātūr effectively controlled the Sinkiang sector of the Altai range, in which region he is reported to have carried out a mass slaughter of Han Chinese 'regardless of sex or age'.<sup>61</sup> It is important to note, however, that no attempt was made by C<sup>U</sup>thmān to set up an alternative administration in Shara Sume and that his revolt, which might perhaps best be described as a nomadic reaction to agricultural encroachment and centralised authority, lacked a coherent political philosophy and remained essentially anarchic in character.

58. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 102.

59. McLean, N., 'The Much-Courted Kazakhs', The Geographical Magazine, XXI (1948), pp. 256-63.

60. Kotov, K.F., op.cit., p. 443; cf. Moseley, G., A Sino-Soviet Cultural Frontier: The Ili Kazakh Autonomous Chou (Cambridge, Mass., 1966), p. 12 (also a reference to Kotov, but in the JPRS, rather than the CAR, version).

61. Lias, op.cit., p. 57, 116.

All this was to change in the autumn of 1944, when, within a few weeks of Sheng Shih-ts'ai's departure for Chungking, a major revolt broke out in the Ili Valley which was to involve not only the nomadic Kazakhs (and Kirghiz), but also the settled Uighur ("Taranchi") population, which had long remained quiescent under Chinese rule.<sup>62</sup> Moreover, although the Ili Revolt was initially Turkic Muslim in character, it was later to attract significant support amongst many non-Muslim peoples of the Ili region, including numbers of White Russians, Mongols, Tungusic peoples (Sibo, Solon and Manchu), and even some Han Chinese. In this the Ili Revolt (or, as it subsequently became generally known, the "Revolt of the Three Regions"),<sup>63</sup> is unique in the annals of Sinkiang history.

Seemingly, trouble had been brewing in the Ili Valley ever since Sheng's break with the Soviet Union in 1942. Ili, the richest and most fertile district of Sinkiang, had long enjoyed a special relationship with its Russian neighbour. The entire valley had been occupied by Tsarist

62. The Uighur Muslims of Ili had last rebelled against Chinese authority in 1864-6; Chinese authority was ultimately restored in 1882. At the time of the Ili Revolt in 1944, therefore, Ili had remained untroubled by a major Muslim rebellion for over 62 years - much longer than any other part of Sinkiang. See Hsu, The Ili Crisis, passim; also above, pp.
63. The often-applied term "Revolt of the Three Regions" (see, for example, the quotation from Mao Tse-tung at the beginning of this chapter) is in fact misleading, as it tends to obscure the fact that two separate and politically distinct revolts occurred in northern Sinkiang during this period - one in Ili, the other in Shara Sume. Although nominal unity was achieved for a short while, political differences inherent between the two groups were to prevent their effective unification into a single movement, as will be shown.

forces between 1871 and 1882, and had only reluctantly been returned to China after prolonged negotiations.<sup>64</sup> During this period of Tearist occupation, many Russian settlers moved into the Ili region. Their numbers were later reinforced by "White" Russian refugees, both during and after the Russian Civil War. Throughout the Republican period Ili had remained unaffected by the Muslim revolts which swept through Dzungaria and the Tarim Basin, and because of its close economic links with the USSR (which remained largely uninterrupted under both Yang Tseng-hsin and Chin Shu-jen, as well as during Sheng's "progressive" years), the region had enjoyed a prosperity far beyond any other in Sinkiang. Following Sheng's break with the Kremlin, however, Ili's special economic relationship with the Soviet Union was abruptly severed, causing the valley to lose its principal market for the sale of cattle and raw materials, and its principal source of manufactured goods. As a result, according to Soviet sources: 'imports grew fewer and fewer, so that prices of manufactured goods soared, whilst those of cattle-breeding fell almost to nothing'.<sup>65</sup>

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64. Hsu, op.cit., passim.

65. Mingulov, N.N., 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang, 1944-49' (an abridged version of Mingulov's 'The National Liberation Movement in Sinkiang as part of the Chinese Revolution, 1944-49', originally published in Voprosy Istorii Kazakhatana i Vostochnogo Turkestan, Alma Ata, 1962), CAR, II, 2 (1963), p. 183.

This decline in trade with the Soviet Union, combined with the greatly increased inflation, taxation, and requisitions in labour and kind which accompanied KMT rule,<sup>66</sup> soon caused widespread discontent in Ili. The inhabitants of the region seem also to have suffered because of their long-standing cultural and educational links with the Soviet Union,<sup>67</sup> and many Soviet-educated Turkic Muslims were forced to flee across the neighbouring Sino-Soviet frontier to escape the widespread anti-communist purges which swept Sinkiang following Sheng's break with the USSR. As was the case with 'Uthmān Bātūr's Kazakhs at Tayingkul in the MPR, these Turkic Muslim refugees met with a warm reception from the Soviets, and in 1943 a "Sinkiang Turkic People's National Liberation Committee" (STPNLC) was reportedly set up at Alma Ata, the capital of Soviet Kazakhstan, with a view to organising "progressive" opposition to the Sheng-KMT regime in Urumchi.<sup>68</sup> Meanwhile, possibly as early as 1943, but certainly by mid-1944, Turkic Muslims of the Ili Valley started to take to the Tien Shan in small numbers, where they began to organise resistance to Chinese rule.<sup>69</sup>

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66. Mingulov, op.cit., p. 183; Kotov, op.cit., p.443.

67. See above, pp. 85-7; 302.

68. Chang Ta-chün, Ssu-shih nien tung-luan Hsin-chiang, p. 175; Lee Fu-hsiang, op.cit., p. 67.

69. Davidson, Turkestan Alive, p. 122.

During September and October, 1944, Kazakh unrest in Shara Sume and Chuguchak districts spilled over into Ili.<sup>70</sup> This spreading nomadic unrest was accompanied by a small-scale rising at Nilka, a small village on the right bank of the River Kash about 80 kilometres east of Kulja, where in mid-September a mixed group of Kazakhs and Uighurs launched an attack on the local KMT garrison. According to Chinese sources, the leaders of this attack were Ghani Bātūr, a local Uighur, and Farhad, variously described as a Tatar and an Uzbek, who is said to have 'entered China from Soviet Central Asia, and to have brought with him arms, including trench mortars and machine guns, for the rebelling tribesmen'.<sup>71</sup> This accusation was vigorously denied by the Kremlin,<sup>72</sup> and Soviet sources maintain that, in protest against KMT requisitions and taxes; 'an excited countryside rose with fowling pieces, pitchforks, hatchets and sticks'.<sup>73</sup> Be this as it may (and it must be remembered that most Kazakh and Kirghiz fighting men would have been mounted and armed with rifles, however antiquated), the KMT garrison at Nilka, together with its small arsenal, fell to the Muslim rebels on or about October 7th, 1944. Shortly thereafter a band of insurgents, variously estimated at between 1,000 and 2,000 strong, set out over the mountains to attack Kulja, the administrative capital of Ili.<sup>74</sup>

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70. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2359, EXT.2314.1945, p. 1.

71. Cheng Tien-fong, op.cit., p. 281; cf. Lee Fu hsiang, op.cit., p.66; Chen, J., op.cit., pp. 208-10; Dallin, op.cit., p. 364.

72. Moore, H.L., Soviet Far Eastern Policy, 1931-45 (Princeton, 1945), p. 276; Beloff, M., Soviet Policy in the Far East, 1944-51 (London, 1953), p. 97.

73. Mingulov, op.cit., p. 183.

74. ibid.; cf. Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 211.

On balance, it seems probable that the Nilka rising was a spontaneous and purely local affair, in which both the USSR and its "progressive" front organisation, the STPNLC, played no direct part, but which both were subsequently swift to exploit for their own ends. Possible indications of this may be found in the raising of the green flag of Islam at Nilka, and in the general massacre of Han Chinese which seems to have taken place.<sup>75</sup> Similarly Jack Chen, whose writings on Sinkiang faithfully echo the orthodox Maoist line, notes that: 'it took time to channel into constructive activities the revolutionary flood loosed by the first victory of the people in Nilka'.<sup>76</sup> Most telling of all, however, is the (apparently) casually-expressed comment of the Soviet historian N.N. Mingulov that: 'what the insurgents now needed was co-ordination, and this was provided by a Committee presided over by Ahmadjān Qāsim with headquarters at Kulja'.<sup>77</sup> For it was the Soviet Union, and not the CCP, which was to 'channel into constructive activities' the 'revolutionary flood' loosed at Nilka. Documentary proof is, alas, lacking, but circumstantial evidence strongly suggests that Ahmadjān Qāsim was Stalin's man in Kulja, whilst the committee he chaired in that town was almost certainly the local (underground) branch of the Soviet-sponsored and Alma Ata-based STPNLC.<sup>78</sup>

75. ibid.; IOLR, L/P&S/12/2359, EXT.2314.1945, p.3.

76. Chen, op.cit., p. 221.

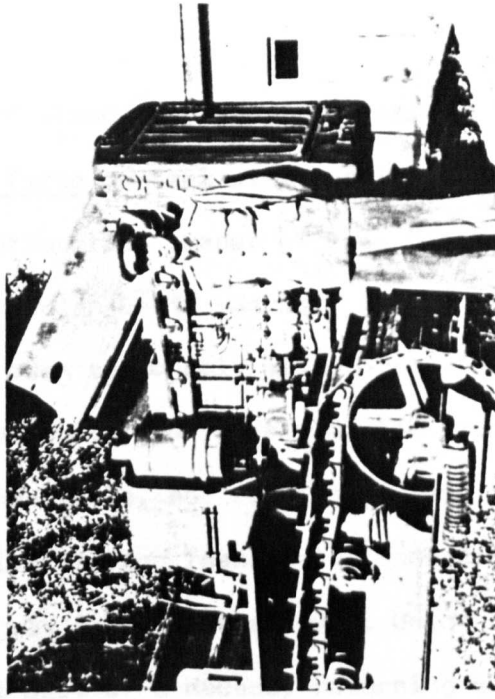
77. Mingulov, op.cit., p. 184

78. Clubb, Russia and China, p. 366; cf. Lee Fu-hsiang, op.cit., p. 67



Plates 24, 25:

## THE EAST TURKISTAN REPUBLIC



The "Stalinetz" tractor used as a tank by the Ili rebels during the storming of the KMT stronghold of Airambek, 1945.



Ahmad jān Qāsīm

Little is known of Ahmadjān Qāsim (see plate 24), the Uighur Turk who was to assume de facto control over the Ili Rising and who was subsequently to become the most influential leader of the "East Turkestan Republic" (ETR). According to Chen, Ahmadjān Qāsim was born in the Ili Valley during 1912. His family must have been reasonably well-to-do, for although his father died when Ahmadjān was only five years old, the young boy was well looked after by his mother and uncle, and received a good education. Shortly after the assassination of Yang Tseng-hsin, when Ahmadjān had reached the age of seventeen, he was taken to the Soviet Union by his uncle. Here he remained for the best part of a decade, returning to Sinkiang in 1938, at the height of Sheng Shih-ts'ai's "progressive" period.<sup>79</sup> Ahmadjān's activities in the USSR remain an almost complete mystery, though it appears he received a higher education under Soviet auspices (probably in Moscow),<sup>80</sup> and may even, according to Chinese sources, have adopted Soviet nationality.<sup>81</sup> By the time of his return to Sinkiang in 1938, Ahmadjān was a "communist-minded progressive" with a Russianised name (Akhmedzhan Kasimov).<sup>82</sup>

79. Chen, op.cit., pp. 246-7.

80. Beloff, Soviet Policy in the Far East, p. 98; McMillen, D.H., Chinese Communist Power and Policy in Xinjiang, 1949-1977 (Boulder, Colorado, and Folkstone, England, 1979), p.22.

81. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p.111; cf. Myrdal and Kessle, op.cit., pp. 217-8.

82. Chen, op.cit., p. 247; Mingulov, op.cit., p.184.

He is reported by Chen to have found work as a carpenter and glazier (though Beloff describes him as a school teacher)<sup>83</sup> until, following Sheng Shih-ts'ai's break with the Soviet Union, he was arrested as a suspected communist and thrown into jail. Chen concludes on a reassuringly domestic note which is not altogether convincing: 'Released only in 1944, he returned to his work and studies and got married. Two weeks after the wedding the Ili Uprising began'.<sup>84</sup>

Whatever the nature of Ahmadjān's activities in the months immediately preceding the outbreak of fighting at Nilka, it is at least clear that both he and his "progressive" colleagues acted swiftly following the fall of Nilka in early October to take political control over the burgeoning rebellion. In the words of Jack Chen: 'the revolutionaries in Ili did not wait to be liberated'.<sup>85</sup> As soon as news of the events at Nilka reached Kulja the STPNLC began to prepare an armed uprising designed both to oust KMT forces from the city and to pre-empt its 'liberation' by rural partisans whom the urban "progressives" (rightly) suspected of woolly-minded Islamic fundamentalism and anti-Han chauvinism. Seemingly, the STPNLC's partial attainment of this objective was considerably facilitated by the military incompetence of the KMT.

83. Beloff, Soviet Policy in the Far East, p. 98.

84. Chen, op.cit., p. 247. Chen further states specifically that Ahmadjān 'was not a member of the underground organization but immediately volunteered for and threw himself into any work the revolutionary leadership gave him to do'.

85. ibid., p. 212.

According to Chen, the KMT maintained three battalions in and around Kulja. One of these, a force of Han regulars raised and trained in China proper and armed with 'modern automatic rifles, mortars, light and heavy machine guns, and plenty of ammunition', was quartered in central Kulja 'in barracks on present-day Stalin Street, a poplar-shaded avenue not far from KMT army headquarters'. The second battalion, 'a scratch force distrusted by the Kuomintang', was stationed in the West Park area of Kulja. Made up of conscripts from the various non-Han nationalities in the Ili region, this force was poorly armed, having 'only two or three rifles to a company'. The third battalion, also of well-armed Han regulars, was stationed in the Airmbek district and guarded the nearby airfield.<sup>86</sup>

Both Chen and Mingulov suggest that immediately before Ahmadjān Qāsim's rising, Nationalist strength within Kulja was seriously depleted by the despatch of the greater part of the KMT garrison towards the rebel-held village of Nilka;<sup>87</sup> according to contemporaneous British diplomatic reports, however, only a 'small detachment of troops' was involved in this sortie,<sup>88</sup> and there must be a distinct possibility that both Chen and Mingulov have deliberately exaggerated the weakness of the Kulja garrison as a device to explain the apparent ease with which rebel forces, said to have been armed initially with 'fowling pieces, pitchforks, hatchets and sticks' succeeded in defeating two battalions of Han regulars armed with machine guns, artillery and even aeroplanes.

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86. ibid., p. 212.

87. ibid.

88. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10 (British Consulate Urumchi to Sir R. Stevenson, British Ambassador Nanking, 24/9/46), p. 1.

As might be expected, accounts of the rising at Kulja and the subsequent struggle for control of the whole Ili Valley are both few in number and differ radically in their interpretation of events. It seems clear, however, that by early November, 1944, the column of Muslim insurgents from Nilka had arrived at the outskirts of Kulja New City, having evaded the contingent of KMT troops despatched to engage them in the countryside. Meanwhile within Kulja the KMT, 'panicky and desperate' according to Chen, had declared martial law and 'unleashed a wave of terror' during which

Security guards rounded up hundreds of suspects. Patrols indiscriminately gunned down anyone moving on the streets. Suspects were butchered. Without even a pretense of investigation or trial thirty-three men and women were shot inside the first district police station. Another thirty-five were shot at the central police station. Two hundred and thirty-three newly arrested people were herded together, shot in batches, and buried in a single mass grave. Another thousand caught in groups was shot and tumbled into wells and ravines.<sup>89</sup>

The Kuomintang terror was 'wild and indiscriminate'. However, whilst the revolutionary organization in Ili suffered losses, 'its leading cadre was intact and swiftly reacted to the attack'.<sup>90</sup> Although the actual sequence of events surrounding the rebel capture of Kulja remain unclear, by piecing together the available Chinese, Russian and British accounts of the rising,<sup>91</sup>

89. Chen, op.cit., p. 212.

90. ibid., p. 213.

91. The main Chinese sources are: Chang Ta-chün, Ssu-shih nien tuno-luan Hein-chiang, pp. 145-76, and Chen, op.cit., pp. 203-75 (in English, but based upon numerous interviews with participants in the Ili Rising, including the widow of Ahmadjan Qasim). The main Russian source consulted by the present author has been N.N. Mingulov's Voprosy Istorii Kazakhstana I Vostochnogo Turkestana, an abridged translation of which appeared in CAR, II, 2(1963), pp. 181-95. The most detailed English account of the actual fighting for Kulja is certainly the report of HMC Urumchi A.C. Graham to Sir R. Stevenson, then British Ambassador to Nanking, cited in fn.88 above. None of these accounts may be legitimately described as 'primary sources', though Graham was in Sinkiang at the time of the Ili Rising, and subsequently travelled in both KMT and ETR regions of the province during 1946.

it becomes possible to state with some certainty that despite KMT counter-measures, the STPNLC succeeded both in establishing contacts with the Nilka partisans, and in winning over to the rebel cause the greater part of the Turkic and Mongol conscripts serving in the KMT's West Park battalion.<sup>92</sup> On the night of 6th-7th November, 1944, a large band of insurgents assembled in an orchard near Kulja New City. It seems probable that this force was comprised of both Nilka partisans and local Kulja rebels. In any event, early on the morning of 7th November this party attacked KMT positions in Kulja Old City (neither city is walled), and within a short time had captured the administrative headquarters. According to Graham, the British consular representative in Urumchi who made an official visit to Ili in 1946: 'Many Chinese soldiers threw down their arms and hid, only to be routed out and butchered at leisure'.<sup>93</sup> Other Han troops took up strong defensive positions, most notably at the power station and the central police station, which they defended with vigour. It took the insurgents almost a week to reduce these last strongholds of KMT resistance within Kulja. Meanwhile, the regular Han troops stationed at the airfield were brought under siege, though no major rebel attack was launched in this direction.<sup>94</sup> By November 12th 'green flags dominated more and more buildings', so that the insurgents deemed themselves sufficiently well in control of Kulja to set up a Central Military Staff of their own, and to plan the formation of a provisional government.<sup>95</sup> The central police station (reportedly defended by

92. Chen, op.cit., p. 213.

93. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 2.

94. ibid.; Chen, op.cit., pp. 213-4; Mingulov, op.cit., p. 184.

95. Chen, op.cit., p. 214; Mingulov, op.cit., p. 184 (citing the ETR organ Inqilabi Sarqi Turkistan /Revolutionary East Turkestan, 7th October, 1947 not seen by present author).

over three hundred armed police who must have known that their lives would inevitably be forfeit in the event of defeat), finally fell on November 13th. Two days later, on November 15th, 1944, a new separatist regime, operating under the soubriquet "Şarqi Türkistan Cumhuriyeti" ("East Turkestan Republic", or ETR) was set up at Kulja under the titular presidency of <sup>c</sup>Ali Khān Tūre, an Uzbek religious leader who enjoyed widespread support amongst the Muslim peoples of Ili.<sup>96</sup> It was soon to become apparent, however, that the real power behind the ETR lay in the hands of the Soviet-sponsored STPNLC, under the chairmanship of the Uighur "progressive" Ahmadjān Qāsım.

### 8.3 The Soviet Union and the Initial Consolidation of the ETR.

Possibly the most vexatious question surrounding the shadowy "East Turkestan Republic" is the degree as to which the predominantly Muslim rebels received support and encouragement from the neighbouring Soviet Union. Predictably enough, Wu Chung-hsin and the KMT authorities lost no time in accusing the Soviets of military intervention in Sinkiang.<sup>97</sup>

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96. Mingulov, op.cit., p. 184; IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p.3.

97. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 104-5; Wheeler, G., 'Sinkiang and the Soviet Union', The China Quarterly, XVI (October-December, 1963) p. 58; Chiang Kai-shek, Soviet Russia in China, pp. 102-3.

Equally predictably, the Soviet authorities strenuously denied this charge, subsequently informing the nationalists that the Kremlin 'had no intention of interfering in China's internal affairs'.<sup>98</sup> In his Pivot of Asia (1950), Lattimore makes it clear that he discounts reports of Soviet involvement, adding that: 'most of the Uighur (rebels) were in fact without rifles and were armed only with hand grenades'.<sup>99</sup> In contrast Whiting, in his 1958 study Pawn or Pivot?, clearly accepts that there was some degree of Soviet involvement, though he adds the caveat that this conclusion rests entirely on circumstantial evidence, whilst 'firm evidence on the relationship between the rebels and Soviet strategy is lacking'.<sup>100</sup> As a result of materials made available by the Russians, the British and the Chinese over the 23 years since Whiting published his conclusions, it is now possible to state with certainty that the Soviet Union was deeply involved in the establishment of the ETR, though the precise degree of Soviet aid to the rebels must remain in some doubt. Similarly, any analysis of Soviet diplomatic purpose in setting up a secessionist Muslim

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98. Moore, H.L., Soviet Far Eastern Policy, p. 276; Wheeler, 'Sinkiang and the Soviet Union', p. 58.

99. Lattimore cites (with apparent concurrence) the reports of Frank Robertson, 'an American correspondent who reached the region (of the ETR) somewhat later'. Pivot of Asia, p. 87. In this context, see also Robertson's report in the New York Times of February 1st, 1948, which states clearly that 'there has been no evidence to support Chinese charges that Ili troops are armed with modern Russian equipment' (cited in Lee Fu-hsiang, op.cit., p. 76).

100. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 105.



statelet in north-western Sinkiang - or of parallels between the ETR and the two contemporaneous secessionist movements backed by the Soviet Union in north-western Iran (the "Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan" and the "Kurdish Republic of Mahebad")<sup>101</sup> - must inevitably remain speculative.

As has been shown, despite Chinese claims to the contrary, it seems probable that the rising at Nilka in September, 1944, was a spontaneous and purely local affair. Following the November 7th rising at Kulja, however, Chinese claims of Soviet complicity with the rebels were redoubled. Thus, on November 8th, whilst the fighting in Kulja was still in its early stages, the KMT Special Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, Chaucer H. Wu, cabled Chungking from Urumchi to the effect that:

According to a telegram from Ili, on the morning of November 7, approximately 500 naturalised White Russians began a revolt in I-ning (Kulja) with machine guns and grenades. When our airplane flew into I-ning for reconaissance, machine guns in the Soviet consulate opened fire.<sup>102</sup>

Whilst this report remains unconfirmed by any independent primary source, it is difficult to believe that a group of insurgents armed chiefly with clubs, 'fowling-pieces' and KMT weaponry captured from the small garrison at Nilka could so swiftly have overcome many hundreds of heavily-armed Han regular soldiers and KMT police, particularly when the less than spectacular

101. See below, pp. 435-40.

102. Copy of telegram from Special Commissioner Wu to Ministry of Foreign Affairs of November 8th, 1944 (Wai-chiao Pu Archives, Taipei, Taiwan), cited in Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, pp. 104-5.

military performance of the TIRET and Kumullik rebels during the 1930s is taken into consideration. Chen ascribes the rebel victory to superior morale,<sup>103</sup> but Graham, who was probably the first Westerner to visit Ili under the ETR, reported that: 'The insurgents were ... joined by many Russians with military experience, both with and without Soviet papers, who fought well, and many of whom were killed'.<sup>104</sup> The involvement of Russian soldiers in the early stages of the rebellion is confirmed by N.N. Mingulov, who describes them as 'settlers living in Sinkiang, having migrated there from Semirech'ye in the 19th century'; he identifies their leaders as F. Leskin and A. Polinov.<sup>105</sup> Taken together these three sources (one Chinese, one British, and one Russian) would seem to establish beyond reasonable doubt that a sizeable group of trained Russian soldiers took part in the initial stages of the Ili rising, though whether their political colouring was "White" or "Red" remains unclear. Besides, as Hedin had indicated in the early 1930s, time and geographical isolation had served to heal the wounds of the Civil War, and many ostensibly "White" Russian settlers in Sinkiang had become reconciled to the Soviet system prevailing in their motherland.<sup>106</sup>

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103. Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 214

104. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p.2.

105. Mingulov, op.cit., p. 184.

106. Hedin, Big Horse's Flight, p. 184.

Seemingly, therefore, during the initial stages of the rising at Kulja, the rebel forces were divided into two main factions. Of these the largest and the least-well organised might loosely be described as pan-Islamic and conservative, consisting primarily of partisans from Nilka assisted by 'gangs of Moslems armed only with sticks, who paraded the streets shouting slogans and murdering defenceless Chinese'.<sup>107</sup> In marked contrast to this group, the Soviet-sponsored STPNLC under Ahmadjān Qāsim sought to establish a secular, secessionist state which might embrace people of all nationalities and religious persuasions including, at least in theory, Han Chinese.

In this context, whilst it is clear that during the early stages of the Ili Rising anti-Han pogroms seem to have been the rule rather than the exception, it is also pertinent to note that when such massacres took place not all Han Chinese fell victim to the mob. Turrall, the British Consul at Urumchi in 1944-45, identified the most common victims of anti-Han pogroms as first generation Chinese immigrants, KMT officials, and soldiers.<sup>108</sup>

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107. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p.2.

108. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2359, EXT.2314.1945, p. 3.

This point is elaborated by Graham, who notes that:

Hardly any Chinese civilian officials escaped. For example, of over a hundred telegraph employees in the Ili Ch'u, only three are known to be safe. The only senior official to escape was the postmaster, who was hidden by a Muslim friend, but his family was butchered. Of non-official Chinese, men from Manchuria had the least chance, as Sheng and the majority of his troops were from the north-eastern provinces... The descendants of the camp followers of Tso Tsung-T'ang's army in the 1870s, mostly Tientsin sutlers and prostitutes, fared best; and generally, though by no means invariably, the mobs spared women and children. Fanaticism was evidently not entirely unbridled.<sup>109</sup>

There are no indications as to the STPNLC's attitude to these massacres. Ahmadjān Qāsim was subsequently to admit that initially the ETR 'made no distinction between Han Chinese and the Kuomintang reactionary clique, considering the whole Chinese nationality as our enemy'.<sup>110</sup> In retrospect it might be supposed that most of the blame for the anti-Chinese pogroms of 1944 and early 1945 lay with the conservative and pan-Islamic faction within the rebel group. On the other hand, a more Machiavellian interpretation would point to STPNLC complicity, for the victims were chiefly KMT officials, followers of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, and recent colonists whilst small merchants, tradesmen and lumpen proletarian elements were generally spared.

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109. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 2.

110. A-ho-mai-ti-ch'ang (Ahmadjān Qāsim), 'Wo-men tsai min-tzu wen-t'i chung tii-hsieh ts'o-wu' ('Some of Our Mistakes with Regard to the Nationalities Question'), Hsin-Hua Yüeh-Pao (New China Monthly, Peking), I, 4 (Feb. 1950), p. 883.

It is at least clear that the ETR government proclaimed on November 15th, 1944, was based on a coalition between "progressive" and "reactionary" elements within rebel ranks. Whilst Ahmadjān Qasim and his "progressive" STPNLC was certainly more powerfully armed and better organised within Kulja, the pan-Islamic conservative faction equally certainly enjoyed more support in the countryside, and was overwhelmingly more numerous. Accordingly, in a move designed to promote unity amongst the anti-KMT forces, the Uzbek Calīm <sup>C</sup>Ali Khān Tūre was declared president, of the ETR, whilst Hākīm Beg Khoja, an influential Uighur landowner, was appointed as his deputy. Mingulov notes with approval the 'flexible tactics' employed by the STPNLC at this juncture, and comments: 'the organisers were alive to the necessity of roping in everybody at this initial stage, from toiling peasant to affluent merchant or great landowner'.<sup>111</sup> Seemingly the conservative faction within rebel ranks was also prepared to compromise at this stage, for both the epithets "Turkic" and "Islamic" were omitted from the title of the new secessionist state (not least, one suspects, because of "White" Russian involvement in the rebellion), whilst a tentative welcome was extended to various non-Muslim minority nationalities (including, besides Russians, Mongols, Sibos, Solons and Manchus) who either supported, or did not actively oppose, the revolutionary movement. No mention was

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111. Mingulov, op.cit., p.184.

made of Islam as the state religion of the ETR, though the green flag of Islam bearing a white crescent and star was retained as the "national flag" of the nascent republic.<sup>112</sup>

An examination of the more influential figures in the ETR administration at this stage indicates that, apart from <sup>C</sup>Ali Khān Tūre and Hākīm Beg Khoja, most senior officials belonged to the "progressive" faction. Besides Ahmadjān Qāsim, "progressive" elements attached to the Central Staff of the ETR are known to have included the Uighurs Saif al-Dīn <sup>C</sup>Azīz, Raḥīmjan Sābir Hājji, and <sup>C</sup>Abd al-Karīm <sup>C</sup>Abbās; the Kazakh, <sup>C</sup>Abd al-Hayir Tūre; the Kirghiz, Ishāq Beg (also known as Ishāq Jān); the Mongol, Fucha-Afandi; and the Russians, F. Leskin, A. Polinov, and Glimkin.<sup>113</sup> Besides Ahmadjān, only two members of this shadowy group were to achieve real prominence. These were the Kirghiz, Ishāq Beg, who became commander-in-chief of the rebel armies, and above all the Uighur Saif al-Dīn <sup>C</sup>Azīz (better known as "Saifuddin" - see plate 32 - the son of a well-to-do merchant from Artush, near Kashgar. Born c. 1914, Saif al-Dīn received his

112. It is interesting to note that following the 'Saur' (April) Revolution of 1978 in Afghanistan, the Khalk (Peoples') faction of the Afghan communist movement substituted a red flag for the former Afghan national flag which had contained green - the prophet Muhammad's favourite colour - for Islam. Following the Soviet invasion in late 1979 and the installation of a puppet government drawn from the Parcham (Banner) faction of the Afghan communist movement, this decision was reversed, and green was reintroduced into the Afghan national flag.

113. Mingulov, *op.cit.*, p. 184; Lee Fu-hsiang, *op.cit.*, p. 73; Kotov, *op.cit.* pp. 443-4; Isma'il and Isma'il, *op.cit.*, p. 28; Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 87; Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 241; McLean, 'Sinkiang Today', p.385 Of the various "progressive" figures attached to the ETR Central Staff, the "Mongol" Fucha-Afandi (described by Mingulov as a 'distinguished patriot') is perhaps the hardest to place. The first element of his name might possibly be a Russification of the Mongol khuch (= strong), which is indeed used as a name by Mongols. 'Afandi', however, is certainly not Mongol, but may well be a distorted transcription of the Turkic Muslim title efendi/effendi (= gentleman, Mr.). This suggests that Fucha-Afandi was probably an Islamised Mongol, and was therefore not truly representative of the Lamaist-Buddhist Mongol population of Ili.

early education in Sinkiang. He then travelled to the Soviet Union, where he studied law and politics at the University of Tashkent, became fluent in Russian, and joined the CPSU. Following his return to Sinkiang, he was to serve the ETR as Minister of Education and (according to the Biographical Dictionary of Republican China) as head of the Yashlar Tashkilati or Ili youth organisation.<sup>114</sup>

According to KMT sources, of the "progressive" figures cited above, Ishāq Beg, Polinov and Glimkin were members of the STPNLC, whilst °Abd al-Karīm °Abbās and Leskin were 'either Soviet agents, or closely associated with the Russians.<sup>115</sup>

Further indications of Soviet involvement with the ETR may be found in the sequence of events which followed the founding of the separatist regime in November, 1944. As Mingulov points out, despite the success of the rebels in seizing Kulja, the most immediate problems facing the new regime remained military. Accordingly, a "Home Guard" was established, and KMT military stores captured intact were made available to the nascent armed forces under the leadership of Leskin and Ishāq Beg.<sup>116</sup>

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114. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol III, pp. 87-9. According to Barnett, however, the Yashlar Tashkilati was led by an Uighur of Turfan called Saifullāh who, like Saif al-Dīn, had been educated in the Soviet Union (op.cit., p. 269). For an alternative bibliography of Saif al-Dīn, based primarily on sources dating from the current communist era, see McMillen, op.cit., pp. 34-7. According to McMillen, Saif al-Dīn was born at Chuguchak and studied at the Central Asia University in Moscow. Despite these discrepancies, however, it seems to be agreed that Saif al-Dīn received his higher education in the Soviet Union, and became a member of the CPSU.

115. Chang Ta-chün, 'Hsin-chiang I-ning shih-pien yü wei Tung Tu-erh-szu-tan Kung-ho-kuo ch'eng-li chi ch'i hui-mieh' (Sinkiang's I-ning Affair: The Establishment and Subsequent Collapse of the "East Turkestan Republic"), in: Kuang Lu (ed.), Hsin-chiang Yen-chiu (Studies on Sinkiang, Taipei, 1964), p. 324; similarly Hsü Po-ta, 'Su-o tui Hsin-chiang chih ch'in-lüeh', (Soviet Aggression Against Sinkiang) in the same compilation, pp.304-5. See also Lee Fu-hsiang, op.cit., pp. 72-3.

116. Mingulov, op.cit., p. 185.

Whilst the KMT forces holding the airfield at Airambek were closely besieged, it was clearly imperative to reduce this position before KMT reinforcements could arrive from Dzungaria. In an apparently successful attempt to pre-empt this latter development, a force of rebels under the command of Leskin was sent to hold back the KMT at the gorge near Kensai; according to Mingulov, by December, 1944, this group had succeeded in stemming the KMT advance.<sup>117</sup> Meanwhile, smaller detachments of rebel troops moved against KMT garrisons in Tekes and Kura to the south-west of Kulja, both of which fell by the end of the year.<sup>118</sup> A similar advance on Suiting seems to have been accompanied by a local rising; however, the local KMT garrison 'defended themselves stoutly' and were not overcome until January 3rd, 1945, 'when mortars were brought up to batter the walls of their positions'.<sup>119</sup>

Considerable mystery surrounds the reduction of the KMT stronghold at Airambek, which did not fall until January 29th. According to Chen, more than 8,000 KMT troops and officers, together with their families and 'hangers-on', had taken refuge in three carefully prepared military positions in and around Airambek. Once again, Chen attributes the victory of the rebels to superior morale and innovative siege tactics which included the use of a converted "Stalinetz" tractor as a tank (see plate 25).<sup>120</sup> Chen's version

117. ibid.

118. ibid.

119. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 2.

120. For Chen's lengthy account of the struggle at Airambek (written throughout in the tedious "black and white" style of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution), see his Sinkiang Story, pp. 222-6.



of events would seem to be partially confirmed by Turrall who, in a report dated February 5th, 1945, informed the India Office that: 'the small garrison at the (Airambek) airfield succumbed probably through starvation, owing to the failure of supplies dropped by air'.<sup>121</sup> On the other hand, KMT sources cited by Lee Fu-hsiang claim that 'two regiments of Soviet artillery came from Jarkent (Panfilov), a Russian city near the Sino-Soviet border, to help the insurgents in fighting the Chinese garrison troops'.<sup>122</sup> Moreover, this latter version of events is accepted by Graham, who notes that, as at Suiting, mortars were brought up to reduce the Airambek garrison. He continues:

According to a White Russian, whenever the rebels were unable to make progress, detachments of the Red Army were brought in from over the frontier, did what was necessary, and retired; and these mortars were part of their contribution. I should have accepted this statement with reserve, as the mortars might have been captured from the Chinese, and would not have been beyond the capacity of the rebels to use, but for a less doubtful report, tending in the same direction. During the two months' defence of the aerodrome the Provincial Government tried to assist the garrison by dropping supplies by parachute, but after the first consignment had been dropped, anti-aircraft guns were used against the Chinese. Such guns were not seen in Kulja before or since, and it seems reasonable to suppose that they were brought in from over the frontier, and withdrawn as soon as the need for them had passed.<sup>123</sup>

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121. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2405, Coll. 12/62, EXT.2733.1945 (HMCU Turrall - IO 5/2/1945).

122. Lee Fu-hsiang, op.cit., p. 74.

123. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p.2; in this context see also Whiting, who states: 'Men as well as material support appear to have been provided by the Soviet Union. Reserves for rebel forces were readily obtainable from ethnically akin groups across the border. Participants in the revolt later testified that key leaders, as well as many followers, crossed from Russian territory during the winter of 1944-45' (Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p.105). It is pertinent to note that during their 1979 invasion of Afghanistan, the Soviets are similarly reported to have made use of ethnically Turkic troops; this practice was almost immediately discontinued because of fraternisation between Soviet Muslim troops and Afghan Muslims.

Whether Soviet troops participated covertly in the fighting or not, the rebels enjoyed remarkable success, and by the end of January, 1945, the whole Ili Valley, excepting only 'some pockets of resistance on the borders towards Kensai... and Santai' was in rebel hands. Mingulov notes that these last pockets of resistance 'could not be liquidated until the month of March'.<sup>124</sup> The fighting in the Ili Valley during the late autumn and winter of 1944-45 seems to have been both fierce and pitiless. KMT sources continued to allege anti-Han massacres, most notably at Suiting, Kulja, and in the Tekes and Borotala Vallies,<sup>125</sup> whilst the ETR continued to accuse the KMT of murdering prisoners and other brutalities. In this context Graham, following his visit to the rebel zone in 1946, reported that: 'Both sides allege atrocities, mutilation and murder of prisoners, and I see no reason to doubt either'.<sup>126</sup>

Meanwhile, having consolidated their hold on the Ili Valley, the rebel forces turned their attention to the neighbouring administrative districts of Chuguchak and Shara Sume. On January 30th, 1945, one day after the fall of the KMT strongpoint at Airambek, rebel forces won a major victory at Sairam Nor, thus 'leaving the way open for the revolt to surge out of the Ili Valley into the Dzungarian plains'.<sup>127</sup>

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124. Mingulov, op.cit., p. 185.

125. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2359, EXT.2314.1945, p. 3.

126. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p.2.

127. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2405, Coll 12/62, EXT.2733.1945.

Shortly thereafter <sup>C</sup>Uthmān Bātūr, leader of the Kazakh rebellion in the Altai region, 'placed himself at the disposal of the ETR'.<sup>128</sup> Taking advantage of the KMT's preoccupation with events in the Ili Valley, <sup>C</sup>Uthmān's Kazakhs swiftly occupied both Shara Sume and Chuguchak, The fate of the KMT garrison in the former administrative centre remains uncertain, but at Chuguchak no resistance was offered, the Han officials and soldiery preferring to flee en masse to neighbouring Soviet territory.<sup>129</sup> <sup>C</sup>Uthman was subsequently appointed ETR special executive officer for the Altai, with headquarters at Shara Sume.<sup>130</sup> Links between the two centres of rebellion remained tenuous, however, and it seems that <sup>C</sup>Uthmān never paid more than lip service to the "progressive" ideals of the ETR. During this period Kazakh rebels in the central and eastern Tien Shan owing allegiance to <sup>C</sup>Ali Beg Rahīm<sup>131</sup> stepped up their harassment of the KMT, raiding towards Manass and mounting guerilla attacks on the small towns lying along the road to the north of the Tien Shan, both east and west of Urumchi.<sup>132</sup>

128. Hayit, Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China, p. 318

129. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol III, p. 47; IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p.2.

130. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol III, p. 47. See also Appendix VI at the end of this study.

131. See above, p. 346.

132. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2359, EXT.2314.1945, p.5.

Following the KMT defeat at Sairam Nor, a relatively stable front between rebel-held and KMT-held territory formed in the region of Tsingho, where the provincial forces began to mass, ostensibly in preparation for a counter-attack.<sup>133</sup> It is clear, however, that the series of rapid and unexpected reverses suffered by the KMT between October, 1944 and January, 1945, had both thrown the provincial forces into disarray and, for a short time, had 'caused acute panic' in Urumchi.<sup>134</sup> Turrall, the British Consul in that city, reported to his superiors in the India Office that 'Central government troops of Li T'ieh-chün's 29th Army have not merely failed to break into the Ili Valley... but are being driven back', a development which he attributed to: 'The fact that... central government troops... are not as well accustomed to, or equipped for, the icy north-west winds of the Sairam Nor Basin as their highly mobile and incredibly tough (Kazakh) opponents'.<sup>135</sup> Wu Chung-hsin and Chu Shao-liang, however, preferred to explain KMT reverses in terms of massive Soviet intervention on behalf of the rebels. Despite being shown captured armaments, Turrall

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133. Chen, op.cit., p. 230.

134. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p.3;

135. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2359, EXT.2314.1945, p.5.

remained unconvinced of these claims, commenting to his superiors:

I have of course myself no proof one way or the other as to Soviet complicity, but on the face of it, it seems to me unlikely. What the Chinese authorities will not accept is the fact that there are ample causes purely internal to Sinkiang which do not need supplementary external causes to explain in the fullest degree not merely the present discontents but also a future conflagration of the greatest size.<sup>136</sup>

However, whilst Turrall was certainly correct in blaming the Chinese authorities for creating the conditions which led to the outbreak of rebellion in Ili, developments within the rebel zone during the first half of 1945 pointed increasingly towards substantial Soviet complicity in backing the secessionist regime.

