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CHAPTER III Chinese Policies in Sinkiang

The Crushing of the Moslem Rebellion

BEFORE Sinkiang became a Chinese province in 1884 this western borderland was known to the Chinese as *Hsi Yü* ("the Western Region"). The story of China's relations with this area is a long one. As early as 115 B.C. Emperor Wu Ti of the Han Dynasty began to send envoys to *Hsi Yü* with lavish presents, and by 36 B.C. nearly all the kingdoms of *Hsi Yü* had recognized the suzerainty of the Chinese Emperor. In the late Han Dynasty about fifty kingdoms were asked to send hostages to China, some of whom were returned, with Chinese wives or Chinese troops, to succeed to the local thrones. One kingdom was set against another in a policy of "divide and rule." Military expeditions were sent — the largest, under General Li Kuang-li, comprising 100,000 troops — and a series of able commanders, aided by cavalry and military colonization, continued to keep order among the oases of the Tarim Basin up to the beginning of the third century A.D., when the Han Dynasty fell. ⁴⁵

After several centuries of confusion, a Chinese reconquest of *Hsi Yü* took place under the T'ang Dynasty when the Western Turks were defeated in Jungaria. The Chinese Emperor established two military governorships, one north and one south of the Tien Shan, and from 657 to 751 the oasis kingdoms acknowledged Chinese suzerainty. ⁴⁵

Chinese policy during the T'ang period was more aggressive and resourceful than it had been under the Han Dynasty. Embassies were sent not primarily to offer bribes but to secure information. Instead of individual hostages, large numbers of Iranians were brought from *Hsi Yü* to Kansu and Shensi as settlers. ⁴⁵

Not only were Iranian soldiers used in military campaigns but Iranian and Uighur generals were appointed in the Imperial Service. Military and civil administrations were expanded and developed on both sides of the Tien Shan. By 742 there was a Chinese frontier army with a total strength of 490,000 men and more than 80,000 horses, and ten marshals had been appointed to supervise the frontier military bases. Then, in a battle near the Talas River in 751, the Prince of Tashkent, aided by Arabs, disastrously defeated the Chinese, and the Inner Asian kingdoms were freed from Chinese rule. ^{1 46}

The next Chinese reconquest of *Hsi Yü* was under the Manchus in the second half of the eighteenth century; and after the Yakub Beg rebellion during the latter part of the nineteenth century Sinkiang became a Chinese province. Manchu policy in *Hsi Yü* was militarily much weaker than that of the Han Dynasty, and politically inferior to that of the T'ang. The crude and cruel nature of the Manchu policy was shown by their unprecedented massacres in Jungaria and in the Uighur revolts in the Tarim Basin which culminated in the Yakub Beg rebellion. ⁴⁶

For the suppression of this rebellion, the Chinese (Manchu) Government for the first time in history resorted to foreign loans. In 1876 Tso Tsung-t'ang, a Chinese general from Hunan who had already done much to subdue the Taipings and prove himself loyal to the Manchu Imperial Court, was appointed commander in chief of the Sinkiang expedition. His second in command was Liu Ching-t'ang, who proved himself so able that later he became the first governor of Sinkiang. At Suchow in Kansu he accumulated a stock of grain large enough to last his army for two years. When his army reached Komul, Barkul, and Kuchengtze, it was divided into two groups. The best soldiers remained in the regular army, while the less able-bodied garrisoned the three cities, and, as colonists, raised their own food by farming. ⁴⁶

Liu Ching-t'ang, continuing the westward advance, captured Urumchi and Manass. His troops then joined another column

¹ Fan Wen-lan and others, *A Short General History of China*, Shanghai, 1947, p. 279 (in Chinese). (46)

south of the Tien Shan, and Kharashahr, Toksun, and Turfan fell in quick succession in 1877. Yakub Beg, then at Kurla, committed suicide upon receiving this news. In the autumn of 1877, Kucha, Bai, Aksu, and Uch Turfan were taken by the forces under the overall command of Tso Tsung-t'ang. In the beginning of 1878 the four western cities of Kashgar, Yarkand, Yangi Hissar, and Khotan were also taken. ² The people, who had been too heavily taxed by Yakub Beg to sympathize with his regime, were glad to welcome Tso's army. ⁴⁷

Before the Sinkiang campaign was completed, however, there had been a serious debate in China as to its real worth. Li Hung-chang, the Viceroy of Chihli (now Hopei), and Pao Yuan-sheng, the Governor of Shansi, believed that the reconquest of Sinkiang should be abandoned in order to concentrate energy on coastal defense. Tso Tsung-t'ang, on the other hand, strongly advocated the continuation and completion of the land campaign in the Northwest, and even pointed out the great danger of not taking and garrisoning Urumchi. ⁴⁷

According to Li and Pao, "Sinkiang is the limb but coastal defense is the heart of China. The capital is near the sea, and is closely linked with coastal defense. In case the capital is lost, there would be no use in holding Sinkiang. The Northwest land expedition therefore is not so urgent nor so important as coastal defense."³ Second, it would be financially difficult and militarily risky to push the campaign beyond Suchow. The suppression of the Taipings had already heavily drained the national treasury, and the demands of a Sinkiang campaign would raise serious financial problems. As time went on, it was argued, the chances of military success would decrease.⁴ ⁴⁷

According to this view it was almost impossible to look after the defense of both the coast and the northwest land frontier, and to keep Sinkiang would in any case be a burden to China,

³ Yao Hsin-an, "Development of Sinkiang policy toward the end of the Ch'ing Dynasty," in *Hsi Pei Yen Chiu* (Northwestern Research), Peiping, 1932, No. 3, p. 32 (in Chinese).

⁴ Yao Hsin-an, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-29.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* ⁴⁷

because Sinkiang was not a revenue-yielding region and would have to be heavily subsidized by the Imperial treasury. Sinkiang would also be a disadvantage in international relations, because China was not strong enough to ward off Russia, Britain, Persia and Turkey, all of which had interests in Jungaria or the Tarim Basin. It would be more practical to give up Sinkiang than to attempt to keep it temporarily. In this connection, the unwarranted fear of Persia and Turkey is an interesting revelation of the limitations of the factual knowledge available to the Manchu Court. ⁴⁸

Li Hung-chang therefore advised the Imperial Court to withdraw the Northwest expedition and to settle some of the troops as colonists, not in Sinkiang but in Kansu, in the Anhsi and Tun-huang areas, where they would be available as a permanent frontier militia. The local governments of Ili, Urumchi, Kashgar, and other areas should be acknowledged as Chinese protectorates or tributaries, similar to Annam, Korea, or the Miao, Yao, and Tai tribal "principalities" on the borders of Yunnan, Kweichow and Szechuan. ⁴⁸

In direct opposition to Li Hung-chang's policy of abandoning the Sinkiang expedition, Tso Tsung-t'ang vehemently advocated the suppression of the Yakub Beg rebellion and the preservation of Sinkiang. Tso's reasons may be summarized as follows: Sinkiang was of the utmost strategic importance to North China, in that the defense of Peking had to rely on the military posts at Kalgan, Uliassutai and Kobdo, and the defense of Mongolia depended on the security of Sinkiang. China's seaboard was not threatened by the foreign powers — which were interested only in obtaining commercial privileges, and not in the occupation of any territory which would involve them in military and civil administrative expenses. In order to have a firm hold on Sinkiang it would be necessary to keep Urumchi, as well as Barkul and Komul to the east and Chuguchak to the northwest. Tso argued that Jungaria was strategically more important than the Tarim Basin, and therefore he would not listen to any idea of retrenchment until these posts in northern Sinkiang were captured and well administered. ⁴⁸

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Tso was genuinely convinced of the importance of Sinkiang. When the British Minister in Peking suggested to the Manchu court that Yakub Beg's realm might be treated as China's protectorate, Tso vigorously opposed the idea. Again when the Chinese Minister in London tolerated the British proposal of recognizing a separate kingdom in Kashgar, Tso countered, as described in Chapter II, by suggesting that if the British had been sincere in their intentions toward Kashgar they should have ceded some Indian territory to it, and that if the British Minister in Peking had wanted to negotiate he might better have gone to Tso's own headquarters at Suchow.⁵ With this resolute attitude and with a firm military policy, Tso Tsung-t'ang moved troops from Jungaria into the Tarim Basin and conquered it. 49

In the latter part of the nineteenth century China was virtually ruled by a triumvirate consisting of Tso Tsung-t'ang, Li Hung-chang, and Chang Chih-tung, the famous Viceroy of Hupeh and Hunan. Chang leaned more toward Tso's policy than toward Li Hung-chang's, and advocated the sending of a Chinese mission to St. Petersburg for new negotiations regarding Ili.⁶ Perhaps the Manchu Court in Peking ultimately decided in favor of Tso Tsung-t'ang's policy, out of respect for the military records of the Imperial Ancestors.⁷ Since Jungaria and the Tarim Basin had been conquered and consolidated by the Emperor Ch'ien-lung in the middle of the eighteenth century, it would have appeared to be neglect of filial piety if the Imperial Court had not restored Sinkiang, including Ili, to the empire.⁸ 49

Tso Tsung-t'ang's policy in Sinkiang was marked by his caution in selecting civil and military officials and by his harshness

⁵ Chiang Chün-chang, *Hsinchiang Chin-Yin Lun*, Nanking, 1936, especially the preface by Ch'en Hsun-tze.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Yao Hsin-an, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

⁸ In 1871 an independent Khanate was organized in the valley of Ili, headed by Abil-Oghlu. It became a Russian protectorate as soon as Russian troops entered the region and occupied it. The population of the Ili region in 1900 was about 170,000 and that of Chuguchak in the same year was 130,000. (See *Entsiklopedicheskii Slovar'*, St. Petersburg, 1903, Brokhaus i Yefron, pp. 805-809.) 49

against the Tungans or Chinese Moslems, in order to obviate future rebellion. He employed many of his own relatives and supporters from Hunan Province in his administration, and this accounts for the fact that in the last quarter of the nineteenth century Hunan officials almost completely dominated the Sinkiang administration. While Tso regarded the Uighurs as rebels, he regarded the Tungans as traitors, because they were Chinese in language, and largely Chinese by descent. Partly out of hatred against them as traitors and partly in order to "divide and rule," Tso massacred the Tungans in great numbers but showed the greatest clemency to the Uighurs, the Kazakhs, and the Mongols.

Even after the conclusion of Tso's military campaigns in the Tarim Basin there were debates among high officials and in the Imperial Court as to the status of the reconquered region. Finally the view championed by Tso Tsung-t'ang was adopted by the Manchu Emperor. On November 18, 1884, an Imperial Edict was issued which made Sinkiang a province (*Hsin-chiang*, "the New Territory," or, as it is frequently translated, "New Dominion").⁹ Urumchi, under the Chinese name of Ti-hua, was proclaimed the capital and more than twenty district administrations were organized. 50

The Chinese in this new province may be classified in four categories, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter IV. First are the descendants of criminals and officials who were banished from China during the second half of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth. Second are the families of military and civil officers in Sinkiang, mostly from Hunan, Yunnan, Kansu and the Northeastern (Manchurian) Provinces. Third are the merchants, including money-changers from Shansi, traders from the Tientsin area, and brick tea merchants from Hupeh and Hunan. Fourth are the peasants, whose immigration began in 1776, when an Imperial Edict provided for a subsidy for those who would settle in Sinkiang.¹⁰ 50

⁹ *Tung-hua hsiu-lu*, 1a-1b, Kuanghsü 66; *Ta Ch'ing Te Tsung Ching Huang-ti Shih-lu*, 190, 27a-28a; and *Ch'ing Shih Kao*, *Pen-chi*, Vol. 23, 17a.

¹⁰ Wang Hsien-chien, *Tung-Hua Lu* (Collection of State Papers), Imperial Edict of June, 1776. (50)

Merchants from Tientsin have flourished as far north as the city of Kulja in the Ili Valley. Nearly twenty years ago a British observer remarked that "successful merchants at Kulja come from the towns of Tou Liu and Yang Liu Ch'ing near Tientsin; the commerce of Ili has been kept in the families for generations, and considering the numbers of relations and connections every Chinese has, it is not to be wondered at that Tientsin people form a whole community, ranging from barbers to landowners, at Kulja." 11 51

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Ever since Sinkiang became a province a small Chinese minority has ruled it by the indirect methods which many colonial governments have found effective. The traditional Uighur and Kazakh and Mongol feudal structures have been left more or less undisturbed, with the existing Begs and princes used as instruments of Chinese rule. In Sinkiang, just as in Sikang and the southernmost parts of Yunnan, the result of this indirect rule is an administration with a Chinese upper stratum and an indigenous lower stratum. The chief defect of this system is that instead of promoting political and administrative progress, it fortifies and preserves the feudal system, and hinders the evolution of a more modern form of society. 51

While bribery, corruption and venality are almost endemic in the lower stratum of administration, the quality of the upper administration is naturally subject to the policy of the governor or the chairman of the provincial government. At this top level Chinese policy has passed through three distinct stages. From 1884 to 1933 there was a period of about half a century dominated by an old-fashioned feudal bureaucracy. Governor Yang Tseng-hsin and Governor Chin Shu-jen can best be described as the last of the old imperial bureaucrats, though both served under the Chinese Republic. Then followed a decade of war lord rule from 1933 to 1944, under General Sheng Shih-ts'ai, whose policy was at first liberal and later harshly repressive. Finally, from 1944 until Sinkiang became enveloped by Chinese Communism on the east as well as Russian Communism on the west,

¹¹ *Journal of the Central Asian Society*, Jan. 1931, Vol. 18, pt. 1, p. 140.

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Kuomintang policy in this frontier region can best be described as one of fitful opportunism in the face of chronic emergency. 52

Feudal Bureaucracy, 1884-1933

Of all the feudal bureaucrats in Sinkiang the most able was Yang Tseng-hsin. He was born in Yunnan, though his family originally moved there from Nanking. After having successfully passed the Imperial Civil Service Examinations, he was appointed district magistrate in Kansu and later promoted to be prefecture head and regional administrative head (Tao'ai) in that province. His record was so good that it attracted the attention of Wang Shu-t'ang, Commissioner of Civil Affairs in Sinkiang, who recommended his appointment as Tao'ai of the Aksu region. Still later he became Tao'ai (Intendant of the Circuit) of Urumchi and Barkul. In 1912, after disturbances accompanying the Chinese Revolution, the Governor of Sinkiang resigned and made Yang Tseng-hsin his successor. Yang negotiated with separatist leaders in Ili, prevented a Moslem revolt in Komul, quickly suppressed a rebellion of the Ko Lao Hui (Elder Brethren) secret society in the Tarim Basin, and unified the whole provincial administration.