To begin with, following the fall of Suiting and the effective establishment of rebel supremacy in the Ili Valley, on January 5th, 1944, the 'Provisional Government' of the ETR issued a declaration (subsequently known as the "Kulja Declaration") setting out its aims. According to Mingulov, these were:

1. The 'annihilation' of the Kuomintang.
2. The creation of a 'Democratic Base' founded on the equality of all nationalities inhabiting the territory of the ETR.

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136. *ibid.*, p.4. The armaments shown to Turrall by the KMT bore no markings, but he was informed that 'miscellaneous rifles of Polish, Finnish, German and Romanian manufacture' had been captured from the rebels. Such arms would, of course, have been widely available to the Soviets following their major advances in the European theatre during 1943 and 1944. In this context see Werth, A., Russia at War, pp. 74-9; 493-508; 519.

3. The formation of a competent, multi-national People's Army.
4. Nationalisation of banks; postal, telegraphic and telephone communications; forestry; and mineral resources.
5. The development of industry, agriculture, stock-breeding and private trade.
6. The establishment and preservation of religious freedom.
7. The development of educational and public health services.
8. The establishment of friendly relations with 'all democratic countries of the world' and, in particular, with Sinkiang's 'next-door neighbour', the Soviet Union.<sup>137</sup>

Mingulov comments approvingly that this programme, 'as will be observed from several of its items', took into account the specific character of society in the Three Regions: 'That is, its patriarchal or feudal stamp; the backward productive relations in the villages where elements of domestic serfdom persisted; and the powerful influence of the Muslim clergy'.<sup>138</sup> According to Kuomintang sources, however, the first clause of the "Kulja Declaration" made no reference to the 'annihilation of the KMT', but announced that the objective of the Ili Revolt was to 'sweep away the Han Chinese'.<sup>139</sup> KMT sources also report

137. Mingulov, op.cit., p. 185; cf. Kotov, op.cit., pp. 443-4.

138. ibid.

139. Lee Fu-hsiang, op.cit., pp. 67-8.

that the programme contained the following ominous passage:

After having led a slave life under the yoke of the Han Chinese for sixty years in the dark ages, we have now awoken by raising the revolutionary flag of the crescent and star which signifies the bright future of Eastern Turkestan... But our goal has not yet been reached, and the sixty year blood debt has not yet been paid by the Han Chinese.<sup>140</sup>

Whatever the truth behind these conflicting claims, there can be no doubt that anti-Han sentiment played a major role in the initial stages of the Ili Revolt.<sup>141</sup> It may also be, as indicated above, that during this early period STPNLC elements within the rebel leadership turned a blind eye to "anti-Hanism", either out of weakness, or out of political expediency, or out of a combination of both.<sup>142</sup> Subsequently, however, the anti-Han tenor of earlier pronouncements by the ETR leadership was gradually set aside as Ahmādjān Qāsim and other "progressive" pro-Soviet elements came to eclipse Muslim fundamentalists and members of the "national bourgeoisie" represented within rebel ranks by 'Ali Khān Ture, Hākīm Beg Khoja, and a string of lesser Muslim Culama'.<sup>143</sup>

140. Chang Ta-chün, Seu-shih nien tung-luan Hsin-chiang, p. 176.

141. This has also been acknowledged by CCP sources since 1949, See, for example, China News Analysis, 103 (October 7, 1955), p.2.

142. See above, pp. 394-5.

143. According to Lee Fu-hsiang (*op.cit.*, p. 68, citing Chang Ta-chün), at least seven 'Moslem clergymen' held cabinet level posts in the ETR. However: 'they had little or nothing to do with the real power, which was in the hands of modern-educated young men who were more or less associated with the Soviet Union'.

The influence of the "progressive" STPNLC faction within the ETR seems to have achieved primacy during the spring of 1945, following the fall of the KMT stronghold at Airambek. From this time onwards anti-Han rhetoric was phased out of ETR pronouncements (not least, one suspects, because so few Han Chinese settlers and officials had survived the pogroms),<sup>144</sup> and a series of genuinely constructive social reforms was introduced.<sup>145</sup> These reforms included the implementation of a "sowing campaign" aimed at boosting agricultural production in which loans of seed and money were advanced to the rural population 'to enable them to press ahead with the spring sowings of 1945'.<sup>146</sup> In the field of public health, the incidence of typhus in the Ili Valley is said to have been arrested, whilst in education: 'Courses for teachers and extension courses were organised so that the scholastic year could begin in all schools in the Ili district by 1st September, 1945'.<sup>147</sup> Meanwhile, the central administration of the

144. When Graham visited the ETR zone in 1946, he asked a junior officer of the revolutionary army whether there were many Han Chinese in Kulja. The officer replied that: 'There used to be, but (with gusto) we killed a lot of them in the war' (IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 1).

145. Even some KMT sources agree with this evaluation. See Lee Fu-hsiang, op.cit., p. 68; Chang Ta-chün, Ssu-shih nien tung-luan Hsin-chiang, pp. 175-6; Chang Chih-chung, 'Dilemma in Sinkiang', Pacific Affairs, XX (1947), p. 428.

146. Mingulov, op.cit., p.186.

147. ibid.



ETR was reorganised into eleven departments<sup>148</sup> under the indirect supervision of a 'National Council' composed of members of 'every nationality' resident in the Ili region, each nationality supposedly being represented in proportion to the size of its population.<sup>149</sup> According to Lattimore, these developments encouraged the participation of various non-Muslim nationalities in the Ili Revolt, thus: 'The Chinese residents of Kulja cautiously declared that they had nothing in common with the oppressive policy of the provincial government',<sup>150</sup> whilst the Tungusic agriculturalists delivered supplies to the rebel administration, the Sibos in particular earning great praise for 'distinguishing themselves in carrying out tasks assigned them by the Kulja regime, such as delivering grain and clover'.<sup>151</sup> It is noteworthy, however, that despite

148. Chang Te-chün, Ssu-shih nien tung-luan Hsin-chiang, p. 175; cf. idem, 'Hsin-chiang I-ning shih-pien', etc., p. 327; Lee Fu-hsiang, op.cit., p. 67. The eleven departments (ten ministries and one banking dept.) are listed in Appendix VI, Fig. 4, at the end of this study.
149. Lee Fu-hsiang, op.cit., p. 69. In fact, the ETR's seventeen man council (presumed to be Lee's "National Council") appears to have lacked Han Chinese representation and to have been dominated by Muslim nationalities (See Appendix VI, passim, and Fig. 4, in particular, at the end of this study.
150. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 87.
151. ibid., pp. 87, 148-9.

their adherence to the Islamic faith, the Tungan minority in the Ili region seems to have played little or no part in the rebel movement.<sup>152</sup>

It seems clear that <sup>C</sup>Ali Khān Tūre and the Muslim fundamentalists remained opposed to the participation of non-Muslim peoples (and especially of Han Chinese) in the ETR, and to this end they fought a vigorous rearguard action against the STPNLC "progressives" during the first half of 1945. According to Chen, a triumvirate of Muslim fundamentalists including <sup>C</sup>Ali Khān Tūre, the titular president of the ETR, <sup>C</sup>Abd al-Mutta <sup>C</sup>Ali Khalīfa, the Minister of Religious Affairs, and Sa<sup>C</sup>ūd Dāmullāh, the Vice-Minister of Education, attempted to 'integrate state and religion' by advocating that Islamic shari<sup>C</sup>a law should be applied throughout the ETR; that the Muslim religion should be taught in all state schools; and that (according to Lee Fu-hsiang) ETR officials should be exclusively selected from amongst 'those who are familiar with the teachings of the Qur'<sup>ān</sup>',<sup>153</sup>

152. ibid., p. 114 (but cf. Chen's unsubstantiated report of an exclusively Tungan cavalry regiment fighting as an integral part of the rebel army during 1945, The Sinkiang Story, p. 228; see also Appendix VI, at the end of this study, passim). Lattimore explains Tungan hostility towards the ETR in terms of 'the social conservatism of the Chinese Muslims'. This is certainly an over-simplification, however. As the present study has attempted to indicate, the history of the Sinkiang Tungan community during both the late Imperial period and throughout the Republican period was characterised by loyalty to China (though not necessarily to the ruling Chinese regime) and by opposition to Turkic Muslim separatism (whether of the "Muslim fundamentalist" or "progressive" strand). It is clear, therefore, that the predominantly Turkic Muslim leadership of the ETR must have regarded the Tungan population of Ili with deep mistrust. This mistrust, moreover, must have been shared by the ETR's Soviet backers, as Moscow had good reason to recall the fanatical support lent by the Tungans of Dzungaria to Ma Chung-ying's invading armies during the mid-1930s. It is, therefore, by no means clear that the ETR leadership and their Soviet backers would have sought Tungan support, even had that support been readily available. Besides, can it really be said that the Tungans of Ili were more 'socially conservative' than the (predominantly Uighur) Muslim fundamentalists of the region, who actively backed the ETR regime?

153. Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 241; Lee Fu-hsiang, op.cit., p. 68. Note, however, that in Table 4 below (p.     ), the Minister of Religion is listed as "Tse-li".

Chen further notes that during this period:

Religious courts tended to dogmatic interpretations of religious texts and failed to adapt to the complexities of modern conditions. They particularly infringed on the rights of women, whose emancipation was one of the aims of the revolution. Great injustices were done to women when age-old religious laws and customs were blindly upheld.<sup>154</sup>

By mid-1945, however, Muslim fundamentalist moves to Islamise the ETR seem finally to have been defeated with the result that, according to Mingulov, 'in criminal law it was made a heinous offence to stir up communal hatred'.<sup>155</sup> Indications of this "progressive" victory may be found in the two chief propaganda organs of the ETR (printed on Russian presses either imported from the Soviet Union or seized from the KMT administration at the time of the Ili rising), namely Azad Şarqi Türkistan ('Free Eastern Turkestan'),<sup>156</sup> and subsequently Inqilabi Şarqi Türkistan ('Revolutionary Eastern Turkestan'),<sup>157</sup> as well as in the numerous propaganda leaflets produced from about this time which emphasised the close ethnic and cultural ties existing between the ETR and the Soviet Central Asian Republics, and which stressed the 'freedom' enjoyed by the various national minorities within the Soviet Union when contrasted with the oppression suffered by the peoples of Sinkiang living in the region still under KMT control.<sup>158</sup>

154. Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 241.

155. Mingulov, op.cit., p. 186.

156. ibid., citing a report in Azad Şarqi Türkistan to the effect that the ETR: 'guaranteed the (Han) Chinese community the right to productive work or to employment in public institutions or in trade, and allowed papers to come out in Chinese'.

157. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 87.

158. According to Dallin (op.cit., p. 364, citing the New York Times of June 3, 1946), one such leaflet stated:

'Our nearest blood relations are the Kazakhs, Kirghiz, Uzbeks and Tatars. In the Soviet Union each of these races has organised its own government and its members are living free and joyful lives'.

Meanwhile, the ETR continued to assume the trappings of statehood with remarkable swiftness. Thus, the newly-established administration instituted an (apparently viable) system of taxation,<sup>159</sup> issued its own currency,<sup>160</sup> and (in marked contrast to its incompetent and ill-fated predecessor at Kashgar), set about creating a well-armed and disciplined 'popular army' as described in clause three of the "Kulja Declaration" cited above. According to Mingulov, shortly after the announcement of this revolutionary programme on January 5th, 1945, a defence fund was started to which 'the people of Ili District contributed with great enthusiasm'.<sup>161</sup> By April 8th, 1945, the foundations of this 'child of the people' (variously styled the "Ili National Army" by Kotov, the "National Peoples' Army" by Chen, and the "Sinkiang Democratic Army" by Barnett),<sup>162</sup> had been successfully laid.<sup>163</sup> Overall command of this force was given to the Kirghiz leader

159. McLean, 'Sinkiang Today', p. 383.

160. Whiting, Soviet Strategy, p. 106. This (paper) currency was certainly locally printed, and not imported from the USSR, as according to Graham: 'the local (ETR) notes, though still in circulation (1946), are printed on such shocking paper that they will soon all have disintegrated entirely' (IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 4).

161. Mingulov, op.cit., p. 186.

162. Kotov, op.cit., p. 443; Chen, op.cit., p. 228; Barnett, op.cit., p. 264. In the present study the term "Ili National Army" will be preferred for its comparative accuracy.

163. Mingulov, op.cit., p. 186; Kotov, op.cit., p. 443.

Ishāq Beg, who had been a brigade commander in the service of Sheng Shih-ts'ai before the latter's break with the Soviets in 1942.<sup>164</sup> It is known that he was assisted in this task by the "White" Russians Polinov (who had been a regimental commander in Sheng's forces during the same period),<sup>165</sup> and Leskin (who was responsible for having defeated the initial KMT counter-offensive near Kensai in December, 1944).<sup>166</sup> All three leading officers of the revolutionary forces in the Ili region are thus known to have been associated with the pro-Soviet STPNLC (indeed, according to Barnett, Ishāq Beg was reported to hold dual Sino-Soviet nationality and to have been 'one of the most completely pro-Russian men in the Ili group'.<sup>167</sup> whilst only in distant Shara Sume, in the person of the Kazakh chieftain ʿUthmān Bātūr, did a powerful rebel leader without avowedly "progressive" views hold sway.

164. Lee Fu-hsiang, *op.cit.*, p. 73. According to A. Doak Barnett (*op.cit.*, p. 264), Ishāq Beg actually commanded one of the (GPU) units sent by Stalin to aid Sheng Shih-ts'ai during his struggle with Ma Chung-ying during the 1930s. Before this, according to Chen, he fought as a partisan in his native southern Sinkiang during the struggle against Chin Shu-jen (Chen, *op.cit.*, p. 228).

165. Lee Fu-hsiang, *op.cit.*, p. 73.

166. See above, p. 399.

167. Barnett, *op.cit.*, p. 264.

#### 8.4 The Soviet Union and the Military Expansion of the ETR

Following Leskin's victory over units of the KMT 29th Army at Sairam Nor on January 30th, 1945, the defeated provincial forces fell back on Tsingho, which became the effective front-line between ETR- and KMT- held territory. Here General Hsieh, the commander of the provincial units opposing Leskin's rebel forces, began to reorganise his dispirited troops in preparation for a counter-attack scheduled for the spring of 1945 by which time the bitterly cold weather, which was considered by both Wu Chung-hsin and Chu Shao-liang to favour the local Kazakh partisans,<sup>168</sup> should have abated. In retrospect it seems clear that the KMT leadership miscalculated badly in taking this decision, for during the intervening winter months the ETR was able to liquidate all continuing KMT resistance within the Ili region, and to build up a surprisingly powerful "Ili National Army" (INA).

Information concerning the following military struggle is both sparse and contradictory. It seems clear, however, that despite an apparently overwhelming superiority in men and material (consisting of an estimated 100,000 troops in Sinkiang, many of whom were armed with modern American weaponry),<sup>169</sup> the KMT were unable to break through the Talki Pass and

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168. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2359, PZ.2314.1945, pp. 1, 5.

169. See above, p. 371.

into the Ili Valley. Rather, when full-scale hostilities broke out in July, 1945, it was the INA which assumed the offensive, sweeping the KMT forces back towards Urumchi and striking deep into Chuguchak and Share Sume to make contact with the Kazakh rebels owing allegiance to 'Uthmān Bātūr.

How was this possible? Clearly, within a period of six months following the fall of the KMT stronghold at Airambek, the rebel forces must have been transformed from a group of partisans numbering, at most, a few thousands (and armed, it will be recalled, with 'fowling pieces'), into a sizeable, well-disciplined force capable of routing a powerful, if dispirited, force of professional soldiers armed with tanks, field artillery, and planes. According to Chen, by the summer of 1945 the INA had expanded to an estimated strength of 30,000 men:<sup>170</sup>

... A modern force, armed with several thousand rifles and other modern equipment captured from the enemy. Designations and flags were given to the various units. There were ten regiments: the First, Second and Third were infantry, the rest were cavalry units... In addition there were machine gun and mortar companies, an artillery battery, rear service establishments and a political department for the education of the troops. Captured Kuomintang trucks became the core of an independent motorised battalion.<sup>171</sup>

Chen continues by emphasising both the mixed ethnic composition of the INA<sup>172</sup>

170. Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 236.

171. ibid., p. 228.

172. ibid.

and, true to the "Red before Expert" dialectic fashionable at the time of the Cultural Revolution, his contention that what the rebel forces lacked in firepower was more than compensated for in terms of political commitment, thus:

Regular political education was introduced from the start... political commissar(s)...led the men in discussions of the aims of the national liberation struggle and the policies of the provisional government (ETR). All instruction and other activities were designed to bind commanders and men together in brotherly unity, to teach them to observe revolutionary discipline conscientiously and to love and care for the people as if they were all one family. They took the oath of the army (INA) "to serve the people to the death and never retreat in the struggle to overthrow the Kuomintang oppressors".<sup>173</sup>

Other sources, however, adopt a less sanguine view of the ETR's intrinsic military potential. According to Whiting, the "Ili National Army" not only obtained substantial supplies of ammunition through the Soviet consulates located in Kulja, Chuguchak and Shara Sume, but also received much-needed reserves of fighting men 'from ethnically skin groups across the border'.<sup>174</sup> The American reporter Doak Barnett, who travelled extensively in Sinkiang at the time of the ETR-KMT struggle, similarly noted reports that Soviet advisers ('most of them Asians from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan') were attached to every major unit of the INA. His contemporaneous account continues:

173. ibid., p. 229.

174. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 105.



Military supply on the Ili side is somewhat of a mystery, even to Chinese intelligence officers with whom I talked in Sui-lai (Manass). There is not enough industrialization in Ili territory to support sizeable number of troops. Although some of their arms... were captured from the Chinese in the initial campaign, they undoubtedly have received aid from the Russians... It seems probable... that the Ili Army is dependent upon Russia for some military supplies, and it is definitely known that the Ili troops wear a Russian-type uniform.<sup>175</sup>

For some time the origin of these 'Russian-type' uniforms remained uncertain. Thus, when reporting on direct negotiations between senior KMT and rebel officials at Manass in October, 1945, Turrel described the uniforms of the ETR delegates as being 'green, bearing the (Islamic) emblem of a crescent and star'.<sup>176</sup> When Graham visited Kulja during the summer of 1946, however, he was able to get a closer look at the mysterious garb of the INA, as a result of which he reported to his superiors in the British Embassy at Nanking that: 'All flags, uniforms and inscriptions' within the rebel zone bore the insignia "ETR" ("East Turkestan Republic"), but in Russian language and cyrillic script ("VTR", or "Vostochnaya Turkestanskaya Respublika") and not, as might more reasonably have been expected, in Turkic ("STC", or "Şarqi Türkisten Cumhuriyeti", even in the cyrillicised script adopted in 1939-40 by the neighbouring Kazakh SSR); indeed, according to Graham: 'the letters VTR (in Ili) were as common as SPQR in Rome'.<sup>177</sup>

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175. Barnett, *op.cit.*, p. 265.

176. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2405, EXT.2671, 1946 (letter, HMCU Turrel-IO, 1/11/1945)

177. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 3.

Given this fact, the origins of the INA's 'Soviet-type' uniform (and therefore, by association, much of its more sophisticated materiel) can be in little doubt. Moreover, although the Soviet Union continued (and has since continued) vociferously to deny having aided or abetted the INA, on at least one occasion the Kremlin seems to have let slip its guard. Thus, on May 14th, 1967, in a Uighur-language broadcast beamed into Sinkiang by Radio Tashkent, the Soviets announced that:

In 1944 the peoples of East Turkestan broke the chain of tyranny and slavery of the KMT hordes and set up an East Turkestan Republic under a national government... The Soviet State, formed under the leadership of the great Lenin, provided the East Turkestan national army with arms and trained commanding cadres... Moreover, the Soviet Union extended all-out aid to the young Turkestan Republic for its economic and cultural construction.<sup>178</sup>

In this context it is also pertinent to note that the secondment of Soviet military advisers to the INA has been independently acknowledged by a senior CCP cadre in the presence of Mao Tse-tung.<sup>179</sup>

It is clear, therefore, that by the time the spring thaw came to northern Sinkiang in April-May, 1945, the KMT forces stationed around Tsingho were no longer facing a militarily inexperienced, if enthusiastically anti-Chinese, band of Muslim rebels. This must have become painfully apparent to the Nationalist High Command in Urumchi as, in July of that year, the INA went over to the offensive. According to Chen, the "White" Russian

178. BBC Summary of World Broadcasts: The USSR, No. SU 2475 (May 26th, 1967, p. A3/2.

179. Yamamoto Mitsuru, 'Henkyo no Chuokoku o yuku: Shinzian Uigururu Tabi Nikki sho', Chuo-koron (Tokyo), November, 1977, p. 167.

Polinov was first to break out of the Sairam Nor region, leading a cavalry column across the KMT's right flank towards Chuguchak. He was followed by the Kirghiz Ishaq Beg who, at the head of the main body of the INA (a force estimated at 15,000 men), pushed south to attack the KMT 29th Army concentration at Tsingho (also estimated at 15,000 men).<sup>180</sup> At about the same time a third rebel column of uncertain strength is reported to have set out from Suiting, marching in a wide arc to the north and east of the Ebi Nor, in a move apparently designed to bypass Tsingho and to take the KMT garrison town of Wusu from the rear.<sup>181</sup> The subsequent chronology of events remains unclear, but on or about September 6th, 1945, the INA, having captured Tsingho and severely disrupted Nationalist communication lines to the north of Urumchi,<sup>182</sup> succeeded in destroying the KMT New 2nd Army in the immediate vicinity of Wusu. As might be expected, partisans of the ETR and pro-Nationalist sources differ widely in their accounts of this stunning rebel victory. According to Chen, the INA forces involved in the capture of Wusu amounted to no more than 3,000 poorly-armed men. Against this the KMT could muster 8,000 troops 'armed with submachine guns in considerable numbers, light and heavy machine guns, some artillery... and a couple of light tanks'.<sup>183</sup> Chen admits that: 'According to the principles

180. Chen, The Sinkiang Story, pp. 230-31.

181. ibid., pp. 231-2.

182. McLean, 'Sinkiang Today', p. 384.

183. Chen, op.cit., p. 233.

of orthodox warfare the proportions between attackers and defenders should have been reversed', but continues by explaining that: 'this revolutionary war of the peoples of Sinkiang against their oppressors shattered all such accepted principles'.<sup>184</sup> Whiting, however, citing KMT sources, offers a more militarily orthodox explanation:

In a major battle near Wusu in early September... The legions of the self-proclaimed "Eastern Turkestan Republic"... smashed the new Nationalist Second Army with combined air, cavalry and infantry assaults, capturing a divisional commander and several thousand prisoners.<sup>185</sup>

KMT claims that the INA enjoyed air support at Wusu have never been confirmed by independent sources, but on September 7th, one day after the KMT defeat, the Chinese Foreign Office officially protested to the Soviet Ambassador over the alleged presence of Soviet aircraft among rebel forces.<sup>186</sup> Meanwhile, the rebel advance towards Urumchi continued unchecked until the INA reached the next major KMT defensive position, on the banks of the Manass

184. ibid.

185. Wo-men ti ti-kuo (Our Enemy), (Taipei, Taiwan, Chung-Yang Jih-Pao, 1952), II, pp. 254 ff. (Cited in Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 106).

186. ibid.

River. According to Lattimore:

The fighting at Manass was so severe that the population was reduced from 40,000 to 17,000, and the physical devastation was proportionately great. By this time the Kulja insurgents were reported to have 40,000 men under arms, and were considered a grave threat to Urumchi itself. Crack troops from the command of Hu Tsung-nan, which throughout the war against Japan had been garrisoned in Northwest China to "contain" the Chinese Communists, were sent to Sinkiang, but failed to throw back the insurgents.<sup>187</sup>

Meanwhile the fighting had spread to southern Sinkiang for the first time since 1937. In late August and early September groups of Kazakh cavalry owing allegiance to the ETR had crossed the Muzart Pass from the Tekes Valley to seize the towns of Aksu and Bai.<sup>188</sup> Almost simultaneously groups of (predominantly Kirghiz) rebels appeared in the Sarikol region, driving the Nationalist garrison from Tashkurgan and advancing to threaten Keshgar.<sup>189</sup> Sinkiang was clearly slipping from KMT control at an increasing speed, and by the autumn of 1945 the situation must have appeared as bleak to the incompetent Wu Chung-hsin in Urumchi as it appeared promising to the rebel leadership in Kulja.

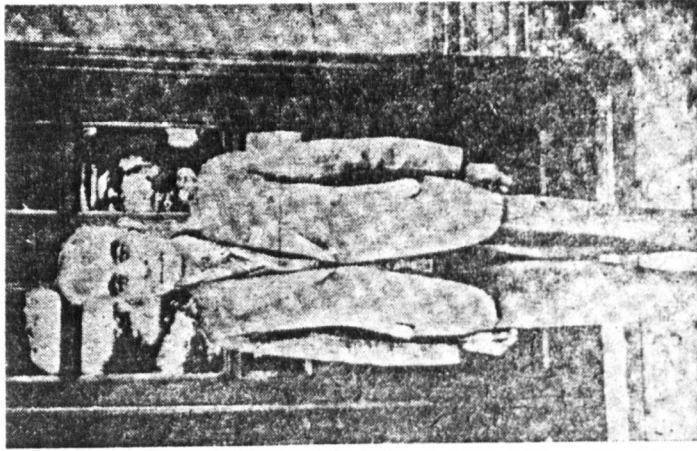
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187. Lattimore, O., Pivot of Asia, p. 87; cf. Lattimore, E., 'Report on Sinkiang', FES, XIV, 7 (April 11, 1945), p. 78.
188. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2405, EXT. 5980.1945 (letter, HMCU Turrall-IO, 2/9/1945); Kotov, op.cit., p. 443.
189. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, EXT.5299.1946 (letter, HMCGK Etherington Smith-GOI, 3/10/46, p. 2. Kotov (op.cit., p. 443), describes this incident as 'an armed uprising of the working masses of Tashkurgan'.

It was at this point, however, that Chungking and Moscow intervened once again decisively to influence the course of events in Sinkiang. Faced with the near-certainty of military defeat before Urumchi, Chiang Kai-shek determined to negotiate with the leadership of the self-styled "East Turkestan Republic". Accordingly, following the KMT debacle before Wusu, the Chungking government despatched General Chang Chih-chung, commander of the KMT's Northwestern Headquarters at Lanchow, to assist the incompetent Wu Chung-hsin at Urumchi.<sup>190</sup> It is apparent that the KMT laid the blame for the unparalleled advances of the INA squarely upon the Soviet Union - and with some justification, for, on September 13th, General Chang went directly to the Soviet Consulate-General in Urumchi where he informed the Russians that: 'Unless a cease-fire were effected immediately, China would make an international affair of the matter'.<sup>191</sup> On September 14th a Soviet consular official is reported to have left Urumchi for rebel lines; only 24 hours later Moscow was able to transmit to Chungking an ETR request that the dispute should be mediated, accompanied by an expression of Soviet willingness 'to act in such a mediatory capacity'.<sup>192</sup> This development, which must surely

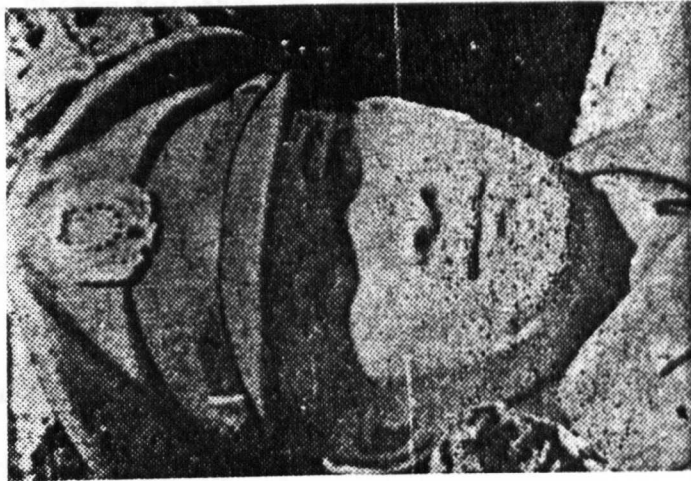
190. Clubb, China and Russia, p. 367; Boorman and Howard, op.cit., I, p. 43.

191. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 106; Clubb, China and Russia, p. 367, citing U.S. Department of State, United States Relations With China With Special Reference to the Period 1944-49 (Washington, 1949), p. 125.

192. Clubb, ibid.



Mas'ūd Sabri



Chang Chih-chung



Wu Chung-hsin

provide yet another positive indication of Soviet links with the Ili rebels, was to lead to an almost immediate ceasefire between the INA and the Nationalist forces, and subsequently to an armistice by which the province of Sinkiang was effectively partitioned into KMT- and ETR-controlled zones.

#### 8.5 The Soviet Union and the KMT-ETR Armistice of 1946

Chang Chih-chung (see plate 27), the senior Nationalist commander despatched by Chiang Kai-shek to negotiate with the Ili rebels in September, 1945, was a man of markedly different stamp from the provincial governor Wu Chung-hsin. Born in Anhwei in 1891, reportedly the son of a poor family, Chang began his association with the military in 1911, when he joined a student corps dedicated to the overthrow of the Ch'ing Dynasty. Subsequently he attended the Paoting Military academy, graduating in 1917, before travelling to Kwangtung where he gained a commission in the nationalist forces surrounding Sun Yat-sen. Chang remained associated with the KMT after Sun's death, and participated in the Northern Expedition as chief-of-staff of the Nationalist First Army's 2nd Division. His career continued to prosper and, following visits to Europe, the United States and Japan in 1927, Chang became Dean of the Central Military Academy in 1929. During the following eight years he saw active service against both the Japanese and the CCP before, in November, 1937, being appointed governor of Hunan.



In 1938, following the burning of the provincial capital of Changsha, Chang lost this post, being 'demoted but retained in office'.<sup>193</sup> Despite this (temporary) setback to his career, however, in 1939 Chang travelled to Chungking where, as a result of his wartime services,<sup>194</sup> he was to become one of Chiang Kai-shek's most trusted lieutenants.

By 1945, therefore, when he was appointed commander-in-chief of the KMT's Northwestern Headquarters at Lanchow, Chang Chih-chung was a tried and trusted military figure of impeccable Nationalist credentials. Yet he was also a man of known political integrity who had a predilection for compromise and was not associated with any of the various pressure groups (such as the "C.C. Clique" and the "Political Science Group") operating within the KMT.<sup>195</sup> These qualities clearly made Chang an acceptable figure to opponents of the KMT, and when in 1945 differences between the KMT and the CCP came into the open, it was Chang Chih-chung that Chiang Kai-shek sent to Yen-an as his personal representative in discussions with the CCP Politburo. Following this mission, as a result of which, in August, 1945, Mao Tse-tung was persuaded to travel to Chungking for talks, Chiang Kai-shek ordered Chang Chih-chung to Urumchi in the hope that his chief negotiator might also succeed in bringing the Ili rebels to the conference table.

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193. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol I, pp. 41-3.

194. During the years 1940-45, Chang served the KMT as director of the political department of the Military Affairs Commission at Chungking and (concurrently) as secretary-general of the executive board of the San Min Chu I Youth Corps. Boorman and Howard, ibid.

195. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 88; Barnett, op.cit., p. 247.

Chang was either accompanied, or closely followed, by three Uighur opponents of Sheng Shih-ts'ai who had fled Sinkiang and had been living for a number of years in China proper, where they had become closely associated with the KMT. These Uighur nationalists, who shared none of the Ili group's sympathies towards the Soviet Union, were Mas<sup>C</sup>ūd Sabri, <sup>C</sup>īsa Yūsuf Alptekin, and Muhammad Amīn Bugra (not to be confused with the ex-"Amīr of Khotan").<sup>196</sup> Another Uighur of markedly anti-Soviet views who re-entered Sinkiang with KMT approval at about this time was Yulbārs Khān, the former counsellor of Khān Maqsūd Shah of Kumul and one-time political associate of Khoja Niyās Hājji.<sup>197</sup>

Following the delivery of Chang Chih-chung's ultimatum to the Soviet Consulate-General in Urumchi on September 13th, 1945, a preliminary meeting between the Ili rebels and the provincial authorities was arranged at Urumchi for mid-October. According to Turrall, on October 12th, three senior representatives of the ETR (the Uighurs Ahmadjān Qāsīm and Rahīmjān Sabīr Khoja, and the Kazakh <sup>C</sup>Abd al-Hayir Tūre, all of whom were closely associated with the "progressive" faction within the Ili group), arrived at the Chinese lines some 6 miles to the east of Manass where they were met and escorted to Urumchi.<sup>198</sup> Negotiations, which began on October 14th

196. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2405, EXT.2671.1946; IOLR, L/P&S/12/2359, EXT.3270. 1946 (letter, HMCU Graham - British Embassy Chungking, 6/4/1946). See also Appendix I, "Who Was Who in Republican Sinkiang".

197. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., IV, p. 60.

198. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2405, EXT.2671.1946.

under Soviet mediation, progressed well. The Kulja delegates professed themselves willing to renounce their separatist goals and to drop the designation "East Turkestan Republic", provided that Chungking would agree to grant autonomous self-government to the whole of Sinkiang. Chang Chih-chung indicated Chungking's preparedness to allow the rebel area to maintain its armed forces as a local "peace preservation corps", but insisted that the KMT retain overall military command and exclusive authority over diplomatic relations.<sup>199</sup> Despite the tone of compromise set at this initial meeting, however, negotiations were to extend over several months, with both the Ili delegates and Chang Chih-chung breaking off talks at regular intervals in order to return to their respective capitals for consultations.<sup>200</sup> These prolonged talks are reported to have centred on two main issues: (1) the ethnic and political composition of a new Sinkiang government which would give due representation to the non-Han peoples of the province and (2) the future form of military organisation for the province.<sup>201</sup> The main treaty, guaranteeing full freedom of religion

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199. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, pp. 88-9.

200. ibid., p. 89; IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, EXT.5299.1946, p.3; Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 107.

201. Clubb, China and Russia, p. 367.

publication, assembly and speech, was signed on January 2nd, 1946. Under this treaty it was agreed that district officials (formerly appointed directly by the provincial government) would in future be elected by universal adult suffrage; that Uighur and Kazakh should, besides Chinese, become official languages; that non-Han nationalities should have the right to use their own languages in primary schools with Chinese only becoming a compulsory language at middle school level; that taxation should be calculated according to 'the real productive power of the people' and 'their ability to pay'; and that the 'free development of racial cultures and arts' should be guaranteed.<sup>202</sup>

An annexe attached to this treaty and signed at the same time provided for the reorganisation of the Provincial Commission which was to be expanded to 25 members, 10 of whom (including the Chairman) were to be directly appointed by Chungking, whilst the remaining 15 (including the Vice-Chairman) were to be recommended by locally elected representative bodies and subsequently appointed by the Central Government. Of these 15 locally-recommended members, the Ili group was explicitly granted the right to choose six commissioners of senior rank, including the Vice-Chairman, the Deputy Secretary-General, the Commissioner of Education (or Reconstruction), and the Assistant Commissioner of Civil Affairs (or Finance).<sup>203</sup> A second annexe

202. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, pp. 89-90; Barnett, op.cit., pp. 248-9.

203. Barnett, op.cit., p. 249.

to the main agreement, dealing with the military reorganisation of the province, proved far more troublesome than the first and was not signed until June 6th, 1946. By this second annexe it was agreed that the "Ili National Army" should be reorganised into three cavalry and three infantry regiments with a total strength not exceeding 12,000 men. One infantry and two cavalry regiments were to be enlisted in the National Army (and thereby to receive military equipment and other supplies from the Nationalist authorities), whilst the other units were to be incorporated into the provincial Peace Preservation Corps. All six regiments were to remain in exclusive control of the (former) rebel zone, under their own military commanders, though they would (in theory) be answerable to a chain of command originating from Chang Chih-chung's own Northwestern Headquarters at Lanchow. Moreover, in a further striking concession by the KMT, all police units within the (former) rebel zone were to be locally staffed and directed.<sup>204</sup>

As a result of the signing of this second annexe, the overall peace agreement was ratified on June 6th, 1946, to come into effect on July 1st of the same year. From that day, at least in theory, the "Three Regions" of Ili, Chuguchak and Shara Sume would be reincorporated within the Chinese province of Sinkiang, and the secessionist "East Turkestan Republic" would cease to exist.

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204. ibid., pp. 249-50; Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p.110.

As has already been indicated, the signing of the KMT-ETR Armistice of 1946 through the "good offices" of the Russian Consul-General at Urumchi provides a clear indication of the high degree of political control exercised by the Soviet Union over the Kulja regime. Yet in providing an answer to this long-debated point, the KMT-ETR ceasefire raises a series of further, inter-related questions, which also require clarification. Why, for example, did the Soviet Union halt its surrogate divisions so shortly before their final advance on Urumchi? Why did the predominantly Muslim rebel forces concur with such apparent readiness in this decision? And why had the Kuomintang not made an 'international affair' of the Sinkiang conflict at a much earlier stage, as soon as Soviet involvement had become apparent?

O. Edmund Clubb, the contemporaneous US Consul in Urumchi, equates Chang Chih-chung's talk of 'internationalising' the KMT-ETR struggle with a barely-implicit threat to involve the United States, then (as now) the KMT's chief military ally, in an area which the Kremlin had long considered as a predominantly Soviet sphere of influence.<sup>205</sup> No doubt there is some substance to this claim, but it is hardly likely to have played a decisive role in Soviet strategic thinking. Rather, it seems probable that, following the fall of Wusu to the ETR and the advance of the "Ili National Army" to the banks of the Manass River, the Soviet Union had attained its primary aims in Sinkiang and had no good reason for encouraging further INA advances on Urumchi. By extending its 'all-out support' to the Ili rebels (and, more discreetly, to <sup>C</sup>Uthmān Bātūr's Altai Kazakhs), the Kremlin had

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205. Clubb, China and Russia, p. 367.

effectively re-established its primacy in the traditionally Soviet-influenced border districts of Ili, Chuguchak and Shara Sume. Moreover, in assisting the INA in its advance to Manass, the Soviets had ensured that the important oil-producing region of Tu-shan-tzu passed under rebel control.<sup>206</sup> Nor was oil the sole economic attraction of the ETR-controlled "Three Regions". As has already been shown, the region of western Dzungaria near the Soviet frontier is rich in tungsten, copper, wolfram and - of singular strategic significance following the explosion of the atom bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August, 1945 - uranium.<sup>207</sup> Following Sheng Shih-ts'ai's break with the Kremlin in 1942, the Soviet Union had been rigorously excluded from north-western Sinkiang. Shortly after the establishment of the ETR in January, 1945, however, Soviet technicians crossed back into the "Three Regions" and began once again to exploit these resources, along with the gold of the Altai and the considerable livestock resources of the area as a whole.<sup>208</sup>

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206. According to Chen (The Sinkiang Story, p.235), almost the first action of the INA command following the capture of Wusu was to send troops 'to occupy the oil wells and refinery south of the main road'.
207. See above pp.325-6; also Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, pp. 65-6; Barnett, op.cit., p. 270; Clubb, China and Russia, p.320.
208. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, pp. 109-10; Cheng Tien-fong, op.cit., p. 282; Barnett, op.cit., p. 270; Moseley, G., A Sino-Soviet Cultural Frontier: The Ili Kazakh Autonomous Chou (Harvard, 1966), p. 25; Wheeler, G., 'Sinkiang and the Soviet Union', p. 58; McMillen, op.cit., p.23.