Most of the important military and police officers under Yang were from Yunnan. These were young men, enthusiastic about the new Chinese Republic. When in 1916 General Ts'ai Ao in their distant home province of Yunnan raised the banner of revolt against Yuan Shih-k'ai's attempt to set up a monarchy, they wanted to join the Republican movement. Because Yang Tseng-hsin refused to join, they plotted to kill him, but the plot was discovered by one of his intelligence agents. The steps that Yang then took showed his alertness and cunning. 52

First he called the Yunnanese officials before him to answer the charge. When they denied it, he executed his own intelligence agent to convince them that he believed they had been falsely accused. He then had their families moved into his own residential quarters. Shortly afterward, when he had to entertain an inspector from the Peking Ministry of Education, he invited all (52)

the important Yunnanese officials to the feast. There he had his bodyguards murder two of them right in the dining hall; the rest were imprisoned or banished.¹² 53

Of middle height, with a strong face, Yang looked remarkably dignified; but he was a cunning and suspicious person. He ruled the province as an autocrat, taking very little notice of the Central Government in Peking. Though the central authorities made several attempts to depose or retire him, he kept his position by a mixture of bribery and force. Officials sent from Peking were either held up at his headquarters until he was sure that they did not or could not oppose him, or given presents and politely sent back. In the fifteen years of his rule he built up a family hierarchy, posting his relatives from one end of the province to the other. In 1927 all the district magistrates in southernmost Sinkiang, from Keriya to Kashgar, with two or three exceptions, were related to him either directly or by marriage. 53

Throughout his rule, Yang was troubled by the fear of revolt, and showed an extreme caution in handling people and affairs. Chinese and foreign newspapers were regularly censored. Any news that might encourage disturbances was excluded from the province as far as possible. No newspapers were permitted in the Uighur or Kazakh languages.¹³ The telegraph office at Yang's headquarters was attended to by the Governor himself. He locked and unlocked the door every day, and the office staff were not allowed to talk with outsiders. He himself took custody of all important documents, which could not be consulted, even by heads of bureaus, without his permission. 53

Yang made an important change in the lower or "native" administration at the level of the Begs, or Uighur "headmen." At some time prior to 1910, and probably shortly after Sinkiang became a province, the Chinese administration had given these

¹³ This story is told by Hsieh Pin, in his *Account of Travels in Sinkiang*, Shanghai, 1925, p. 135 (in Chinese). The author was the inspector from Peking who was present at the feast.

¹⁴ W. Bosshard, "Politics and Trade in Central Asia," in *Journal of the Central Asian Society*, London, 1929, Vol. 16, pt. 4, 438; also Hsieh Pin, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

Begs the Chinese designation of *Hsiang Yeh* ("District Elders"). Chinese magistrates came and went, but these Hsiang Yeh often held office for twenty or thirty years, or even for life. In this way the Uighur District Elder, solidly entrenched, often had an advantage over his superior, the temporary Chinese magistrate. Not infrequently a wealthy and locally powerful Elder, dismissed by a higher Chinese official, was able to obtain reinstatement when there was a change of administration. In 1915 Yang Tseng-hsin found a device which undermined this kind of local strength. He ordered that District Elders must first be locally elected; then recommended by the Chinese magistrate; and finally appointed by himself. After appointment, the District Elder might be dismissed at any time, but had the privilege of re-election.¹⁴ The significance of this ladder of election, recommendation, and appointment was that it was also a ladder by which talebearers could reach the provincial capital and make accusations against locally powerful men. 54

As a bureaucrat of the old school Yang was both generous in cultivating good will and severe in punishing offenses, with the result that the tales told about him reflected the popular conviction that even in justice he was despotic. According to one of these tales the old Governor, while walking in the streets of his capital like a Harun al-Rashid, saw a soldier stealing boots from a shop. After watching him successfully remove fourteen pairs, he shot him.¹⁵ At the same time, he was generous to Russian refugees in Sinkiang; for many of them he found employment, to others he gave money allowances. It was also said that he gave money for the education in Peking of the son of Fan Yao-nan, his Commissioner of Foreign Affairs, the man who in the end murdered him.

In his policy toward the non-Chinese nationalities in Sinkiang, Yang Tseng-hsin followed tradition in setting one people against another, and also in exploiting quarrels between factions within

¹⁴ Tseng Wen-wu, *Chung Ku Kin Ying Hsi Yü Shih*, Shanghai, 1936, p. 592 (in Chinese).

¹⁵ Anonymous, "His Excellency Yang Tsen-hsing," in *Journal of the Central Asian Society*, London, 1929, Vol. 16, pt. 1, pp. 88-89. (54)

each nationality. Under Manchu rule, the Torgut Mongols of Sinkiang had been favored against the Kirei Kazakhs. The basic rights to pasture were considered to belong to the Mongols, and Kazakh clans or tribes were treated as "tenants" of Mongol tribes. Disputes over primary and subsidiary rights, and over the use of migration routes, forested lands, and water were frequent. It was traditional also to exploit antagonisms between nomads and settled peoples, and among the settled groups themselves.¹⁶ 55

When Yang Tseng-hsin came to power there had been a revolution in Outer Mongolia as well as in China. Fearing that the Mongols of Sinkiang might make common cause with Outer Mongolia, Yang turned his favor away from them and toward the Kazakhs. The Mongols were forbidden to carry arms, but the Kazakhs were allowed to hire arms from the Chinese provincial forces. An exception was made, however, for the Kharashahr division of the Torgut Mongols, who were most distant from Outer Mongolia and whose territory lay strategically between the Ili Valley and the Tarim Basin. This one group of Mongols was allowed to maintain a good cavalry force, trained by Russian Cossacks. 55

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Yang was not unaware, however, of the modern aspects of nationalism. In a memorial to the National Government at Peking in 1925, when revolutionary influences were stirring all over China, he pointed out that power and privilege had been the basic factors in Pan-Islamism among all the Moslem peoples in both Europe and Asia. His idea of the appropriate policy in Sinkiang can be seen from the following quotation: 55

Only by a Republican federation can racial antagonisms be gradually dissolved. Most important of all is to realize political and administrative reform. The land of the Moslems should not be regarded as "fish or meat" — an object of exploitation. It must be demonstrated that the indirect rule of the Chinese is superior to the autonomy of the Moslems.

¹⁶ M. Nemchenko, "The Colonial Regime and Agrarian Relations in Sinkiang," in *Problems of China*, Moscow, 1931, 8-9 (3-4), pp. 181-190 (in Russian). (55)

Otherwise it would be difficult to avoid internal conflicts and to ward off aggression from without.¹⁷ 56

He was also fully aware of the underlying weakness of Chinese rule in this distant frontier province. In the same memorial he wrote: 56

It is a pity that what is called five races in one family [Chinese, Manchus, Mongols, Moslems, and Tibetans] has been only nominal and has not become a reality. Chinese officials, without a sense of moral obligation but full of ideas for selfish gain, are rarely talented in administration. There are too many bad officials and too few good ones. This is why there have been more days of trouble and fewer of tranquillity. This is true of all provinces, but it is worse on the frontier. It will be impossible for the Chinese officials to control the Moslems permanently unless administration is greatly improved.¹⁸ 56

In keeping with the ideas expressed in his own memorial, Yang Tseng-hsin made certain attempts to improve the economic situation in Sinkiang. As early as 1915 he put an end to the monopolization of the trade in silkworm eggs. In Yarkand, Khargalik, Guma Bazar, Khotan, Lob, and Keriya especially Chinese magistrates had been accustomed to import silkworm eggs from Russia and India. These they sold to the peasants, charging over three taels and sometimes as much as five taels for a case of eggs that cost one tael at most.¹⁹ 56

In 1916, Yang made an attempt to end the special form of corvée, known by the Manchu term wula, widely prevailing in such frontier provinces as Sikang, Szechuan, Chinghai, and Sinkiang, under which officials and travelers with official authority can requisition food, lodging, and transport. The requisitioning is done through local officials, and is a source of abuse because of the extra requisitioning which the officials exact on their own be-

¹⁷ Tseng Wen-wu, *op. cit.*, p. 599.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 595-596. (56)

half. Yang Tseng-hsin's attempted reform of this corvée was ineffective; the practice and the abuses continued. 57

In the same year Yang embarked on another reform, reducing the rate of interest on loans of grain from the public granaries. The management of granaries in many districts was corrupt. When the official authorized the issue of grain, eight *tou* (about ten pounds) would be entered on the slip as ten *tou*; but when he collected grain in repayment, only ten *tou* would be counted for every twelve *tou* weighed in. Thus what was originally intended as a measure of social welfare and economic stabilization was made to serve the collection of interest at a rate of 50 per cent. To prevent the practice of this form of usury by bureaucrats, Yang ordered the enforcement of standard measurements and the limitation of interest to a standard 10 per cent. 57

Bureaucrats also engaged in usury by lending to moneylenders. In the Tarim Basin, especially, pawnshops were managed by merchants of several nationalities: Chinese, Uighurs, Indians claiming the protection of the British Consulate General at Kashgar, Tatars who formerly held Tsarist Russian passports, and Tungans or Chinese-speaking Moslems. The rates of interest traditionally charged were 7, 8, and even 10 per cent per month. At the same time there existed government money bureaus which were supposed to charge only 1 per cent per month. Under these conditions, officials found it easy to make low-interest loans not to the poor, but to prosperous and solvent merchants who reloaned the money to pawnbrokers, at not less than 2 per cent per month, who in turn made loans to the poor at much higher rates. In this way the high interest paid by the poorest people paid a profit to the pawnbroker, to the merchant backing the pawnbroker, and to the official who authorized the loan of public money to the merchant. The abuses inherent in the system were made worse by the fact that all too often the rich merchant was the local Beg or District Elder, who could use his official authority, backed by the higher authority of the Chinese magistrate, to enforce the collection of principal and interest. In 1922 Yang Tseng-hsin attempted to end these abuses, first by forbidding the combination of private

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loans and the lending of public money, and then by ordering the complete withholding of government loans.²⁰ 58

More effective, because more easy to carry out, was Yang's policy of regulating trade balances. He required merchants to limit imports to values which would not exceed the value of exports. The object of this policy was both to prevent the draining of wealth from the province and to prevent Uighur merchants from banking their accumulated wealth in Russia (before the Russian Revolution), and also to stop Chinese merchants from holding their wealth in provinces other than Sinkiang. He himself, however, through Chinese merchants acting as his agents, sold Sinkiang exports, principally in Tientsin, and then banked the proceeds not in China but under the American flag in the Philippines. 58

During Yang Tseng-hsin's rule Sinkiang was forced to change its fiscal basis completely. Before the Revolution, the province had been heavily subsidized by the Imperial treasury. The annual subsidy was at one time as high as 2,920,000 taels; then it fell to 2,600,000 taels, and by the time of the Republic the poverty of the Central Government cut off the subsidy altogether. Yang Tseng-hsin then issued his own provincial paper currency to a face value of about 10,000,000 taels.²¹ This measure inevitably caused an inflation and considerable hardship. 58

Eventually, no less than four paper currencies were established in the same province. The Urumchi, Turfan, Ili, and Kashgar regions each had its own currency, and each currency exchanged against the others at different rates. Each paper currency, carrying values not in dollars but in taels, had a subsidiary copper coinage. Only in the Kashgar region, with its two-way trade with both India and Russian Turkistan, was there a certain amount of silver backing, with silver coins in circulation in addition to paper.

²⁰ For these reforms or attempted reforms, see Tseng Wen-wu, *op. cit.*, pp. 595-596.

²¹ Chiang Chün-chang, *Hsinchiang Chin-Yin Lun*, Nanking, 1936 (reprinted Chungking, 1939), p. 45 (in Chinese). (58)

The maintenance of different exchange rates in different parts of the province enabled the Governor to keep a political check on remittances. The undue concentration of money in any one part of the province, possibly indicating preparations for a political move of some kind, would be detectable through the resulting pressure on exchange rates. 59

Until the Russian Revolution, Tsarist Russia had by treaty the right to maintain branches of the Russo-Asiatic bank at Urumchi, Ili, Chuguchak, and Kashgar. (After the Russian Revolution, these branches continued to operate for some years under French protection.) Like other foreign banks in China, the Russo-Asiatic bank had the right to issue its own paper currency. In 1916, under the stress of war financing in Russia, it suddenly increased its note circulation in Sinkiang from one million to five million rubles.²² Then, when the Russian ruble fell, it dragged the Sinkiang tael with it, thus aggravating the inflation in Sinkiang. In that year the total provincial revenue was a little over 5,200,000 taels and the budget deficit amounted to more than 700,000 taels. The most important source of revenue was the tax on cultivated land, which then totaled 10,500,000 mu.²³ The gold mined in Sinkiang in that year, under government license or monopoly, was worth less than 5000 taels. 59

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The Provincial Government at this period had no money for irrigation schemes which might have opened large areas for cultivation. Poor finance and inflation not only hindered economic improvement through public works but intensified corruption among officials. While in all fairness it must be repeated that Yang Tseng-hsin was both an honest and a competent official by old mandarin standards, it must also be admitted that economic and political conditions toward the end of his rule were shrewdly summed up by the Swiss traveler Bosshard:

²² Hsi Pei Yen Chiu (*Northwest Research*), Peiping, 1932, Vol. 6, issue of April 15, pp. 55 and 129 (in Chinese).

²³ The *mu*, a traditional land measure, varies from place to place. Six *mu* to the acre is often taken as an average figure. (59)

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 were the ways in which villages and towns were vamped.²⁴

As an official of the old school, Yang's attitude toward foreign civilization was definitely conservative. Though he was too courteous to show his feelings to foreigners directly, it is known that he disliked them. When a Chinese student attached to the Sino-Swedish Expedition under Sven Hedin asked him why he did not employ foreign engineers to introduce modern techniques into his province, he flew into a rage and said: "Yes, that is just like you students, ready to sell your country to the foreigner."²⁵

Yet he was a realist in handling as best he could the international situations with which he was confronted. In 1912, when he was inaugurated as Military Governor, he said in an official statement:

From the Han and T'ang Dynasties on, whenever China was at peace and powerful the frontier people became obedient; but whenever China was weak and in confusion they revolted. Today the situation has greatly changed. We are being threatened by Outer Mongolia and powerful foreign nations. We shall not be able to come back to Sinkiang if we once lose it.²⁶

As soon as he took office as Governor in 1912, Yang Tseng-hsin had to concern himself with problems on the Sinkiang frontier with Outer Mongolia. Then, in 1916, there was a revolt of the Kazakhs in Russian territory, set off by a Tsarist order for la-

²⁴ Bosshard, *op. cit.*, p. 437.

²⁵ *Journal of the Central Asian Society*, London, 1929, Vol. 16, pt. 1, p. 89.