In addition to these economic and strategic advantages, indirect control of the "Three Regions" of Ili, Chuguchak and Shera Sume through the agency of its ETR clients provided the Soviet Union with an important political card which could be played in both the international theatre (at a time of Soviet expansion in the Far East closely associated with the Yalta Conference and the entry of Soviet forces into the Pacific War),<sup>209</sup> and on the regional stage, where Stalin remained uncertain as to the eventual outcome of the Nationalist-Communist power struggle

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209. At the Yalta Conference (February 4-11, 1945), Stalin demanded as a price for Soviet entry into the Pacific War: 'First, the maintenance of the status quo in Mongolia; second, the restoration of Russia's former rights violated by Japan in 1904 - the return of southern Sakhalin; the restoration (subject to an early agreement with Chiang Kai-shek) of Russian interests in respect of Dairen, Port Arthur and the Chinese Eastern and South Manchurian Railways, to be operated jointly by a Soviet-Chinese Company, with China retaining full sovereignty in Manchuria; and third, the handing over of the Kurile Islands to the Soviet Union'. Werth op.cit., p. 997, See also: Lensen, G.A., 'Yalta and the Far East' in Snell, J.L., (ed.), The Meaning of Yalta (Baton Rouge, 1956), pp. 150 ff.



in China and therefore as to which side to back.<sup>210</sup> In retrospect, it seems probable that, so long as Soviet influence remained limited to the north-western third of Sinkiang, the KMT was prepared to treat the issue as a purely local problem in the hope that the Soviet Union would impose a restraining influence on the CCP as an appropriate quid pro quo.<sup>211</sup> In the final extremity, moreover, it was even possible that the Kremlin might be "bought off" with a direct transfer of the "Three Regions" to Soviet authority, either as an MPR-style satellite, or as a sixth Soviet Central Asian Republic, or to be directly absorbed

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210. Moscow remained uncertain as to the outcome of the CCP-KMT struggle until well into 1949, and had long held serious reservations concerning the desirability of a CCP victory. In this context it is interesting to note that in August, 1944, when Roosevelt's special envoy Major General Patrick Hurley stopped off in Moscow en route for Chungking, he was informed by Molotov that the Soviet Union 'was not interested in the Chinese Communists: they weren't really communists anyway' (Stettinius, E.R., Roosevelt and the Russians: The Yalta Conference, London, 1950, p. 28). Hurley, doubtless as intended by the Kremlin, conveyed this message to Chiang Kai-shek. He later reported back to the State Department that:

At the time I came here Chiang Kai-shek believed that the Communist Party in China was an instrument of the Communist Party in Russia. He is now convinced that the Russian Government does not recognise the CCP as communist at all and that (1) Russia is not supporting the communist party in China (2) Russia does not want dissensions or civil war in China, and (3) Russia desires more harmonious relations with China. (Clubb, Russia and China, p. 334)

211. According to Chiang Ching-kuo, Chiang Kai-shek's son, his father certainly believed that Stalin would be prepared to exercise (and indeed able to exercise) such restraint. Ts'ao Chu-jen, Chiang Ching-kuo lun (Discussions With Chiang Ching-kuo, Singapore and Hong Kong, 1954), p. 61. (Cited in Clubb, China and Russia, p. 345).

within the RSFSR in the manner of the neighbouring "Tuvianian People's Republic" which lost the last vestiges of its autonomy in 1944.<sup>212</sup>

An important indication of the fact that the Soviet Union was indeed prepared to use its hold over the "Three Regions" of north-western Sinkiang as a bargaining card in its wider dealings with the KMT may be found in the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance (signed in Moscow on August 14th, 1945, on the very day that Soviet-sponsored negotiations between Chang Chih-chung and the ETR rebels were to begin in far-off Urumchi), as a result of which the Soviet Union regained, at a very low cost, many of the privileges once enjoyed by Tsarist Russia in China's three north-eastern provinces.<sup>213</sup> The precise role played by the KMT-ETR conflict in Sinkiang during the discussions surrounding the ratification of this treaty remains unclear, but a passage of the final agreement reaffirming Moscow's recognition of China's sovereignty over Manchuria continues: 'As for the recent developments in Sinkiang, the Soviet government confirms that... it has no intention of interfering in the internal affairs of China'.<sup>214</sup>

212. The KMT was later reported to have considered the idea of abandoning the whole of Sinkiang to the Soviets in a bid to 'save the Chinese heartland'. Lieberman, H.R., 'Nanking is Seeking a Deal with the Soviets', New York Times (Feb. 1st, 1949); Sullivan, W., 'China Northwest Veering to Russia', ibid., (March 30th, 1949). See also Whiting's account of 'interview with a firsthand source', Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, pp. 117-9.

213. For details see Clubb, China and Russia, pp. 344-7.

214. ibid., p. 364. The implication that Stalin pressured the KMT through the advance of the INA on Urumchi (as well as through his suggestion to T.V. Soong, the chief KMT negotiator, that the Nationalists 'had better reach an agreement quickly, or the Chinese Communists would enter Manchuria'), is apparent.

In this context, the halting of the INA on the banks of the Manass River in September, 1945, may be seen as a compromise between the USSR and the KMT; a break in hostilities which was acceptable to both sides pending the outcome of developments elsewhere in China, most notably in Manchuria (which had been overrun by troops of the Red Army Far Eastern Command during the short-lived Russo-Japanese war of August-September, 1945), and in Chungking, which was the setting for important negotiations between the KMT and the CCP during September and October of the same year.<sup>215</sup>

One further reason for Soviet/ETR compromise at the banks of the Manass River may be found in the changing ethnic and political make up of the territories overrun by the INA. Specifically, the further that rebel forces pushed from Ili, the weaker Soviet control became over the movement. Whilst within Kulja the authority of "progressive", pro-Soviet elements was paramount, beyond the narrow confines of the Ili Valley anti-Soviet sentiment was rife amongst the independent Kazakhs of the Altai region, and still more so amongst the traditionally conservative and Muslim fundamentalist population of the Tarim Basin. This must also have been an important factor in the willingness of "progressive" STPNLC rebels (who, through no coincidence, controlled both the main body of the INA and completely dominated the three-man ETR delegation to the Urumchi talks),<sup>216</sup>

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215. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 109.

216. The INA was dominated by Ishaq Beg, Leskin and Polinov, whilst the three-man negotiating team comprised Ahmadjan Qasim, Rahimjan Sabir, and Abd al-Hayir Türe. All six figures are clearly associated with the "progressive", pro-Soviet faction within the ETR.

to acquiesce in the Soviet-sponsored ceasefire with the KMT. That other leading Muslim rebels not associated with the STPNLC disagreed with this decision will be shown below.<sup>217</sup>

Finally, mention should be made of contemporaneous and possibly parallel political developments in north-western Iran where, in December, 1945, an "Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan" (together with a related "Kurdish Republic of Mahabad") was established through a pattern of subversion similar (but not identical) to that employed by the Soviets in north-western Sinkiang. In August, 1941, Iran had been simultaneously invaded by Soviet and British forces, acting in conjunction, in a move designed to exclude German influence from the country. Iran was subsequently divided into British and Soviet zones, with the Red Army assuming control over the northern part of the country, and the British taking over the south, including the entire concession area of the Anglo-Iranian oil company.<sup>218</sup> From the very beginning of this enforced partition, there emerged a marked difference between conditions in Soviet and British zones. According to Lenczowski:

Whereas the British considered their presence in Iran a temporary expedient... The Russians gave early signs that they were embarking upon a long-range policy that would effect basic changes in the political, economic and social life of the provinces under their occupation.<sup>219</sup>

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217. See Chapter 9, Section 1, 'The Establishment of "Coalition Government" and Muslim Factionalism in Shara Sume and the South'.
218. Pounds, J.G., and Kingsbury, R.C., An Atlas of Middle Eastern Affairs (London, 1966), pp. 48-9.
219. Lenczowski, G.L., Russia and the West in Iran, 1918-1948 (Ithaca, 1949), p. 194.

As in Sinkiang during Sheng Shih-ts'ai's "progressive" period, pro-Soviet elements (in this case primarily the Iranian Tudeh Party) were encouraged, pro-Soviet propaganda was widely disseminated, and local attention was drawn to historical and cultural links existing between ethnically-akin groups (Azerbaijanis, Kurds, Turkomen) living on either side of the Soviet-Iranian frontier.<sup>220</sup> In September, 1944, only months before the establishment of the secessionist "East Turkestan Republic" in Sinkiang, the Soviet Assistant Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Sergei Kavtaradze, arrived in Tehran ostensibly to discuss the exploitation of oil reserves at the negligible (and previously unworked) Soviet-held oil concession of Kavir-Khurian, near Semnan.<sup>221</sup> Shortly after his arrival, however, Kavtaradze dropped all pretence of discussing Kavir-Khurian, and demanded a new Soviet oil concession which would cover all five northern provinces of Iran bordering on the Soviet Union. Not unnaturally, the Iranian Premier Sa'ed demurred, and Kavtaradze left Tehran after denouncing 'the disloyal and unfriendly position taken up by Premier Sa'ed towards the Soviet Union' and appealing to the Iranian people to bring pressure upon their government 'for a favourable solution to the dispute'.<sup>222</sup>

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220. ibid., pp. 212-13; 249.

221. ibid., pp. 85; 171-2; 216-7.

222. ibid., p. 219.

Under the terms of the Anglo-Soviet-Persian Treaty of 1942, it had been agreed that allied forces occupying Iran should be withdrawn from that country within six months of the cessation of the war.<sup>223</sup> During the summer of 1945, however, shortly after the surrender of Germany, the appearance of an "Azerbaijan Committee for National Liberation" (cf. STPNLC), was reported in the Soviet-occupied north-western provinces of Iran where the authority of the Tehran government 'had been reduced virtually to zero.'<sup>224</sup> In August, 1945, Tudeh-led disturbances broke out in Tabriz, and an Azerbaijani 'Democratic Party' was established, incorporating both local Tudeh supporters and Soviet Azerbaijanis brought in from across the frontier.<sup>225</sup> Meanwhile, several new divisions of the Red Army entered Iran (bringing total Soviet strength in the area to between 30,000 and 70,000 men), and large quantities of arms were distributed by the Russians to both local "progressives" and to sections of the peasantry.<sup>226</sup> Throughout this period central government officials and troops were excluded from the area, and it must have come as little surprise to Tehran when, on December 12, 1945, an "Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan" was proclaimed at Tabriz under the leadership of Ja<sup>C</sup>far Pīshāvarī, a veteran Comintern agent who had

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223. Kirk, G., The Middle East, 1945-50 (London, 1954), p. 57.

224. ibid., pp. 57-8.

225. ibid., pp. 58-9.

226. ibid., p. 60 Lenczowski, op.cit., p. 287-8.

been Commissar of the Interior in the short-lived "Soviet Republic of Gilan" during 1920-21.<sup>227</sup> Three days later, on December 15th, 1945, a "Kurdish People's Republic" was declared at Mahabad, in the presence of Soviet officials, under the leadership of one Qādī Muhammad.<sup>228</sup>

There can be no doubt that in 1945 (as, indeed, today), the predominantly Turkic population of Iranian Azerbaijan felt considerable antipathy towards the central government in Tehran, partly because of their persecution at the hands of Riza Shāh, and partly because the central authorities did not permit the official use of the local (Āzerī) dialect of Turkish. (Kurdish hostility towards Tehran has, of course, been a long-established factor in Iranian politics). Nevertheless, the situation in north-western Iran could not be compared to that in Sinkiang (which had been in a state of almost constant armed rebellion since the Kumul rising of 1931), and the ineffectual Azerbaijani "People's Army" cobbled together by the Soviets<sup>229</sup> was in no way comparable to the INA in Ili. The survival of both the "Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan" and the "Kurdish Republic of Mahabad" was therefore entirely dependent upon the presence of Soviet troops in northern Iran. Accordingly, the Iranian authorities were obliged

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227. Kirk, op.cit., p. 59.

228. Roosevelt, A. Jr., 'The Kurdish Republic of Mahabad', MEJ, I, 3 (July, 1947), p. 257.

229. Lenczowski, op.cit., p. 308.

to travel to Moscow to seek satisfaction, where they were informed that:

The Soviet government would abandon its demand for an oil concession. Instead it proposed that an Iranian-Russian joint stock company be set up with 51% of the shares owned by the Soviets and 49% by Iran.<sup>230</sup>

The chief reason for Soviet intervention in Iran thus became clear -- and indeed parallels with Tu-shan-tzu in Sinkiang are immediately apparent. As Allen S. Whiting has pointed out, several features of the Azerbaijan affair invite comparisons with the Ili revolt. Both risings occurred in areas adjacent to the Soviet Union; both areas possessed mineral reserves of interest to the war-ravaged Soviet Union; and in both instances the Soviet Union could supply covert support for the rebels from ethnically akin groups resident within its own frontiers.<sup>231</sup> Here the similarities end, however, for following Iranian acceptance of Soviet demands for oil concessions in the insurgent areas, and as a result of strong pressure for Russian withdrawal from Britian, the United States and the UN, the Red Army pulled back across the Soviet frontier in May, 1946. Within six months, central government

230. Lenczowski, op.cit., p. 296. Moscow also demanded that Soviet troops should be permitted 'to stay in some parts of Iran for an indefinite period'. This was rejected outright by Tehran.

231. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 129; Lenczowski, G.L., 'The Communist Movement in Iran', The Middle East Journal, I, 1 (January, 1947), p. 42. As with the INA, besides covertly supplying arms, the Soviet Union supplied both the "People's Army of Azerbaijan" and the officers of the Kurdish militia of Mahabad with Red Army uniforms bearing local insignia. Lenczowski, Russia and the West in Iran, p. 290; Roosevelt, 'The Kurdish Republic of Mahabad', p.257, 261.



troops crossed into Azerbaijan to put down the rebellion. Ja'far Pīshāvarī succeeded in escaping to Soviet territory, but Qādī Muhammad was apprehended at Mahabad and hung.<sup>232</sup> Subsequently all traces of the separatist regimes were effaced by Tehran, and on October 22, 1947, the Iranian Majlis abrogated the oil agreement forced on it by the Soviet Union.<sup>233</sup> In Sinkiang, however, retribution was to be less direct, and was to be postponed for a number of years pending the installation of a strong, centralised government in Peking which might once again extend Chinese authority to the remote frontier regions of Inner Asia.

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232. Kirk, op.cit., p. 82; Roosevelt, op.cit., p. 267.

233. Lenczowski, Russia and the West in Iran, p. 312.

CHAPTER 9SINKIANG, 1946-49: THE MUSLIMS ON THE EVE OF THE COMMUNIST TAKEOVER

It appears that the Soviet-oriented leaders in the three districts were persuaded by the Russians to adhere voluntarily to the CPR and that the absence of popular resistance to CPR rule was due to the belief that the Russians, so nearby, would provide a guarantee for China's good behaviour. In the end, everyone was to be disappointed, except the Chinese Communists. As the non-Han peoples of the three districts were to discover, no autonomy was any longer possible between Russia and China in the middle of Asia.<sup>1</sup>

Even while they were singing the comradesly strains of "The International", the Russian and Chinese Communists looked at each other with shining eyes, but suspicious hearts'.

Sheng Shih-ts'ai.<sup>2</sup>

9.1 The Establishment of "Coalition Government" and Muslim Factionalism in Shara Sume and the South

On July 1st, 1946, Chang Chih-chung addressed the people of Sinkiang, by radio, from Urumchi. In his speech he announced the peaceful settlement of the Ili dispute, thanked China's 'great and friendly neighbour, the Soviet Union' for acting as mediator, and urged all the peoples of Sinkiang 'to work

1. Moseley, A Sino-Soviet Cultural Frontier, p. 22.
2. Sheng Shih-ts'ai, Red Failure in Sinkiang, p. 186.

unitedly for peace'.<sup>3</sup> On the same day a new Sinkiang coalition government came into being, with Chang Chih-chung as Provincial Chairman,<sup>4</sup> and Ahmadjān Qāsīm as Provincial Vice-Chairman. Other ("ex")-ETR appointees to the coalition government were <sup>C</sup>Abd al-Karīm <sup>C</sup>Abbās as Deputy Secretary-General, Raḥimjān Sābir Khoja as Assistant Commissioner of Civil Affairs and Saif al-Dīn <sup>C</sup>Azīz as Commissioner of Education.<sup>5</sup> All rebel appointees to the coalition were thus closely associated with the "progressive" STPNLC faction within the rebel alliance, whilst "bourgeois nationalist" elements such as <sup>C</sup>Ali Khān Türe and <sup>C</sup>Uthmān Bātūr were excluded. Other non-Han members of the coalition included the Tatar Burhān Shahīdī (second Vice-Chairman); the Uighurs Muḥammad Amīn Bugra (Commissioner of Reconstruction) and <sup>C</sup>Isa Yūsuf Alptekin;<sup>6</sup> the Kazakhs Janīm Khān (Commissioner of Finance)

3. IOLR., L/P&S/12/2360, EXT.6613.1946 (Speech by Chang Chih-chung to the People of Sinkiang, 1/7/1946).
4. According to Boorman and Howard (op.cit., Vol. I, p. 44), Chang Chih-chung replaced Wu Chung-hsin as Governor of Sinkiang on 29th March, 1946; Lattimore, however, gives the date as 'July, 1946' (Pivot of Asia, p. 90). In this context it should be noted that Wu Chung-hsin was elected to the State Council of the National Government when the latter was reorganised in April, 1947. (Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol III, p. 424).
5. Barnett, op.cit., p. 250; Hayit, Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China, p. 320; Clubb, China and Russia, p. 368; Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 246.
6. The position of <sup>C</sup>Isa Yūsuf Alptekin in the coalition government remains unclear. According to Barnett (op.cit., p. 250), <sup>C</sup>Isa held the role of Provincial Secretary-General. Lattimore, however, names the Han Chinese Liu Meng-hsun as Provincial Secretary-General (Pivot of Asia, p. 90). Barnett describes Liu Meng-ch'un (sic) as 'Chang Chih-chung's Secretary-General' (op.cit., p. 251). Muḥammad Amīn Bugra should not be confused with the former Khotan Amir of the same name; indeed, according to Lias (op.cit., p. 20), he was the latter's son.

and Sālis (second Deputy Secretary-General); and the Tungan Wang Tseng-shan (Commissioner of Civil Affairs).<sup>7</sup> The "returned" Uighur Mas<sup>U</sup>d Sabri, a politician who enjoyed close links with the KMT, was given the post of Supervisory Commissioner for Sinkiang (with direct responsibility to the Nationalist authorities at Nanking).<sup>8</sup>

Despite these (apparently) promising concessions by the KMT, the Sinkiang political scene was to experience few changes of substance as a result of the formation of the coalition government of 1946. Within the "Three Regions" authority continued to be wielded by the pro-Soviet STPNLC, whilst in the remaining seven regions of the province real power remained concentrated in the hands of Han Chinese appointees of the Nanking government, including specifically Chang Chih-chung; his Secretary-General, Liu Meng-hsun; the Social Welfare Commissioner, Chao Chien-feng; the Vice-Commissioner of Reconstruction, Ku Chien-chi; and General Sung Hsi-lien, commander of the 100,000-strong Sinkiang garrison forces.<sup>9</sup> Of this group only Chang Chih-chung seems to have been committed to genuine reform; the remainder of his Han colleagues (except Sung), as well as the Tungan Wang

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7. Lattimore, op.cit., pp. 90-91; Barnett, op.cit., pp. 250-51.

8. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2359, EXT.3270.1946 (letter, HMCU Graham - British Embassy, Chungking, 6/4/1946), p. 1.

9. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, pp. 90-91.

Tseng-shan and the Uighur Mas<sup>C</sup>ud Sabri, were all active members of the "C.C. Clique", and as such intractably opposed to co-operation with the Ili rebels.<sup>10</sup>

Following the formation of this ill-matched and disparate coalition, during the latter half of 1946 Chang Chih-chung introduced a series of reforms designed to reduce communal tensions within the province and to reconcile the predominantly Muslim population to continuing Chinese rule. Even before the formal establishment of the coalition, Chang had given his approval for the release of all political prisoners, the remission of all taxes for a period of six months, and the abolition of the government-controlled Sinkiang Provincial Trading Corporation (set up by Sheng Shih-ts'ai), which had enjoyed a monopoly of all foreign and domestic trade.<sup>11</sup> Shortly after the establishment of the coalition, Chang followed up these reforms by passing a series of laws under which provincial officials were forbidden to engage in trade (whilst the right of free foreign and domestic trade was restored to the population in general); private banks were encouraged to increase investment and production; state requisitions in kind were strictly limited; taxes in arrears were cancelled; and a reduction of taxes was promised for 1947.<sup>12</sup> Chang gave proof of his determination to combat

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10. ibid.; Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 250. Sung Hsi-lien was apparently associated with the "C.C. Clique"'s main rival, the "Political Science Group". This, however, did not make him any the more favourably disposed towards the Ili group, and he is reported to have told his supporters: 'Our first enemy is the Ili party' (New York Times, February 1st, 1948, cited in Chen, op.cit., p. 250, fn.)

11. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, EXT.5299.1946, p. 8.

12. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 91.

official corruption by seizing some 25,000 Chinese ounces of opium (formerly the property of the Sinkiang Provincial Trading Corporation) and having it burned in front of his Urumchi headquarters.<sup>13</sup> In a move designed to placate Muslim fundamentalist sections of the population, marriages between Muslims and non-Muslims were prohibited,<sup>14</sup> whilst in an apparent gesture of good-will towards the Chinese Communists, more than 100 CCP members imprisoned in Sinkiang since Sheng Shih-ts'ai's break with the Soviet Union were released from jail and sent back to Yen-an by a special convoy of lorries.<sup>15</sup>

Chang also sought to reach a genuine understanding with the Ili leadership, subsequently declaring (in terms surely never before employed by a Han Chinese official in Sinkiang):

The I-ning (Kulja) Incident, which was said to be a revolutionary movement, featured slogans calling for an anti-Han campaign, the overthrow of despotism and the independence of Eastern Turkistan. From the standpoint of revolution, it cannot be said that it was absolutely wrong. Recently, at a press conference for Chinese and foreign journalists in Nanking, I said that our former policy in Sinkiang had been unreasonable. We Chinese comprise only five per cent of the population of Sinkiang. Why have we not turned over political power to the Uighurs and other racial groups who constitute the other 95 per cent? In many respects, the policies adopted by the Sinkiang government in the past were entirely wrong - no different, in fact, than the policies of imperialist nations towards their colonies. These mistakes we must correct, and we must remove and atone for the many evils and bloodstains left behind by ex-Governor Sheng Shih-ts'ai.<sup>16</sup>

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13. ibid., Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol I, p. 44.
14. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, EXT.6245.1946; cf. Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 245;
15. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 91, citing Han Hai Ch'ao (Desert Tides), Shanghai edition, January, 1947.
16. Chang Chih-chung, Hsin-chiang Jih-pao (Sinkiang Daily), Urumchi, August 14th, 1947. An English summary may be found in Chang Chih-chung, 'Dilemma in Sinkiang', Pacific Affairs, XX, 4 (Dec. 1947), pp. 422-9. The passage cited above appears on p. 428.

As might be expected, these astonishingly conciliatory gestures found absolutely no sympathy amongst Chang's more orthodox KMT colleagues. Within Sinkiang, the "asset-stripping" operation by which KMT officialdom survived and profited was dependent upon the corruption which Chang sought to stamp out, whilst in Nanking KMT headquarters can hardly have received with delight Chang's request for an annual subsidy of 165,000,000 Chinese dollars to pay for tax reductions in Sinkiang.<sup>17</sup> Thus the appointment of the conciliatory and morally upright Chang Chih-chung was clearly a temporary device, intended both to secure a breathing space for the KMT leadership during its struggle with the CCP in China proper, and to limit the growth of Soviet influence in Sinkiang pending the full restoration of Chinese authority over the area.

Meanwhile, within the "Three Regions" a serious split was emerging between pro-Soviet and anti-Soviet Muslim rebels. Indications of this development had become apparent as soon as the Soviet Union brought pressure to bear on the rebel leadership in a successful bid to halt the INA on the banks of the Manass River. The nominal President of the ETR, the Uzbek <sup>c</sup>Ali Khān Türe, was strongly opposed to compromise with the provincial authorities, and is reported to have wept at the conclusion of the initial peace agreement. He subsequently declined all offers of posts in the new provincial coalition and, according to Graham, 'disappeared none knows whither'.<sup>19</sup>

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17. Hsin-chiang Jih-pao, April 11th, 1947 (cited by Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 91, fn. 77).

18. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 3.

19. ibid.; cf. Hayit, Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China, p. 320.

According to anti-Soviet Kazakh sources, however:

On August 16th (1946), four Soviet Officers from the border town of Khorgos came across the frontier and paid a polite call on <sup>c</sup>Ali Khān Türe at his home in Kulja. At the end of their visit, they cordially invited him to lunch with them at Khorgos. <sup>c</sup>Ali Khān Türe accepted and drove off with the officers in their car. He never returned.<sup>20</sup>

Following this development, political power within the Ili region passed entirely into the hands of the STPNLC and (despite the retention of Hākīm Beg Khoja as <sup>c</sup>Ali Khān's successor),<sup>21</sup> Soviet influence within the valley became still more marked. When Graham visited the region during the autumn of 1946, he found 'no outward signs of returning Chinese control in Kulja itself or along the road'.<sup>22</sup> All official notices within Ili were in Turkic and Russian, but never in Chinese;<sup>23</sup> all trade was with the Soviet Union, and all movable property belonging to murdered or refugee Han Chinese had been confiscated and exported to the USSR to pay for arms and other assistance;<sup>24</sup> whilst Soviet doctors and nurses administered the local hospital

20. Lias, Kazakh Exodus, p. 120; cf. Barnett, op.cit., p. 269.

21. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 3; Barnett, op.cit., p. 269. Note that, since the ETR had officially ceased to exist, Hākīm Beg became District Officer of Ili under the coalition rather than "President" of the ETR.

22. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 3.

23. ibid. Graham comments that this was in direct contravention of the June 1976 peace agreement.

24. ibid., pp. 3-4; cf. Barnett, op.cit., pp. 269-70.



where injured INA soldiers were taken for treatment.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, Soviet technicians continued to supervise illegal mining operations on Chinese territory without Chinese permission, and Soviet consular officials in Kulja (as well as in Chuguchak and Shara Sume) were issuing Soviet nationality papers to residents of the Three Regions (particularly to "White" Russians) at a prodigious rate.<sup>26</sup> On the other hand, during the short-lived period of the Sinkiang coalition government, no substantial steps towards land reform or the redistribution of wealth seem to have been undertaken in the Ili region. Chinese forms of regional administration (including the chou and the hsien) were retained, and no anti-religious campaigns were mounted.<sup>27</sup>

By the autumn of 1946, therefore, Sinkiang had effectively been partitioned into KMT-controlled and Soviet-controlled zones, whilst within Ili those rebel leaders who sought to oppose both Chinese and Russian hegemony had been ousted from power. Yet despite the speed with which the Soviet Union and its STPNLC allies had moved to eliminate <sup>C</sup>Ali Khan Türe following the KMT-ETR armistice, it was soon to become apparent that the

25. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/234/10, p. 4.

26. ibid., p. 3. According to Graham: 'The very large majority of the Russian population took advantage of the offer of Soviet papers... and of those who did not wish to do so, nearly all intend to leave for Urumchi or further east as soon as possible. They look on Ili as lost to China and doomed to become part of the Soviet Union'. According to Barnett (op.cit., pp.268-9), as many as 20,000 residents of Ili took out Soviet nationality papers during this period. See also Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, pp. 146-7.

27. Barnett, op.cit., p. 269.

subordination of rebel interests to Soviet control was unacceptable both to many Kazakhs of the "Three Regions", and to the Muslim fundamentalist guerillas operating in the far south-west of the province, in the vicinity of Kashgar.

Kazakh opposition to the tightening of Soviet control over the "Three Regions" of Ili, Chuguchak and Shara Sume was initially manifested after the signing of the initial KMT-ETR armistice, but before the related "disappearance" of <sup>C</sup>Ali Khan Türe, when two influential Kazakh leaders from the Chuguchak and Shara Sume regions - namely <sup>C</sup>Uthmān Bātūr and <sup>C</sup>Ali Beg Rahīm (see plate 3D) - broke away from the Kulja regime and, together with their followers, took to the mountains.<sup>28</sup> Doubtless this development can partly be explained as a manifestation of the traditional antipathy felt by Sinkiang Kazakhs towards centralised authority, as well by a desire on the part of at least <sup>C</sup>Uthmān Bātūr's seasoned, semi-bandit forces to go on fighting even after the KMT-ETR armistice had been signed.<sup>29</sup> It is noteworthy, however, that despite the defection of <sup>C</sup>Uthmān Bātūr in the Altai and <sup>C</sup>Ali Beg Rahīm in the eastern Tien Shan, most Kazakhs within the Ili Valley seem either to have remained loyal to the Kulja regime, or to have maintained a sympathetic neutrality. In part this may be explained by the proximity of Ili to the Soviet Union, and by the pervading influence of the pro-Soviet STPNLC within the valley. A more important factor, however, seems to have lain in the traditional tribal and social distinctions dividing the Kazakhs of Dzungaria from their bretheren in the Ili Valley.

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28. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol IV, p. 47; Barnett, op.cit., p. 276. Lias, however, dates <sup>C</sup>Uthmān's defection to September 7th, 1946 (op. cit., p. 122).

29. See, for example, Barnett's statement that <sup>C</sup>Uthmān's Kazakhs 'admit they like to fight' (op.cit., p. 275); see also IOLR, L/P&S/12/2359, EXT. 2314, 1945, p. 3.



Ali Beg Rahim



Uthman Batir

Plates 29, 30: THE KAZAKHS

Within Sinkiang the Kazakh people may be divided into three main tribal groups, the Naiman, the Kirei and the Auwak. According to Barnett, on the eve of the communist takeover the Naiman were divided into nine further sub-tribes, chiefly concentrated in Ili; the Kirei were divided into twelve further sub-tribes, chiefly concentrated in Shara Sume, but also in the eastern Tien Shan and at Gez Kōl in the south-east; and the Auwak were divided into three further sub tribes, 'scattered in small, unimportant groups throughout northern Sinkiang'.<sup>30</sup> Whilst the Naiman Kazakhs of Ili had belonged to the Great Horde (Tk. Ulu Zhuz) centred on Lake Balkash, which was severely disrupted by the Dzungars in the late 17th and early 18th centuries and subsequently came under considerable Russian influence,<sup>31</sup> the Kirei Kazakhs of Shara Sume had belonged to the Middle Horde (Tk. Orta Zhuz) located in the central steppe region, and had escaped strong Russian influence prior to their eastward movement into Dzungaria following the Ch'ing destruction of the Oirod Dzungar Empire in 1757.<sup>32</sup> Within Ili (and to a lesser extent Chuguchak), the Naiman were exposed to prolonged commercial and cultural contact with Tsarist Russia during the 19th century (and, in Ili, to a decade of Russian occupation between 1871 and 1881), whilst the Kirei Kazakhs, isolated in the Ch'ing backwater of Altai, avoided disruptive contacts with the Russians to a far greater extent.<sup>33</sup> Finally, it was to Ili (and to a lesser

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30. Barnett, op.cit., p. 274.

31. Hambly, G., et al., Central Asia, pp. 145-6. Moseley (op.cit., p. 16), would appear to be mistaken in assigning the Naiman Kazakhs to the Great Horde and subsequently to Shara Sume.

32. Hambly, op.cit., p. 146; cf. Moseley, op.cit., p. 16.

33. ibid., p. 18.

extent to Chuguchak) that most Kazakh refugees from the Soviet Union fled during the years of the Civil War and the subsequent 'katl-i-sam' (general massacre) associated with Stalin's collectivisation of the steppe.<sup>34</sup> Located in the south and west of the "Three Regions", they remained exposed to considerable Soviet influence under the administrations of Yang Tseng-hsin and Chin Shu-jen, and particularly during the "progressive" years of Sheng Shih-ts'ai. Though the experiences of the Naiman Kazakhs at the hands of the Russians can hardly have endeared them towards the Soviet Union, constant exposure to successive generations of Russian (and subsequently Soviet) influence had, to a considerable extent, broken down their traditional social structure so that, by the time of the establishment of the ETR, the Kazakhs of the Ili region had no khans at all.<sup>35</sup> In marked contrast, the isolated and culturally traditionalist Kazakhs of Shara Sume and the eastern Tien Shan were still governed by a complex system of chiefs and khans (often of aristocratic, or "white bone" status, whilst commoners were classified as "black bone"),<sup>36</sup> amongst whom may be numbered such leaders as <sup>C</sup>Uthmān Bātūr and <sup>C</sup>Ali Beg Rahīm.<sup>37</sup> By the mid-20th century, moreover, regional distinctions between Kirei and Naiman Kazakh

34. See above, p. 345.

35. According to Moseley (op.cit., p. 18), the hereditary aristocracy of the Ili Kazakhs had disappeared completely by the end of the 19th century.

36. Barnett, op.cit., p. 274; Moseley, op.cit., p. 19. See also Krader, L., Social Organization of the Mongol-Turkic Pastoral Nomads (The Hague, 1963) and Hudson, E., Kazakh Social Structure (New Haven, 1938), for general studies of traditional Kazakh social organisation.

37. The official tribal chief of the Kirei Kazakhs at this time, however, was 'Ailin Wang (Ch. 'king'), an ineffective, hen-pecked little man who is overshadowed even by his wife, the 250 pound Hatewan'. Barnett, op.cit., p. 274.

within Sinkiang had become less marked. Thus those Sinkiang Kazakhs who were attracted by the material advances made in Soviet Kazakhstan tended to gravitate towards Ili, regardless of tribal affiliation, whilst more traditionally-minded or anti-Soviet Kazakhs tended to move towards the Altai in a bid to avoid Soviet influence.<sup>38</sup> By the mid-1940s this mutually opposed flow of Kazakhs (which included, in particular, members of the small Kazakh upper classes and intelligentsia), had resulted in the emergence of a pro-Soviet Kazakh elite in Ili, whilst 'traditional Kazakh social ideals found their last refuge... in eastern and northern Dzungaria'.<sup>39</sup>

Following the initial signing of the KMT-ETR armistice in January, 1946, this split came into the open, with C<sup>U</sup>thmān Bātūr and his allies in Shara Sume breaking away from the Kulja regime, whilst Ili Kazakh leaders such as C<sup>A</sup>bd al-Hayir Türe and Dālīl Khān continued to support its pro-Soviet orientation.<sup>40</sup> According to Barnett, C<sup>U</sup>thmān broke with the Ili leadership on April 1st, 1946, ostensibly because they were Soviet-dominated but in reality because 'they tried to bring him under control and to ensure his obedience to their orders'.<sup>41</sup> C<sup>U</sup>thmān immediately withdrew to the remote

38. Moseley, op.cit., p. 20.

39. ibid. See also Wang Chih-lai, 'Shih-lun chieh-fang ch'ien wo-kuo Ha-se-k'o tsu ti she-hui hsing-chin' ('A Preliminary Discussion of the Nature of Kazakh Society in Our Country Before the Liberation'), Min-tau t'uan-chieh (Peking), I (1963), pp. 30-33.

40. C<sup>A</sup>bd al-Hayir Türe's tribal affiliations remain unclear, but according to Barnett, Dālīl Khān was one of several leading Naiman chiefs who supported the Kulja regime (op.cit., p. 275).

41. ibid., p. 276.

Pei-ta-shan range on the Sinkiang-MPR frontier (in the region of his old Tayingkul power base - see Map 12), where he began to organise resistance to the Ili regime whilst entering into secret negotiations with the KMT in Urumchi. He was subsequently joined in this struggle by <sup>C</sup>Ali Beg Rahīm of the eastern Tien Shan, who had once been magistrate of Shawan, near Manass.<sup>42</sup> Meanwhile the administration of Shara Sume, which remained under the control of the Kulja regime, seems to have passed to the Naiman Kazakh leader Dālīl Khān.<sup>43</sup> Both Soviet and pro-Soviet sources tend to make light of <sup>C</sup>Uthmān's defection,<sup>44</sup> but in reality the loss of the Kirei Kazakh chieftain proved to be a grievous blow to the Ili authorities. To be sure, there was no place for independent, elitist, semi-bandit leaders such as <sup>C</sup>Uthmān in the Soviet-orientated "democracy" emerging within the "Three Regions", yet <sup>C</sup>Uthmān's defection signalled the start of large-scale desertions amongst the Kazakh cavalry which had provided the backbone of the INA during its initial liberation of the "Three Regions" and subsequent advance on Urumchi.<sup>45</sup> Precise figures are not available, but <sup>C</sup>Uthmān's personal followers are reported to have numbered 4,000 yurts and 15,000 Kazakhs,<sup>46</sup> whilst in November, 1946, a further 10,000 Kazakhs who refused

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42. *ibid.*, p. 268, Lias, Kazak Exodus, p. 125; Ismā'il, M.S., and Isma'il, M.A., *op.cit.*, p. 29; Hayit, Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China, p. 320.
43. Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 261. Dālīl Khān's "progressive" stance is confirmed in Mingulov, *op.cit.*, p. 188. According to Dallin (*op.cit.*, p.276) another senior Naiman chieftain to continue supporting the Ili regime was 'Bashbai'. This is almost certainly the "Ba-ssu-ba-yi" identified by KMT sources as the administrative head of the Chuguchak region under the rebels (see Appendix VI, Table 4, at end of this study).
44. Mingulov, *op.cit.*, p. 189; Chen, The Sinkiang Story, pp. 260-61.
45. Barnett, *op.cit.*, pp. 264-5, 275; Lias, Kazak Exodus, pp. 129-30; Dreyer, J.T., 'The Kazakhs in China', in: Astri and Noble (eds.), Ethnic Conflict in International Relations (NY, 1977), p. 154.
46. Barnett, *op.cit.*, p. 276; Boorman and Howard, *op.cit.*, Vol IV, p. 47 cf. Kotov, *op.cit.*, p. 189, however, where it is stated that <sup>C</sup>Uthmān commanded 'irrigular horse numbering 1,500', whilst <sup>C</sup>Ali Beg, 'another of his sort', commanded 900.

to fight against C<sup>U</sup>thmān are reported to have fled from Ili to KMT-dominated territory, reducing the overall percentage of Kazakh troops serving with the rebel forces to no more than 30% (whilst Kazakhs make up more than 60% of the total population of the "Three Regions").<sup>47</sup> By any standards, therefore, the defection of C<sup>U</sup>thmān Bātūr, which may be interpreted as an indication both of Kirei-Naiman differences and of a wider Kazakh-Uighur disjunction of interest,<sup>48</sup> must be seen as a serious setback to the Kulja regime.

Meanwhile, in south-western Sinkiang, a second area of Muslim factionalism had emerged in the Kashgar region following the establishment of the KMT-ETR armistice. Here, it will be recalled, a revolt 'similar in character to, though of smaller dimensions than' the Ili rising, had broken out in August, 1945.<sup>49</sup> Within a short time the rebel Muslim forces (predominantly Kirghiz) succeeded in capturing Tashkurgan and in seizing the entire Serikol region before advancing to threaten Kashgar.<sup>50</sup>

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47. Barnett, *op.cit.*, p. 265; Moseley, *op.cit.*, p. 17, citing Wang Wei-ping and Hu Ying-mei, Hsin-chiang Wei-wu-erh tzu-chih ch'u (The Sinkiang-Uighur Autonomous Region, Peking, 1959), p. 46.

48. Following the Kazakh desertions of 1946, the percentage of Uighurs within the armed forces of the "Three Regions" rose to 60% (compared with 30% Kazakhs and 10% Mongols), whereas in 1944-45 the majority of "INA" troops had been Kazakh. Barnett, *op.cit.*, pp. 264-5.

49. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, EXT. 5299.1946 (letter, HMCGK Etherington Smith-GOI, 3/10/1946), p. 2.

50. See above, p. 420.



The origins and nature of this new south-western revolt have long remained uncertain. According to KMT sources, the rising in Sarikol was directly inspired by the ETR and its Soviet backers, and indeed Chang Ta-chün claims the existence of a direct administrative link between the rebel capital at Kulja and 'So-che chou, P'u-li hsien' (Yarkand Region, Tashkurgan County), whilst identifying the ETR administrative head of this area as one "K'a-la-wan" (? Qalāwūn).<sup>51</sup> Yet the areas controlled by the two rebel groups were never contiguous, and regular communication between Ili and Sarikol can only have been possible with direct Soviet connivance. Certainly HMGCK Etherington Smith believed it 'well established' that the southern revolt had been 'engineered and organised by a group which came over the border from the Soviet Union',<sup>52</sup> and attention has already been drawn to Kotov's sympathetic reference to 'an armed uprising of the working masses of Tashkurgan'.<sup>53</sup> Yet both the timing of the revolt (which occurred shortly before the initial KMT-ETR ceasefire, and therefore at a time when the Soviet Union had all but achieved its primary objectives within Sinkiang), and its subsequent course, suggest that the Sarikol rising was, in fact, a spontaneous and purely local affair over which the ETR and its Soviet backers immediately (but unsuccessfully) attempted to assert control. It is at

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51. See Appendix VI at the end of this study.

52. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, EXT.5299. 1946, section 14.