²⁶ *A Survey of Sinkiang*, edited by the Provincial Government, 1938, p. 111 (in Chinese). (60)

bor conscription.²⁷ When it was crushed, many armed Kazakhs crossed into Sinkiang, plundering and murdering as they swarmed in thousands over the frontier passes, especially near the mountain lake of Issik Kul. They then dispersed among the Kazakhs of Sinkiang. Governor Yang did not attempt to prevent their entry, and let them go where they pleased.⁶¹

As soon as the October Revolution broke out in Russia, refugees began to enter Sinkiang. In 1920 and 1921 two groups of armed "White" (anti-Red) Russians retreated into Sinkiang. They totaled between 30,000 and 40,000 men. Some wished merely to retreat through Sinkiang into China proper; others wished to reach India; others attempted to join up with the counterrevolutionary Russian bands in Outer Mongolia. Yang, who had only about 10,000 troops under his command, dealt with the emergency cautiously but firmly. He disarmed some of the Russian troops and interned them in and near Kuchengtze. He then negotiated with Moscow for amnesty for all those who would return peacefully to Russian territory. At the same time, he asked for help from Moscow to dislodge armed "White" Russians from the Altai region on the Outer Mongolian frontier. He also took advantage of this emergency to revise the administrative structure of the Altai region — which before 1912 had been in some ways subject to the jurisdiction of the Manchu Amban in Kobdo, in Outer Mongolia, as well as to the provincial authorities in Sinkiang — a stronghold of Mongols and Kazakhs, by dividing it into three districts and three subdistricts. ⁶¹

In his dealings with the new Soviet regime across the frontier from him, Yang Tseng-hsin was cautious but not hostile. The National Government at Peking to which he was nominally subordinate was virtually powerless, and for some years had no relations with Moscow. He himself, however, had to deal with a dual

²⁷ *The Rising of the Year 1916 in Kazakhstan. Documents and Materials.* Edited by B. S. Suleimanov. Compilers: F. N. Kireev, Sh. Ya. Shafiro. Academy of Sciences of the Kazakh S.S.R. (In Russian). We have not had access to this volume but there is a review of it by M. Kim in *Questions of History*, Moscow-Leningrad, 9, 1948, pp. 111-13 (in Russian). (61)

heritage of Russian interests in Sinkiang and Chinese interests in adjoining Russian territory. In 1920 he closed the frontier toward Russia west of Kashgar—a move which may have been prompted by the fact that the British, who were especially hostile to the new Soviet regime, had strong influence in Kashgar and had, at the beginning of the Russian Revolution, used it as a subsidiary base for their activities in Russian Central Asia.²⁸ In the same year, however, he concluded a trade agreement between Sinkiang and the local authorities in Soviet territory. Under this agreement he encouraged the return of Russian refugees, while the authorities at Tashkent agreed to take a friendly attitude on the problem of the private property of Chinese citizens which had been affected by the Soviet program of confiscation.²⁹

At the same time, the trade route through the Ili Valley was fostered as an alternative to that through Kashgar. Instead of the previous seven Russian consulates, there were to be only two, both in the Ili Valley. A Chinese consulate was provided for at Semipalatinsk and another—in spite of the fact that this was a local agreement made by a Chinese province, not by the National Government—at Verkhne-Udinsk, on the frontier between Siberia and Outer Mongolia. The reason for a consulate at the main gateway of trade between Russia and Outer Mongolia is not clear; there can have been little trade of concern to Sinkiang passing by this route. Most important of all, extraterritoriality was abolished and traders and travelers were made subject to the law of the locality where they happened to be. 62

This makeshift arrangement was superseded in May 1924 when diplomatic relations were restored between China and the Soviet Union under a treaty signed at Peking. In December of the same year a Soviet consulate was opened at Chuguchak; in the spring of 1925 one at Sharasume and one (already provided for under the provincial agreement) at Ining; in August, a Soviet consul

²⁸ Among accounts by British officers, see L. V. S. Blacker, *On Secret Patrol in High Asia*, London, 1922, and F. M. Bailey, *Mission to Tashkent*, London, 1946.

²⁹ M. R. Norins, *Gateway to Asia*, N. Y., 1944, p. 62. (62)

general arrived at Urumchi; and finally toward the end of 1925 a Soviet consulate was established at Kashgar. Reciprocally, the previous "provincial" Chinese consulate at Semipalatinsk was made a consulate general, and consulates were opened at Tashkent, Andijan, Zaisan, and Alma-Ata. 63

In the period of civil war leading up to the establishment of the National Government of the Kuomintang, organized at Nanking by Chiang Kai-shek in 1927, Yang Tseng-hsin continued to observe neutrality in China's domestic politics. In 1926, he feared that Sinkiang might be entered by the troops of the "Christian General" Feng Yü-hsiang, who was then retreating before the forces of Chiang Kai-shek. He therefore negotiated with Moscow and agreed to a Russian proposal for opening a motor service from the Siberian frontier to Urumchi. Since the Russians were at that time on good terms with Feng Yü-hsiang, to whom they had supplied arms (by routes leading across Mongolia, not Sinkiang), there is a suggestion that Russian good offices averted a retreat of Feng's troops into Sinkiang. 64

In 1927, when Chiang Kai-shek broke off Chinese relations with the Soviet Union, Yang Tseng-hsin kept up his contacts with the Russians and with the staffs of the Chinese consular offices in Soviet territory within the field of Sinkiang trade. Thus on December 28, 1927, the Consul General at Semipalatinsk and his secretary sent a statement to the local newspaper in which they declared: "The Consulate at Semipalatinsk has nothing in common with Central China and is not able, consequently, to take upon itself the responsibility for events which have occurred recently in Central China. This consulate is dependent upon Western China, which does not wish, in any case, to sever its friendship with the U.S.S.R." In conclusion the statement, as cited by *Izvestiya*, referred to "relations between Western China [Sinkiang] and the friendly Republic of the U.S.S.R. . . . so dear and so necessary for us, from the point of view not only of commerce but also of politics." 30 65

³⁰ *Izvestiya*, Moscow, Jan. 8, 1928. (63)

Only in June 1928, when he ordered a change from the old five-barred flag of the Chinese Republic to the new blue-field, white-sun national flag of the Kuomintang, did Yang Tseng-hsin acknowledge the Nanking Government; but in practice the internal administration of Sinkiang was scarcely affected. In this year, the Sino-Swedish Scientific Expedition, headed by Sven Hedin and backed by the authority of the Chinese Government, reached Sinkiang after a journey through Inner Mongolia. The movements of its Chinese members as well as its Swedish and German members were carefully circumscribed by the provincial authorities. Only reluctantly was Sven Hedin permitted to leave Urumchi for Kumul; and in his own words his "reception by the Chinese officials of Hami was as disagreeable as that by the Sultan [of Hami] was the reverse."³¹ 64

In the same year of 1928 Yang Tseng-hsin was assassinated, after he had ruled Sinkiang for seventeen years, dealing successfully with the events that followed the Chinese Revolution, the Outer Mongolian Revolution, and the Russian Revolution. When in 1928 he changed flags and nominally proclaimed allegiance to Nanking, he seems to have anticipated an early end to his career. He had transferred his enormous wealth to British and American banks, and placed his family in Manila, beyond Chinese jurisdiction.³² To that extent, he was ready for the death that came to him at the hands of his trusted subordinate Fan Yao-nan, in a manner that recalled the way in which he himself, at the outset of his career as Governor, had murdered his Yunnanese colleagues. 64

Fan Yao-nan, Yang's Commissioner of Foreign Affairs, gave a feast on July 7, 1928, on the occasion of the graduation exercises of the Government Law School in Urumchi. As that school used the Russian language in its curriculum, Soviet consular officials and other Russians were invited together with all the leading Chinese officials. Yang Tseng-hsin arrived with an escort of two hundred soldiers in addition to his regular bodyguards. Fan's

³¹ Sven Hedin, "Hami or Kumul," in *Journal of the Central Asian Society*, London, 1929, Vol. XVI, pt. 1, p. 92.