53. See above, p. 420.

least clear that, by mid-1945, conditions in southern Sinkiang had deteriorated to a point where, independent of any external factors, a new Muslim rising had become a distinct probability. Thus, according to Etherington Smith:

Foreign trade was at a standstill and domestic trade had shrunk to minute proportions as a result of the many restrictions imposed on it. There was an acute shortage of essential consumer goods and prices were rising at an alarming rate, assisted by a growing lack of confidence in the currency. The whole administration was inefficient and corrupt, and no attempt was made to improve the condition of the people, who were, on the contrary, continually subjected to new exactions in the form of forced labour and arbitrary local taxes. The army, too, was in a deplorable state, the officers corrupt and irresponsible, the men ill-cared-for and undisciplined - as evidenced by the acts of looting which occurred in various parts of the province. Signs of demoralisation were becoming increasingly evident in both the military and civil administrations, reflecting a growing lack of faith in the stability and permanence of Chinese rule. Meanwhile the native population were becoming ever more resentful of the hardships imposed on them and less amenable to authority, having lost much of their respect for the administration as a result of the successes achieved by the rebels and the poor showing of the government troops.<sup>54</sup>

Little information is available regarding the sequence of events surrounding the revolt in the south, but according to McLean, in mid-August, 1945, 'rebel bands poured through the passes leading from the Soviet Union to the Pamirs and drove out the Chinese garrison' before advancing to threaten Kashgar and Yarkand.<sup>55</sup> Similarly Barnett, who travelled in the south, was informed by 'a foreigner that lives in south-west Sinkiang' that:

54. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, EXT.5299.1946, p. 6.

55. McLean, 'Sinkiang Today', p. 384.

It was more of an invasion than a revolt... the fighting was done almost entirely by troops from the Soviet republics across the border, and ... these troops actually antagonised the Tajiks and Kirghiz in south-western Sinkiang by destroying their crops and flocks.<sup>56</sup>

Yet the fighting in the south was to continue for more than a year after the KMT-ETR ceasefire of September, 1945, by which the INA was halted in its advance on Urumchi, and indeed the Kulja leadership was to disclaim all responsibility for the Sarikoli rebels whom they denounced as "bandits".<sup>57</sup> Thus in January, 1946, even as the initial KMT-ETR armistice was being signed in Urumchi, the south-western rebels diverted the main thrust of their attack from Kashgar to Yarkand, which they succeeded in investing following the capture of the lesser oases of Posgam and Karghalik (see Map 7).<sup>58</sup> This advance was subsequently beaten back by KMT garrison troops (a development which, in itself, casts some doubt on claims of direct Soviet involvement), but Muslim rebels continued to control most of the countryside between Khotan and the Soviet frontier until the autumn of 1946 when, following the establishment of the Sinkiang coalition government under Chang Chih-chung, Chinese troops 'cleared the rebel forces from the region of the Pamirs and reopened the routes to India'.<sup>59</sup>

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56. Barnett, op.cit., p. 266.

57. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, EXT.5299.1946, p. 4.

58. ibid., pp. 4-5.

59. Beloff, Soviet Policy in the Far East, 1944-51, p. 98.

The political identity of the south-western Muslim rebels of 1945-46 has long remained uncertain. British diplomatic sources are contradictory, indicating, on balance, a belief that the Soviet Union was behind the rising.<sup>60</sup> Yet in a report dated October, 1946, (shortly after the reassertion of Chinese authority), HMCCK Etherington Smith informed his superiors that:

The rebels took particular care not to interfere with the native population and made efforts to win their favour by such measures as the distribution of food captured from the Chinese. They also conducted a vigorous propaganda campaign based on (1) a racial appeal for the overthrow of alien rule and the expulsion of the Chinese, and (2) the promise of a return to a traditional Moslem culture and way of life.<sup>61</sup>

Etherington Smith continues by noting that 'this policy was not without effect', and elsewhere states that:

In the south... not only are most people indifferent to the Soviet Union, but a considerable section of the population - partly on account of the oppression which they suffered under Sheng Shih-ts'ai, but chiefly for religious reasons - are actively hostile to it (an interesting illustration of this antipathy is the fact that the word "communist" is frequently used as a term of opprobrium by the natives).<sup>62</sup>

In sum, therefore, it seems probable that KMT misrule in southern Sinkiang led to a spontaneous and purely local rising in the Kashgar region during August, 1945. Following the established pattern of Muslim revolts in that region, the rising was Muslim fundamentalist in character, being

60. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, EXT.5299.1946, passim.

61. ibid., p. 5.

62. ibid., section 18.

not only anti-Chinese, but also anti-Soviet. At this stage the Soviet Union intervened to take control of the rebellion by sending pro-Soviet Kirghiz (and possibly Tajiks) across the frontier in an exact repetition of the "Tortunji" raids of 1933-4.<sup>63</sup> That this move was at least partially successful may be inferred from the southward movement of the main centre of rebel activity, early in 1946, from an area contiguous with the Soviet border to the Muslim fundamentalist belt (formerly the domain of the "Khotan Amīrs") between Khotan and Yarkand, as well as by the emergence of an (almost certainly) pro-Soviet organisation known as the "Partisans of the Red Tents" in the Tashkurgan area.<sup>64</sup> Little is known of the political objectives of the rebels, but claims that they envisaged the establishment of an authoritarian, pan-Turanian state would seem to confirm their anti-Soviet identity.<sup>65</sup>

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63. See above, p. 275.

64. Lattimore (Pivot of Asia, p. 139), notes that the political orientation of this organisation remains uncertain. See, however, Bacon, E., 'Soviet Policy in Turkestan', MEJ, I, 4 (October, 1947), p. 397, where mention is made of "Red Tents" (Soviet educational centres) being established amongst Muslim nomads in neighbouring Kazakhstan.

65. Jackson, The Russo-Chinese Borderlands, pp. 62-3.

## 9.2 The Administration of Mas<sup>C-</sup>ud Sabri and the "Pai-ta-shen Incident"

As has been shown, following the advance of the Soviet-assisted INA to the banks of the Manass River in September, 1945, the KMT, fearing the fall of Urumchi and a consequent extension of Soviet influence over Sinkiang in the north-west paralleling the Red Army's take-over of "Manchuria" in the north-east, determined to seek a temporary accommodation with the rebel forces. This was acceptable to the Soviet Union, which had attained its primary security and economic goals within Sinkiang, and which needed time to secure its vast post-war gains in territory (extending from Finland and Romania to Japan), pending some indication as to the likely outcome of the KMT-CCP struggle within China proper. In effect, Moscow had to determine whether it was better to lean towards an avowedly anti-communist but politically pragmatic KMT, or to throw its full support behind an increasingly intransigent CCP which the Kremlin had long suspected of heterodoxy and recognised as a possible future rival for supremacy in the world communist movement. There can be no doubt that the political scenario which suited Moscow best in this dilemma was a continuing impasse, as whichever side was to emerge victorious from the Chinese Civil War would surely seek to re-establish the sanctity of China's Inner Asian frontiers and to exclude Soviet influence from that region. Moreover, this analysis had not escaped the indigenous Muslim peoples of Sinkiang, who saw only too clearly that in the coming Sino-Soviet struggle, whether waged by the KMT or the CCP for the Chinese side, they would once again be caught between the hammer and the anvil.

By the spring of May, 1946, events within China proper and therefore, by extension, within Sinkiang, were rapidly moving to a climax. During March and April, Malinovski's 300,000 Soviet troops withdrew from "Manchuria" having failed to wring major economic concessions from Chiang Kai-shek, but taking with them US\$900,000,000 in "war booty" looted from Chinese territory.<sup>66</sup> Due to a combination of KMT military inefficiency and comparative CCP competence, during April, May and June the Chinese Communists, acting with tacit Soviet approval, overran the greater part of the territories thus vacated. Within Sinkiang, these developments were to signal the implementation of a more 'robust' KMT policy both towards the Soviet Union, and towards the Kremlin's Turkic Muslim protégés within the "Three Regions".

During the autumn and winter of 1946-47 the unfortunate Chang Chih-chung, bereft of power base both amongst his C.C. Clique-influenced KMT colleagues and amongst the various sections of the Sinkiang Muslim population, strove to please all sides but succeeded in pleasing none by consistently advocating policies of compromise and reconciliation. It is clear that Chang genuinely sought to promote a peaceful settlement to the "Ili Problem". He thus toured Sinkiang (in itself a novel departure from the behaviour of former Han Chinese governors, who preferred to remain securely in Urumchi), issuing a series of apparently contradictory statements to the effect that

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66. Clubb, China and Russia, pp. 355-6. Note that according to the (American) Pauley Misson's estimate, total losses to the economy of North-east China directly attributable to the effects of Soviet looting amounted to ten times this amount, or approximately US\$9,000 million.

he would be prepared to support the independence of Sinkiang if a genuine independence could be achieved, but cautioning that, in his opinion, this was impossible.<sup>67</sup> He therefore advocated closer links between Sinkiang and China proper, with rail links and a fully unified national currency.<sup>68</sup> His conciliatory attitude seems merely to have strengthened the will of the Muslim population to resist closer links with China, whilst it certainly infuriated the dominant C.C. group within the Sinkiang coalition government. In Chang Chih-chung's own words:

Because Provincial Vice-Chairman Ahmadjān and other government members from I-ning (Kulja) have constituted a minority and thus could not expect to have their motions passed, I never exercised my right to put their motions to a vote. Whenever I differed with the minority, I settled the difference by negotiation or concession... In consequence, a false impression has been created amongst outsiders to the effect that I was too weak to prevent the I-ning group from gaining control of everything.<sup>69</sup>

Meanwhile, within the seven regions of Sinkiang still under Nationalist control, KMT hard-liners were preparing for a second round of hostilities with the Kulja rebels which they saw as being both inevitable and desirable. To this end the C.C. Clique continued to expand its membership within Sinkiang, both amongst Han Chinese and other non-Han

67. Chang Chih-chung, 'Dilemma in Sinkiang', passim.

68. ibid., p. 427; cf. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 96.

69. Chang, 'Dilemma in Sinkiang', p. 425.



nationalities, throughout the period of Chang Chih-chung's administration.<sup>70</sup> Muslim factionalism also provided the KMT with a means through which to extend its control. Thus, following the Kulja regime's disclaimer of links with the Serikoli Muslim rebels, KMT troops moved into the area and successfully reasserted Nanking's control over Posgam, Karghalik and Tashkurgan.<sup>71</sup> Similarly, at the other side of the province, the defection of the Kirei Kazakh chieftain <sup>C</sup>Uthmān Bātūr was followed by negotiations between <sup>C</sup>Uthmān and Sung Hsi-lien, commander-in-chief of the KMT garrison forces in Sinkiang, as a result of which, on August 26th, 1946, <sup>C</sup>Uthmān's re-equipped forces launched a large-scale raid against the "Three Regions", briefly capturing Shara Sume in mid-September, only to be driven out (according to <sup>C</sup>Uthmān) following the arrival of 160 Russian trucks bearing troops of the INA.<sup>72</sup> Following these developments, combined with the implementation of KMT policies in Urumchi which 'often seemed designed to delay and block realisation of joint Chinese-Turki rule rather than to implement the principles agreed upon in January and June of 1946',<sup>73</sup> large-scale demonstrations and riots broke out at Urumchi early in 1947. Thus, on February 19th:

70. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, pp. 92-3.

71. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, EXT.5299.1946, p. 5.

72. Barnett, op.cit., p. 276; Lias, Kazak Exodus, p. 128.

73. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., I, p. 44.

A "liberty mass meeting" held in the Uighur Club in Tihwa (Urumchi), drew up a petition to the Provincial Government. Two days later, on February 21, a Uighur demonstration of several hundred men took place in the streets of Tihwa. A second long petition was formulated, followed the next day by a third. The three petitions demanded reduction of provincial taxes by half, rapid reorganization of the Aksu and Kashgar Peace Preservation Troops, an increase of native personnel in the administration, cessation of "oppression" by Chinese troops and police, evacuation of the majority of Chinese troops in Sinkiang, prohibition of military purchases of supplies on the open market, and the cessation of political arrests. They also called for re-elections in areas where "oppression" had occurred, complete judicial reorganization, including the removal of all "chiefs" of judicial organs, release of all political prisoners, the end of secret police activities, and organization of a province-wide Uighur police force.<sup>74</sup>

Significantly, these petitions also demanded the dismissal of a number of incompetent or "collaborationist" Kazakh officials (including, most prominently, Janim Khān, the coalition government's allegedly-illiterate Commissioner of Finance, and Sālis, the second Deputy Secretary-General), as well as the arrest and punishment of Uthmān Bātūr, now openly aligned with right-wing elements of the KMT.<sup>75</sup> Two days later, on February 24th, similar lists of grievances and demands were presented to the coalition government by groups of Kazakhs and Tungans - two Muslim minority groups who are reported by Barnett to have been given special consideration and support by the KMT, doubtless in a bid to split the "coalition nationalism" of the Kulja regime.<sup>76</sup> Accordingly, the effect of these latter petitions was

74. Barnett, op.cit., p. 251.

75. ibid., pp. 251, 257. According to Lias (Kazak Exodus, p. 128), both Janim Khān and Sālis were involved in Sung Hsi-lien's negotiations with Uthman Batur leading to the latter's attack against Shara Sume in August, 1946. If true, this would have marked both men down for attack by agents of the Kulja regime regardless of their supposed literary abilities.

76. Barnett, op.cit., p. 251, 259.

'to counterbalance the Uighur demands, counteract Uighur pressure on the government, and place the Chinese provincial authorities in a better bargaining position'.<sup>77</sup> These developments led to the outbreak of serious rioting in Urumchi on February 25th, during which (according to Chen), a crowd of 'tens of thousands' besieged the government offices in the centre of the city, whilst attempts were made by agents provocateurs of the C.C. Clique to assassinate both Ahmadjān Qāsim and Burhān Shahīdī.<sup>78</sup> Another sign of the increasing provincial unrest during this period was the reported outbreak of communalist fighting between Torgut Mongol nomads and Uighur agriculturalists in the region of Karashahr.<sup>79</sup>

By now Cheng Chih-chung was clearly in some despair. On May 13th, 1947, he reiterated his stance that 'if Sinkiang really can achieve independence, I shall be the first to approve, or at least to offer my support when the Central Government discusses the matter', before adding (with considerable foresight)... 'On the other hand, our Sinkiang compatriots should ponder whether, if their independence were achieved, it would resemble that of Switzerland... or of Poland'. As for the Sinkiang coalition government of which he was head: 'Superficially the government appears to be democratic in spirit, but political discord lies in its marrow'.<sup>80</sup> These were not sentiments guaranteed to win the support and confidence of the C.C. Clique, and accordingly on May 28th, 1947, it

77. ibid., p. 251.

78. Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 254.

79. ibid., p. 255.

80. Cheng, 'Dilemma in Sinkiang', pp. 425-6.

was announced by Nanking that Chang Chih-chung, whilst retaining his position as commander of Chiang Kai-shek's north-western headquarters, was to be replaced by Mas<sup>C</sup>ūd Sabri, the first non-Han governor of Sinkiang, as chairman of the coalition government.<sup>81</sup> During the subsequent governmental reorganisation Mas<sup>C</sup>ūd's fellow Uighurs, Muhammad Amīn Bugra and C<sup>T</sup>īsa Yūsuf Alptekin, were similarly given increased prominence in a clear bid to split the political loyalties of the Uighur people of Sinkiang.

Mas<sup>C</sup>ūd Sabri, the new provincial chairman (see plate 29), was born in Ili in 1886, the son of a wealthy merchant and landlord who was also a devout Sunni Muslim. After studying at a Muslim college in Kulja, Mas<sup>C</sup>ūd was sent to Turkey in 1904. Here he studied at military school, and subsequently at the University of Constantinople, where he received his medical degree in 1914. In 1915 he returned to Sinkiang to practice medicine, also devoting much of his time to the improvement of educational facilities for the Uighurs of Sinkiang. These latter activities led him into trouble with the provincial authorities, and brought about his imprisonment by Yang Tseng-hsin in 1924. Following his release after serving a term of 10 months, Mas<sup>C</sup>ūd took pains to place his schools under the direction of conservative, orthodox Muslims in a bid to avoid further trouble with the authorities. In 1934, however, he is reported to have become involved as a 'political worker' in the forces of the Turfanlik Uighur leader Mahmūd shih-chang.<sup>82</sup> In April, 1937, following in Mahmūd shih-chang's footsteps, Mas<sup>C</sup>ūd fled to India, subsequently returning to

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81. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol I, p. 44; Barnett, op.cit., p. 252.

82. See above, pp. 252; 303-10.

China by way of Tientsin. He then travelled to Nanking, where he was 'welcomed by the city's Sinkiang community (comprised primarily of anti-Soviet refugees from Sheng Shih-ts'ai's "progressive" regime), and by representatives of the National Government'.<sup>83</sup> Once in Nanking, Mas<sup>C</sup>ūd became closely associated with Muhammad Amīn Bugra<sup>84</sup> and C<sup>T</sup>īsa Yūsuf Alptekin,<sup>85</sup> two young Uighur nationalists who collaborated in the publication of the pan-Turanian paper Tien Shan (and subsequently, from Chungking, in the publication of the monthly journal Altai). Unlike Muhammad Amīn Bugra and C<sup>T</sup>īsa Yūsuf Alptekin, however, Mas<sup>C</sup>ūd also became closely associated with the right wing C.C. Clique and, possibly through their influence, a member of the KMT Central Executive Committee. In 1942 he joined the National Government, becoming one of only two Muslims serving on the KMT's 36-member State Council.<sup>86</sup> Yet despite his attainment of this apparently elevated position, Mas<sup>C</sup>ūd does not seem to have been held in any great respect by his KMT colleagues. Thus, when he arrived in Sinkiang during

83. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol III, p. 23.

84. According to Lias (who knew Bugra as a refugee in Istanbul during the early 1950s), Muhammad Amīn was the son of his namesake, Muhammad Amīn Bugra, the senior and only surviving "Khotan Amīr" (Kazak Exodus, p. 20). Jack Chen's claim that Mas<sup>C</sup>ūd Sabri (born Ili, 1886) was the son of the last "Khotan Amīr" (born Khotan, c.1900) is patently mistaken, as is his claim that the younger Muhammad Amīn Bugra (if indeed the son of a man born c.1900) worked in the Chinese consulate at Tashkent during the 1920s (The Sinkiang Story, pp. 250-51).

85. According to Chen (The Sinkiang Story, p. 251), C<sup>T</sup>īsa was 'the former beg of Kashgar' (?)

86. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol III, p. 23 (the other Muslim was the Tungan former Governor of Tsinghai, Ma Lin, a great uncle of Ma Chung-ying).

the autumn of 1945, ostensibly as Provincial Inspector-General (a post theoretically superior to that of Provincial Chairman),

HMCU Graham reported to the India Office that:

Mahsoud does not seem to be taken, or to take himself, over seriously. There was almost no one at the aerodrome to meet him on his arrival, and among the large crowd that welcomed General Chang he took up a most inconspicuous position.<sup>87</sup>

Clearly Mas<sup>C</sup>ud was returning to Sinkiang as something of a KMT puppet.

Thus, according to Lattimore:

When (in 1947) Masud Sabri became Chairman of Sinkiang - the first "native" ever to hold that post - he did not come to the fore as the head of a movement originating in Sinkiang, but as a "tame" Uighur who had long been the pensioner of the powerful C.C. Clique.<sup>88</sup>

Yet Mas<sup>C</sup>ud was also closely associated with anti-communist sentiment in Sinkiang and, as such, anathema to the Kremlin, subsequently to be denounced by Soviet sources as 'a double-dyed nationalist and pan-Turkist, an agent of imperialist intelligence' who had served Germany, Britain, Japan and the United States seriatim.<sup>89</sup> Moreover, in an interesting indication of the parochial nature of nationalist Turkic politics in Sinkiang, Mas<sup>C</sup>ud was also the uncle and father-in-law of Rahimjān Sābir Khoja, the strongly pro-Soviet ex-ETR Assistant Commissioner of Civil Affairs

87. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2359, EXT.3270.1946 (letter, HMCU Graham-IO, 6/4/1946). p. 1.

88. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 97.

89. Mingulov, op.cit., pp. 188-9; cf. Kotov's description of 'the Uighur nationalist and agent of Anglo-American imperialism, Masud' (op.cit., p. 444).

in the Sinkiang coalition government.<sup>90</sup> Mas'ud's appointment must therefore have been galling to the Ili group on personal, as well as purely political grounds.

In replacing Chang Chih-chung with Mas'ud Sabri, therefore, the KMT was deliberately attempting to exploit the substantive political differences existing between the predominantly pro-Soviet ("Taranchi") Uighurs of the Ili Valley and their anti-Soviet, traditionalist brethren in southern Sinkiang. Doubtless it was intended that this manoeuvre should provoke a split amongst the Uighurs of southern and western Sinkiang paralleling that which had emerged between the Kazakhs of the north and east of the province. It is clear, however, that the KMT made a serious miscalculation in choosing Mas'ud Sabri - a discredited and wholly disliked Uighur "collaborationist" from Ili with no real following south of the Tien Shan - as their vehicle for winning Uighur traditionalist support.<sup>91</sup> Had they selected a staunchly anti-Soviet Uighur from the south-west who was not too closely associated with the KMT - such as, perhaps, Muhammad Amin Bugra or 'Isa Yūsuf Alptekin<sup>92</sup> - then their efforts might possibly have met with more success (though the very nature of south-

90. Barnett, op.cit., p. 286.

91. According to Barnett (op.cit., p. 257), Mas'ud was 'far from popular' amongst Uighurs generally.

92. Muhammad Amin Bugra and 'Isa Yūsuf Alptekin were both genuine Uighur nationalists and not (as alleged by Soviet sources) puppets of the KMT. Both men, however, recognised that the attainment of Sinkiang's independence was increasingly unlikely, and therefore preferred to work for autonomy within China rather than within the Soviet Union (Barnett, op.cit., pp. 256-7, 272-3). They are acknowledged as Uighur patriots by pan-Turanian writers such as Hayit (Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China, p. 320) and Isma'il (op.cit., p. 29) and condemned as 'Pan-Turkic nationalists... demanding self-government for themselves' by Lattimore (Pivot of Asia, 112-14). Even the slavishly Maoist Jack Chen allows that Muhammad Amin Bugra had 'a bigger popular following (than Mas'ud Sabri) because of his long-continued activities in the region' (The Sinkiang Story, p. 251).

western Muslim traditionalism made its adherents hostile to both China and the Soviet Union in almost equal measure, a fact which cannot have escaped the KMT hard-liners).<sup>93</sup> As it was, however, news of Mas'ud's appointment in late May, 1947, led to almost immediate riots in Kashgar,<sup>94</sup> whilst in a meeting of the Provincial Assembly held at Urumchi on June 4th, no fewer than 63 of the 90 members present adopted a resolution opposing Mas'ud's appointment. Meanwhile, extensive demonstrations took place outside, whilst pro-Kulja groups distributed leaflets criticising Mas'ud throughout the bazaars of the city.<sup>95</sup>

One month later, on or about July 7th, simultaneous Uighur risings directed against the new chairman broke out in Turfan, Toksun and Shanshan. These revolts were rapidly and efficiently suppressed by crack KMT forces under Sung Hsi-lien, who announced that he had captured agents from Ili amongst the rebel leadership,<sup>96</sup> a charge specifically rejected by Ahmadjān, who described the risings as 'a spontaneous result of overflowing Muslim anguish'.<sup>97</sup> However, it was clear that the days of the 'coalition government'

93. In this context, see Sung Hsi-lien's warning that 'if our first enemy is the Kulja party, our second is the nationalist group (i.e. Bugra and Alptekin). The nationalists had better forget their slogan "Turkistan first", or there will be trouble'. Despatch by F. Robertson, NYT, February 1st, 1948.

94. Barnett, op.cit., p. 253.

95. Min-Chu Pao (Kulja), June 24th and July 3rd, 1947 (cited in Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 97).

96. Barnett, op.cit., p. 252.

97. ibid., p. 253.



founded only one year before were strictly limited. Shortly after Sung Hsi-lien's suppression of the Turfan risings, in late July, 1947, a group of 27 members of the Provincial Assembly (including members for Karashahr, Turfan, Khotan and Aksu, as well as from the "Three Regions"), left Urumchi for Kulja. Within days, this group was followed by a further 22 members from the Kashgar region and finally, on August 26th, 1947, by the remainder of the Ili delegates including Ahmadjān Qāsīm.<sup>98</sup>

By the end of August, 1947, therefore, the 'coalition government' had collapsed in all but name and Sinkiang was once again split into two mutually hostile zones with no direct communication possible between Urumchi and Kulja. This can scarcely have been Nanking's original aim in replacing Chang Chih-chung with Mas'ūd Sabri, and indeed it seems likely that, far from isolating the Kulja regime or promoting discord amongst the "Taranchi" Uighurs of the Ili Valley, the appointment of an Uighur puppet of the KMT had the effect of splitting the population of the Muslim traditionalist south-west, with the peasantry looking increasingly to Kulja, the begs and conservative land-owners looking to Urumchi, and the fundamentalist 'Culamā' undecided as to which way to turn.<sup>99</sup> Yet despite this overall failure of KMT strategy, there can be no doubt that the appointment of anti-Soviet, pan-Turanian Uighurs to senior posts in the Urumchi administration - coupled with the appearance of KMT-armed and supplied Basmachi-type guerillas owing allegiance to 'Uthmān Bātūr along

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98. Hsin-chiang Jih-pao (Sinkiang Daily, Urumchi), July 11th and 14th, 1947; cited in Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 98.

99. cf. Lattimore, ibid., p. 97.

the Sinkiang-MPR frontier - touched an exposed nerve in Moscow, where the emergence of even the slightest indication of Central Asian Muslim nationalism has always been viewed with a hostility verging on the pathological.

Moscow's response, which was clearly designed to "destabilise" the Mas'ud Sabri administration rather than to bring about the overall collapse of KMT authority in Sinkiang, was of a limited nature and aimed directly at 'Uthmān Bātūr's Kazakh partisans in the southern Shara Sume and northern Kumul regions. Here, following his break with the Kulja regime in April, 1946, 'Uthmān had set up his headquarters in the remote Baitik Bogdo, known to the Chinese as Pei-ta-shan, a small range of mountains about 20 miles long and 10 miles wide, running south-east to north-west along the Sinkiang-MPR border, and rising to 10,000 feet at their highest point (see Map 12). Until 1911, Pei-ta-shan had remained a little-known and politically unimportant region set well within the frontiers of Imperial China. With the collapse of the Ch'ing Dynasty and the secession of Outer Mongolia, however, Pei-ta-shan suddenly assumed new geo-political and strategic importance as an adequately-watered potential military stronghold set firmly astride the undefined and disputed Sino-MPR frontier zone. Although it was stipulated by the tripartite Sino-Russian-Mongolian agreement of 1915 that the Sino-Mongolian border should be demarcated by mutual agreement, this was never in fact undertaken, and the Pei-ta-shan remained disputed territory, claimed by both China and the MPR, throughout the Chinese Republican era.<sup>100</sup> Seemingly, from 1911 to 1944, ownership of the

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100. Lamb, Asian Frontiers, pp. 198-204.

Pei-ta-shan remained a purely academic question. Sinkiang was isolated from China proper under a series of military strongmen, whilst Pei-ta-shan was similarly isolated from Urumchi and Ulan Bator both by distance and by poor communications. What is more, China had never acknowledged the de jure independence of Outer Mongolia (nor, indeed, of Urianghai/Tannu Tuva), and therefore, from the official Chinese point of view, not only Pei-ta-shan, but also the entire territory of the MPR, lay by right within China. All this was to change as a result of the Sino-Soviet Agreement of August, 1945, by which (under Soviet pressure), Chiang Kai-shek was obliged formally to acknowledge the independence of the MPR.<sup>101</sup> Following the signing of this treaty, Pei-ta-shan ceased to be a neglected backwater and became instead the front-line of KMT-MPR confrontation in the Sinkiang sector.

Considerable disagreement surrounds the origin and subsequent course of the Pei-ta-shan incident, though it is clear that the southward migration from Shara Sume of <sup>C</sup>Uthmān Bātūr's Kazakhs provided the spark which led to the outbreak of open hostilities. Under both Ch'ing and Republican administrations, the pastures of the Pei-ta-shan had been shared by Kirei Kazakh and Western Mongol nomads, with the former apparently predominating in the south and west of the region, whilst the latter controlled the north and east. According to Lattimore, it was the custom of the Sinkiang Kazakhs to use the slopes of the Pei-ta-shan for summer pasture, whilst in the winter they would drive their sheep, cattle and camels down into the Dzungarian lowlands 'where they were clearly within the jurisdiction of Sinkiang', leaving only their horses, which could paw down through the

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101. See above, p. 433.

snow for winter fodder, in the exposed uplands. Lattimore continues:

There was a tendency on the part of the Kazakhs to move clear across the desert and up to the lower slopes of the Bogda Ula near Kuchengtze (Kitai); but the policy of the Sinkiang authorities was to drive them back towards the Baitik Bogda (Pei-ta-shan) and to keep them out of the jurisdiction of Sinkiang, because they were regarded as cattle thieves and trouble makers. In practice, therefore, the attitude of the Sinkiang authorities was that the Baitik Bogda lay outside of Sinkiang.<sup>102</sup>

It is apparent, however, that whilst from 1911 to 1942 the Sinkiang authorities may well have regarded Pei-ta-shan as lying beyond the pale of provincial control, this pragmatic approach can hardly have been shared by the Chinese national government, which was primarily concerned with the de jure, and not the de facto, status of the Sinkiang-Mongolian frontier. It was inevitable, therefore, that following the extension of KMT authority to Sinkiang during 1942-44, Chungking should attempt to reassert Chinese control over the strategically significant Pei-ta-shan region. Moreover, it seems probable that this drive would have gained new impetus following Chiang Kai-shek's belated recognition of MPR independence, under Soviet pressure, during August, 1945.

The extension of indirect KMT control to the greater part of the Pei-ta-shan may be dated to the late spring of 1946, following <sup>C</sup>Uthmān Bātūr's break with the Kulja regime and subsequent realignment with the Chinese authorities. Most sources agree that <sup>C</sup>Uthmān and his followers migrated directly from the Shara Sume region to Pei-ta-shan,<sup>103</sup> where an

102. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 100.

103. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol III, p. 47; Barnett, op.cit., p. 276; Lias, op.cit., p. 122; Cheng Tien-fong, op.cit., p. 282.

agreement was reached between Ḳuthmān Bātūr and a representative of Sung Hsi-lien, the KMT garrison commander in Sinkiang. According to Lattimore, however, Ḳuthmān first migrated to the northern foothills of the Bogda Ula before being 'encouraged' by the Chinese authorities to move northwards and 'occupy' the Pei-ta-shan 'which were accordingly claimed as Chinese territory'.<sup>104</sup> Precise details of subsequent events in the Pei-ta-shan region remain, apparently, unestablished. It may be that Ḳuthmān, acting with tacit KMT approval, attempted to expel the Mongol inhabitants of the area, or that he crossed into the northern foothills of the Pei-ta-shan, into a zone regarded by the MPR as its special preserve.<sup>105</sup> On the other hand, it may be that the MPR, with tacit Soviet backing, sought actively to extend its control over the Pei-ta-shan in preparation for the frontier delimitation negotiations which had, sooner or later, to follow China's formal recognition of Mongolian independence.<sup>106</sup>

104. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 100.

105. In this context, note Lias' statement (based on extensive interviews with Ḳuthmān's Kirei Kazakh supporters) that: 'The northern slopes of the Baitik Bogdo are well-wooded and watered and with good pasture, though the southern slopes are almost waterless and barren (*op.cit.*, p. 122).

106. Frontier delimitation between China and the MPR was, in fact, delayed until 1962, when Peking abandoned claims to large areas of the frontier region including a tract of land extending northwards from Pei-ta-shan towards Khovd. By this agreement, the Sino-Mongolian frontier was agreed to run along the watershed of the Pei-ta-Shan, establishing the greater part of the disputed range as Chinese territory, but confirming the more fertile northern slopes as lying within the MPR. Lamb, *op.cit.*, p. 200; *Chung-kuo ti-t'u chi (An Atlas of China)*, Hong Kong, 1972), p. 28.

Whatever the exact sequence of events surrounding C<sup>U</sup>thmān Bātūr's withdrawal to the Pei-ta-shan, it is clear that forces owing allegiance to the Kirei Kazakh chieftain clashed both with MPR frontier units and with units of the INA during the summer of 1946.<sup>107</sup> Initially these hostilities remained low-key, being limited to short exchanges between local militia units. C<sup>U</sup>thmān seems to have been the first to have deviated from this pattern, and it is apparent that his autumn raid deep into northern Shara Sume was viewed with hostility and concern not only in Kulja and Ulan Bator, but also in Moscow. As has been shown, C<sup>U</sup>thmān was driven out of Shara Sume and back to the Pei-ta-shan, where he remained during the winter of 1946-47. Yet despite this setback, he clearly remained a constant threat both to Soviet interests in Sinkiang, and to the frontier security of the MPR. Accordingly, following Chang Chih-chung's replacement by Mas<sup>C</sup>ud Sabri in May, 1947, the Soviet Union determined to make its displeasure felt in both Urumchi and Nanking by launching a major attack on C<sup>U</sup>thmān's mountain stronghold.

According to KMT sources, the "Pei-ta-shan Incident" began on June 5th, 1947, only five weeks after Mas<sup>C</sup>ud Sabri's appointment as Chairman of the Sinkiang coalition government, when a force estimated at 500 MPR troops, reportedly backed by four or five planes with Soviet markings, moved into the disputed region and attacked C<sup>U</sup>thmān's Kazakh irregulars.<sup>108</sup> The Chinese

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107. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol III, p. 47; Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, p. 100.

108. Clubb, China and Russia, pp. 368-9 (citing a report from the China News Agency, dated 5th June, 1947); Calvocoressi, P., Survey of International Affairs 1949-50 (London, 1953), pp. 359-60; cf. Barnett, op.cit., p. 267, Whiting's suggestion that 'it is possible that Outer Mongolian aircraft were mistakenly identified as Russian' (Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 115), is scarcely relevant, as the idea of Mongolian aircraft operating in Chinese airspace without direct Soviet connivance was as improbable in 1947 as it is today.

authorities responded by lodging an official protest with the Soviets through their embassy in Moscow,<sup>109</sup> whilst strengthening their position on the ground through the despatch of elite units of Tsinghai Tungan cavalry to the Pei-ta-shan region.<sup>110</sup> Accounts of the subsequent struggle are uniformly sparse, but differ widely in interpretation. Thus both Clubb and Whiting indicate that Soviet-MPR pressure forced a Chinese withdrawal from the disputed area by mid-1947, and the former authority goes so far as to call the "Pei-ta-shan Incident" 'a clear victory for the Mongolian People's Republic'.<sup>111</sup> Yet according to Barnett, more than 15 months later, in September, 1948, the 'northern crests' of the Pei-ta-shan remained securely in the hands of the KMT 14th Tungan Cavalry Regiment, whilst the closest MPR positions were located 'at the foot of the northern slopes of the mountains'.<sup>112</sup>

How may this divergence of accounts be explained? On balance it seems probable that, during late 1946 and early 1947, Cūthmān Bātūr's Kazakh irregulars had thrust beyond the Pei-ta-shan (which, according to Barnett's KMT informants, had been garrisoned by Chinese troops 'for many years'),<sup>113</sup>

109. Clubb, China and Russia, p. 368; Whiting, Soviet Strategy, p. 115.

110. Barnett, op.cit., p. 236.

111. Clubb, China and Russia, p. 369; Whiting, Soviet Strategy, p. 115.

112. Barnett, op.cit., pp. 236, 267.

113. ibid. p. 266.

out into the sparsely-inhabited lowland region to the north of the mountains, which the MPR controlled, but which China claimed (and was to continue to claim until 1962).<sup>114</sup> The joint MPR-Soviet attack of June, 1947, was thus successful in driving C<sup>U</sup>thman's Chinese-supported Kazakh irregulars back to the line of actual control before their invasion of 1946, and to this extent, in purely regional terms, the outcome of the so-called "Pei-ta-shan Incident" may be seen as an MPR victory. Yet both Clubb and Whiting are clearly mistaken in their assumption that the "Incident" came to an end during the summer of 1947.<sup>115</sup> According to Barnett, fighting was to continue on a reduced scale for at least another year, with thirteen separate clashes taking place in the Pei-ta-shan region between June 5th, 1947, and July, 1948.<sup>116</sup> No doubt Sino-Mongolian rivalry played an important part in this continuing confrontation - thus Major-General Han Yu-wen, the KMT front-line commander in the Pei-ta-shan region, informed Barnett 'that he believed the border should be about 40 miles to the north of the mountains'.<sup>117</sup> Yet beyond this purely local dispute, in which the MPR,

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114. In this context, see Lias' statement that: 'Tired of abortive attack and counter-attack between the Altai and Baitik Bogdo, the Russians built a road from Mongolia across the wild country on Osman's western flanks...' (Kazak Exodus, pp. 128-9), which would seem to confirm that C<sup>U</sup>thman had indeed struck northwards from the Pei-ta-shan towards Tayingkul (see Map 12).

115. Clubb, China and Russia, p. 369. Whiting (op.cit., p. 115), similarly claims that fighting ended in June, 1947, but allows that 'the situation remained tense in early 1948'.

116. Barnett, op.cit., p. 267.

117. ibid., p. 266.



with Soviet backing, had succeeded in restoring the status quo ante, lay the wider Sino-Soviet struggle for control of the Central Asian heartland, in which, at a time of Chinese weakness, the Manass River and the northern slopes of the Pei-ta-shan had become the effective front-line. Thus, by maintaining indirect pressure on China in the Pei-ta-Shan sector of the Sinkiang-MPR frontier long after C<sup>U</sup>thmān Bātūr's Kazakh raiders had been expelled, Moscow undoubtedly sought to hasten the demise of the Mas<sup>C</sup>ūd Sabri regime in Sinkiang without, however, openly breaking with the Nationalist authorities in Nanking. In wider international terms, therefore, the true beneficiary of the "Pei-ta-shan Incident" was the Soviet Union, though its victory was to be purely Pyrrhic, as will be shown.

### 9.3 The Victory of the Chinese Communists

Following the disintegration of the Sinkiang coalition government during the summer of 1947, the effective partitioning of Sinkiang into two zones - one administered by nominees of the KMT and the other by nominees of the Soviet Union - became virtually complete. Little or no contact seems to have taken place between the two sides, and no serious fighting took place to disturb the status quo. The Manass River remained the dividing line between the "Three Regions", where the secessionist ETR was re-established in all but name, and the remainder of the province. Meanwhile, both the Urumchi and Kulja regimes took steps to consolidate their respective positions and to exclude each other's influence from their particular spheres of control.

Little or no non-partisan information is available concerning events in Sinkiang during this period. According to reports from the insurgent press in Kulja, following Mas<sup>C</sup>ud's assumption of power in Urumchi, C.C. Clique hard-liners within the KMT implemented a programme designed to discriminate against "progressives" in particular, and against Muslims in general. Thus, even before Ahmadjān's return to Kulja, known or suspected supporters of the Ili rebels were excluded from the provincial assembly and the provincial peace preservation corps, whilst the KMT military authorities retained control over locally-elected district magistrates and severely limited the appointment of Muslims to the provincial police force, thus:

Out of 421 appointments to the police bureau in Urumchi only 48 were Moslems, with Chinese holding 84% of the posts. Police orders were written only in Chinese, and Moslem members of the force were not allowed to carry arms. Moreover, a secret police force continued to operate, although supposedly abolished under the "basic provincial law" of July, 1946.<sup>118</sup>

Similarly, the Kulja regime charged that, in the KMT-controlled zone, San Min Chu I (KMT Youth Corps) activists, assisted by members of the provincial police, mounted vicious attacks on local "progressive" politicians and their supporters, whilst ordinary 'people in the street' were beaten up and imprisoned simply for reading wall posters critical of the Mas<sup>C</sup>ud regime.<sup>119</sup> There is no reason to doubt these charges, and indeed,

118. Min-chu Pao (Kulja), June 24th and 29th, 1947 (cited in Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, pp. 97-8).

119. Min-chu Pao (Kulja), July 9th, 1947 (cited in Lattimore, Pivot, p. 98), cf. Mingulov, op.cit., p. 189.

following the replacement of Chang Chih-chung by Mas<sup>C</sup>ud Sabri, it is clear that the conciliatory policies associated with the former were completely abandoned.

Partly because of the comparative accessibility of the KMT zone to Western correspondents (as contrasted with the total inaccessibility of the "Three Regions"), and partly as a result of the CCP's subsequent endorsement of the legitimacy of the Kulja regime, much has been made of the brutality and corruption surrounding the last years of KMT power in Sinkiang.<sup>120</sup> By contrast, our knowledge of conditions within the Soviet-dominated "Three Regions" remains rudimentary - yet it is apparent that, in many ways, the political repression meted out in the KMT-controlled zone of Sinkiang was mirrored by the domestic activities of the Kulja authorities. Thus, at least on a surface level, the Min Chu Pao's charge that Muslims were discriminated against in the provincial police force was paralleled in Kulja, where all official notices were in Russian or Turkic (but never in Chinese), and even Han supporters of the regime were excluded from the INA and forbidden to carry arms.<sup>121</sup> More significantly, there can be no doubt that a secret police force based on the Soviet model operated throughout the "Three Regions", and that the reported abduction of <sup>C</sup>Ali Khan Türe was followed by the harassment and arrest of many similarly-minded conservative Muslim nationalists.<sup>122</sup>

120. See, for example, Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, pp. 97-10 ; Davidson, Turkestan Alive, pp. 120-33; Chen, The Sinkiang Story, pp. 242-66.

121. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 3; Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 228.

122. Isma'il and Isma'il, op.cit., p. 28; cf. Barnett, op.cit., p. 270.

It is clear that the KMT leadership in Urumchi was aware of the Kulja regime's persecution of "anti-Soviet" and "pan-Turkist" elements within its sphere of control, and that in this development it perceived a way to counterbalance ETR propaganda and to win the "hearts and minds" of the traditionally conservative Muslim south of the province, now tilting increasingly towards the Kulja regime. Accordingly, in an extraordinary move never before (or since) sanctioned by the Chinese authorities in Sinkiang, the anti-Soviet Uighur nationalists Muhammad Amin Bugra and Isa Yusuf Alptekin were permitted openly to publish pan-Turanian literature which, in a direct challenge to the established Soviet (and, by extension, ETR) line, stressed the ethnic and cultural unity of the various Turkic Muslim peoples of Central Asia. There can be no doubt that this development, which conjured up one of the darkest spectres of official Kremlin demonology, infuriated the Soviet leadership. Thus, according to Mingulov:

Mas'ud formed his government on 28th May, 1947. The soi-disant Champion of the Faith gagged the public press and spoke through two pan-Turk journals called Yalkyn ('Flame'), and Erk ('Freedom'). The people of Sinkiang were told that they were a single Turkic nation, and that the names "Uygur", "Kazakh", "Kirgiz", were mere ethnic abstractions. An organization as powerful as it was bogus, known as the Society for the defence of Islam, functioned under the supervision of the C-in-C Sinkiang and stretched its tentacles everywhere.<sup>123</sup>

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123. Mingulov, op.cit., p. 189; cf. Chen, The Sinkiang Story, pp. 251, 254, 259, Kotov, op.cit., p. 444.

The precise KMT logic behind this development, which directly contravened the previously established Han policy of accentuating splits and divisions between the various Muslim and non-Muslim nationalities of Sinkiang, remains uncertain.<sup>124</sup> Its immediate effect, however, was clearly beneficial to the Nationalist authorities in that it served to accentuate the already substantive differences between the Soviet-backed Uighur leadership in Kulja and the KMT-backed Uighur leadership in Urumchi, whilst at the same time proffering a tantalising mirage of potential Turkic autonomy outside the Soviet orbit to the deeply conservative Muslim population of southern Sinkiang.

In response, the Kulja regime and its Soviet sponsors seem to have determined to press ahead with the building of "Socialism in Three Regions" pending the outcome of the KMT-CCP struggle within China proper. Accordingly, amongst numerous other reforms claimed by Chen and Mingulov, limited land redistribution was initiated in Ili during this period.<sup>125</sup>

124. It may simply be that the KMT was obliged, through the dictates of necessity, to tolerate some degree of conservative pan-Turanianism as a counter-balance to Soviet influence. Yet both Muhammad Amin Bugra and Isa Yusuf Alptekin had long been active in Nanking (subsequently Chungking), and it is interesting to note that KMT "Greater Han" theory tended to subsume all Turkic Muslims under the generic heading 'Tatar', as 'one of the five peoples designated in China' (See above, p. 36).

125. Mingulov, *op.cit.*, p. 189; cf. Chen, *op.cit.*, p. 258. Mingulov also claims that, during this period: 'loans of money and seed were advanced, taxation was reduced by 50%. The area under cultivation was increased from 251,000 hectares in 1941 to 375,000 hectares in 1948, and the gross grain harvest from 212,000 tons to 295,000 tons. Towards popular education there was a literacy drive; health measures included a medical school, dispensaries, and maternity homes'.

Similarly, in response to the establishment of a "Society for the Defence of Islam" in Urumchi during 1947, an organisation called the "Union in Defence of Peace and Democracy in Sinkiang" was set up at Kulja during the first half of 1948.<sup>126</sup> Membership of this party, which was clearly intended as a mass base for the STPNLC, was open to 'whoever sets store by the interest of the people', and its programme was formally based on the "Kulja Declaration" of January 5th, 1944, by which the political programme of the secessionist ETR had been initially proclaimed. This clear indication of Soviet concern with the "Three Regions" to the exclusion of the remainder of Sinkiang is amply confirmed by Mingulov, who notes that

The (revolutionary) movement, therefore, had survived in one corner of the country (sic), but it was powerless to capture the remainder... The next best thing was to make certain that the fires would go on burning in the Three Districts and to hope that their warmth would eventually reach out to the other corners.<sup>127</sup>

Meanwhile, far to the east, the balance of the Chinese Civil War was swinging inexorably in favour of the CCP. During 1946 and early 1947, Chiang Kai-shek's forces succeeded in scoring a series of apparently spectacular successes, including the capture of the Communist capital at Yen-an. Yet it soon became apparent that the CCP was 'losing the cities, but winning the war'. Thus the Nationalist conscript forces became

126. According to Mingulov, this union was set up in July-August, 1948 (op.cit., p. 190). Kotov, however, gives the date as January, 1948 (op.cit., p. 444).

127. Mingulov, op.cit., pp. 189-90.

increasingly bogged down in a debilitating guerilla conflict, whilst popular discontent with the KMT government mounted rapidly throughout south China. During the winter of 1947-48 the PLA went over to the offensive, winning a series of major set-piece battles against the Nationalists in the north-east, and advancing towards Peking. In April, 1948, Yen-an was recaptured, and on June 19th Kaifeng, the capital of Honan, fell to the victorious PLA. By the autumn of 1948 it was clear that Nationalist power within China was crumbling, and that a final CCP victory could not long be delayed.

There can be little doubt that the Soviet Union viewed the advance of the PLA towards Sinkiang with mounting apprehension. Stalin must long have suspected that Mao Tse-tung was a chinese nationalist first, a communist second, and a loyal disciple of the Comintern scarcely at all. Accordingly, despite the continuing pin-prick pressures of the "Pei-ta-shan Incident", and under the camouflage of a constant drum-fire of anti-KMT propaganda from Kulja, the Kremlin sought to persuade Chiang Kai-shek to compromise in Sinkiang before it was too late. Chiang, who clearly still believed that the Soviet Union could exercise a restraining influence over the Chinese Communists, was quick to respond. Thus in October, 1947, Chang Chih-chung, who had remained in Sinkiang as commander of the Nationalist's north-western headquarters, travelled to Nanking to begin negotiations with the Soviet Embassy. He was either accompanied or shortly followed by the Tatar Burhān Shahīdī, who had served as Vice-Chairman in the short-lived coalition government of 1946-47. During the remainder of 1947 and much

of 1948, the Uighur, Russian and Chinese-speaking Burhān is reported to have acted as an intermediary between the Soviet Embassy and Chang in a prolonged series of negotiations designed to pave the way for a secret KMT-Soviet deal over the future status of Sinkiang.<sup>128</sup> That some progress was made in these talks may perhaps be inferred from the cessation of hostilities in the Pei-ta-shan region in the middle of 1948.<sup>129</sup> It seems clear, however, that Soviet demands for economic and political concessions in the north-west were too great for Chiang Kai-shek seriously to consider until some time in December, 1948, mid-way through the great and decisive Battle of the Hwai-Hai, during which the impending collapse of the Nationalist forces must have become apparent even to the most loyal partisans of the KMT.<sup>130</sup> Accordingly, in a conciliatory gesture clearly aimed at the Soviet Union, on December 31st, 1948, Mas<sup>C</sup>ud Sabri was recalled from Sinkiang and, in a move thought to have been negotiated with the Soviet Embassy in Nanking during the previous autumn, replaced by the amenable Burhān Shahīdī.<sup>131</sup>

128. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol I, p. 4.

129. It is interesting to note that Sung Hsi-lien, the right-wing KMT garrison commander of Sinkiang who was responsible for provoking the initial "Pei-ta-shan Incident", was recalled at this time, apparently at the suggestion of Burhān Shahīdī. He was replaced by the more moderate T'ao Chih-yueh. Boorman and Howard, ibid.

130. The Battle of the Hwai-Hai, which delivered the coup de grace to KMT aspirations in mainland China, was fought for 65 days between 7th November, 1948, and 12th January, 1949, across a battlefield extending from the Hwai River to the Lunghai Railway. By the end of the battle the Nationalists had lost five army groups, seven other full divisions, the Armoured Corps, and miscellaneous other units - in all, approximately 550,000 men. Clubb, Twentieth Century China, p. 291.

131. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol I, p. 4. According to Hayit (Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China, p. 321), Mas<sup>C</sup>ud Sabri was offered the post of Chinese Ambassador to Iran, but he refused and chose to stay in China. He was arrested by the Communist authorities on 5th April, 1951, and died in prison during March, 1952.



On January 1st, 1949, Chiang Kai-shek made an offer of peace to the CCP in his New Year's message. Shortly thereafter Chang Chih-chung returned to Urumchi with the stated purpose of negotiating a new treaty with the Soviet Union to replace the ten year agreement which Sheng Shih-ts'ai had signed in 1939 to govern Sino-Soviet economic relations in Sinkiang.<sup>132</sup> As Clubb has indicated, the advantage to the Soviets of the ratification of any such new agreement was obvious - as with Chiang's recognition of MPR independence during 1945, Moscow would at least be able to confront a CCP successor regime with a valid document which would have to be taken into consideration in the working out of any new Sino-Soviet relationship.<sup>133</sup> Chiang, however, was certainly playing for higher stakes. By reaching an agreement with the Soviets over Sinkiang, he clearly hoped to widen the substantial rift which he already knew to exist between Yenan and Moscow, though whether this was intended to prolong his rule over mainland China, or alternatively to facilitate his reconquest of the mainland from Taiwan, must inevitably remain speculative.<sup>134</sup>

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132. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol. I., p. 4.

133. Clubb, China and Russia, p. 370.

134. Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, pp. 101-2 (citing numerous contemporary NYT dispatches from H.R. Lieberman and Walter Sullivan); Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, pp. 116-7; Moseley, A Sino-Soviet Cultural Frontier, p. 14. According to the Royal Institute of International Affairs, the KMT may also have considered establishing Sinkiang as an alternative western bastion to Taiwan, 'possibly even with Russian support'. Calvocoressi, op.cit., p. 360.

Little is known of the subsequent negotiations, though according to KMT sources Stalin's demands paralleled those made on Sheng Shih-ts'ai by the infamous "Sin-Tin" Agreement of 1939. Thus, in exchange for unspecified support - which may not have exceeded good will<sup>135</sup> - the Soviet Union is reported to have sought virtually exclusive control over the mineral resources of Sinkiang.<sup>136</sup> Similarly, Stalin is reported to have sought full import-export freedom for the USSR without offering any reciprocal benefits to China.<sup>137</sup> Even in extremis these terms proved too much for the KMT leadership, and negotiations were abandoned in May, after Nanking and Moscow had failed to reach any agreement beyond the extension of Soviet rights to operate an air service between Urumchi and Alma Ata.<sup>138</sup>

According to Allen S. Whiting, following the breaking-off of KMT-Soviet talks at Urumchi in May, 1949, the Soviet Union made one further, unofficial attempt to confirm their position in Sinkiang before the arrival of the Chinese Communists. Thus, as units of the PLA under P'eng Te-huai marched into neighbouring Kansu during the summer of 1949, the Soviet

135. Most sources remain unspecific on this point. June Dreyer, however, believes that the Soviet Union was 'clearly offering Chiang Kai-shek's government arms... in return for some form of control over Sinkiang'. 'The Kazakhs in China', p. 155.
136. Su-lien tui Hsin-chiang ti ching-chi ch'in-lueh, pp. 142 ff., cited in Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 117. Paralleling demands made to Sheng in 1939 and to Chungking negotiators in 1942-43, general managers of all proposed companies to be set up under joint Sino-Soviet auspices in Sinkiang were to be Soviet citizens.
137. ibid.
138. ibid.; Clubb, China and Russia, p. 370, Sceptics of Chiang's refusal to compromise the territorial integrity of China in the Sinkiang region should note his subsequent refusal to condemn the CCP takeover of Tibet, even under strong US pressure to do so.

Consul-General in Urumchi is reported to have approached General T'ao Chih-yueh, the KMT garrison commander in Sinkiang, with a suggestion that he should declare Sinkiang independent 'on the precedent of Outer Mongolia', following which Moscow would 'order' the PLA to halt its advance from Kansu. T'ao is reported to have referred this proposal to Canton (Nationalist headquarters following the fall of Nanking), for deliberation. Once again, however, the Soviet offer is said to have been declined.<sup>139</sup>

By the end of July, 1949, P'eng Teh-huai's PLA forces stood at the very gates of Sinkiang. T'ao Chih-yueh was apparently ordered by the KMT Government in Canton - itself in hurried preparation for flight to Taiwan - to continue his stand, and to fight a harrying rear-guard action, apparently with the ultimate objective of retreat across the Himalayas. T'ao was clearly unwilling to follow these instructions. Accordingly, he gave orders permitting those of his men who wished to flee to Taiwan permission to do so. Most, however, chose to stay with T'ao, who surrendered peacefully to the PLA on September 25th, at the head of the 80,000 KMT troops still remaining in Sinkiang.<sup>140</sup> One day later, on September 26th, 1949, Burhān Shāhīdī, in his capacity as Provincial Chairman of Sinkiang, severed relations with the Nationalist authorities at Canton, pledged allegiance to the Communist Government then being established at Peking, and announced that he would accept peace terms offered by the CCP pending their reorganisation of the Sinkiang provincial administration.

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139. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, pp. 117-8; McMillen, op.cit., p. 24. Note that in June, 1949, at the time of this supposed Soviet approach to T'ao Chih-yueh, the Soviet Ambassador was the sole foreign diplomatic representative to accompany the Nationalist Government in its flight from Nanking to Canton (Calvocoressi, op.cit., p. 360).

140. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, pp. 117-8; McMillen, op.cit., p. 24.

#### 9.4 The Limitation of Muslim Separatism and the Decline of Soviet Influence

Throughout their long struggle to win power in the Chinese heartland, not only Sinkiang, but also the greater part of Northwest China had remained hostile and largely unknown territory to the CCP. Thus, whilst it is true that in 1937 Chinese Communist forces had advanced to within 300 miles of the Sinkiang frontier, they were unexpectedly defeated and driven back by a coalition of "Wu Ma" Tungan forces in a series of reverses said to have been regarded by the CCP leadership as 'the most cruel and punishing they had suffered up to that time'.<sup>141</sup> Similarly, whilst it is true that a team of more than one hundred Chinese Communists had served in Sinkiang under Sheng Shih-ts'ai between 1937 and 1942, their power had been strictly circumscribed, and their influence constantly overshadowed by Stalin and the CPSU. Moreover, with their sudden fall from grace in 1942, even this tenuous link between Yen-an and Urumchi had been broken, leaving Sinkiang isolated from CCP influence by a wide swathe of hostile Tungan-controlled territory and subject to the exclusive competition of Moscow and Nanking.

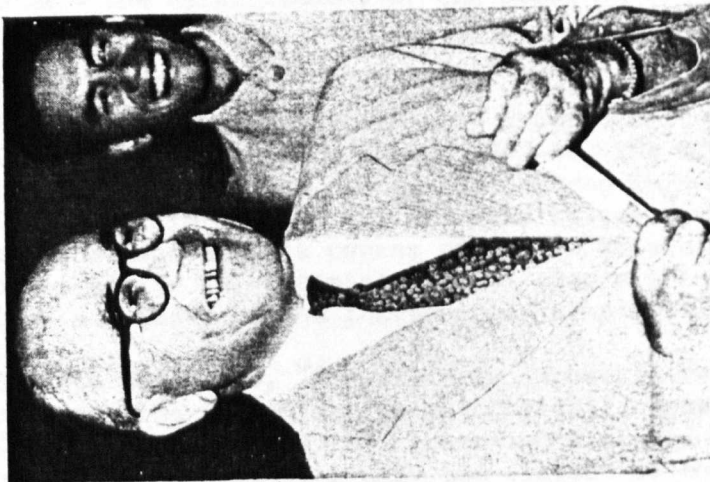
Yet it should not be supposed that the CCP leadership remained totally unaware of developments in Sinkiang during this period. Certainly Yen-an must have kept a watchful eye on the power struggles centred on

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141. Lindbeck, J.M.H., 'Communism, Islam and Nationalism in China', The Review of Politics (Indiana), XII, 4 (October, 1950), pp. 477-8; Wales, Nym, Inside Red China, (NY, 1935), p. 154; Chang, Hajji Yusuf, 'Islam and Communism in China', Islamic Literature (Lahore), XIII, 12 (1967), p. 8.



Saif al-Dīn<sup>c</sup> Azīz  
("Saifuddin")



Burhān Shāhidī

Plates 31,32: THE SURVIVORS

Urumchi, and above all on the situation in the "Three Regions", where the CCP's supposed Soviet ally and "mentor" continued to expand its influence and power at the expense of China's political and territorial integrity.<sup>142</sup> Thus, when on October 12th, 1949, units of the PLA First Field Army Group under General Wang Chen advanced across the Kansu-Sinkiang frontier to extend CCP power to Sinkiang for the first time, they moved purposefully and with certain predetermined commitments, foremost amongst which - the elimination of Muslim separatism in the former KMT-controlled zone notwithstanding - was the restoration of Chinese political control in the "Three Regions" and, ultimately, the exclusion of Soviet influence from the province.

In October, 1949, however, the CCP was in no position to move hastily against its perceived Soviet rival in Sinkiang. Indeed, the situation in the far north-west was potentially most embarrassing, as the leaders of the Kulja regime, although regarded by Peking as Soviet puppets far more threatening to China's territorial integrity than such minor anti-communist "bandits" as <sup>C</sup>Uthmān Bātūr, actually welcomed - or feigned to welcome - the establishment of CCP power in Sinkiang.<sup>143</sup> In line with

142. Besides the certain presence of covert CCP sympathisers and informants in Sinkiang during the period 1942-49, the CCP leadership had been in regular and intimate contact with Chang Chih-chung in his capacity as KMT negotiator. Chang was probably better acquainted with Soviet machinations and the course of Muslim separatism in Sinkiang than any other senior KMT official. He was also a Chinese patriot who, between 1945 and 1949, became increasingly sympathetic towards the CCP.

143. On 11th May, 1949, <sup>C</sup>Abd al-Karīm <sup>C</sup>Abbas is reported to have announced at a meeting in Kulja: 'We categorically assert that the success of the Chinese People's Army of Liberation alone rendered possible the victory of our own movement... Only the victory of the national liberation struggle of the entire Chinese people can lead to the full freedom of the people of Sinkiang; only then will the correct solution of the national question in Sinkiang be reached' (Sinkiang Gazette, 30th September, 1949, cited in Mingulov, op.cit., pp. 192-3). It should be noted that this speech, which would appear to be the first direct statement of Kulja support for the CCP (as opposed to renunciation of separatism), was not published until more than one month after its author's death, and four days after the formal submission of the Sinkiang provincial authorities to the PLA. Its authenticity may therefore be open to some legitimate doubt.

this political stance, the "progressive" STPNLC faction which had successfully purged the former "East Turkestan Republic" of anti-Soviet, pan-Turanian elements during 1946-47, was obliged overtly to acknowledge the revolutionary leadership of Mao Tse-tung in the hope of maintaining, under covert Soviet auspices, a high degree of autonomy in north-western Sinkiang. Accordingly, on August 15th, 1949, by which time the ultimate victory of the CCP over the KMT had become a foregone conclusion, the most prominent members of the Kulja leadership, including the Uighurs Ahmadjān Qāsīm and Abd al-Karīm Abbas, the Kazakh Dālīl Khān, and the Kirghiz Ishāq Beg, left Kulja for Alma Ata in Soviet Kazakhstan, ostensibly en route for Peking, where they were to take part in the first plenary session of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.<sup>144</sup>

During the subsequent KMT capitulation and PLA occupation of Sinkiang, nothing more was heard of Ahmadjān Qāsīm and his colleagues. Only in late December, 1949, just as the CCP was setting up a new political administration in Urumchi, was it quietly announced by the Chinese Communist authorities that almost four months previously, on August 27th, the plane carrying Ahmadjān and the other Ili leaders had crashed into a Manchurian hillside, killing everyone on board.<sup>145</sup> Considerable mystery surrounds the disaster, not least because of Peking's long delay in making it

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144. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 143; Hayit, Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China, p. 12.

145. ibid., cf. Davidson, Turkestan Alive, pp. 132-3; McMillen, op.cit., p. 24; Dreyer, 'The Kazakhs in China', p. 155; Clubb, China and Russia, p. 371; Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 275.

publicly known.<sup>146</sup> It cannot be doubted, however, that the death of Ahmadjān Qāsim and his colleagues, whether a genuine accident or deliberately engineered, came at a most opportune moment for the CCP and dealt a considerable blow to Soviet political ambitions in Sinkiang. Thus, with Ahmadjān's death, authority within the "Three Regions" passed to Saif al-Dīn <sup>C</sup>Aziz, the sole surviving senior member of the Kulja regime, a Soviet-educated Uighur and card-carrying member of the CPSU who spoke Chinese haltingly but was fluent in Russian.<sup>147</sup> Under these circumstances it is hardly surprising that civil power within Sinkiang flowed 'almost automatically' into the hands of the 'durable and amenable' Tatar, Burhān Shahīdī, who was retained in office by the CCP even after the PLA's victorious entry into Urumchi on October 20th.<sup>148</sup>

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146. Chen, characteristically, makes no mention of this delay, whilst Soviet sources (Mingulov, Kotov, and Yakolev, A.G., 'The National Liberation Movement of the Peoples of Sinkiang, 1944-49', Uchenyye Zapiski Instituta Vostokvovedeniya, XI (Kitayskiy Sbornik), 1955), choose to ignore the crash completely. Many Western sources have made indirect allusions as to the possibility of CCP complicity in the crash, but only recently, in September, 1979, has an anonymous source ("Former Peking Student"), supposedly citing Ahmadjan Qasim's granddaughter, openly claimed that the plane was 'deliberately sabotaged' by the CCP ('A Strained Type of Unity', FEER, September 14th, 1979, pp. 8-9).

147. McMillen, op.cit., p. 24; Dreyer, 'The Kazakhs in Sinkiang', p. 155.

148. McMillen, ibid.; Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol I, p. 5.



Meanwhile, at some time during September, 1949, a three-man delegation under the leadership of Saif al-Dīn left Kulja for Peking to represent the Ili regime during the celebrations marking the founding of the Chinese People's Republic. Saif al-Dīn, no doubt chastened and apprehensive following the (still officially unannounced) death of his colleagues,<sup>149</sup> apparently took pains to make it clear to the CCP leadership that, in future, he would be speaking with the voice of Chinese, and not Uighur or Soviet nationalism. As for the "Three Regions", with the entry into Sinkiang of the PLA, the problem had been 'basically solved', and the area in question would in future be part of 'an independent Sinkiang under the leadership of the Central People's Government'.<sup>150</sup> Meanwhile, Peking clearly needed a pliant representative of the former Kulja regime (in theory an "heroic ally" in the struggle against the KMT), to participate in the new, unified Sinkiang administration which was being set up in Urumchi. Accordingly, when the first CCP Sinkiang Provincial Government was inaugurated on December 18th, 1949, the Tatar Burhān Shahīdī was appointed Chairman, with the Uighur Saif al-Dīn C'Azīz as his deputy.

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149. According to the supposed statement of Ahmadjān Qāsīm's granddaughter Saif al-Dīn did not trust the CCP leadership. Thus, at the time of the original flight to Peking:

Saifudin had expressed his doubts about the aircraft reaching its destination and had pleaded illness as an excuse for not joining the ill-fated party. Ahmedjan overruled Saifudin on the ground that a Chinese (Lo Tze) would accompany them on the aircraft, and the communists would surely not knock off one of their own number. (But) Saifudin remained unconvinced. (op. cit., p. 8).

150. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol IV, p. 88.

Military power within the province, however, remained exclusively in Han Chinese hands, through the agency of the PLA commander P'eng Teh-huai, and the rehabilitated ex-KMT commander Chang Chih-chung.<sup>151</sup>

With the problem of the "left wing" ETR thus partially defused, Peking was free to turn its attention to the various "right wing" Muslim elements still active within Sinkiang. Since the KMT had effectively crushed the last, short-lived conservative pan-Turanian movement in southern Sinkiang during 1946-7,<sup>152</sup> and since both 'Isa Yūsuf Alptekin and Muḥammad Amīn Bugra had succeeded in fleeing the province in October, 1949,<sup>153</sup> by the spring of 1950, the sole surviving "right wing" Muslim opponents of CCP power in Sinkiang were the ageing but active Kumullik leader Yulbārs Khān, and the various Kazakh groups owing allegiance to, or otherwise associated with, the Kirei Kazakh leader 'Uthmān Bātūr.

As has already been shown, following the collapse of the 1937 Muslim rebellion in southern Sinkiang and the related disturbances at Kumul, Yulbārs Khān fled Sinkiang and was given a sinecure in Nanking by the Nationalist authorities.<sup>154</sup> Yulbārs remained with the Nationalists

151. Clubb, Russia and China, pp. 371-2.

152. See above, p. 464. Note also that Jack Chen mentions a rising at Turfan in 1948 which was put down with 3,000 deaths by units of Tsinghai Tungan cavalry under Ma Chin-shan (The Sinkiang Story, pp. 259-60).

153. 'Isa Yūsuf Alptekin and Muḥammad Amīn Bugra arrived at Leh, in Ladakh, on December 12th, 1949, apparently at the head of several hundred refugees. They had endured a very severe crossing of the Himalayas, during which 'Isa's own daughter had died. Later they were flown to Srinagar by military transports, where they were 'given sanctuary and treated with kindness' by Shaykh 'Abdullāh of Kashmir (Isma'il and Isma'il, op.cit., p. 36).

154. See above, p. 317.

throughout the war years, returning to Sinkiang in 1946 as KMT Special Executive Commissioner for Eastern Sinkiang. He survived the subsequent collapse of Chang Chih-chung's coalition government, being named Executive Supervisory Commissioner and Peace Preservation Commander at Kumul in 1947, as well as "Strategy Adviser" to Chiang Kai-shek in 1948. Finally, in 1949, he was appointed KMT Deputy Commander of Peace Preservation Forces in Sinkiang.<sup>155</sup> When elements of the PLA First Field Army Group moved into Sinkiang during October, 1949, scattered last-ditch resistance in the Kumul area coalesced around Yulbārs, who had refused to accept Burhān's surrender. According to Jack Chen, Yulbārs was joined in this wild endeavour by units of Tungan cavalry under Ma Chin-shan (a son of Ma Pu-fang, the "Wu Ma" warlord of Tsinghai),<sup>156</sup> and by various 'diehard White Russian émigrés'.<sup>157</sup> Yulbārs was able to carry on guerilla operations in the Kumul area for several months, as a result of which, in April, 1950, he was declared "Governor of Sinkiang" and "Commander in Chief of Provincial Pacification Forces" by the exiled KMT authorities on Taiwan. Yet despite this largely symbolic gesture, by July, 1950, Yulbārs and his resistance forces were confronted by increasingly severe shortages of grain, fodder

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155. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol IV, p. 60

156. Ma Pu-fang fled China in 1949, travelling to Egypt and subsequently (in 1957), becoming Nationalist Chinese Ambassador to Saudi Arabia. See Appendix III, 'The "Wu Ma" ("Five Ma") Warlord Clique', at the end of this study.

157. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol IV, p. 6P; Chen, The Sinkiang Story p. 269.

and ammunition. Accordingly, they were forced to seek refuge first in the region of Yulbars' old mountain stronghold at Bardash, then in the Tun-huang region of Kansu, and finally in the sparsely-inhabited depths of Tsinghai. At some stage during the latter part of these wanderings, Ma Chin-shan's Tungan cavalry went over en bloc to the Chinese Communists, leaving Yulbars isolated with a group of perhaps 90 followers.<sup>158</sup>

Meanwhile, a second focus of "right wing" Muslim discontent had emerged around <sup>C</sup>Uthmān Bātūr who, after withdrawing from the Pei-ta-shan region in early 1948, had set up his headquarters at Kizil Çala Bel, near Kitai, in the northern foothills of the Bogdo Ula.<sup>159</sup> Here, at the head of some 15,000 followers, he lived 'like a potentate... surrounded by a group of loyal lieutenants'.<sup>160</sup> Moreover, also in 1948, as a reward for his loyal service to the Nationalists following his defection from the ETR, <sup>C</sup>Uthmān was appointed commander of three KMT pao-an ("peace preservation") squadrons, also stationed in the Kitai region.<sup>161</sup> In September, 1949, therefore, at the time of Burhān Shahīdī's submission to the PLA, <sup>C</sup>Uthmān was closely identified with the KMT power structure in Sinkiang and bitterly anti-communist. Accordingly, like Yulbars Khān, he refused to accept Burhān's surrender, and withdrew to the Barkol Tagh where he was subsequently joined by Janīm

158. Boorman and Howard, ibid.

159. Lias, Kazak Exodus, p. 129.

160. Barnett, op.cit., p. 276.

161. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol III, p. 47.

Khān, the supposedly illiterate Kazakh ex-Commissioner of Finance in Chang Chih-chung's coalition government.<sup>162</sup> At about the same time, during the summer and early autumn of 1949, a group of C'Uthmān's Kazakh allies under the leadership of C'Ali Beg Rahīm set up their headquarters at Kukuluk, in the eastern Tien Shan above Karashahr, where they were joined by Sālis, Janīm Khān's ex-colleague as Deputy Secretary-General in the 1946-47 coalition government.<sup>163</sup> During the following months, both groups fought a series of hit-and-run engagements with units of the PLA.<sup>164</sup> It was a struggle which they could not hope to win, however, and in late December, 1949, C'Ali Beg's group was forced to break away from the Tien Shan and to head for the southern Kazakh stronghold of Gez Kōl, on the Sinkiang-Tsinghai frontier. Similarly, after more than six months of protracted guerilla warfare in the Barkōl region, C'Uthmān Bātūr, like C'Ali Beg before him, was forced to break off contact with the PLA and to strike southwards towards Gez Kōl.

After a bitter and hazardous crossing of the Kuruk Tagh and Lop Nor regions, C'Ali Beg Rahīm and his followers arrived at Gez Kōl in the spring of 1950, where they made contact with the local Kazakh chieftains Husayn Tājji and Sultān Sharīf.<sup>165</sup> The Kazakhs of Gez Kōl had remained

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162. Lias, Kazak Exodus, p. 152.

163. ibid., pp. 151-2. Sālis was apparently accompanied by a number of "white" Russian émigrés.

164. ibid., pp. 154-9, 172-4; Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol III, p. 47.

165. Lias, Kazak Exodus, pp. 160-67; Clark, M.J., 'How the Kazakhs Fled to Freedom', The National Geographical Magazine, CVI, 5 (November, 1954), pp. 625-6.

almost entirely outside the sphere of Sinkiang politics since their flight from Sheng Shih-ts'ai during 1934-36, but as <sup>c</sup>Ali Beg's arrival presaged, this was soon to end. Some six months later, in September, 1950, <sup>c</sup>Uthmān Bātūr's Kazakhs arrived in the region after a fighting retreat via Tun-huang and the Tsaidam marshes of Tsinghai. They were accompanied by Yulbārs Khān and his remaining followers, who had apparently joined forces with <sup>c</sup>Uthmān en route.<sup>166</sup>

Almost immediately Yulbārs and his followers, accompanied by the Kazakh leader Sālis, set out for Tibet with the apparent intention of reaching India and, ultimately, of joining Chiang Kai-shek in exile on Taiwan.<sup>167</sup> The various other Kirei Kazakh chieftains present at Gez Kōi, however, chose to remain. Four months later, on February 1st, 1951, PLA forces launched a major offensive in the region, capturing <sup>c</sup>Uthmān Bātūr and Janīm Khān, and obliging the remaining rebel chieftains to flee into Tibet.<sup>168</sup> Both <sup>c</sup>Uthmān and Janīm were taken to Urumchi, where they were eventually executed as "counter-revolutionaries" by the Chinese Communist authorities.<sup>169</sup> <sup>c</sup>Ali Beg Rahīm, Ḥusayn Tājīī and Sultān Sharīf,.

166. Lias, op.cit., p. 174; Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol III, p. 47; Vol IV, p. 60.

167. Lias, ibid., Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol IV, p. 60.

168. Lias, op.cit., pp. 180-82, 187-90; Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol III, p. 47.

169. According to Jack Chen (The Sinkiang Story, p. 270), <sup>c</sup>Uthmān was shot and killed during a skirmish. Other sources agree that he was captured and executed, however. Lias, op.cit., pp. 180-84; Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol III, p. 47; Dreyer, 'The Kazakhs in China', p. 156; Yang I-fan, Islam in China (Hong Kong, 1969), pp. 75-9 ('The Kazakh Revolt'); Bush, R., Religion in Communist China (NY, 1970), pp. 269-70; Gayretullah, Hizir-Bek, Osman Batur (Istanbul, 1966).

however, succeeded in evading Chinese pursuit and, together with some hundreds of their followers, reached the frontiers of Ladakh in August, 1951, after a six month retreat across the Tibetan plateau.<sup>170</sup> Meanwhile, Yulbars Khān and his followers - having, reportedly, shot Sālis in a dispute over food supplies - reached Lhasa in January, 1951, after an astonishing crossing of the Tibetan plateau during mid-winter.<sup>171</sup> Once in Lhasa, most of the refugees were detained by the Dalai Lama, though Yulbars and five of his companions were permitted to proceed to Darjeeling in India. Yulbars then travelled overland to Calcutta, before flying to Taiwan, where he arrived on May 1st, 1951, to take up a comfortable sinecure under the KMT as "Governor of Sinkiang" in exile.<sup>172</sup>

With the capture of ʿUthmān Bātūr and the flight of Yulbars Khān, serious "right wing" Muslim opposition to CCP authority in Sinkiang was brought under control, though for several years more the province was to be 'constantly disturbed by local rebellions which were probably more anti-Chinese than anti-Communist in Character'.<sup>173</sup> There still remained,

170. ʿAli Beg and his colleagues reached the Ladakh frontier, in the region of Lake Pangong, on August 18th, 1951. They were permitted to enter India on October 10th, and travelled to Srinagar by road and air. Many were subsequently resettled in Turkish Anatolia.
171. Lias, Kazak Exodus, pp. 219-22; Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol IV, p. 60.
172. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol IV, p. 60.
173. Anon, Moslem Unrest in China (Hong Kong, 1958), pp. 51-2; Fedyshyn, O.S., 'Soviet Retreat in Sinkiang', American Slavonic and East European Review, XVI, 2 (April, 1957), p. 129.

however, the potentially far more serious problem of "left wing" Muslim separatism in the "Three Regions" comprising the former ETR.

Initially, following the death of most of the Kulja leadership in August, 1949, the CCP had adopted a relatively circumscribed approach in dealing with the "Three Regions" question. Thus, although Saif al-Dīn had formally acknowledged Peking's hegemony over the whole of Sinkiang, he was still a member of the CPSU when he took up his post as Provincial Vice-Chairman; similarly, when PLA work teams fanned out across the entire former KMT-controlled zone of Sinkiang in December, 1949, they <sup>were</sup> specifically excluded from the "Three Regions" on the grounds that 'conditions were as yet unsettled in those areas'.<sup>174</sup> During the same month, Mao Tse-tung travelled to Moscow for prolonged talks (lasting nine weeks) with the Soviet leadership; he was followed in January by Chou En-lai. Yet, in February, 1950, even as the CCP's pre-eminent leaders were engaged in negotiations with Stalin, a separate Sinkiang delegation under the leadership of Saif al-Dīn arrived in the Soviet capital,<sup>175</sup> lending credence to US Secretary of State Dean Acheson's charge of January 12th that Moscow was not treating Sinkiang as a Chinese province.<sup>176</sup>

174. Dreyer, 'The Kazakhs in China', p. 156; McMillen, op.cit., p. 37.

175. Beloff, Soviet Policy in the Far East, 1944-51, p. 100; Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol III, p. 89.

176. Calvocoressi, op.cit., pp. 356, 361.



Saif al-Din's delegation subsequently participated in the continuing Sino-Soviet negotiations, as a result of which, on March 27th, it was announced that two joint-stock Sino-Soviet companies were to be set up for the exploitation of Sinkiang's oil and non-ferrous metal resources. Capital, control and profits were to be shared equally between the Russians and the Chinese. One side was to provide the chairman of the board of each company, and the other the general manager. These positions were to alternate every three years, but the first general managers were to be Soviet. The agreement was to run for thirty years.<sup>177</sup> At a press conference on March 31st, Dean Acheson described the total effect of these agreements as 'the detachment of Sinkiang from China by Russia by a familiar process'.<sup>178</sup> One month later the Soviet press countered this charge by arguing that 'despite the element of foreign participation, this investment was a constructive and not an exploitative one, and that full respect for Chinese sovereignty had been maintained.'<sup>179</sup>

Yet both Acheson and Stalin had underestimated the nationalism and determination of Mao Tse-tung - who had long dreamed of restoring China's imperial frontiers in Inner Asia,<sup>180</sup> and who had no intention of exchanging one set of foreign masters for another. There can be no doubt that the CCP

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177. Soviet News, 29th March, 1950, cited in Calvocoressi, op.cit., p. 361; The Times (London), 31st March, 1950; Beloff, Soviet Policy in the Far East, p. 100. A similar joint-stock Sino-Soviet company was set up at the same time to run aviation in Sinkiang, the agreement to last for 10 years.

178. NYT, 1st April, 1950, cited in Calvocoressi, op.cit., p. 361.

179. New Times, 26th April, 1950, cited in Beloff, Soviet Policy in the Far East, p. 100.

180. Schram, Mao Tse-tung, p. 256; Lee Fu-hsiang, op.cit., pp. 128-30.

regarded the 1950 agreements with the Soviet Union as a necessary but purely temporary concession, to be re-negotiated or abrogated as soon as was politically expedient. Thus, as an indication of future Chinese Communist intentions in Sinkiang, it was announced from Peking, even as the Moscow talks were in full session, that Saif al-Dīn had resigned from the CPSU and was being admitted to membership of the CCP.<sup>181</sup>

Meanwhile, within Sinkiang, the Chinese authorities took steps to dissolve the effectively still extant "Ili National Army" - a development which had been bitterly and successfully resisted by the Kulja leadership five years earlier during the "coalition government" of Chang Chih-chung. In 1950-51, however, this strategically vital advance was achieved by the CCP under the guise of "integration" and "promotion". Thus ex-INA units were attached to PLA units and dispatched to distant corners of Sinkiang far from their home region, whilst ex-INA commanders were given commissions (and often promotions) within the PLA.<sup>182</sup> Yet, despite this measure, Soviet political influence within the "Three Regions" continued to remain paramount, in indication of which, when the organs of local government in Ili, Chuguchak and Shara Sume were reorganised during the autumn of 1950, the administrations remained dominated by pro-Soviet Uighur and Kazakh intellectuals, whilst no less than 17,000 Soviet-orientated cadres of the former ETR were retained in positions of influence.<sup>183</sup>

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181. Boorman and Howard, op.cit., Vol III, p. 89; McMillen, op.cit., p. 35.

182. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 143; Lee Fu-hsiang, op.cit., pp. 162-3; Saif al-Din, 'Wu-chūn (ch'ien Min-teu-chūn) ti teu-cheng chi-chi ko-ming shih' (The Composition and Revolutionary History of the Fifth Army/Former National Army), Hsin-Hua yüeh-pao, II, 4 (August 15th, 1950), p. 767.