³² Bosshard, *op. cit.*, p. 436. (64)

own bodyguards, of whom eighteen were serving as waiters, had red bands on their arms and Browning pistols in their sleeves. As soon as the guests sat down to lunch, at three o'clock in the afternoon, Fan's men fired on Yang Tseng-hsin and he fell dead at once. The commander of Yang's bodyguards and some other officials were also murdered, and the foreign guests fled. 65

Fan Yao-nan went at once to the Governor's office, took the official seals, and sent for Chin Shu-jen, Chief of the Political Department. Instead of going, Chin sent troops headed by the son of the commander of Yang Tseng-hsin's bodyguard, who had just been killed. They seized Fan and killed thirteen of his bodyguard. Fan is said to have been tried at once by a special government committee, and on the next day, July 8, he and a number of his accomplices were executed. Others were executed later. Chin Shu-jen was immediately chosen by the other officials as Commander in Chief and Chairman of the Committee [Governor] of Sinkiang. 65

Like Yang Tseng-hsin, under whom he had held high office for many years, Chin Shu-jen was a bureaucrat of the old school; but he was not to be compared with Yang in ability and wisdom. On becoming Governor he increased the number of secret service men — presumably out of fear. He entrusted all important posts to his relatives or men from his own native province of Kansu. He promoted one of his bodyguard to be a brigade commander. One of his younger brothers was made military commander at Kashgar; another became the head of the Military Bureau of the province. 65

Chin's administration was shot through with corruption. Land revenues were collected to almost double the legal amount, and in this process the corruption of the Chinese officials intensified venality among the Uighur Begs. The working of gold at Keriya and of jade in the Khotan district was managed by private contractors, but the output was sold under government monopoly at high prices.³³ The export trade in newborn lambskins was also monopolized. With the backing of military and police power, the

³³ Chiang Chün-chang, *Hsinchiang Chin-Yin Lun*, as already cited, p. 137. (65)

lambskins were collected at only a tenth of the market value. Monopolies of this kind, through collection at the source of supply by the assertion of official authority, were common in China — especially in the frontier provinces. A Russian observer estimated that in Urumchi only 12 per cent of trade capital belonged to local merchants, 37 per cent to agents of foreign firms, and as much as 51 per cent to Chinese officials.³⁴ 66

While Governor Yang had issued paper currency to a total of 10,000,000 taels, Governor Chin increased the inflation by expanding the issue to 145,000,000 taels. Under Yang, the paper currency had a uniform face value of one tael (subject to an exchange differential between regions, as described previously); under Chin, notes were issued in denominations of one, three, five, eight, ten, thirty, and fifty taels. At one time, a tael of silver (about one and one-third ounces) could be bought for two paper taels; by the end of Chin's regime, it took 80 taels in paper to buy a tael of silver.³⁵ 66

Both Yang and Chin could be described favorably as "cautious" or unfavorably as "suspicious" in their dealings with foreigners. According to Sven Hedin: "Chin hated foreigners. He took a cynical pleasure in tripping them up, in hindering or frustrating their endeavors. . . . Marshal Yang had decided that a house should be placed at the disposal of the expedition so long as it remained in Sinkiang, arguing that our work was of benefit to the development of the province. For this house Chin demanded an unreasonable rent, which he made retroactive. For that matter, the narrow-minded despot treated everyone with the same meanness."³⁶ On the other hand, my wife and I, when traveling through Sinkiang in 1927, met with the most cordial treatment from Chin Shu-jen, who was then administrator of Aksu oasis.³⁷

The completion in 1930 of the Turksib Railway, passing close

³⁴ M. Nemchenko, "The Colonial Regime and Agrarian Relations in Sinkiang," as already cited, p. 187.

³⁵ Chiang Chün-chang, *Hsinchiang Chin-Yin Lun*, p. 136. Chin frequently issued paper notes, the total of which amounted to 145,000,000 taels.

³⁶ Sven Hedin, *The Flight of "Big Horse"*, New York, 1936, p. 3.

³⁷ Owen Lattimore, *High Tartary*, Boston, 1930, pp. 304-306. (66)

to the Chinese frontier in the Ili region, naturally encouraged Sinkiang-Soviet trade, which in that year passed the level of 32,000,000 rubles. In the following year, 1931, shortly after the Japanese invasion of Manchuria, Urumchi was threatened by Ma Ch'ung-ying, the leader of a Moslem invasion from Kansu, who had already captured Barkul and Komul and was taking over the leadership of a Moslem rising within the province. Since Ma was accompanied by Japanese "advisers" and believed to be backed by Japanese militarists, he was not only a menace to the province but a danger to Soviet frontier interests. Chin Shu-jen, in order to obtain arms from the Russians, and because the rising cut off trade with China, signed a trade agreement in October 1931 which gave Soviet interests new privileges. 67

Under this agreement eight Soviet trade agencies were established, at Urumchi, Chuguchak, Kulja, Kashgar, Aksu, Kucha, Yarkand, and Khotan. Customs duties on Soviet goods were reduced, and new Sinkiang-Soviet telegraph and radio communications were opened. Chin signed the agreement without authorization from Nanking and without reporting it to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and for this he was imprisoned when, later, he fled the province and returned to China. 67

Chin was forced out of Sinkiang by a combination of insurrection, invasion, and a mutiny of "White" (exile) Russian mercenary troops. The insurrection began in the Komul oasis in 1931 and was joined by Chinese Moslem (Tungan) invaders from Kansu. Urumchi was attacked in the winter of 1932 and again in January 1934. In November 1933 an Eastern Turkistan Republic was proclaimed in Kashgar. In the main, the rebellion was brought under control by June 1934; but as late as the fall of 1935 there were still 20,000 Tungans, who had originally come from Kansu, holding out in Guma Bazar on the southern rim of the Tarim Basin. It is estimated that these dark and bloody years cost about 100,000 lives. 67

The original revolt in Komul was certainly precipitated by the weak and avaricious Chin. In the winter of 1930 the last Uighur ruler of the ancient principality of Komul died. His son and suc-

(67) cessor, who was opposed by the people, went to Urumchi to offer bribes for assistance. In the meantime the Chinese garrison commander at Komul advised the Governor to discontinue indirect rule of the oasis as a "native state," and to divide it instead into three administrative districts under appointed magistrates, thus making it possible to collect revenues directly. The advice was accepted, and the "natives" were alarmed by the fact that a new land survey threatened to double or treble their taxes. 68

The situation that developed illustrates the complexities of a multinational frontier province. Most of the people of the oasis had no strong loyalty to the old ruling house to which they had paid their customary taxes; but they resented the new direct administration which, though established in 1931, declared that back taxes for 1930 would also be collected. There was general hostility to the Chinese garrison commander. At the same time, a minority faction which supported the prince who was claiming the succession feared that he might be arrested in Urumchi.³⁸ 68

Into this situation there entered some eighty Chinese non-Moslem refugees from a drought-stricken district in the province of Kansu. The Governor ordered the magistrate of one of the three new administrative districts to provide for them, which he did by expropriating land cultivated by Uighurs. The Uighurs were transferred to new land, not yet brought under cultivation. It is a general tradition in Chinese frontier provinces that settlers of such land should be exempted from taxes for the first few years; but in this case the Uighurs were assessed for the same taxes that they had paid on their old land, while the refugees to whom this land had been given were exempted from taxes for three years. In addition to this injustice, the salt bureau of Komul embarked on a program of forced sales. Everyone was either to buy a quota of salt every day, or pay cash for a "salt certificate."

Revolt was touched off when an "infidel" (non-Moslem) Chinese tax collector tried to force the parents of a pretty Moslem

³⁸ Tu Chung-yuan, *Sheng Shih-ts'ai and the New Sinkiang*, Hankow, 1938, p. 65 (in Chinese). Actually the prince was not harmed in Urumchi, because while there he bribed Chin heavily. (68)

girl to give her to him in marriage. The people rose and killed not only the tax collector but the Chinese refugees from Kansu. Thousands joined the revolt. Delegates were sent to Kansu to solicit help from Ma Ch'ung-ying, a young chieftain belonging to the most famous, powerful, and warlike Chinese Moslem clan in Kansu,³⁹ who was then in command of the 36th Division, who though nominally troops of the National Government were actually his personal followers. With only 400 Tungan cavalry, Ma Ch'ung-ying successfully attacked Barkul, Ch'ichiaoching ("Seven-cornered Well," on the main truck route from Kansu to Urumchi), and Komul. After suffering a wound he retired to Kansu, but returned to Sinkiang in May, 1932. 69

Sheng Shih-ts'ai, Chameleon War Lord

In the winter of 1932 Ma Shih-ming, a subordinate of Ma Ch'ung-ying, marched to the outskirts of Urumchi. Under Chin Shu-jen's orders, the defense of the city was taken over by Sheng Shih-ts'ai, a professional soldier of Manchurian origin. Sheng took command of over a thousand troops who had reached Urumchi from Manchuria. These troops, after fighting the Japanese, had retreated into Siberia, where they were interned. The device of repatriating them to Chinese territory in Sinkiang had enabled the Soviet authorities to strengthen the Provincial Government of Sinkiang with a reinforcement of trained Chinese soldiers. As non-Moslems, they could be counted on to resist the insurrection; as men from the Manchurian provinces, they were disposed to be more loyal to Sheng Shih-ts'ai than to any other officer. With the aid of this force, Sheng drove Ma Shih-ming back to the south.

Then in April 1933 "White" Russian troops in Urumchi⁶⁹ mutinied, joined with local Moslems in an attack on the provincial headquarters, and killed Chin Shu-jen's younger brother, who was head of the Military Bureau. These Russian troops had been recruited or conscripted among exiled Russians living in the

³⁹ He is related both to Ma Pu-fang, war lord of Ch'inghai (Kokonor) Province, and to Ma Hung-k'uei, war lord of Ninghsia Province. (69)

province — who, though considered formidable fighters, had been badly treated and irregularly paid. Their mutiny broke Chin Shu-jen's nerve, and he fled to Russian territory, whence he returned to China. The remaining officials in Urumchi then elected the head of the Education Bureau, Lin Wen-lung, as acting provincial Chairman, and Sheng Shih-ts'ai as acting commander of the military forces. 70

Ever since the regime of China's first modern war lord, Yuan Shih-k'ai, a provincial governor who does not control his own troops has usually been overshadowed by the commander of the provincial military forces. It was not surprising, therefore, that Sheng Shih-ts'ai soon dominated his nominal civil superior. Sheng was born in Liaoning Province, in the south of Manchuria, and educated partly in Shanghai and Nanking. He went to Japan in 1915 and again in 1925 to study political economy and military science. During his second stay in Japan he was already under the patronage of Chiang Kai-shek. In 1926-1927 he served on the staff of Ho Ying-ch'ing, Chief of Staff to Chiang Kai-shek on the "Northern Expedition" which resulted in the capture of Nanking and Shanghai and Chiang's rise to power. At this time it was not sure whether or how the Kuomintang would be able to take over the Northeastern Provinces (Manchuria), and it was advisable to have in reserve a promising young Northeastern officer. Eventually, however, the Northeastern Provinces came over to the Kuomintang under their own war lord, the "Young Marshal" Chang Hsueh-liang, which left no room for Northeasterners who did not belong to his personal following. The hopes of Sheng Shih-ts'ai went into eclipse, and for lack of other prospects he went to Sinkiang in 1929 on the personal staff of a bureaucrat who had been appointed General Secretary of the Provincial Government. By 1930 he had worked up to the position of Chief of the General Staff Office of the Frontier Army. 70

As soon as he took over the real power in 1933, Sheng announced an "Eight-point Policy" for Sinkiang, which was to become famous: equality between nationalities; religious freedom; immediate rural relief; financial reform; administrative reform;

extension of education; encouragement of self-government; judiciary reform.⁴⁰ 71

Before he could do much in the way of reform, however, Sheng had still to cope with the Moslem rebellion led by Ma Ch'ung-ying. While Sheng was taking the first steps toward power in the north, Ma was threatening to secure control in the south, most of which he now held from Komul in the east to Kashgar in the west. By June 1933 Ma's forces had also entered Kuchengtze, in Jungaria, and begun to push toward Urumchi. By this time, however, Ma's ruthlessness and his plundering of the countryside were weakening him by arousing the hatred even of his fellow Moslems. At Komul the shops were closed and the villages nearby had become heaps of rubble. At Ch'ichiao-ching, on the main trade route, the streets were littered with the bodies of dead horses. Trade through Turfan had been suspended. 71

As Sheng Shih-ts'ai at the head of his Manchurian troops went out to meet him, Ma cut south across the mountains and took Turfan, main valve of the trade routes both eastward to China and westward to Kashgar. At the beginning of 1934, when Sheng Shih-ts'ai had to detach some of his forces to face a fresh revolt in Ili, Ma advanced once more from Turfan against Urumchi — only to meet, this time, his decisive defeat. Sheng had been able to obtain war materials from the Soviet Union, including even planes. He threw back Ma's attack and harassed his retreat by bombing the road between Toksun and Kharashahr. Ma himself barely escaped to Kucha, and fled on to Kashgar. There he remained from April to June, 1934; but when Sheng's troops approached, he fled once more — this time to Soviet territory. He was reported to have been seen in Moscow at the beginning of 1936.⁴¹ For some years, Soviet policy was to hold an exceptionally advantageous position. Sinkiang was now to be governed by a non-Moslem Chinese who depended on Russia not only for arms but for economic co-operation. Yet the chief alternative

⁴⁰ Tu Chung-yuan, *Sheng Shih-ts'ai and the New Sinkiang*, Hankow, 1938, pp. 67-72 (in Chinese).