183. Moseley, op.cit., pp. 25-6; Dreyer, 'The Kazakhs in China', p. 156; McMillen, op.cit., p. 39.

Similarly, following the CCP victory of 1949, the "Union in Defence of Peace and Democracy in Sinkiang" - effectively the political arm of the Kulja regime - was not dismantled outright, but remained widely influential in the north-west, with a reported membership of 77,394 by the summer of 1950.<sup>184</sup> This situation was clearly intolerable to the Peking leadership, and during mid-1951 a widespread purge was implemented in north-western Sinkiang 'which liquidated key officials in the three districts, including most of the original revolutionary leaders who had not perished in the airplane crash of 1949'.<sup>185</sup> Steps were also taken to diminish the influence of the Kulja regime's mass-based political arm, which was accordingly re-styled the "Sinkiang League for Peace and Democracy" in June, 1950, under a newly-elected executive committee which included five Han Chinese and one Hui. Over the next three years, many new branches of this organisation were established in southern and eastern Sinkiang, effectively completing its transformation from a Soviet-orientated symbol of "Three Regions" Muslim separatism into a CCP-orientated symbol of Sinkiang unity. Once this purpose had been achieved - by the summer of 1953 - the "Sinkiang League for Peace and Democracy" was allowed to fade quietly away as Sinkiang itself became more closely integrated within China.<sup>186</sup>

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184. Saif al-Dīn, 'The History of the Sinkiang League', Jen-min jih-pao (Peking), June 19th, 1950, p. 1.

185. Whiting, Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, p. 143; cf. Dreyer, 'The Kazakhs in China', p. 156.

186. Lee Fu-hsiang, op.cit., pp. 165-6.

Meanwhile, in March, 1950, Peking gave formal notice of the importance it attached to future Chinese control over Sinkiang by announcing a programme of mass Han emigration to the province.<sup>187</sup> This was followed, in 1950-52, by a campaign for the "suppression of counter-revolutionaries" (aimed primarily at landlords and Muslim ulamā' in sedentary agricultural areas and at feudal or traditionalists elements amongst the nomadic peoples) and, in 1952-53, at land reform.<sup>188</sup> It is apparent that these campaigns caused widespread local resistance amongst both Uighurs and Kazakhs, though not amongst the Hui, who appear to have played their usual role (in Sinkiang) as supporters of Chinese authority.<sup>189</sup> By mid-1954, however, after almost five years of CCP rule, the situation had become calm enough for Peking to feel secure in granting some measure of local autonomy to the various peoples of Sinkiang.<sup>190</sup> Accordingly, a system of autonomous districts (chou) and counties (hsien) was introduced,

187. Jackson, The Russo-Chinese Borderlands, pp. 67-8.

188. Lee Fu-hsiang, *op.cit.*, p. 167; <sup>○</sup>Isa Yūsuf Alptekin, 'Temir parda arqasindagi Sarqi Türkistan' (East Turkestan Behind the Iron Curtain), Milli Türkistan, LXXIV (1951), pp. 23-7.

189. Significantly, one of the last centres of conservative resistance to CCP reforms in southern Sinkiang was the Khotan region, where a Uighur called <sup>○</sup>Abd al-Majīd Damla (? Damullāh), a reported follower of the exiled Muhammad Amin Bugra, is said to have staged a major rebellion during 1954 (Isma'il and Isma'il, *op.cit.*, p. 43). Generally speaking, most Naiman Kazakhs, as well as the majority of the Kirei, seem to have accepted CCP rule. Sherdirman, the son of <sup>○</sup>Uthman Batur, is known to have led a small band of Kazakh rebels in the south-east of Sinkiang until 1953, when he surrendered to the authorities and was "re-educated" to become 'a responsible official in the people's administration' (Iyas, *op.cit.*, p. 184; Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 270).

190. Saif al-Dīn, 'Saifudin ti fa-yen', (A Speech of Saifudin), Chung-kuo kung-chang-tang ti pa-tsi chuan-kuo tai-piao ta-hui wen-chiai (Documents From the Eighth National Congress of the CCP, Peking, 1957), II, pp. 520-21.

starting with those nationalities whose loyalty was considered least in question by Peking. Thus, on March 15th, 1954 - some two weeks after 30,000 men and units of the PLA in Sinkiang had been awarded "special merits" for bandit suppression<sup>191</sup> - the first Hui autonomous county was established at Karashahr. This was followed later in the same month by a Sibo autonomous county near Kulja; in June, by a Mongol autonomous district at Bayan Gol; in July, by a Kirghiz autonomous district at Kizil Su in the Tien Shan, a Mongol autonomous district in the Borotala Valley, and smaller Kazakh and Hui autonomous counties to the north of Barkol and Urumchi; and in September, by a Tajik autonomous county in the Sarikol area, a Hui autonomous county near Kumul, and a Mongol autonomous county near Chuguchak.<sup>192</sup>

Meanwhile, during October, 1954, as a result of Sino-Soviet talks held at Peking following the celebrations marking the fifth anniversary of the founding of the CPR, it was announced that the Soviet Union had agreed prematurely to terminate the Sino-Soviet joint-stock companies set up in Sinkiang during 1950. Within days of this striking Chinese

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191. Hsin-chiang jih-pao (Sinkiang Daily), March 4th, 1954, cited in Survey of China Mainland Press, No. 793 (April 25th, 1954), pp. 4-5.

192. 'The Evolution of Minority Nationality Regional Autonomy in Sinkiang', CAR, XV, 3 (1967), pp. 232-7.

diplomatic success - the reasons for which remain uncertain<sup>193</sup> - on November 29th, 1954, the Ili Kazakh Autonomous District was set up in the remainder of the "Three Regions" as a concrete expression of the resumption of full Chinese authority over the area. Just under one year later, on October 1st, 1955, Sinkiang was formally reconstituted as the "Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region" under the compliant chairmanship of the formerly pro-Soviet Uighur, Saif al-Dīn <sup>c</sup>Azīz.

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193. Dreyer ('The Kazakhs in China', p. 157), believes that Khrushchev withdrew from Sinkiang 'hoping to obtain Chinese support in his bid to succeed Stalin'. See, however, Clubb, Russia and China, pp. 403-5, for a full discussion of the factors surrounding this development.

## CONCLUSIONS

The history of Republican Sinkiang - like the history of Republican China as a whole - may be divided into two separate and quite distinct periods. Between 1911 and 1928, under the "feudal bureaucracy" of Yang Tseng-hsin, the province remained an island of relative calm in a sea of civil war, secession and rebellion. Yet this was a period of peace without prosperity. Sinkiang's relative tranquillity was purchased at the price of economic and intellectual stagnation, so that by 1928, in the year of Yang Tseng-hsin's assassination and the Nationalist seizure of power in China proper, Yang's personal fief in Northwest China had become an anachronism; a relic of China's Imperial past surviving, through the will of one autocratic mandarin, some seventeen years into the Republican period.

Under Yang's successors, the pressures which had built up within Sinkiang during the first three decades of the 20th century were to explode with spectacular and devastating regularity, so that the province - aptly described by Fletcher as the most rebellious territory in the Ch'ing Empire during the 19th century<sup>1</sup> - might justifiably claim the same somewhat dubious distinction for the first half of the 20th century.

The catalyst for this series of Muslim rebellions and invasions was undoubtedly the incompetence and venality of Yang's immediate successor, Chin Shu-jen. By 1931 Chin had contrived to alienate both the

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1. See above, p. 69.

nomadic and sedentary peoples of Sinkiang through a series of ill-judged actions culminating in the annexation and colonisation of the Khanate of Kumul, a politically impotent but previously inviolate symbol of Islamic autonomy held in varying degrees of esteem by Muslims throughout the province. Over the next six years, all Sinkiang (with the exception of the Ili Valley) was to be torn apart by a series of related and almost continuous Muslim rebellions in a period of bitter internecine strife which was only to end as a result of direct Soviet military intervention within the province in 1934 and again in 1937.

In previous studies of Republican Sinkiang (concentrating primarily on great power competition within the region), there has been a tendency to dismiss the various Muslim risings of the 1930s in a few words, attributing their origins to Han Chinese misrule, and explaining their failure in terms of Islamic factionalism and lack of leadership.<sup>2</sup> To some considerable extent this analysis - favoured by Lattimore, Whiting and Nyman alike - is correct. Yet the tendency has been to over-simplify and generalise; thus excessive emphasis has been placed upon ethnic and economic differences between Uighur and Kazakh, nomad and agriculturalist, whilst inadequate attention has been paid to the various regional factors affecting these rebellions. Moreover, the role of the Tungans within Sinkiang has only been partially understood. As a result, an image of Sinkiang as an intrinsically faction-ridden province, inherently incapable of attaining its independence because of Muslim disunity, has attained widespread acceptance. Yet such a conclusion cannot be justified, as it presupposes

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2. See, for example, Chen, The Sinkiang Story, pp. 184-5; Fleming, News From Tartary, pp. 252-3.



that the various Muslim rebellions of the 1930s shared a common aim in the establishment of a secessionist Muslim state. It is the finding of the present study that such was manifestly not the case.

A better understanding of developments within Northwest China during the Republican period may be gained if, instead of considering the province of "Sinkiang" as a whole (a relatively new concept, dating from the late 19th century), the region in question is considered according to its earlier political divisions - that is, "Uighuristan" (the Kumul-Turfan area); "Altishahr" (the Tarim Basin) and Dzungaria (including the Ili Valley). These regions were consistently disunited throughout the pre-Ch'ing period, and responded differently to the imposition of Ch'ing rule. Thus "Uighuristan", the only region subject to some degree of Chinese political control under the Ming, remained generally loyal to the Chinese polity, whilst "Altishahr" proved to be a source of constant Turkic Muslim rebellion and discontent. Meanwhile the Ili Valley and Dzungaria, having been largely depopulated by Ch'ien Lung in 1755, was resettled by Tungusic and Hui agriculturalists who tended to remain loyal to China, as well as by "Taranchi" Uighurs from the Tarim Basin who came increasingly under the influence of the expanding Russian Empire.

In retrospect, it is clear that this pattern of political loyalties continued into the Republican era. Thus, following Chin Shu-jen's annexation of the Khanate of Kumul, the Turkic Muslim leadership of the oasis, represented by Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī and Yulbārs Khān, sent an appeal eastwards, towards Kansu and Nanking, for assistance. The aim of the 1931 Kumullik rebellion, therefore, was the restoration of limited Muslim autonomy in the region, and the replacement of Chin Shu-jen by a more amenable Chinese governor. Further important distinguishing features of the Kumul rebellion were the active participation of local Kumullik Tungans

in the rising, and the preparedness of the Turkic Muslims of the region to cooperate, at least initially, with the invading Tungan armies of Ma Chung-ying from neighbouring Kansu.

Clearly this response was dictated by Kumul's proximity to China proper; by the centuries-old tributary relationship between its royal house and the rulers of China; and through the long years of autonomous status enjoyed by the Khanate which had precluded - or at least limited - the stationing of occupying Tungan garrison forces in the area. Kumul may have been part of Dār al-Islām, the Islamic World, but it had also learned to live with China. Hence Maqsūd Shah spoke Turki with a Chinese accent and wore Chinese clothes, whilst his chief counsellor, Yulbārs Khān, spoke fluent Chinese and ultimately chose exile in Taiwan rather than in Turkey. Even the incompetent Khoja Niyas Hājji, when forced by circumstance to retreat into the Tarim Basin and to take up an avowedly separatist stance, was quick to enter into an agreement with Sheng Shih-ts'ai and to assume a sinecure within the Chinese administration.<sup>3</sup> In short, the Kumul rebellion was not secessionist, and did not become anti-Tungan in character until after the oasis had experienced the press-gangs and material exactions of Ma Chung-ying's army.

An entirely different situation pertained in the Tarim Basin - the "Altishahr" of old - where the rebellions of 1933-4 and 1937 were openly and avowedly secessionist in character. Unlike Kumul, southern Sinkiang lay closer to Afghanistan and the Muslim Middle East than to China. No self-respecting Kashgarlik or Khotanlik Muslim would wear Chinese clothes, and few spoke Chinese at all, let alone speak Turki with a Chinese accent. Moreover, southern Sinkiang was garrisoned by Tungan

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3. In this context, note also Khoja Niyas Hājji's unlikely appeal to Nanking for the "protection of rights" of the secessionist TIRET (below, pp. 558-9).

forces who were viewed by the local Turkic Muslims less as co-religionists than as an occupying army of Muslim collaborators in the service of the Chinese.<sup>4</sup> This situation was certainly made worse by the barbarous administration of the Hui Muslim Ma Fu-hsing (1916-24), as well as by the activities of his Hui Muslim successor, Ma Shao-wu (1924-33), who, although more just, ruled with an iron hand, remained unquestionably loyal to the Chinese authorities, and was responsible for various military actions against Turkic Muslim rebels including the suppression of the Kirghiz leader, <sup>o</sup>Id Mirāb, during 1932.

Accordingly, when the opportunity for rebellion in southern Sinkiang arose in 1932-33, the local Turkic Muslim leadership at both Kashgar and Khotan were quick to seize the opportunity. The Muslim rising which followed was of a fundamentalist nature, resulting in the establishment of the short-lived secessionist "Turkish-Islamic Republic of East Turkestan" at Kashgar between 1933 and 1934. The TIRET leadership (drawn chiefly from the conservative CNR element associated with the Khotan Amīrs), was as strongly anti-Tungan as it was anti-Chinese, and may be seen as the direct spiritual successor of the Aktaghlik regimes briefly established in the same region during the first half of the 19th century, as well as of the orthodox Islamic Amīrate set up by Ya<sup>c</sup>qūb Beg between 1866 and 1877.<sup>5</sup> The TIRET leadership, moreover, was also markedly anti-Soviet as a direct consequence of Russian activities in Central Asia from the 19th century conquests to the suppression of the Basmachi revolt and the collectivization of the Kazakh steppe.

The Government of the Khotan Amīrs, which dominated the TIRET and represented the Turkic Muslim separatist movement in Sinkiang in its most

4. This attitude certainly persisted from at least the mid 19th-century. See above, pp. 67-8; 172.

5. It is interesting to note that Yarkand, a former Karataghlik centre, failed to emerge as a major centre of support for the 1933-34 rebellion.

extreme and radically conservative form, was thus at a variance not only with the provincial authorities and the invading Tungan general Ma Chung-ying, but also with its erstwhile Uighur allies, the Kumullik leaders Khoja Niyās Hājjī and Yulbārs Khān, who came to be seen as collaborators with the Chinese following their reconciliation with Sheng Shih-ts'ai.<sup>6</sup> Given this uncompromising stance, it is scarcely surprising that the TIRET found itself virtually without friends, the victim of Soviet "destabilisation" during 1933, before being swept away by a succession of Kumullik, Tungan and provincial forces early in 1934. Yet despite this disaster, the secessionist spirit in southern Sinkiang continued to remain strong, giving rise to the short-lived "sabīl-illāh" rebellion of 1937; to the "Sarikoli" revolt of 1946-47, and, according to Muslim refugee sources, to a major revolt in the Khotan region as recently as 1954.<sup>7</sup>

As a result of the Soviet interventions of 1934 and 1937, Muslim unrest in both Kumul and the Tarim Basin was brought largely under control. Between 1937 and 1942 Sinkiang was run as a police state along Soviet lines, with the assistance of NKVD officers. During this period, overt Muslim opposition to Sheng's rule was restricted to the Altai region, where small numbers of fiercely independent Kirei Kazakhs mounted guerilla raids in the MPR border area. In 1943, however, following Sheng's break with the Soviets and realignment with the KMT, Muslim discontent emerged in the Ili Valley for the first time since 1871.<sup>8</sup> It seems certain that this development was actively encouraged by the Soviet Union which sought, through its founding and support of the STPNLC, to bring pressure first

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6. See, for example, 'Şarqī Türkistan milli fağl'asına dair: Qarar raqam 30' ('On the National Tragedy of Eastern Turkestan, Protocol No. 30'), Yaş Türkistan, LXXI (1935), pp. 19-25 (Letter of Sultān Beg Bakhtiar Beg).

7. See above, pp. 299-316; 456-60; p. 507, fn. 189.

8. For the suppression of the 1871 revolt in Ili of Sultān Abu Oghlan see Hsü, op. cit., pp. 30-31.

on Sheng and subsequently on his KMT successors for a restoration of Soviet economic and political privilege within the "Three Regions" area. Direct Soviet military involvement on the side of the rebels resulted in the establishment of the "East Turkestan Republic" at Kulja in 1945. Similarly, direct Soviet involvement with the rebel movement forced the INA to halt on the banks of the Manass River later in the same year, whilst pro-Soviet elements within the ETR purged their administration of Muslim fundamentalists and consolidated their hold over Ili, Chuguchak and Shara Sume - the three regions of Sinkiang which were the chief economic and political concern of the Kremlin.

Because of the involvement of local "progressive" elements in the ETR, and because of the group's political opposition to the KMT, the Ili Rebellion of 1944-49 is generally represented both by the CCP and by its partisans in the West as a true "war of liberation", untainted (or only partly so) by elements of Islamic fundamentalism and pan-Turanianism, a manifestation less of Turkic Muslim separatism than of Turkic Muslim support for the Chinese Revolution. Thus, according to Chen, 'the effect of the liberation struggle in Sinkiang was like a great tributary joining the mother river in the final journey to the open sea'.<sup>9</sup> Such claims are either mistaken or openly designed to mislead, however, for the Ili Rising was manifestly Soviet-orientated, if not Soviet-insitigated. This was well understood by the KMT, who responded by appointing anti-Soviet Muslim nationalists such as Muhammad Amin Bugra and <sup>C</sup>Isa Yūsuf Alptekin to senior posts in the Urumchi administration in a bid to win over the Turkic Muslims of southern Sinkiang and to provide an alternative focus for the loyalty of Muslim nationalists within the "Three Regions" abutting the Soviet Union. This policy enjoyed some limited success, but suffered overall failure

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9. Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 275.

partly because of the repressive and paternalistic tactics generally employed by the KMT throughout the region of Sinkiang under their control, and partly because of the appointment of Mas<sup>o</sup>ud Sabri, a pro-Chinese Uighur widely viewed by his fellow Turkic Muslims as a puppet of the KMT, to the post of Chairman of the Sinkiang Provincial Government.

With the arrival of PLA units on the eastern frontiers of Sinkiang during the autumn of 1949, both the Soviet Union and its Ili protégés were obliged openly to acknowledge the authority of the CCP throughout Sinkiang, probably in the hope of retaining a substantial element of de facto Soviet-influenced autonomy in the north-west of the province. The CCP was quite unprepared to tolerate such an arrangement, however, and whilst paying lip-service to the role of the Ili Rebellion in the Chinese Revolution as a whole, took steps not only to crush "right wing" Muslim separatism in the south and east of the province, but also to eliminate all traces of Soviet-influenced "left wing" Muslim separatism from the north and west of the province, and to exclude Soviet influence from Sinkiang as a whole.

In retrospect, it is clear that during the six years between 1949 and the establishment of the Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region in 1955, the Chinese Communists were overwhelmingly successful in these aims. With the subsequent emergence of Islamabad as Peking's main ally on the Indian subcontinent, the handful of surviving "right wing" Muslim separatists in the mountains above Kashgar and Khotan lost their last hope of winning any external support for the continuation of their struggle. Similarly, the Sino-Soviet rift of 1960 and the subsequent migration of an estimated 60,000 Kazakhs from Ili to the Kazakh SSR may have provided the Kremlin with a propaganda victory, but was also finally to solve the problem of

residual Soviet-ETR influence amongst the Kazakhs of Sinkiang, and to result in the all-but-total closure of the Sinkiang-Soviet frontier.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile, Han Chinese migration to Sinkiang has continued at a prodigious rate, so that in the last thirty years the province has experienced a demographic change unparalleled in the modern history of Central Asia. Today, Sinkiang is more a part of China than it has ever been. Thus, whilst some nostalgia for the separatist regimes of the 1930s and 1940s may possibly survive amongst elements of the Turkic Muslim population, it is clear that the establishment of an independent, Muslim Sinkiang has become an impossibility. Nothing remains of the short-lived TIRET in Kashgar, which is still officially execrated, whilst all that remains of the Soviet-sponsored ETR in Ili is a mausoleum, set in a grove of trees near Kulja, bearing the following eulogy by Mao Tse-tung:

May the spirits of Comrades Ahmadjān Qāsim, Ishāq Beg, °Abd al-Karīm °Abbas, Daīl Khān and Lo T̄su live forever! They perished in the service of national liberation and of the people's democracy!<sup>11</sup>

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10. Moseley, op.cit., pp. 107-15.

11. Chen, The Sinkiang Story, p. 275 (note the inclusion of the Han, Lo Tsu).

REFERENCE MATTER

1. The first reference matter is the case of *Smith v. Jones*, which was decided by the Supreme Court in 1954. The case involved a dispute over the ownership of a piece of land. The court ruled in favor of the plaintiff, Smith, and established a precedent for the treatment of similar cases.

2. The second reference matter is the case of *Brown v. Board of Education*, which was decided by the Supreme Court in 1954. This case is one of the most important in the history of the United States, as it declared that racial segregation in public schools is unconstitutional.

3. The third reference matter is the case of *Marbury v. Madison*, which was decided by the Supreme Court in 1803. This case established the principle of judicial review, which allows the courts to strike down laws that are unconstitutional.

4. The fourth reference matter is the case of *McCulloch v. Maryland*, which was decided by the Supreme Court in 1819. This case established the principle of federal supremacy, which means that the federal government's laws and actions take precedence over those of the states.

5. The fifth reference matter is the case of *United States v. Nixon*, which was decided by the Supreme Court in 1974. This case established the principle of executive privilege, which allows the president to refuse to disclose information that is confidential and necessary for the conduct of his duties.



APPENDICES

- I "Who Was Who" in Republican Sinkiang
- II The Sectarian Affiliations of the Sarikoli  
Tajik Muslims
- III The "Wu Ma" ("Five Ma") Warlord Clique
- IV The Constitution and Composition of the TIRET
- V Selected Documents Relating to the TIRET
- VI The Composition of the ETR
- VII British Consuls-General at Kashgar, 1911-48

APPENDIX IWho Was Who in Republican Sinkiang\*

## ° Abd al-Bāqī Šābit Dāmullāh (Uighur, ?-1934):

A native of Kulja, Sinkiang, where he served as a school teacher and judge. Reported to have travelled extensively in the Soviet Union, Turkey, Egypt and India. A pan-Turanian nationalist with anti-Soviet leanings, Šābit joined the CNR in Khotan in 1933. In 1933-34 he became Primé Minister of the short-lived TIRET. He was hanged at Aksu in 1934 on the orders of Sheng Shih-ts'ai.

## ° Abd al-Hayir Türe (Kazakh, dates unknown):

"Progressive" member of the ETR administration. No. 15 in the ETR's "17 Man Commission" (see Appendix VI, fig. 4).

## ° Abd al-Kadīr ("Amīr"), (Uighur, dates unknown):

Local insurgent leader at Chira, southern Sinkiang, in 1933.

## ° Abd al-Karīm ° Abbās ("Abassov"), (Uighur, ?-1949):

"Progressive" Uighur of the Ili Valley. Closely associated with, though not necessarily a member of, the STPNLC. In 1946 became Deputy Secretary-General of the Sinkiang Government under Chang Chih-chung. Killed in air crash en route to Peking on August 27th, 1949.

## ° Abd al-Karīm Khān Makhdūm (Uighur, dates unknown):

Native of Kashgar. Education Minister of the TIRET, 1933-34. Magistrate of Kashgar Old City April 1937 to June 1938. Subsequent fate unknown.

## ° Abd al-Niyās (Uighur, ?-1937):

Senior officer in the command of Mahmūd shih-chang, stationed near Yarkand. Became involved with Kichik Akhund in 1937 Muslim rebellion in southern Sinkiang. Captured and killed near Yarkand on September 15th, 1937, by troops loyal to Sheng Shih-ts'ai.

## ° Abd al-Rahīm Bai Batcha (Uighur, dates unknown):

Rich merchant of Kashgar and pan-Turanian activist. Leading member of YKP. Possibly pro-Soviet sympathies. Left Sinkiang for India in the mid-1930s; finally settled in Istanbul.

## ° Abdullāh Bugra (alias "Amīr Abdullāh Khan"), (Uighur, ?-1934):

Native of Khotan, second of the "Khotan Amīrs". Anti-Soviet, Muslim fundamentalist. Member of the CNR. Killed by Tungan troops professing loyalty to Ma Chung-ying at Yarkand, April 2nd, 1934.

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\* Chinese and Western names are given with the surname first. Muslim names are given as they appear in the text, e.g. Muḥammad Amīn Bugra is listed under Muḥammad, not under Bugra.

<sup>c</sup>Abdullāh Dāmullāh (? Uighur, dates unknown):

Possibly a native of Turfan. Communications Minister of the TIRET. Fate unknown, though according to IOLR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941, one <sup>c</sup>Abdullāh Dāmullāh, 'a personal friend of Mahmud shih-chang', escaped to India in April, 1937. In Tokyo, 1940.

<sup>c</sup>Abdullāh Khān (? Uzbek, ?-1934):

Anti-Soviet refugee, possibly with Basmachi connections. Thought by Hayit to have emigrated to Sinkiang in 1924 (Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China, p. 313, fn. 19). Subsequently became Health Minister and Chairman of the Independence Society under the TIRET. Died of hardship during flight across the Himalayas during 1934.

Ahmadjān Qāsim (Uighur, 1912-1949):

Native of Ili, the son of well-to-do family. Father died in 1917. Ahmadjān was taken to the Soviet Union by his uncle in c.1929. Here he remained for about 10 years, studying (probably in Moscow), and possibly adopting Soviet nationality. He returned to Sinkiang in 1938, working either as an artisan or a school teacher in Kulja until 1942, when he was imprisoned by Sheng Shih-ts'ai. A "communist-minded progressive", Ahmadjān played an important part in the Ili rising of 1944, and was almost certainly the leading member of the STPNLC in Sinkiang. In 1945 he became the most powerful member of the ETR (a position which he retained until his death in 1949), and in 1946 he became Vice-Chairman of the Sinkiang Provincial Government. Killed in an air crash en route to Peking on August 27th, 1949, Ahmadjān is still honoured by both Moscow and Peking.

Akbar <sup>c</sup>Ali (Turkic, probably Uighur, dates unknown):

Interpreter at Soviet Consulate-General in Kashgar blamed for starting serious riots at Kashgar in March, 1926. Imprisoned by Ma Shao-wu despite Soviet protests. Subsequent fate unknown.

<sup>c</sup>Ali Akhund Bai (Uighur, dates unknown):

Native of Kashgar. Finance Minister of the TIRET, 1933-34. Fate unknown.

<sup>c</sup>Ali Beg Rahīm (Kazakh, 1908-?):

Kazakh leader from eastern Tien Shan, probably of Kirei tribe. Friend of Yunus Hājji and ally of <sup>c</sup>Uthman Batur. In state of almost constant rebellion against Sheng Shih-ts'ai and KMT. Fled to Kashmir in 1950-51, and was subsequently resettled in Anatolia by the Turkish government. A photograph of <sup>c</sup>Ali Beg Rahīm may be found as the frontpiece of Lias' Kazak Exodus.

<sup>c</sup>Ali Khān Türe (Uzbek, dates unknown):

Popular religious leader at Kulja who became titular head of the ETR in 1945. He opposed the September, 1945 cease-fire between the ETR and the KMT, and was reportedly kidnapped by Soviet officials from Khorgos in August, 1945. According to Kazakh refugee sources emanating from Turkey (Lias, op.cit., p. 120), <sup>c</sup>Ali Khān Türe was accused of pan-Turanianism by the Soviets. His subsequent fate is not known.

Annenkov (Russian, dates uncertain):

"White" Russian Cossack general. Retreated to Sinkiang's Ili Valley in May, 1920, at the head of 1,500 troops. Arrested by Yang Tseng-hsin in January, 1921. Subsequent fate uncertain - either died in custody in Sinkiang, or was handed back to the Soviet Government and executed.

Apresoff, Garegin A., (Russian, ?-1937):

Soviet Consul-General in Urumchi, 1933-37. Specialist on Central Asian affairs. As consul in Mashhad, Iran, Apresoff worked closely with local Persian communists and affiliated minority groups during the 1920s. Executed during Stalinist purges of 1937 as a "Fascist-Trotskyite" plotter.

Bash Bai (Kazakh, dates unknown):

Native of Ili or Chuguchak, a member of the Naiman tribe. He became administrative head of the Chuguchak region under the ETR.

Burhān Shahīdī (Tatar, 1894-?):

A native of Aksu (either in Semirech'ye or Sinkiang). Thought to have received his early education at Kazan, then to have studied at the University of Berlin. Travelled to Sinkiang before 1918, either to escape Tsarist conscription of Tatars, or Russian Civil War. Became successful trader in Sinkiang, also entered provincial government service under Yang Tseng-hsin. Became Foreign Affairs Commissioner under Chin Shu-jen, and was sent to Germany to 'study political and economic conditions'. Thought to have returned to Sinkiang in 1934 following Chin's fall from power. Served under Sheng Shih-ts'ai as Sinkiang consul in Andijan, Uzbek SSR, and later in Zaysan, Kazakh SSR. Returned to Sinkiang in 1937 but was accused of "Trotskyism". Sentenced to nine years imprisonment (surprisingly not to death), and remained in jail until Sheng's fall from power. Served under Wu Chung-hsin, and in 1946 became Second Vice-Chairman of Sinkiang under Chang Chih-chung. In 1949 he replaced Mas'ud Sabri as Chairman of Sinkiang, a post he retained under the CCP until 1955. Subsequently a leading official representative of China's Muslim community, Burhān was truly the great survivor of Sinkiang politics. A skilled linguist, he compiled China's first Uighur-Chinese-Russian Dictionary in 1953.

Chang Chih-chung (Han Chinese, 1891-?):

A native of Ch'ao hsien, Anhwei. Participated in the 1911 Revolution, subsequently serving under Sun Yat-sen and later Chiang Kai-shek. In 1945 was appointed C-in-C of Chiang's Northwestern Headquarters at Lanchow and in August, 1945, was ordered to Sinkiang where he succeeded in bringing the ETR leadership to the negotiating table. He served as Chairman of Sinkiang from March, 1946 to May, 1947, earning a reputation as a moderate and tolerant administrator who genuinely sought to ameliorate conditions in the province. Following his replacement by Mas'ud Sabri in May, 1947, he continued to serve under Chiang Kai-shek until 1949, when he chose to remain in Peking under the CCP.

Chang Mu (Han Chinese, ?-1931):

A native of Ho-chou region, Kansu, who was employed as a tax collector and chief-of-police in Hsiao-p'u village, Kumul oasis, by Chin Shu-jen. Early in 1931 Chang either raped or attempted to seduce a local Uighur girl in an incident which sparked off the Kumul rising. He was killed on the night of April 4th, 1931, by a crowd of infuriated Uighur farmers.

Chang P'ei-yüan (Han Chinese, ?-1933):

Nothing is known of Chang's antecedents. He was military commander of the Ili region until 1931, when he was appointed provincial commander-in-chief in place of Lu Hsiao-tsu by Chin Shu-jen. Under Chang's command, the siege of Kumul was lifted by White Russian forces on or about November 1st, 1931. Chang subsequently took part in the looting of the oasis, before returning to Ili where he was appointed Reclamation Commissioner for north-western Sinkiang on 28th March, 1933. In 1933-34 he entered into secret negotiations with Ma Chung-ying with a view to ousting Sheng Shih-ts'ai, but his position became untenable following the Soviet intervention of January, 1934. Chang is believed to have tried to flee across the Muzart Pass to southern Sinkiang, but was caught in a snow storm and committed suicide to avoid capture by the Soviets.

Chao Chien-feng (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Social Welfare Commissioner of the 1946-47 Sinkiang coalition government (under Chang Chih-chung). An active member of the KMT's C.C. Clique.

Ch'en Chung (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Sheng Shih-ts'ai's chief-of-staff (and therefore, almost certainly, a north-easterner). Despatched 'to Nanking' via Moscow in April, 1933. In fact, probably carried Sheng's initial plea for assistance against Ma Chung-ying to Moscow.

Chen Hsiu-ying (Han Chinese, ?-1942):

Wife of Sheng Shih-ch'i, the fourth younger brother of Sheng Shih-ts'ai. Reportedly a member of the CPSU. Accused by Sheng Shih-ts'ai of Sheng Shih-ch'i's assassination, Chen Hsiu-ying was tortured and executed by the former in 1942. Her "confession" - a frightening document which gives a clear image of the terror imposed by Sheng Shih-ts'ai - is reproduced, in translation, in Appendix C of Whiting and Sheng, Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?

Chen T'an-chiu (Han Chinese, ?-1943):

Founding member of the CCP at Shanghai in 1921. Travelled to Sinkiang with Mao Tse-min in 1937. Arrested by Sheng in 1942. Executed 1943.

Chiang Yü-fen (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Initially brigadier and chief-of-staff to Liu Pin, c-in-c Kashgar 1934-37. Subsequently appointed c-in-c Kashgar in place of Liu Pin during the 1937 Muslim rebellion. Succeeded in holding Kashgar New City throughout this rebellion. According to British diplomatic sources: 'an efficient officer, ruthless when the occasion demands' (IOLR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941). Subsequent fate unknown.

Chin Shu-chih (Han Chinese, ?-1933):

Brother of Chin Shu-jen, therefore a native of Ho-chou, Kansu. Appointed c-in-c Kashgar, where he died in 1933, either of illness or by committing suicide.

Chin Shu-hsin (Han Chinese, ?-1933):

Younger brother of Chin Shu-jen. Appointed Provincial Commissioner for Military Affairs at Urumchi following latter's seizure of power. Said to have manipulated grain market for personal gain during Ma Chung-ying's siege of Urumchi in 1932-3. Captured and executed by White Russian supporters of Sheng Shih-ts'ai after April, 1933 coup.

Chin Shu-jen (Han Chinese, 1883-?):

Native of Tao-ho hsien, Ho-chou district, Kansu. Graduated from Kansu Provincial Academy. Subsequently served as principal of a normal school. Entered official service in Kansu and gained favour of Yang Tseng-hsin. Followed Yang to Sinkiang in c. 1908. Became Secretary General of the Sinkiang Provincial Government by time of Yang's assassination in 1928. Succeeded Yang as Provincial Governor in 1928. A corrupt and incompetent man, possibly addicted to opium. Like Yang, stripped Sinkiang of assets for personal gain. Responsible for widespread nepotism. Absorbed Khanate of Kumul in 1930. Permitted settlement of Kansu Han on Uighur lands, leading to outbreak of Kumul Rebellion in 1931. Responsible for murder of Tsetsen Puntsag Gegeen in 1932. Overthrown by coup at Urumchi on April 12th, 1933, during invasion of Ma Chung-ying. Fled to China proper, where he was sentenced to 3½ years imprisonment for signing an illegal treaty with the USSR. Released after only 6 months (possibly after payment of bribe), and returned to native Kansu. Subsequent fate not known.

Ch'iu Yü-fang (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Wife of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, daughter of Ch'iu Tsung-chun, a 'trusted subordinate' of the Northeastern warlord Kuo Sung-ling. Described as 'ambitious and intelligent' (Chan, 'The Road to Power'), Ch'iu survived Sheng's years in Sinkiang and followed her husband to Taiwan in 1949.

Chu Jui-ch'ih (Han Chinese, dates unknown):

Tao-yin of Aksu under Chin Shu-jen who successfully defended Kumul Old City against Ma Chung-ying's invading Tungans between June 28th and November 1st, 1931.

Chu Jui-hsi (Han Chinese, ?-1934):

Figurehead Chairman of Sinkiang under Sheng Shih-ts'ai between 1933 and 1934, when he died, apparently of natural causes. Replaced by Li Yung.

Chu Shao-liang (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Commander of the KMT Eighth War Area (Headquarters Lanchow) who flew to Urumchi in March, 1942, to negotiate Sheng's break with the Soviets and realignment with Chungking. Troops under Chu entered Sinkiang from Kansu in June, 1943. In September, 1944 Chu was appointed Acting Chairman of the Sinkiang Government (to be replaced by Wu Chung-hsin in October of that year). According to HMCU Turrall, the C.C. Clique-influenced Chu was: 'a splendid chap, with a direct manner, bulldozer jaw, and tommy-gun laugh... drinks like a fish and holds it like a British consul'. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2405, EXT.271.1945.

Dālīl Khān (Kazakh, ?-1949):

Naiman Kazakh chief who supported the "progressive" faction within the ETR and assumed administrative control over Shara Sume following °Uthmān Bātūr's break with the Kulja regime. Killed in air crash en route to Peking on August 27th, 1949.

Fan Yao-nan (Han Chinese, ?-1928):

Japanese-educated 'modernist' appointed by Chinese national government to post of tao-yin of Aksu under Yang Tseng-hsin. Subsequently rose to become tao-yin of Urumchi, and then Sinkiang Provincial Commissioner for Foreign Affairs. On July 6th, 1928, Yang was assassinated at an official banquet, reportedly at Fan's instigation. Within a few hours of Yang's death, Fan Yao-nan, his accomplices and members of their immediate families were put to death on the orders of Chin Shu-jen.

Fucha Afandi (Mongol, dates unknown):

Mongol of the Ili region supposedly associated with the "progressive" faction of the ETR. Fucha Afandi's name suggests that he may have been an Islamicised Mongol.

Glimkin (Russian, dates unknown):

"White" Russian "progressive", according to KMT sources a member of the pro-Soviet STPNLC, and subsequently a member of the ETR central staff in 1945.

Ḥāfīz (Uighur, ?-1937):

Native of Turfan. Commander of Uighur troops owing allegiance to Timūr, Kucharlik leader during 1933 Muslim rebellion. Involved in prolonged dispute with forces of Khotan Amīrs during siege of Yarkand New City in April-May, 1933. Subsequently advanced into Khotanlik territory as far as Guma. On hearing of Timūr's execution at Kashgar (9th August, 1933), Ḥāfīz withdrew to Yarkand, and subsequently to Kashgar. Served as magistrate at Yangi Hissar from June 1934 to June 1935. Killed by Ma Hu-shan's Tungans at Yarkand in June, 1937.

Ḥākīm Beg Khoja (Uighur, dates unknown):

Native of Ili. An influential landowner, who became deputy president of the ETR (along with the "White" Russian Polinov) in 1945. Following the official disbandment of the ETR and °Ali Khān Tūre's abduction in 1946, Ḥākīm Beg Khoja became titular head of the Ili administrative district, though real power was exercised by Ahmadjan Qasim. Subsequent fate unknown.

Hsiung Fa-yü (Han Chinese, ?-1933):

Second in command to Chu Jui-ch'ih during Ma Chung-ying's siege of Kumul (June 28th-November 1st, 1931). Subsequently responsible for mass executions at Kumul and for destruction of much of the oasis. Killed by the Tungan leader Ma Fu-ming at Turfan during the winter of 1932-33.

Huang Han-chang (Han Chinese, ?-1937):

Secretary-General of Sinkiang Provincial Government (as figurehead) under Sheng Shih-ts'ai. Accused of being a "Fascist-Trotskyite" plotter during the Sinkiang purges of 1937, and thought to have been executed at that time.

Huang Mu-sung (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

KMT "Pacification Commissioner" sent to Sinkiang in June, 1933, ostensibly to halt conflict between Ma Chung-ying and Sheng Shih-ts'ai. Accused by Sheng of conspiring to effect his overthrow, Huang was placed under house arrest and only permitted to leave Sinkiang after wiring a recommendation to Nanking that Sheng be confirmed in his post.

Husayn Tājī (Kazakh, dates unknown):

Thought to have been an Kirei Kazakh, probably a native of the Barköl region. Fought prolonged guerilla struggle against Sheng Shih-ts'ai before emigrating, in 1936, to the Gez Köl region with Sultān Sharīf. Fled to Kashmir following CCP victory. Subsequently resettled in Anatolia by Turkish government.

Id Mirāb (Kirghiz, dates unknown):

Leader of 1932 Kirghiz rebellion in central Tien Shan. Movement suppressed by joint Sino-Soviet military action. Subsequent fate unknown.

Isa Yūsuf Alptekin (Uighur, dates unknown):

Anti-Soviet Uighur nationalist, probably a native of Kashgar. An intellectual. Fled to China proper to escape Sheng Shih-ts'ai, and settled in Nanking (subsequently Chungking), where he collaborated with Muhammad Amin Bugra (II) in the publication of Tien Shan and Altai. Returned to Sinkiang in 1945. Became Second Provincial Secretary-General under Chang Chih-chung, a post he continued to hold under Mas'ūd Sabri. Isa lost this position in January, 1949. Fled to India over the Karakoram Pass in 1949-50, in the company of Muhammad Amin Bugra.

Ishāq Beg (Kirghiz, 1903-49):

Native of Aksu region in southern Sinkiang. Travelled to Soviet Union shortly after 1917 revolution. Said by Chen (Sinkiang Story, p. 228) to have returned to southern Sinkiang in 1922, and to have 'distinguished himself' in Kirghiz rising against Chin Shu-jen. According to KMT sources and Barnett, however (see p. fn. 164 above), Ishāq re-entered Sinkiang as commander of GPU unit sent to aid Sheng Shih-ts'ai during 1930s. Became c-in-c of Ili National Army in 1945. One of the most important figures attached to the "progressive" faction within the ETR. Reportedly strongly pro-Soviet. Killed in air crash en route to Peking on August 27th, 1949.

Isma'īl Beg (Uighur, dates unknown):

Native of Aksu. Thought to have been follower of Khotan Amīrs. On May 31st, 1933, drove Ma Chan-ts'ang's Tungan forces from Aksu, and became rebel tao-yin of that oasis. Subsequent fate not known.



Ismā'īl Khān Khoja (Uighur, dates unknown):

Mine-worker's leader from Karakash, southern Sinkiang, who led local miners in 1933 rising. Later believed to have joined the Khotan Amīrs. Subsequent fate not known.

Jānīb Beg (Kirghiz, dates unknown):

Basmachi leader who fled to Sinkiang and was detained by Ma Shao-wu, apparently at the request of the Soviets. Was banished to Keriya oasis in 1931, but made common cause with the Khotan Amīrs during the 1933 rebellion, and returned to Kashgar at the head of 1,000 Khotanlik troops. On July 13th Jānīb was arrested by Timūr in a sudden coup, possibly organised and financed by the Soviet Consulate-General. Strongly anti-Soviet, Jānīb later succeeded in escaping across the frontier into Afghanistan. Subsequent fate not known.

Janīm Khān (Kazakh, ?-c.1951):

Kirei Kazakh leader, ally of 'Uthmān Batūr. Described by Barnett as 'illiterate (but)... undoubtedly popular' (op.cit., p. 257), became Commissioner of Finance in Chang Chih-chung's coalition government (1946). Captured at Gez Kōl by the PLA in 1951, he was taken to Urumchi and shot.

"K'a-la-wan" (? Qalāwūn - presumed Kirghiz or Tajik, dates unknown):

Nothing is known of this Muslim rebel leader who, according to Chang Ta-chūn, administered the Sarikol area under the ETR.

Kamāl Kaya Effendi (Osmanli Turk, dates unknown):

Apparently a native of Istanbul. Reported to have entered Sinkiang from the Soviet Union in the company of another Istanbul Turk. Both men apparently exiled opponents of Kemal Atatürk. Kamāl arrived in Urumchi c.1930, ostensibly as a merchant, but was arrested by Chin Shu-jen, probably as a supposed spy. He was later released - minus his goods - and made his way to Kansu, where he entered into service with Ma Chung-ying. Kamāl had apparently seen service during the First World War, and subsequently during the Russian Civil War. Subsequently he became Ma Chung-ying's chief-of-staff. Kamāl is supposed to have been instrumental in encouraging Ma's invasion of Sinkiang in 1931 - according to Cable and French, in a bid to revenge himself on Chin Shu-jen. Later he served as Ma Chung-ying's chief-of-staff during the second Tungan invasion of 1933-34. According to Georg Vassel (Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien, p. 7), Kamāl had served in the German Imperial Army in Elbing before travelling to Paris, where he graduated from the French Military Academy. Later he served under Von Epp in the Caucasus (as a staff officer). If this information is correct, then Kamāl's contribution to Ma Chung-ying's war effort is likely to have been very great indeed. Again according to Vassel (op.cit., p. 15), Kamāl was captured by pro-Soviet forces in Kumul during 1934 and sent to Urumchi. Instead of being imprisoned or executed, however, he is said to have been made Commissar for Road Construction in Sinkiang. He may, therefore, have been a Soviet agent. Subsequent fate unknown.

Khoja Niyās Ḥājji - see under Niyās Ḥājji, Khoja.

Kichik Akhund (Uighur, dates unknown):

Subordinate of Mahmūd shih-chang and fellow officer of 'Abd al-Niyas, in command of Uighur troops stationed near Yarkand in early 1937. Became involved in 1937 "sabīl-illāh" rebellion against Soviet influence and Sheng Shih-ts'ai. Captured Kashgar Old City 30th May, 1937. Later advanced towards Aksu, but was routed by provincial forces. subsequent fate unknown.

Ku Chien-chi (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Vice-Commissioner of Reconstruction in the 1946-47 coalition government of Chang Chih-chung. Member of KMT and part an of C.C. Clique.

Kuang Lu (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Native of north-western Sinkiang. Deputy General-Secretary of the Sinkiang Government under Chin Shu-jen. Travelled to Nanking in 1929. Instrumental in Sheng Shih-ts'ai's decision to go to Sinkiang. Played a key role in Sheng's negotiations with Consul-General Apresoff in 1934. Subsequently posted to Tashkent as Sinkiang consul. Recalled in 1938 and imprisoned as a "Trotskyist". Released in 1942, he served under the KMT as an adviser on Sinkiang affairs, subsequently transferring to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Taiwan. Thought during the 1930s and early 1940s to have been pro-Soviet. According to Whiting (Pawn or Pivot, xiv), he was offered a post in the ETR, but declined.

Kung Cheng-han (Han Chinese, c.1904-?):

Sheng Shih-ts'ai's Pacification Commissioner for southern Sinkiang, 1934-5. Replaced by Liu Pin.

Lan Yen-shou (Hui, dates unknown):

Vice-Commissioner of Sinkiang Provincial Government purged by Sheng Shih-ts'ai for "conspiracy" in 1939. Subsequent fate not known.

Leskin, F., (Russian, dates unknown):

A "White" Russian of the Ili Valley. "Progressive" supporter of the ETR. Became a senior officer in the INA (under Ishāq Beg). Responsible for stemming initial KMT counter-attack at Kensai, near Sairam Nor, in December, 1944. Defeated elements of the KMT 29th Army at Sairam Nor on January 30th, 1945. Subsequent fate not known.

Li Hai-ju (Han Chinese, dates unknown):

Probably a native of Northeast China. Commander of the provincial forces at Kitai during Ma Chung-ying's second invasion. Kitai fell to the Tungans in late May, 1933, but Li's fate is not known.

Li Hsi-ts'eng (Han Chinese, dates unknown):

Probably a native of Ho-chou region, Kansu. Divisional Commander in Sinkiang provincial forces stationed at Kumul in 1930. Suggested to Chin Shu-jen that Khanate should be absorbed following death of Maqsūd Shāh.

Li Yi-ch'ing (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Sheng Shih-ts'ai's chief-of-police in 1943-4, and a trusted political subordinate. Following Sheng's departure from Sinkiang in 1944, Li conducted his own purge of Sheng's prisons, during which an estimated 400 to 500 prisoners were 'liquidated'. Li was subsequently dismissed and permitted to return to China proper by Wu Chung-hsin.

Li Yung (Han Chinese, ?-1940):

Native of Kansu. Figurehead Provincial Chairman of Sinkiang under Sheng Shih-ts'ai from 1934. Died in the spring of 1940.

Liu Meng-hsun (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Secretary-General of the Sinkiang coalition government under Chang Chih-chung. Member of KMT. Closely associated with C.C. Clique.

Liu Pin (Han Chinese, c.1895-?):

Native of Northeast China. Commander of Northeastern troops who arrived in Sinkiang via the Soviet Union in March, 1933. At first Chief-of-Staff to Sheng Shih-ts'ai, then commander in Ili region. Appointed C-in-C Kashgar in August, 1934. Lost favour and transferred as a result of Mahmūd shih-chang's flight to India. Said to have been appointed chief inspector of gold mines, Sinkiang, in 1937. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941, p. 17, concludes: 'his subsequent history is not definitely known, but it is believed that he has been done away with'.

Liu Wen-lung (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Commissioner of Education under Chin Shu-jen. Later became figurehead Provincial Chairman (under Sheng Shih-ts'ai's tupan-ship) in 1933. Liu was confirmed in office by Nanking on August 1st, 1933, and forced from that office by Sheng Shih-ts'ai in September, to be replaced by the more pliable Chu Jui-hsi.

Lo Tsu (Han Chinese, ?-1949):

Han Chinese supporter of the ETR who died in plane crash en route to Peking on August 27th, 1949. Apparently his chief significance to the ETR (and to the mythology constructed around the ETR following its dissolution) lay in his ethnic origin.

Lo Wen-kan (Han Chinese, 1888-1941):

Nationalist Foreign Minister. Travelled to Urumchi by air on September 2nd, 1933, to negotiate between Sheng Shih-ts'ai and Ma Chung-ying. Under his auspices a truce was reached and Ma was appointed Garrison Commander of Eastern Sinkiang. Shortly after Lo's departure in October, this truce broke down.

Lu Hsiao-tsu (Han Chinese, dates unknown):

Chin Shu-jen's chief secretary. A civilian with little or no military experience, he was appointed c-in-c of the provincial forces during Ma Chung-ying's 1931 invasion. Replaced by Chang P'ei-yüan during the same year because of his incompetence.

Lung Hsieh-lin (Han Chinese, dates unknown):

District magistrate at I-ho hsien, Kumul, under Chin Shu-jen. Responsible for expropriation of Uighur land and settlement of Han Chinese settlers from Kansu leading up to Kumul rising in 1931.

Ma Chan-ts'ang (Hui, dates unknown):

Tungani Muslim of Kansu. Emerged as leader of rebel forces in Karashahr region during 1932-3. Entered into alliance with local Uighur leader Timur. Advanced towards Kashgar, capturing Aksu. Reached Kashgar in May, 1933, but fell out with local Turkic leaders and in August, 1933, came under siege in Kashgar New City. Relieved by units of Ma Chung-ying's forces under Ma Fu-yüan in February, 1934. Withdrew to Khotan under Ma Hu-shan in July, 1934. Arrested by Sheng Shih-ts'ai after collapse of Tungan forces in 1937. Subsequent fate not known.

Ma Chin-shan (Hui, dates not certain):

Tungani Muslim. Son of Ma Pu-fang, "Wu Ma" warlord of Tsinghai from 1938 to 1949. Ma Chin-shan was therefore a scion of the Ma family of Pieh-tsang, near Ho-chou, Kansu. Commander of Tungan cavalry deployed in Sinkiang by KMT after 1944. Reported to have put down Uighur rising at Turfan in 1948. Later joined Yulbars Khan in opposing PLA entry into Sinkiang. According to Jack Chen, most of Chin-shan's troops surrendered to the Communists, but he escaped with Yulbars to Tibet, where he joined up with the anti-Communist Tibetan Khamba rebels (The Sinkiang Story, p. 271).

Ma Chung-chieh (Hui, c.1913-1933):

Tungani Muslim of Kansu. Younger brother of Ma Chung-ying. Led 1933 Tungan invasion of Sinkiang. Captured Kumul in May. Killed leading successful attack on Kitai later in same month.

Ma Chung-ying (Hui, c.1910-c.1937):

Tungani Muslim of Ho-chou, Kansu. Shared same paternal grandfather as "Wu Ma" warlords Ma Pu-ch'ing and Ma Pu-fang. Chung-ying, the fifth of the "Five Ma" warlords, was to achieve perhaps the greatest notoriety of all. Entered military service in 1924. Fought against against Kuominchün forces of Feng Yü-hsiang. Travelled to Nanking in 1929, where he enrolled briefly in military academy. Invaded Sinkiang in 1931. Failed to take Kumul, and was wounded in leg. Returned in 1933. Would certainly have seized control of province but for Soviet intervention. Withdrew to Kashgar in April, 1933, and to Soviet territory in July of that year. Subsequent fate unknown, though almost certain to have been executed by Stalin.

Ma Fu-hsing (Hui, c.1851-1924):

"Panthay" Muslim of Yunnan. How Fu-hsing came to be in Sinkiang is not clear. However, at the time of the 1911 Revolution he was appointed head of the Tungan levies raised by the Ch'ing authorities at Urumchi. He remained in Urumchi under Yang Tseng-hsin until 1915, when he was appointed t'i-t'ai at Kashgar. Ma T'i-t'ai, as he became better known, was responsible for a reign of terror in southern Sinkiang which lasted until 1924, when he was shot.

Ma Fu-ming (Hui, dates unknown):

Tungan garrison commander at Turfan under Chin Shu-jen; went over to Ma Chung-ying in the autumn of 1932. Captured and executed Hsiung Fa-yü, the Han officer in charge of repression at Kumul, during the winter of 1932-33. Subsequent fate not certain, but probably withdrew to southern Sinkiang.

Ma Fu-yüan (Hui, dates unknown):

Tungani Muslim of Kansu. On staff of Ma Chung-ying. According to Yulbars Khan, participated in fateful dinner at Soochow in June, 1931, when Ma Chung-ying "decided" to intervene in Sinkiang. Later took part in Ma Chung-ying's invasion, lifting siege of Kashgar New City in February, 1934. Captured Yangi Hissar in March. Responsible for looting and massacres in both Kashgar and Yangi Hissar Old Cities, apparently in revenge for "Kizil Massacre" of June, 1933. Later withdrew with Ma Hu-shan to Khotan. Later believed to have returned to Kansu.

Ma Hu-shan (Hui, 1910-1954):

Tungan. Brother-in-law (or, possibly, half-brother or cousin) of Ma Chung-ying. Succeeded Chung-ying as c-in-c of KMT 36th Division and as leader of Tungan forces in Sinkiang following latter's flight to Soviet Union. Absolute ruler of "Tunganistan" between 1934 and 1937. Eventually compelled by mutiny amongst his own troops to escape across the Himalayas to India. Returned to China in 1938. According to Kao Han-jen (The Imam's Account, 1960), Hu-shan led a Tungan rebellion against the Chinese Communists in the early 1950s. He was captured in 1954 and executed at Lanchow (op.cit., pp. 93-8, 'Fate of a Hero').

Ma Ju-lung (Hui, dates unknown):

Tungan of Kansu. Commander of Ma Hu-shan's First Brigade (KMT 36th Division), which occupied Kashgar Old City during Muslim rebellion of 1937. According to British diplomatic sources 'an illiterate, but rather a pleasant man to deal with'. Fled to India with Ma Hu-shan in 1937. Subsequent fate not known.

Ma Shao-wu (Hui, 1890-c.1937):

"Panthay" Muslim of Yunnan. Trusted lieutenant of Yang Tseng-hsin. Appointed garrison commander at Kuchar in 1914; later rose to be amban at Uch Turfan. In May, 1924, shot Ma Fu-hsing at Kashgar on Yang Tseng-hsin's orders. Became chief civil authority in Kashgar (and, by extension, in all south Sinkiang) from 1924. Beseiged in Kashgar New City with Ma Chan-ts'ang's Tungans during period of TIRET. Later reappointed, but victim of attempted assassination (on Sheng Shih-ts'ai's orders?) in October, 1934. A loyal supporter of Nanking, he was probably too anti-Soviet for Sheng's "progressive" period. Thought to have been executed after failure of 1937 Muslim rebellion - though he was almost certainly not involved.

Ma Sheng-kuei (Hui, c.1900-?):

Tungan. Childhood spent in Kansu and Shensi 'in bad company'. Later became bandit in Ninghsia. 'In the pursuit of his livelihood he was very cruel and tortured his victims' (IOLR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910. 1941). He joined Ma Chung-ying in 1933 and travelled to Sinkiang 'to seek his fortune'. Later went to Khotan as commander of Ma Hu-shan's

Second Brigade. Participated in fighting surrounding 1937 Muslim rebellion in southern Sinkiang, but mutinied at Faizabad and joined provincial forces. Later posted to Khotan in subordinate position. Believed to have returned to Kansu.

Ma Shih-ming (Hui, dates unknown):

Tungan of Kansu. On staff of Ma Chung-ying. Participated in Ma Chung-ying's supposed dinner party with Yulbars Khān at Soochow in June, 1931. Led first Tungan assault on Kumul in 1931. Later remained in Sinkiang to lead Tungan units near Turfan after Ma Chung-ying had been wounded and withdrawn to Kansu. Subsequent fate not known.

Mahmūd Nedim Bey (Osmanli Turk, dates unknown):

Companion of Muṣṭafa<sup>c</sup> Ali Bey, an anti-Kemalist exile who appeared briefly in Kashgar as "adviser" to the TIRET in November, 1933.

Mahmūd shih-chang (Uighur, dates unknown):

Native of Turfan. Originally a rich merchant, became chief military commander of Khoja Niyās Hājji's Kumullik forces in 1933-34. After endorsing Khoja Niyās Hājji's agreement with Sheng Shih-ts'ai, became c-in-c Uighur forces in Kashgar area, July, 1934. Hostile to Sheng's increasingly close alliance with Soviet Union. Fled to India in the autumn of 1937 before making his way to Mecca. Later (1940) reported to be in Japan (IOLR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941).

Mao Tse-min (Han Chinese, 1895-1943):

Brother of Mao Tse-tung. Named Minister of Finance in the Sinkiang government from 1937 to 1942. Arrested and executed by Sheng on charges of plotting against his government.

Maqsūd Shāh (Uighur, c.1864-1930):

Khān of Kumul. Acceded to throne in 1908 on death of his father, Muḥammad. Maqsūd ruled over some 25-30,000 Kumulliks, paying a small annual tribute to the Chinese administration in Urumchi. Friendly to the Chinese, he wore Chinese cloths and spoke Turkic with a marked Chinese accent. When Maqsūd died in 1930 (of old age), he was succeeded by his son Naṣīr, but Chin Shu-jen intervened to seize control of the Kumul oasis, thus creating the conditions for the Kumul rising of 1931.

Mas<sup>c</sup>ūd Sabri (Uighur, 1886-1952):

A native of Ili, the son of a wealthy merchant and landlord. Educated in Kulja and Istanbul. Lived in Turkey from 1904 to 1915. Imprisoned by Yang Tseng-hsin in 1924 but released after ten months. Political adviser to Mahmūd shih-chang in 1934-37. Fled to India and thence to Nanking in 1937. Became closely involved with KMT and especially C.C. Clique during 1938-45. Returned to Sinkiang in 1945 as Provincial Inspector-General. Became first Uighur chairman of Sinkiang in 1947. Offered post of Chinese Ambassador to Iran in 1948, but refused. Arrested by CCP in 1951, died in prison in 1952.

Muhammad Amīn Bugra (I), (Uighur, c. 1897-?):

A native of Khotan. Muslim scholar of fundamentalist beliefs. Anti-Chinese, anti-Soviet, anti-Tungan, anti-Christian. Founding member and leader of Khotanlik CNR. Became eldest "Khotan Amīr" and real power behind Khotanlik Muslim rebellion of 1932-34. Unlike his two younger brothers, remained in Khotan throughout rising. Later escaped advancing Tungans of Ma Hu-shan and fled to Afghanistan, where he was granted a pension by the Afghan government. Later made contact with Japanese ambassador to Kabul. Subsequent fate not known.

Muhammad Amīn Bugra (II), (Uighur, dates unknown):

May have been son of the above, though this remains uncertain (see Lias, Kazak Exodus, p. 20). If so, a native of Khotan. Turkic nationalist; anti-Soviet. Fled to China proper during Sheng Shih-ts'ai's "progressive" period, and edited Tien Shan and Altai together with ʿIsa Yūsuf Alptekin, first in Nanking and later in Chungking. Returned to Sinkiang to serve as Commissioner of Reconstruction in the 1946 coalition government. Later escaped CCP takeover and fled to India. Settled in Istanbul.

Muhammad Niyās Aʿlām (Uighur, dates unknown):

Qādi of Karakash, near Khotan, in 1932. "President" of the CNR provisional government formed at Khotan on February 20th, 1933, under auspices of "Khotan Amīrs".

Muhammad Qāsim Jān Hājji (Uighur, dates unknown):

Foreign Minister of TIRET in 1933-34. Escaped to Karachi.

Muhammad Sharīf Khān (Afghan, dates unknown):

Head of Afghan mission sent to Yarkand in autumn of 1922. Regarded by Yang Tseng-hsin as head of visiting trade delegation, he styled himself "Afghan Consul-General in Sinkiang", however, and remained at Yarkand for several years. Responsible for the creation of an Afghan "cult" at Yarkand.

Mustafa ʿAli Bey (Osmanli Turk, dates unknown):

Companion of Mahmūd Nedim Bey. Apparently an anti-Kemalist exile (? for pan-Turanian reasons) who appeared briefly as an adviser to the TIRET in Kashgar, November, 1933.

Nasīr (Uighur, dates unknown):

Son of Maqsūd Shāh, Khān of Kumul. Kept as political hostage in Urumchi following his father's death, and forbidden to return to Kumul. Subsequent fate not known, but probably killed by Chin Shu-jen.

Niyās Hājji, Khoja (Uighur, ?-1937):

Native of Kumul. Leader of north-western Muslim rebel forces in 1933 (with Yulbars Khān). At first allied to Ma Chung-ying, but later came to terms with Sheng Shih-ts'ai and was appointed Vice-Chairman of the Sinkiang Government in 1934. 'He was an old man and, in Urumchi, completely powerless... killed in Urumchi as a result of the 1937 rebellion'. IOLR, L/P&S/20, D.226.

Nūr Ahmad Bugra (Uighur, ?-1934):

A native of Khotan. Youngest of the three "Khotan Amīrs", styled "Amīr Nūr Ahmad Jān". Invested Yarkand on behalf of "Khotan Islamic Government" in 1933. Forced to withdraw from Yarkand New City by Hāfiz on July 17th. Subsequently imprisoned in Yarkand Old City. Freed following execution of Timūr, Nūr Ahmad took charge of Yangi-Hissar under the TIRET. Killed by Tungan troops of Ma Chan-ts'ang and Ma Fu-yüan on April 12th, 1934.

Pai Tzu-li (Hui, ?-1937?):

Tungani Muslim of Kansu. Trusted adviser of Ma Chung-ying. Later became chief-of-staff to Ma Hu-shan during "Tunganistan" episode. Said to have been shot by Ma Hu-shan during escape to India in September, 1937. 'He was a very shrewd man' (IOLR, L/P&S/20/D.226).

Pappengut (Russian, ?-1933/34):

"White" Russian. Former staff officer of Russian Imperial Army; settled in Ili area after White defeat in Russian Civil War. Placed in command of "White" Russian force press-ganged to fight Ma Chung-ying during 1931. Responsible for relief of Kumul in November, 1931. Shot by Sheng Shih-ts'ai, probably at Soviet request (via Apresoff) in December, 1933 or January, 1934.

Pogodin (Russian, dates unknown):

NKVD Brigadier-General in charge of Sheng Shih-ts'ai's secret police organisations (Pao-an-chü and Pao-an-tui) during Sheng's "progressive" period.

Polinov, A., (Russian, dates unknown):

"White" Russian of Ili. Opponent of Sheng Shih-ts'ai (post-1942), and thought to have been a member of the STPNLC. Became Vice-President of ETR in 1945, and led INA cavalry advance from Sairam Nor towards Chuguchak in July, 1945.

Pushkin (Russian, dates unknown):

Soviet Consul-General, Urumchi, at the time of Sheng Shih-ts'ai's break with the USSR (1942).

Qādir Beg (Uighur, dates unknown):

Native of Kashgar. pro-Soviet chief-of-police in Kashgar at time of 1937 Muslim rebellion. 'Taken to Moscow in 1938; present whereabouts not known'. (IOLR, L/P&S/12/2392.EXT.4910.1941). Not to be confused with Qādir Beg, subordinate officer of Khotan Amīr 'Abdullāh.

Rahīmjan Sābir Hājji (Uighur, dates unknown):

Member of "progressive" wing of ETR. Son-in-law of Ma 'ūd Sabri. Assistant Commissioner of Civil Affairs in 1946 (Chang Chih-chung) coalition government. Ultimate fate not known.

Šādiq Beg (ethnic origin and dates unknown):

Trade and Commerce Minister of the secessionist TIRET, Kashgar, 1933-4.



## Saif al-Dīn ʿAzīz (Uighur, c.1914 - )

Son of a well-to-do merchant from Artush, near Kashgar. Educated in Sinkiang, later in the USSR at the University of Tashkent. Fluent in Russian, he joined the CPSU. Returned to Sinkiang after short spell living in Afghanistan. Member of "progressive" wing of ETR, he served as Minister of Education (1945-46), and subsequently as Commissioner of Education for Sinkiang in Chang Chih-chung's coalition government (1946-47). In December, 1949, he became vice-chairman of the (CCP) Sinkiang provincial government, and in 1955 Chairman of the Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region. Fell from power in 1978 after death of Mao Tse-tung - discredited by his survivor's role in the Cultural Revolution. Still alive (1981).

## Saifullāh (Uighur, dates unknown):

Native of Turfan, member of ETR administration. Said by Barnett to have controlled the Ili youth group Yashlar Tashkilati (op.cit., p. 269), though according to Howard and Boorman (op.cit., III, 87-9), this role was fulfilled by Saif al-Dīn ʿAzīz.

## Salāh (Uighur, dates unknown):

Partisan of Khoja Niyās Ḥājji. A Kumullik, the father of the Uighur girl whose abduction/seduction/ or rape by Chang Mu sparked off the Kumul rising. Fought with Khoja Niyās throughout the 1931-34 troubles. Became brigade commander and remained at Kashgar until appointed administrative commissioner at Aksu in 1936. Subsequent history not known.

## Sālis (Kazakh, ?-1950/51):

Deputy Secretary-General to the Sinkiang coalition government of Chang Chih-chung (1946-47); fled to Gez Kōl and later towards India, in company of Yulbars Khān. Reportedly killed in Tibet, during winter of 1950-51, by some of Yulbars' men in a dispute over supplies.

## Sātibaldī Jān (Uzbek, c.1908-?):

Commander of force of some 300 "Andijani" Uzbeks operating in the Yarkand-Kashgar area at the time of the TIRET (1933-34). Sātibaldī was a native of Margelan, in Soviet Central Asia, and was widely suspected, both by local Sinkiang Muslims and by HMCGK, of being pro-Soviet, or even a Soviet agent.

## Shams al-Dīn Turdi Ḥājji (?Uighur, dates unknown):

Thought to have been a native of Kashgar. Religious Institutions Minister (in charge of waqf endowments) under TIRET (1933-34). Fate unknown.

## Sharīf Khān (Kazakh, dates uncertain):

Leader of Altai revolt directed against Chin Shu-jen in 1933. Fought against Sheng Shih-ts'ai, but may later have come to terms, as one Sharīf Khān - quite probably the same man - was appointed administrator of the Altai region later in Sheng's rule, only to be purged in 1940.

## Sharīf Qārī (Uighur, ?-1934):

A native of Khotan. Justice Minister of the TIRET. Captured and hanged by provincial authorities at Aksu in July, 1934, together with ʿAbd al-Baqī Sabit Dāmullāh.

Sheng Shih-ch'i (Han Chinese, ?-1942):

Fourth younger brother of Sheng Shih-ts'ai. Schooled in Moscow military academies; returned to Sinkiang in the winter of 1941-42 and named commander of motorised brigade in Urumchi. Married to Chen Hsiu-ying (qv). Died under mysterious circumstances in March, 1942. Chen Hsiu-ying was accused of, and later executed for, his murder. More probably, however, he was killed by Sheng Shih-ts'ai because of his close links with Moscow.

Sheng Shih-ts'ai (Han Chinese, 1895-?):

Native of Liaoning in Northeast China. Studied in Japan before participating in May 4th Movement. Entered military service under Kuo Sung-ling. Following latter's failed rebellion and execution, Sheng returned to Japan (Shikan Gakko), where he studied until 1927. In that year fought with Northern Expedition as staff officer attached to Chiang Kai-shek's field headquarters. Travelled to Urumchi at request of Chin Shu-jen in late 1929 or early 1930. Fought against Ma Chung-ying's Tungans in 1931-34. Replaced Chin as de facto ruler of Sinkiang in April, 1933. Remained warlord of Sinkiang from 1933 to 1944 (much of that time as a virtual puppet of the Soviet Union). Replaced by KMT in 1944, in 1949 he accompanied the KMT to Taiwan where he lived in comfortable retirement with his wife, Ch'iu Yü-fang, who had borne him a daughter and three sons.

Soong Ching-ling (Mme. Chiang Kai-shek, Han Chinese, 1892-):

Reported to have carried a letter promising 'not only forgiveness for past deeds, but also a full pardon for their consequences' from her husband to Sheng Shih-ts'ai, in Urumchi, in August-September, 1942.

Su Chin-shou (Hui, dates uncertain):

Tungan, probably from Kansu. Ma Chan-ts'ang's chief-of-staff. Appointed joint tao-yin of Kashgar (with Yunus Beg) in May, 1933. Subsequent fate not known.

Sūfī Zāda (Nationality and dates not known):

Secretary of the TIRET National Assembly (Kashgar, 1933-34). Fate unknown.

Sultān Beg Bakhtiar Beg (?Uzbek, dates unknown):

A native of Margelan, (Soviet) Uzbekistan. Presumed to be anti-Soviet, probably with Basmachi connections. Fled to Sinkiang after Bolshevik revolution. Became Defence Minister of TIRET (1933-34). Escaped across Himalayas to India, thence to Arabia, where he lived in Ta'if until 1960.

Sultan Sharīf (Kazakh, dates unknown):

Kirei Kazakh chieftain. Together with Husayn Tājjī fled to Gez Kōl in 1936. Fled to Kashmir following CCP victory. Thought to have been resettled in Turkey.

Sung Hsi-lien (Han Chinese, 1906-?):

Commander of the Sinkiang garrison forces in 1946-7. KMT senior officer under influence of "Political Science" group.

Tāhir Beg (Nationality and dates unknown):

President of the TIRET National Assembly (Kashgar, 1933-34). Fate unknown.

Tao Chih-yüeh (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Moderate KMT officer who replaced Sung Hsi-lien as c-in-c Sinkiang in 1948. Responsible for surrender of Sinkiang to CCP in September, 1949.

Tawfiq Bey (Arab, dates unknown):

Styled himself "Sayyid Ahmad Tawfiq Bey Sharif Effendi". A native of Syria who served for a time in Arabia under Abd al-Aziz ibn Sa'ud. First arrived in Kashgar from India during 1932 and was deported by Ma Shao-wu. Returned during 1933 rebellion and was put in command of local (Kashgarlik) Uighur forces. Wounded in stomach and later deported by Sabit Dāmullāh for corresponding with Khoja Niyas Hājji. Reported by 1937 to have made his way to Japan. IOLR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941.

Timūr (Uighur, ?-1933):

A native of Kuchar. Emerged as local rebel leader in February, 1933. Initially an ally of Ma Chan-ts'ang, he later changed sides and was captured and executed by Ma's troops on August 9th, 1933, at Kashgar.

Tsetsen Puntsag Gegeen (Mongol, ?-1932):

Regent and "Living Buddha" of the Karashahr Torgut Mongols. Murdered by Chin Shu-jen at Urumchi during May, 1932.

Ts'ui Chao-chi (Han Chinese, dates unknown):

Almost certainly a native of Kansu. Chin Shu-jen's orderly and bodyguard, appointed to position of brigade commander, Urumchi, in c.1928. Together with Chin Shu-jen's younger brother, Chin Shu-hsin, reported to have manipulated grain market for private gain during Ma Chung-ying's winter 1932-33 siege of the provincial capital. Fate unknown.

Tu Chih-kuo (Han Chinese, ?-1931):

Commander of the Sinkiang provincial forces under Chin Shu-jen during initial stages of Ma Chung-ying's first invasion. Reported either to have committed suicide, or to have been killed, as a result of Tungan night attack at Ch'i-chiao-ching during the summer of 1931.

Tu Chung-yuan (Han Chinese, 1895-1943):

Childhood friend of Sheng Shih-ts'ai. Politically "progressive" though not, apparently, a member of the CCP, Tu travelled to Sinkiang in 1937. Author of only firsthand book on Sheng's rule in Sinkiang, he served as director of the Sinkiang College until his execution on Sheng's orders in 1943.

Umar Ali (Kirghiz, ?-1933):

Younger brother of Uthmān Ali, a native of the southern Tien Shan. Involved in Kizil Massacre of May, 1933. Killed during Kirghiz

seizure of Kashgar Old City from Tungan forces of Ma Chan-ts'ang on August 16th, 1933.

Uthmān 'Alī (Kirghiz, c.1903 - c.1935):

Leader of Kirghiz faction during Kashgar rebellion, 1933-34. Imprisoned at Kashgar, he was released in 1933 by Ma Shao-wu to command Kirghiz levies which later mutinied. Described by Fitzmaurice as a 'heavy opium smoker', Uthman was apparently not associated with either the YKP or the "Khotan Amirs". Rather he was an independent, bandit-like figure. Arrested in Kashgar and taken to Urumchi in 1935, he was, doubtless, executed on Sheng Shih-ts'ai's orders.

Uthmān Bātūr (Kazakh, 1899-1951):

Kirei Kazakh, native of the Altai region of northern Sinkiang. Rebelled against Sheng Shih-ts'ai in 1940. Forced to retreat to MPR in 1942, where he received aid from both the MPR and the USSR governments. Temporarily allied with ETR in 1945, he broke with the Kulja regime in 1946 and withdrew to the Pei-ta-shan. Later fought (at least nominally) for the KMT. Refused to accept CCP victory in 1949. Captured and executed by CCP in April, 1951.

Wang Tseng-shan (Hui, dates unknown).

Apparently a Tungan (Northwestern Hui). KMT Commissioner of Civil Affairs in the 1946-47 Sinkiang coalition government. Believed to have been associated with the CC Clique.

Wu Ai-chen (Aitchen K. Wu), (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Emissary from Nanking who attempted to mediate between Sheng Shih-ts'ai and Ma Chung-ying in 1933. Author of several books and articles on Sino-Soviet relations and Sinkiang.

Wu Chung-hsin (Han Chinese, 1884-1959):

Native of Anhwei. Military and political associate of Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek. Governor of Anhwei (1932); Kweichow (1935); Chairman of the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission (1936-44). Became Governor of Sinkiang under KMT in 1944-45. Associated with CC Clique.

Wu Tse-hsiang (Chaucer H. Wu), (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

KMT Special Commissioner for Foreign Affairs. Sent to Sinkiang in 1942. Active in negotiations with the Soviet Union during 1942-43.

Yang Tseng-hsin (Han Chinese, 1867-1928):

A native of Meng-tzu, Yunnan. Entered Imperial Civil Service in 1899. Served Ch'ing Administration in Kansu and Ningsia until his transfer to Sinkiang in 1908. In Sinkiang served as tao-t'ai Aksu, then as tao-t'ai, Urumchi, a post he held in 1911. Assumed de facto power from Yuan Ta-hua in March, 1912. Confirmed in this position by Peking later in same year. Yang remained Governor of Sinkiang from 1911 to 1928, when he was assassinated by Fan Yao-nan.

Yang Tsuan-hsü (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Military commandant of Ili region at the time of the 1911 revolution. Served as figurehead leader of the 1911 anti-Ch'ing rising in Ili. Later transferred by Yang Tseng-hsin to Kashgar, where he served as t'i-t'ai until August, 1915, at which time he was forced to resign by his own troops (replaced by Ma Fu-hsing, qv).

Yen Yu-shan (Han Chinese, dates unknown):

Sinkiang Commissioner for Reconstruction under Chin Shu-jen. Argued (unsuccessfully) for adoption of conciliatory policy towards Kumullik Muslim rebels.

Yüan Ta-hua (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Ch'ing Governor of Sinkiang at time of 1911 revolution. Handed over power to Yang Teng-hsin in March, 1912.

Yulbars Khān (Uighur, 1888 - still alive in 1969):

Native of Yangi Hissar, southern Sinkiang. At the age of 15 entered the service of Muhammad, Khān of Kumul. Later became senior adviser to Muhammad's son, Maqsud Shah (ascended throne in 1908). Gained title "Khān" in 1922. Fought throughout the 1931 rising against Chin Shu-jen, but was never anti-Chinese nor, apparently, a secessionist. Fled to Nanking in 1937, but returned to Kumul in 1946. Given series of senior appointments by KMT, but, like °Uthman Bātūr, refused to accept CCP victory. Fought guerilla action against PLA until winter of 1950-51, when he fled to Tibet. Finally arrived in Taiwan, where he retained the appointment of Governor of Sinkiang in exile, in May, 1951. Yulbars' wife died during his mid-winter escape across the Tibetan plateau; however, once in Taiwan he married a 19-year old girl. He had two sons by his first wife, one of whom was called Ya °qūb Beg in honour of the 19th century Sinkiang leader of that name. His other son was called Niyās, possibly in honour of his ally Khoja Niyās Hājji. He is believed to have died in the mid-1970s.

Yūnus Beg (Uighur, ? - c.1937):

A native of Kumul. Appointed joint tao-yin of Kashgar (with Su Chin-shou) in May, 1933. Later served as Interior Minister of the TIBET in 1933-34. Believed to have been killed by Sheng Shih-ts'ai at Urumchi in 1937. A partisan of Khoja Niyās Hājji.

Yūnus Hājji (Kazakh, ? -c.1940):

Kazakh leader from north-eastern slopes of Tien Shan. Ally of °Ali Beg Rahīm. Arrested by Sheng Shih-ts'ai in 1940, and apparently killed.

Yūsuf Jān (? Kirghiz, dates unknown):

Commander of "Tortunji", pro-Soviet irregulars in Ulughchat-Kashgar region, 1933-34. Reported to have been arrested and taken to Moscow (IOLR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941). His subsequent fate is unknown.

APPENDIX IIThe Sectarian Affiliations of the Sarikoli Tajik Muslims

The most important of the various heterodox sects within Islam are the Shī<sup>C</sup>a. The Shī<sup>C</sup>a, who predominate in Iran and who number perhaps one-sixth of all Muslims, belong to the "Party of <sup>C</sup>Alī". They reject the legitimacy of the first three orthodox caliphs, and believe that <sup>C</sup>Alī, the son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad, should have been his successor as caliph. The great majority of the Shī<sup>C</sup>a community believe that the spiritual mantle of Muhammad passed from father to son through twelve generations of the prophet's family. The eldest male heir of each succeeding generation was known as the Imām; the Shī<sup>C</sup>a hold that the Imām was both infallible, and able to intercede with God on behalf of the Shī<sup>C</sup>a community. The twelfth and last Shī<sup>C</sup>a Imām "disappeared" in 878 A.D.

A major split occurred within the Shī<sup>C</sup>a community between 760 and 765 A.D., when Ja<sup>C</sup>far, the sixth Imām, is said to have disinherited his eldest son Ismā<sup>C</sup>īl. The Imāmate duly passed to his younger son, Mūsa, in 765; however a group of Shī<sup>C</sup>a held that Ja<sup>C</sup>far had no right to disinherit his son Ismā<sup>C</sup>īl. They accepted Ismā<sup>C</sup>īl (who was by now dead) as the legitimate Imām. His followers, the Ismā<sup>C</sup>īlīs, are known as "Seveners" to distinguish them from the main branch of the Shī<sup>C</sup>a community whose adherents acknowledge twelve Imāms and are known as "Twelvers" .

Within the Ismā<sup>C</sup>īlī community a further important split was to take place. This cleavage occurred in 1094 A.D. when al-Musta<sup>C</sup>lī succeeded to the throne of the Ismā<sup>C</sup>īlī Fātimid Caliphate of Egypt instead of his brother Nizār. The partisans of Nizār (i.e. the Nizārīs) failed to dislodge al-Musta<sup>C</sup>lī from the Caliphate, and were forced out of Egypt. As multiple heretics the Nizārīs were obliged to retreat to remote mountain fastnesses;

they later attained renown as the Assassins of Alamūt. After the destruction of Alamūt by the Mongols in 1256, the spiritual mantle of the Ismā'īlī Nizārīs was taken on by the Khoja Muslims of India, who accept the Aga Khan as their living Imām. The supporters of al-Musta'īlī, victors of the Fāṭimid power struggle in Cairo, also ended up in India where they are known as Bohras to distinguish them from the Khojas. The "Mountain Tajiks" of the Soviet, Afghan, Kashmiri and Chinese Pamirs are members of the Khoja Ismā'īlī community.

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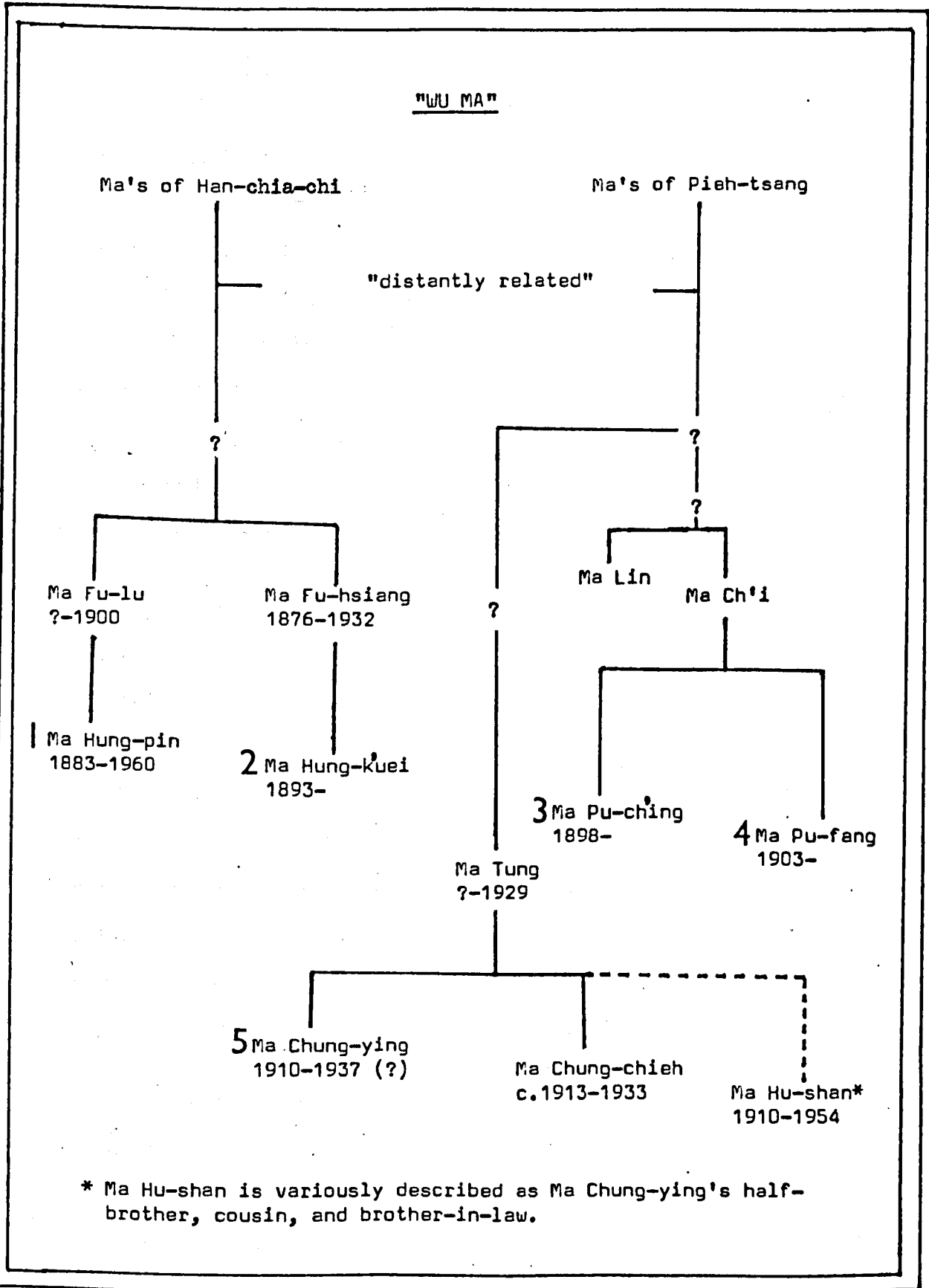
Appendix IIIThe "Wu Ma" ("Five Ma") Warlord Clique

The "Wu Ma" group of warlords which dominated much of Northwest China during the latter Republican period consisted of five Hui Muslim militarists related by family, but not necessarily by policy (though they tended to close ranks against outsiders).

The two eldest Ma's, Ma Hung-pin and Ma Hung-k'uei, were cousins, being scions of the powerful Ma family of Han-chia-chi, some 30 miles from Ho-chou. Distantly related to the Ma's of Han-chia-chi, the Ma family of Pieh-tsang, some 20 miles from Ho-chou, produced the remaining three "Wu Ma" warlords. These were the brothers Ma Pu-ching and Ma Pu-fang, and the scourge of Sinkiang, Ma Chung-ying, with whom they shared the same paternal great grandfather. Ma Chung-chieh, who was killed at Kitai in 1933, and Ma Hu-shan, the ruler of Tunganistan between 1934 and 1937, were also scions of the Ma family of Pieh-tsang (see Fig. 3).

Ma Hung-pin (1883-1960) was the son of Ma Fu-lu and the elder cousin of Ma Hung-k'uei. He entered military service in the Hsi-ning area c.1904. In 1926 he became Commander-in-Chief of Bandit Suppression in the Shensi-Kansu border region. Later he served under Feng Yü-hsiang. In 1929 he declared his allegiance to the KMT, and was given command of the Nationalist 7th Division. In 1930 he was appointed Governor of Kansu. He participated in the anti-Japanese war before being appointed Governor of Ningsia in 1948. He declared his allegiance to the CCP in 1949, and remained in China to serve in a variety of posts, including that of Deputy Governor of Kansu, under the Chinese Communists.





**FIG. -3:** The "Wu Ma" (Five Ma) Warlord Clique  
 (the "Wu Ma" warlords are numbered from one to five).

Ma Hung-k'uei (1893 - ?), the younger cousin of Ma Hung-pin. He completed his studies at the Kansu Military Academy in 1910, before entering military service under his father in 1913. In 1915 he was appointed bandit-suppression commissioner for the Kansu-Shensi-Mongolia border region. In 1925 he entered the service of Feng Yü-hsiang. In 1929 he defected from Feng's command and joined the Nationalists. He was rewarded by being given command of the KMT 64th Division. He became Governor of Ningsia in 1933, a post which he retained until 1948, when he was replaced by his cousin and transferred to the Governorship of Kansu. He fled China before the CCP takeover, and settled in southern California where he took up ranching and horse-breeding.

Ma Pu-ch'ing (1898 - ?), the elder brother of Ma Pu-fang. About 1916 he entered military service as commander of the Ninghai (Ningsia-Tsinghai) Army Cavalry Patrol's 1st Battalion. He subsequently became commander of the entire Ninghai Army. In 1928 he entered the service of Feng Yü-hsiang, but he was not penalised by the KMT following the defeat of the latter. In 1936 he became commander of the KMT 5th Cavalry Division. In 1937 he was also appointed director of the Sinkiang-Kansu highway.<sup>1</sup> In 1942 he was appointed reclamation commissioner for the Tsaidam region of Tsinghai province (then under the Governorship of his younger brother, Ma Pu-fang). He fled to Taiwan shortly before the CCP victory in 1949.

Ma Pu-fang (1903 - ?), the younger brother of Ma Pu-ch'ing, and son of Ma Ch'i, Governor of Tsinghai from 1929 to 1931. (Ma Ch'i was succeeded by his brother, Ma Lin, the uncle of Ma Pu-ch'ing and Ma Pu-fang). Ma Pu-fang studied to become a Muslim imam before entering military service in the Ninghai Army c.1920. By 1930 he had risen to become KMT Pacification Commissioner for Northwest China. In the same year he drove Ma Chung-ying's

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1. See above, p. 321

forces westwards towards the Sinkiang frontier (possibly by secret agreement with Chung-ying),<sup>2</sup> before participating in an invasion of Tibet in 1932. In 1931 he had been named Acting Governor of Tsinghai Province (under the titular Governorship of his uncle, Ma Lin). In 1938 he became full Governor, when Ma Lin became a member of the KMT State Council. Between 1938 and 1949 he retained full control over Tsinghai, whilst in 1945 he was he became concurrent deputy chairman of the KMT's Northwestern Headquarters and a member of the Nationalist Central Executive Committee. When Chang Chih-chung declared his allegiance to the CCP in 1949, Ma Pu-fang became (very briefly) his successor as C-in-C of the KMT Northwestern Headquarters. In late 1949, he fled to Hong Kong, and thence to Egypt, where he lived until 1957. Between 1957 and 1961 he lived in Saudi Arabia as Nationalist Chinese Ambassador.

Ma Chung-ying (c.1910-c.1937), the youngest and best-known of the "Wu Ma" warlords, is discussed in Appendix I, p. 531 above.

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2. See above, p. 163.

APPENDIX IVThe Constitution and Composition of the "Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan" (TIRET)

According to Fuad Kazak,<sup>1</sup> the draft constitution of the TIRET was drawn up on March 3rd, 1933, seven months before the founding of the TIRET at Kashgar Old City, but only a few days after the leadership of the Khotanlik Committee for National Revolution (CNR) had met at Khotan Old City to found their provisional administration (the "Government of the Khotan Amīrs"). Taken together with CNR domination of the TIRET administration, this factor indicates quite clearly that, despite the new and perhaps somewhat grandiose title ("Şarki Türkistan Türk-İslâm Cumhuriyeti") given to the separatist Turkic administration set up at Kashgar in November, 1933, the TIRET was, essentially, the "Government of the Khotan Amīrs" extended to include Kashgar Old City, Maralbashi and Aksu within its sphere of influence.

The full text of the draft constitution was published in the Kashgarlik paper Istiklâl ("Freedom") in 1933, and republished in the Berlin and Paris-based pan-Turanian journal Yaş Türkistan ("Long Live Turkestan");<sup>2</sup> an abridged German translation is given by Hayit in his Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China. (It is Hayit's abridged version which is translated into English in the present appendix).<sup>3</sup> Lists of the senior administrative personnel of the TIRET are provided by Hayit, as well as by Badruddin Wee-liang Hai in his Muslim Minority in China.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Kazak, F., Osttürkistan zwischen den Grossmächten (Königsberg, 1937), p. 20.
  2. Istiklâl (Kashgar), I, 2 (1933); Yaş Türkistan, 1934, 53, pp. 31-6; 54, pp. 32-5; 55, pp. 29-32.
  3. Hayit, op.cit., pp. 304-7.
  4. Hai, op.cit., pp. 105-6; cf. Hai's Tārīkh al-Muslimīn fī al-Şīn, pp. 125-6.

### Principles of the Constitution

1. The Republic of Eastern Turkestan is based on principles of the sharī'a and is ruled by the precepts of the Qur'ān which means happiness and dignity to us.
2. The state of Eastern Turkestan, based on the Republic, works for the well-being and peace of the nation. The state takes responsibility for protection against the aggression of others, and regulates the religious, national, cultural and economic affairs of the nation. For the fulfillment of the aspirations of the nation it looks to the Government in Nanking and to the League of Nations for the guarantee of its independence.

### Central Organisation

3. At the head of the state administration is the state president (Amīr al-mu'minīn) who rules on the basis of the sharī'a.
4. The state is founded on the basis of the nation, consensus, and the legislature. The will and wishes of the nation are expressed through the representatives of the people.

### Cabinet

5a. For the administration of the State a Cabinet will be formed in the capital under the chairmanship of the ruler of the faithful (Amīr al-mu'minīn). At its head is the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister will have 2 deputies. In the cabinet are nine ministers: Religion & Justice; Defence; Finance; External Affairs; Interior; Trade and Agriculture; Education; Religious Institutions and Health. The 9 ministers are divided into 2 groups: the first consists of National Defence and Trade, to which belong the Ministers for Defence, Foreign/External Affairs, Finance and Trade/Agriculture/Industry. This group is lead by the First Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet. The second group consists of the Administrative and Cultural Ministries, i.e. Interior,

Religious and Justice, Education, Religious Institutions and Health. This group is led by the Second Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet.

The Duties of the State President

6b. The State President of the Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan leads the Government and is the Grand-Father of the Government (Hukumetnīn bŭyŭk Atasī), Supreme Ruler, Supreme Commander-in-Chief, who is to serve the well-being, order and the future development of the religion, nation and fatherland.

6c. The State President is elected by the National Assembly for four years. But our present President, Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī, who struggled for the attainment of the freedom of Islam, of the fatherland and of the nation and gained independence, remains President for Life and is finally confirmed in this status by the whole nation and also by the soldiers. The State President nominates the Prime Minister and confirms the Cabinet of the State Administration. Note: When the National Assembly convenes, then the State President recommends the Prime Minister and the Ministers to the Assembly for confirmation.

6e. The State President will confirm the decisions of the Cabinet. In cases where he rejects these, he will recommend them to the Cabinet for renewed discussion. If differences arise between the State President and the Prime Minister or the Cabinet, then the Prime Minister resigns. The State President then organizes a new Cabinet. The State President will receive foreign embassies, missions and delegations, which are sent to Eastern Turkestan, in the presence of the Foreign Minister.

6h. The State President, as Supreme Commander-in-Chief of all soldiers, will command the army of Eastern Turkestan through the Prime Minister and the Minister of Defence.

6l. The State President, in his decisions confirming or rejecting the

resolutions of the Cabinet, will consult the majority, for the Islamic Government of Eastern Turkestan is based on advice and discussion.

#### Duties of the Prime Minister

7. The Prime Minister is the chief of all Ministers. Because of this he has the right to concern himself with the affairs of each minister. He is also Chairman of the Cabinet. The Prime Minister calls a meeting/assembly of the Ministers once a week, in extraordinary cases as often as he wishes, which is termed the Cabinet. All measures of the Government are deliberated at such meetings and resolutions are made concerning them. These are called "Resolutions of the Cabinet" and are then laid before the National Assembly. If the resolutions are given a majority (vote), they become law. When the National Assembly is not present they are laid before the King (padishah).<sup>5</sup> When the King or Ruler approves the Resolutions of the Cabinet, then they also become law. The resolutions of the Cabinet are also designated Rules (nizāmna).

#### Departments of the National Administration

8. Because the State is based on the highest principles of Islam, a Ministry for Religion and Justice will be formed. The Justice Minister will be counted as Shaykh al-Islam. A Religious Department will be formed in the Justice Ministry, which will be termed the "Department of Announcement" at whose head will be the Mufti. The Ministry of Justice functions as a liaison organ between the Jurisdiction and the Government. The Magistrates of the regions will not be elected. The Minister of Justice (Shaykh al-Islam) and the Supreme Magistrate will choose the chairmen of the courts. The magistrates will be chosen only by the Justice Minister. The Minister of Justice must take responsibility for the fairness of the magistrates through his inspectors.

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5. Note that the office of "State President" is here confused with Kingship.

The Justice Minister is responsible for the conformity of the laws to the sharī'a. One of the duties of the Justice Minister is the founding and supervision of prisons, the hygienic and cultural conditions of which must correspond to the moral improvement of the prisoners.

#### The Duties of the Ministry of Defence

9. The first duty of the Ministry of Defence is the organisation of an army, which must be able to defend the territory against foreign armies. For this, a military school will be founded. This military school will be started by highly qualified and foreign specialists. It will build military manufacturing plants needed by the army. It will choose military observers to find out the military preparations and objectives of foreign states. An important duty for Eastern Turkestan is the creation of a military college from abroad. This armed forces college will be made up of teachers specialising in infantry, cavalry, artillery, aeroplanes and tanks. Also, chemical supplies and experts will be brought in and defence armaments procured.<sup>6</sup>

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6. In the original constitution paragraphs 10-16 describe the duties and responsibilities of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Interior, Religious Institutions, Finance, Trade and Agriculture, Education and Health. Paragraphs 17-29 describe the administrative structure of the regions, districts, towns and village communities. Paragraph 30 deals with the arrangement of the Control Organs of the Government which have the right to appoint, dismiss and veto all state positions.



	<u>Governmental Position</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>	<u>Place of origin</u>
1	President and "Supreme Commander"	Khoja Niyas Hājji	Uighur	Kumul
2	Prime Minister	* Abd al-Baqī Šābit Dāmullāh	Uighur	Kulja or Khotan
3	Foreign Minister	Muhammed Qasim Jān Hājji	Uighur	Khotan
4	Justice Minister	Sharif Qarī	Uighur	Khotan
5	Interior Minister	Yūnus Beg	Uighur	Kumul
6	Health Minister*	* Abdullāh Khān	Uzbek?	Tashkent
7	Defence Minister	Sultān Beg Bakhtiar Beg	Uzbek?	Margelan
8	Education Minister	* Abd al-Karīm Khān Makhdūm	Uighur	Kashgar
9	Finance Minister	* All Akhund Bai	Uighur	Kashgar
10	Religious Institutions Minister (waql)	Shams al-Dīn Turdi Hājji	Uighur?	Kashgar?
11	Trade and Commerce Minister	Šādiq Beg	?	?
12	Khotan Amīr (with ministerial rights)	Nūr Ahmad Jān Bugra	Uighur	Khotan
13	Communications Minister	* Abdullāh Dāmullāh	?	?
14	President of National Assembly	Jāhir Beg	?	?
15	Secretary of National Assembly	Šūfi Zāda	?	?

\* Abdullāh Khān was also Chairman of the Independence Society.

Table 3: Ministers of the "Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan"

APPENDIX VSelected Documents Relating to the TIRET1) Letter from Khoja Niyās Hājjī to HMCCK, c. 22nd October 1933,

Following his retreat from Toksun to Aksu in the autumn of 1933, Khoja Niyās Hājjī sent an appeal for assistance to the Government of India through the British Consulate General at Kashgar. The Khoja's letter is important, because it indicates that, at least for a brief period, one of the two major Kumullik leaders (the other being Yulbars Khān) was seriously prepared to contemplate the secession of Sinkiang from the Chinese Republic. The political duplicity of Khoja Niyās is apparent in this appeal to the British - it must be remembered that whilst penning this missive he was negotiating for arms supplies from the Soviet Union as well as being simultaneously Urumchi's "Chief Defence Commissioner for Southern Sinkiang" and titular president of the "Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan" - as is his political naïveté (note the use of his mutually contradictory Chinese and TIRET titles in an overtly secessionist appeal to a foreign power). Had Sheng Shih-ts'ai been aware of the Khoja's appeal to HMCCK (or at least of its stridently anti-Chinese and anti-Soviet terminology), it is unlikely that the Khoja would have survived from 1934 to 1937 (when he was finally arrested and executed) as Vice-Chairman of the Provincial Government at Urumchi.

Communication to HMCCK

From: President of the Republic Pao-wei ssu-ling Khoja Niyās Hājjī

'History proves the fact that for more than one thousand years the yoke of this country was on the shoulders of Muslim kings. It is now 58 years since the Chinese Government treacherously took away our independence, and with cruelty brought us under their subjugation. During the 58 years of most oppressive tyrannical rule, the proud atrocious Chinese by showering incessant hardships and cruelties reduced us to our present pitiable state. The proud Chinese officials looked down at us with disdain. Our creed and religion were contemptible objects to their sight. The Chinese deprived us of citizenship rights. The Chinese did not acquaint us

with science, art, industry and trade. The Chinese went so far that they closed the only press which we brought for our religious books to be printed. Because of mismanagement by the Chinese 80% of the population was unemployed. The tyranny of the Chinese kept us uncultured, uncivilised and brought evil days on us, which is well-known to the world. The oppressed Muslims of the Eastern Turkestan bore with patience all the tyrannies and cruelties of the Chinese up to the present time and did not create any trouble nor did they complain to any foreign power. Not satisfied with the infliction of all the miseries quoted above, they intended to take away our daughters. The Chinese sold our trade to the Bolsheviks. From all sides Bolshevik agents began to pour in. They started communist propaganda. We heard about the tragic fate of the Muslims of Western Turkestan...The Bolsheviks slaughtered a large number of Muslims in Western Turkestan, the remainder were turned into atheists by dint of force and cruelty, thus was the religion of Islam trampled. We, fearing the fatal infection of Bolshevism, and secondly unable to bear any longer the tyranny of the Chinese, rose and fought without arms against the Chinese. The All-Merciful Lord placed the crown of victory on our heads, and we came into possession of numerous arms from the conquered Chinese. The Chinese becoming helpless in avenging themselves on us, gave vent to their anger on the Muslims of Turfan, by slaughtering and burning their houses. The Muslims of other places becoming aware of this barbaric deed of the Chinese raised the banner of revolt from Altai to Khotan. The Chinese of Urumchi desired peace and the resignation of Chin Shu-jen, but the latter possessed no other idea except fighting - in the end he was defeated and fled. After this the Chinese sent their representatives from Urumchi for peace negotiations. We, after drafting the terms such that all powers were vested in ourselves, provisionally accepted peace. The terms of the

peace were so drafted that from one hundred kilometres from Urumchi on this side, the whole of Eastern Turkestan was solely and wholly under our rule, and this peace pact was certified by the Chinese of Urumchi. The Chinese army at Urumchi are in principle followers of Bolsheviks.

• It might be known to your Honour, that when the Bolsheviks came into existence, there was a certain Russian general, Dotoff Annekoff (Czar Party) who fought against the Bolsheviks but was defeated, and he took shelter in Urumchi, and was then handed over to the Bolsheviks. It is not in the law of any government to hand over a man who has sought asylum. The Chinese being now unable to fight any more with us, the Bolsheviks have entered the war arena. The Bolshevik Red Shirts are excellently armed and are allowed to pass Ili and Chuguchak. And these soldiers have begun playing havoc with the Muslims. The Bolsheviks have supplied the Chinese with armoured cars and other arms. For this reason the Chinese have captured and burned 14 towns. After our peace the Bolsheviks remained silent for the time being. Just now in Moscow some thousands of Chinese soldiers are intending to leave for Eastern Turkestan. The Muslims of Chuguchak have petitioned me for help, saying that unless the Chinese are totally turned out of the country the spirit of communism will soon be spread throughout Sinkiang. Therefore we look and expect for help from the British Government to save us from the terrible and infectious wave of communism. Moreover we pray for arms from your government and in return the British Government can receive the products of this country, i.e. silk, wool and skins. The British Government may become our guide, and we request the Government may spread education among our masses!.

October 1933/Rajab 1352

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1. IOLR, PZ.98.1934 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 23/11/1934).

- 2) Agreement signed between Khoja Niyās Hājjī and the provincial authorities at Urumchi under the auspices of Soviet officials at Irkeshtam in February, 1934.

Little is known of the agreement signed by Khoja Niyās Hājjī at Irkeshtam in February, 1934, as the official text was never released. A clear idea of the contents of the agreement can be derived, however, from the minutes of a TIRET cabinet meeting held at Yangi Hissar on 2nd March, 1934 under the chairmanship of Şābit Dāmullāh. The record of this cabinet session runs as follows:

'From the statement of Şābit 'Abd al-Bāqī Dāmullāh based on Khoja Niyās Hājjī's letter of February 25th, addressed to the Prime Minister of the TIRET and thereby to the TIRET cabinet, it is evident that Khoja Niyās Hājjī has made the following agreement with the Soviet Union'.

1. Khoja Niyās Hājjī will immediately break his connections with the government in Nanking and declare Eastern Turkestan a province with internal autonomy under the protection of Russia.
2. He will bring to an end the independence of Eastern Turkestan, dissolve the government of the Islamic Republic and hand over the members of that government to the government under Sheng Shih-ts'ai in Urumchi.
3. After his resignation from the post of State President Khoja Niyās Hājjī will be named Civil Governor of Sinkiang for life.
4. Khoja Niyās Hājjī will take various measures to subordinate the national forces of the territory of Eastern Turkestan to Sheng Shih-ts'ai.
5. Khoja Niyas Hajji will put his own soldiers, who consist of Kumulliks and Turfanliks and are under the orders of Mahmūd Sau-chang, at the disposal of Sheng, in order to disarm the national armies (Milli ordularni) of the Tungans, Khotanliks, Uzbeks, Kirghiz and Kazakhs and in order to impose order in Eastern Turkestan (Sinkiang) will march from Urumchi to Altī-Shahar (i.e. Southern Sinkiang), in order to help the Manchurian, Chinese and Russian soldiers.

6. The agreement between Governor Sheng Shih-ts'ai and the Soviet Union about the repatriation of the Manchurian troops from the Soviet Union to Eastern Turkestan remains valid.
  7. All foreign military advisers who are in the service of the TIRET are to be immediately dismissed and expelled from Eastern Turkestan.
  8. The Soviet government will supply help for the reconstruction and development of Eastern Turkestan.
  9. The Soviet government undertakes to defend Eastern Turkestan against attack from Inner China (Nanking), Manchuria or any other powers, and against any possible dangers.
  10. After the restoration of order a regular modern army will immediately be organised. To this end the Soviet government will establish a military college and will make available officers.
  11. With reference to questions of political and commercial co-operation a special treaty will be signed between the government in Urumchi and the Soviet Union.<sup>2</sup>
- 3) Decision of TIRET cabinet meeting held at Yangi Hissar on 2nd March, 1934, regarding agreement reached between Khoja Niyas Hajji and the Urumchi authorities under the auspices of Soviet officials at Irkeshtam in February, 1934.

The cabinet decided:

1. The activities of Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī, in journeying without a mandate from the Nation to Irkeshtam at the invitation of the Soviet government and in signing with the Bolsheviks an agreement which was unlawful and against the interests of the Nation, are regarded as treason against the Turks of Turkestan.
2. The 12 (sic, only 11 are given) point treaty between Khoja Niyas Hajji and the Soviet government is declared unlawful.

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2. Yās Turkistan, 71 (1935) pp. 19-25 (with a photocopy of the protocol), translated into German in Hayit, Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China, pp. 310-311.

3. The national independence of Eastern Turkestan was attained through countless sacrifices over many years, and now the attempts to liquidate it means nothing more than the destruction of the Turks of Turkestan. Because of this the Turks of Eastern Turkestan are prepared to make every effort to defend their national independence. Khoja Niyās Hājji is damned by his treachery.

4. The Turks of Eastern Turkestan will never accept Bolshevik rule. Because of this the protest of the Nation will be communicated to the government of the USSR through the Soviet Consulate in Kashgar.

5. The occupation of Eastern Turkestan by Soviet troops is contrary to international law and is an aggression against the Turks of Eastern Turkestan previously unheard of in the history of Red Imperialism. Therefore, all consulates in Kashgar will be requested to communicate the illegal behaviour of the Red Bolsheviks to their governments.

6. The Soviets mean to occupy Eastern Turkestan using the meaningless treaty with Khoja Niyās Hājji. Therefore the Foreign Ministry and the Supreme Commander-in-Chief must meet (to draw up) defence measures.<sup>3</sup>

7. Because of the present difficult situation all members of the Nation must be mobilised.

8. Sharif Khān (Kazakh rebel leader in Altai region) must immediately be ordered to prevent the incursion of the Red Bolshevik Manchurian-Chinese from Russian territory, through Chuguchak to Eastern Turkestan.

9. The Great National Assembly of Eastern Turkestan must be called (into session) on 10th March, 1934.

10. This resolution of the cabinet concerning the treaty between Khoja Niyas Hajji and the Soviet government must be laid before the Great National Assembly.

11. In the case of Khoja Niyās Hājji not heeding the request of the cabinet and not renouncing his plans, then the question of the dismissal of the State President from his position of Supreme Commander-in-Chief is to be left to the Great National Assembly.

3. Khoja Niyās was, in fact, Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the TIRET at this time. See clause 11 below.

12. We must appeal to Nanking,<sup>4</sup> to Japan and to the League of Nations to protect our rights.

Signed: Prime Minister

Şābit <sup>c</sup> Abd al-Bāqī Dāmullāh

Secretary

Şūfī Zāda <sup>s</sup>

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4. A remarkable idea, since the TIRET sought actively to secede from the Chinese Republic!
5. Yas Turkistan, 71 (1935) pp. 19-25. Translated into German in Hayit, Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China, pp. 312-13. Hayit comments:

Madness such as Khoja Niyās Hājjī's has been a common occurrence in the history of the Turks. One often finds that, when someone attains supreme power, then he believes he can decide everything without consulting his fellows.

In fact, far from providing an overall comment on the history of the Turkish peoples in Central Asia, Khoja Niyās Hājjī's actions serve simply to illustrate the lack of social, ideological, and regional unity amongst the Turkic peoples of Sinkiang in the 1930s.



APPENDIX VIComposition of the "East Turkestan Republic"

Little is known of the ethnic composition and administrative structure of the ETR, though a relatively complex diagram of the latter (which may be open to some question) is appended to Chang Ta-chün's 1964 study, 'Hsin-chiang I-ning shih-pien', etc.,<sup>1</sup> a simplified version of which is provided in fig. 4 (opposite).

By examining this diagram it is possible to draw certain provisional conclusions concerning the ethnic composition of the ETR. Thus, we know that the ETR President (or "Chairman"), was the Uzbek, °Ali Khān Türe, whilst the two Vice-Presidents were Uighur (Hākīm Beg Khoja) and Russian (A. Polinov). Directly responsible to these three officials were eleven departments (ten ministries and one banking division, numbered I to XI on fig. 4), and a "Seventeen Man Commission" (presumed to be Lee Fu-hsiang's "National Council",<sup>2</sup> numbered 1 to 17 on fig. 4). A consistent claim both of the ETR and of its partisans has been that the revolutionary administration set up at Kulja in 1945 'represented all nationalities within the three regions'.<sup>3</sup> Yet an examination of the ministers and members of council shown opposite must cast some doubt on this proposition. Thus, of the eleven departmental heads (see Table 4) recorded by Chang, at least nine were clearly Muslim (though the ethnicity of seven of these remains

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1. Chang Ta-chün, Hsin-chiang I-ning shih-pien yü wei Tung Tu-erh-szu-tan kung-ho-kuo ch'eng-li chi ch'i hui-mieh (Sinkiang's I-ning Affair: The Establishment and Collapse of the "East Turkestan Republic"), pp. 327-8.

2. See above, pp. 407-8.

3. ibid.

東 土 耳 其 人 民 共 和 國

EAST TURKESTAN (PEOPLES') REPUBLIC

ETR CHAIRMAN:  
Ali Khan Türe  
(Uzbek)

席主  
熱艾力汗條

ETR VICE-CHAIRMEN:  
Hakim Beg Khoja\*  
(Uighur)  
A. Polinov  
(Russian)

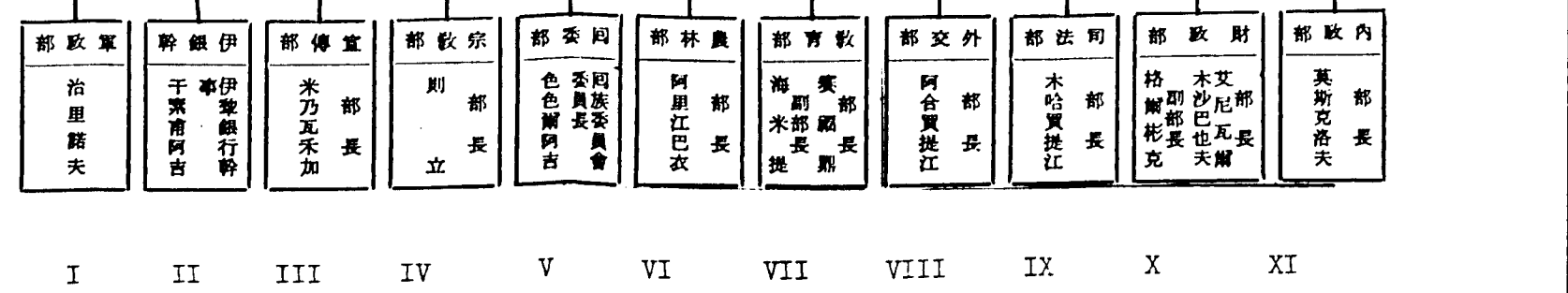
席主 副  
艾青木拜 波里諾夫

Seventeen Man Commission

人七十員委

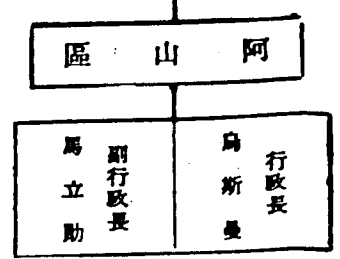
瓦克斯阿吉	洛莫斯夫克	爾阿不海熱衣	甫加	艾尼瓦爾	居買阿洪	沙力江巴夷	顧依木江	司阿克拜克	江買克蘇木	阿合買提	滿累兒	波里諾夫	克力木阿吉	甫買克蘇木	阿不都力烏	排阿力海力	阿木都不提	克艾青木加拜
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17		

Chief-of-Staff  
江木合拉  
總參謀長 本參謀部  
ARMED FORCES



- I. Ministry of War
- II. Bank of Ili
- III. Ministry of Propaganda
- IV. Ministry of Religion
- V. Ministry of the Muslim Commission
- VI. Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
- VII. Ministry of Education
- VIII. Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- IX. Ministry of Justice
- X. Ministry of Finance
- XI. Ministry of Internal Affairs

Ashan (Shara Sume) Region



ADMINISTRATIVE HEAD:  
Uthman Batür  
(Kazakh)

區城塔  
T'a-cheng (Chuguchak) Region

Special Representative of Ili Administrative Area

員專政行區黎伊  
吉台縣西阿

Administrative Districts

區化迪  
Ti-hua (Urumchi) Region:  
Hu-t'u-pi and Sui-lai  
(Manass) Counties

區車莎  
Supposed Link with So-che  
(Yarkand) Region: P'u-li  
(Tashkurgan) County

Fig. 4: ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE ETR (simplified) as according to CHANG TA-CHÜN.

\* The Chinese characters read: Ai-ch'ing-mu-pai. This is presumably an unusually distorted transliteration of Hakim Bai.

I	Minister of War	Polinov	Russian
II	Executive Secretary of the Bank of Ili	Khān Sūfi Hājī	(Muslim)
III	Minister of Propaganda	Manwar Khoja (?)	(Muslim)
IV	Minister of Religion	Tse-li (?)	(Muslim)
V	Minister of the Muslim Commission	Se-se-erh Hājī	(Muslim)
VI	Minister of Agriculture and Forestry	Ali Jān Bai	(Muslim)
VII	Minister of Education	Saif al-Dīn 'Azīz	(Uighur Muslim)
VIII	Minister of Foreign Affairs	Ahmadjān Qāsim	(Uighur Muslim)
IX	Minister of Justice	Muhammadjān	(Muslim)
X	Minister of Finance	Anwar Nūsa Bai	(Muslim)
XI	Minister of Internal Affairs	Moskelov (?)	(Russian ?)

Table 4: Ministers of the EMR

problematical),<sup>4</sup> whilst the remaining two seem to have been Russian.<sup>5</sup> Certainly there are no obviously Han Chinese, Mongol or Tungusic representatives, and the participation of Hui (Tungani) Muslims remains in doubt.<sup>6</sup>

A similar examination of the "Seventeen Man Commission" reveals the following pattern of ethnicity:

1	Hākim Beg Khoja	Uighur Muslim.
2	A-mu-tou-pu-t'i	Ethnic group and religion not known.
3	A-li-hai-li-pai-t'i	Possibly <sup>c</sup> Ali Khalīfa? Almost certainly a Muslim.
4	<sup>c</sup> Abdullāh Wu-fu-mai (?) Qāsim	Clearly a Muslim, though the "Wu-fu-mai" remains problematical.
5	Karīm Hājī	Muslim.
6	Polinov	Russian.
7	Mansūr	Muslim. Probably an Uzbek. <sup>7</sup>
8	Ahmadjān Mai (?) Qāsim	Uighur Muslim. The "Mai" is probably an error in transliteration.
9	Ssu-a-k'e-pai-k'e	Ethnic group and religion not known.

- 
4. Table 4, No's IV and V might possibly be Hui Muslims. The remaining five whose ethnicity remains unclear (No's II, III, VI, IX and X), are almost certainly Turkic.
5. The Minister of War is given as Chih-li-no-fu (as opposed to Po-li-no-fu in Fig. 4, ETR Vice-Chairman), but this is almost certainly an erroneous transliteration. Polinov was both Vice-Chairman of the ETR and Minister of War. The Minister of Internal Affairs (Mo-ssu-k'e-lo-fu) was almost certainly Russian (possibly Moskelov?)
6. Chang Ta-chün names a seven man commission attached to the "Minister of the Muslim Commission" (op.cit., pp. 327-8). Two members of this commission (Ma San-ta-jen and Ma Liang-pao) were almost certainly Hui Muslims.
7. Lee Fu-hsiang, op.cit., p. 73.

10	Lai-i-mu-chiang	Probably Rahīmjan, Muslim.
11	Sha-li-chiang bai-i	Probably Sharīfjan Bai, Muslim.
12	Chu-mai A-hung	Jumay <sup>o</sup> (Jamī <sup>c</sup> ) Akhund, Muslim; Possibly Hui?
13	Anwar	Muslim
14	Fucha Afandi	Mongol, but probably Muslim. <sup>8</sup>
15	Abu Hayir Türe	Probably <sup>c</sup> Abd al-Hayir Türe, Kazakh Muslim.
16	Mo-ssu-k'e-lo-fu	Probably Russian (see fn. 5).
17	Waqqās Hājji	Muslim.

It is immediately apparent that there are no Han Chinese names in this list, whilst the presence of Buddhist Mongols or Tungusic peoples remains very much in doubt. On the other hand, out of 17 commission members, no fewer than 13 are definitely Muslim (No. 12, Jumay<sup>o</sup> Akhund, might possibly be a Hui). No mention of Lo Tsu, the Han Chinese who is reported to have died in the plane crash which eliminated all the senior ETR leadership but Saif al-Dīn, is made in either list.<sup>9</sup>

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8. See above, p. 397, fn. 113.

9. See above, p. 496, fn. 149.

APPENDIX VIIBritish Consuls-General at Kashgar, 1909-48

November 1909	Sir George Macartney*
August 1918	Col. P.T. Etherton
May 1922	N. Fitzmaurice
July 1922	C.P. Skrine
September 1924	Col. Lyall
July 1925	Maj. Gillan
October 1927	F. Williamson
October 1930	G. Sherriff
?	N. Fitzmaurice
November 1933	Col. J.W. Thomson-Glover
October 1936	Capt. K.C. Packman
October 1938	Maj. H.H. Johnson
November 1940	E. Shipton
October 1942	M.C. Gillett
March 1945	H.G. Etherington Smith
November 1946	E. Shipton

\* Sir George Macartney had served as British representative in Kashgar since 1890. The Kashgar Consulate was officially established in August, 1908, when he was on leave in Britain.

Sources: Skrine and Nightingale, op.cit.; IOLR, L/P&S/12/2345; IOLR, L/P&S/12/2349; IOLR, L/P&S/12/2350.

## SCHEMES OF ROMANISATION

Chinese: Wade-Giles. Chinese place names have been romanised according to the principles set forth by G. William Skinner in his Modern Chinese Society (Stanford, California, 1973). They are given in either of two forms: 'in Post Office spelling, which never involves hyphenation, or in Wade-Giles transcription, which never combines syllables into an unhyphenated word'. Post Office spelling is used only in cases where that form has been 'securely established as a scholarly idiom' (e.g. Soochow rather than Su-chou); in all other cases Wade-Giles is used.

Arabic: Arabic words (and Muslim personal names) have been transliterated according to the system followed by D. Cowan in his Modern Literary Arabic (Cambridge, CUP, 1958), with the exception that the letter ʿayn is written thus: ʿ.

Turkic: In so far as has been possible, words and place names in the Turkic dialects of Sinkiang have been transliterated according to the new Turkish alphabet employed in Turkey (Moran, Türkçe-İngilizce Sözlük, Istanbul, 1945). Muslim personal names, however, have been transliterated in the Arabic fashion, thus ʿUthmān not Osman, etc. Russianised Muslim personal names have been presented in their original forms (e.g. omitting the Russian patronymic -ov and the use of dzh for the Arabic j, thus Ahmadjān Qāsim, not Akhmedzhan Kasimov), except where established custom dictates otherwise (Sultan Galiyev, Faizulla Khodzhayev, etc.). Within Sinkiang, Turkic place names (Kumul, Kulja, etc.), have been preferred to their Chinese alternatives (Ha-mi, I-ning). For a list of 'Some Sinkiang Place Names and their Alternatives' see Lattimore, Pivot of Asia, Appendix VIII.

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the following categories:

1. Western Languages: Books and Pamphlets
2. Western Languages: Articles
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4. Chinese and Japanese: Books
5. Chinese and Japanese: Articles
  
6. Turkish and Arabic Works
  
7. Official Archives and Records
  
8. General Reference Works, etc.



ABBREVIATIONS USED IN BIBLIOGRAPHY

<u>CAJ</u>	<u>Central Asiatic Journal</u> (Wiesbaden)
<u>CAR</u>	<u>Central Asian Review</u> (London)
<u>FEER</u>	<u>Far Eastern Economic Review</u> (Hong Kong)
<u>FES</u>	<u>Far Eastern Survey</u> (New York)
<u>GJ</u>	<u>Geographical Journal</u> (London)
<u>HRAF</u>	<u>Human Relations Area Files</u> (New Haven)
<u>IOLR</u>	<u>India Office Library and Records</u> (London)
<u>JAH</u>	<u>Journal of Asian History</u> (Wiesbaden)
<u>JPRS</u>	<u>Joint Publications Research Service</u> (New York)
<u>JRCAS</u>	<u>Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society</u> (London)
<u>MEJ</u>	<u>Middle East Journal</u> (Washington DC)
<u>MW</u>	<u>Moslem World</u> (now <u>The Muslim World</u> , Hartford, Conn.)
<u>NYT</u>	<u>New York Times</u>
<u>PRO</u>	Public Records Office
<u>REI</u>	<u>Revue des Études Islamiques</u> (Paris)
<u>RMM</u>	<u>Revue du Monde Musulman</u> (Paris)

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