⁴¹ Hedin, *op. cit.*, p. 247. (71)

claimant to power, the Moslem leader Ma Ch'ung-ying, was living in Soviet territory. 72

There can be no doubt that Sheng Shih-ts'ai, in addition to being dependent on good relations with Russia, was genuinely opposed to Japanese imperialism — which, like many Chinese who had studied in Japan, he thoroughly understood. There is also no doubt that Ma Ch'ung-ying had Japanese agents at his headquarters — agents who can be described as adventurous forerunners rather than acknowledged representatives of Japanese policy. Had Ma won, Japanese policy could have followed up these agents; when Ma lost, Japan had nothing to say in public. 72

The operations of Japanese agents, however, did not end immediately with the flight of Ma to Russia. As late as 1937, from February to October there was a revolt in Kashgar in which the Japanese were accused of having a hand. In October 1937 Sheng told Tu Chung-yuan, a former fellow student in Japan who was then working with him in Urumchi, that he knew of Japanese intelligence agents in the Moslem strongholds of Ninghsia and Ch'inghai (Kokonor) — Chinese frontier provinces adjoining Inner Mongolia and Tibet — and that Japanese remittances to Sinkiang through the coastal Treaty Port of Tientsin in recent months had amounted to more than three million yen. He believed that another ten million yen or more would be sent into Sinkiang. Tu Chung-yuan describes how four important government officials and some merchants with traitorous connections were then arrested.⁴² 72

In the meantime, Sheng Shih-ts'ai had embarked on a period of real reform. His "Eight Points," announced in 1933, have already been listed. In the following year he declared that Sinkiang was to be considered "the New Sinkiang," and that his "Eight Points" were to be implemented through "Six Great Policies." The first of these was anti-imperialism (subsequently to be interpreted in a strongly anti-British as well as anti-Japanese sense); this was followed by rapprochement with the Soviets,

⁴² Tu Chung-yuan, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-30, 62-63, 97. (72)

racial or national equality, clean government, peace, and reconstruction. 73

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. Under the provincial Bureau of Education in Urumchi, five branch bureaus were opened: at Sharasume, Chuguchak, Kulja, Aksu, and Kashgar. 73

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The provincial newspaper *Hsinchiang Jih Pao* set up branch offices at the same five places, and another at Chingho. Editions were 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.⁴³ 73

For a time, there was even relatively clean government. Under Yang and Chin it had been possible for a magistrate to pocket 80,000 to 100,000 Chinese dollars a year. At the beginning of Sheng's administration, inspectors and auditors were sent out to prevent such speculation. More than any other reform, however, this one depended on the degree to which the system as a whole really functioned in a democratic way. After 1940, when Sheng was officially appointed Chairman of the Provincial Government, he became more and more autocratic and suspicious, and an old provincial saying began to be heard again: "The provincial Chairman may be less fat than the Bureau head, and the Bureau head may be less fat than the Regional Administrator, who in turn may be not so fat as the District Magistrate" — the District Magistrate, as the closest to the people, being the official with primary access to sources of "squeeze."⁴⁴ 73

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 80-84.

⁴⁴ Chiang Chün-chang, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-84. (73)

Like many another official insuring himself against a fall from power, Sheng in his last years in Sinkiang put by an immense fortune. In 1945 when, after a series of political deals, he had returned to Chungking, the man who had formerly been the head of his Reconstruction Bureau in Urumchi was quoted as saying that he had contributed 500,000 Chinese ounces of gold to the Kuomintang party treasury; and it was further alleged that it was because of this gift that Chiang Kai-shek did not take action against him for his record in Sinkiang.⁴⁵ 74

In 1940, when Sheng was at the height of his power, a British official who visited Sinkiang informed me that as far as he personally was able to form an opinion, from his own observation and from documents such as the Governor's own speeches, the system of government was decidedly autocratic. He compared the authority of the Governor in Sinkiang to that of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek in China, but he had the impression that the Governor was not much influenced by any of his lieutenants. The Governor inspired fear, and demanded that his authority be consulted even in minor details. 74

On the other hand, this observer conceded that the policy being carried out was relatively progressive and enlightened. He considered that the policy was clearly under the influence of developments close at hand in Russia. He attributed the existence of the secret police, and such practices as convictions and executions without trial, to the fact that while the Governor was determined to hold onto power, he was a prey to suspicion and fear. In his opinion, the Governor could not be called a follower of either the Kuomintang or the Communists. The facts, as this British observer saw them, were that the geographical situation and mixture of peoples in Sinkiang made a special policy for the province necessary.⁴⁶ 74

⁴⁵ Sa Kung-liao "Talks about Sinkiang," in *Wen Tsia*, Shanghai, March 21, 1946, No. 22 (in Chinese).

⁴⁶ In 1937 and 1938, while the Chinese National Government was at Hankow, between its withdrawal from Shanghai and its retirement to Chungking, and while co-operation between the Chinese Communists and the Kuomintang was relatively cordial, Sheng Shih-ts'ai invited a group of (74)

Sheng himself is quoted by the man who was the director of his provincial newspaper as saying that he was not a member of the Kuomintang, so that "It is strange that they should have elected me a member of the Kuomintang Central Control Committee!"⁴⁷ 75

After coming to power with Soviet military assistance, Sheng negotiated a Soviet loan of five million gold rubles for reconstruction purposes. This loan, which involved no political or economic conditions, carried an interest of 4 per cent.⁴⁸ Sheng also asked for Soviet technical assistance. In 1937 he instituted a three-year plan of reconstruction, during the course of which he obtained a further fifteen million rubles in Soviet loans. In 1938 the Provincial Commercial Bank was reorganized as the Sinkiang Commercial Bank, with partly private and partly Provincial Government capital. It issued new notes, and the currency was to a large extent stabilized. By the end of 1939 the old paper currency was declared invalid. During 1939 credits of \$17,872,500 (Chinese) were granted to the bank to promote commercial and agricultural capitalization. Funds from the Soviet loans were used to build more motor roads, and trucks in use increased from only 20 in 1933 to 400 in 1938 and eventually to 3000 in 1941. In the same period, 1350 miles of telephone lines were installed. By 1939, there were some 20 factories in the province, and over 400 tons of Soviet machinery had gone into the construction of a refinery at an oil field northwest of Urumchi. 75

Communist advisers from Yen-an to come to Sinkiang. He later executed some of these advisers and jailed the rest. Miss Anna Louise Strong has kindly let me see her unpublished notes of interviews with survivors of this group, at Yen-an, after the war. These notes suggest that the Communists are inclined to claim credit for all the reforms of Sheng Shih-ts'ai in his "progressive" period, even before 1938; but the record as a whole seems to make it clear that the reforms were initiated by National Salvationists and other liberals, before the arrival of the Communist advisers. The currency reform of 1938, however, appears to have been the work of Mao Tze-min, brother of Mao Tze-tung, who was executed by Sheng Shih-ts'ai in 1943.

⁴⁷ Sa Kung-liao, *op. cit.*

⁴⁸ Tu Chung-yuan, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-94. (75)

ment as well as the Provincial Government. Under the Nanking-Moscow Nonaggression Agreement of 1937, a through air route had been stipulated. Under the Soviet-Chinese Trade Agreement of June 16, 1939, a Sino-Soviet Aviation Corporation was organized. By the terms of these agreements, Russia obtained priority over other countries in air traffic, jointly with China, over Sinkiang. 76

In 1941 Sheng decreed a second three-year plan. The economic activities of the Provincial Government were expanded through "Foreign Trade and Local Resources Companies." Reconstruction bonds were issued; and the combined effects of inflation in China and a trade boom in Sinkiang raised the exchange value of the Sinkiang dollar from the low point of 4000 to one Chinese national dollar in 1934 to a rate of six to one national dollar in 1942. At the time Sheng left the province in 1944, the rate was five provincial dollars to one national dollar. The boom was largely promoted by an arbitrary linking of the "official" exchange rate between American dollars and Soviet rubles, which enabled Sinkiang to buy from the Soviet-operated Sinkiang Trading Corporation at artificially favorable rates. During this period many Russians entered the province as technicians, but — according to the British observer already quoted, who visited the province in 1940 — there was nothing to suggest that Soviet administrative control was being forced on Sinkiang. 75

In retrospect, it is clear that Sheng Shih-ts'ai was guided throughout by opportunity rather than by principle. Even while carrying out reforms, which for some years were encouragingly successful, he did not lose his concern for his own interest. This concern led him into a policy of sudden shifts in his relations with Russia, in contrast with the policy of steady neutrality pursued so long and so successfully by Yang Tseng-hsin. From 1933 to 1940 he leaned toward the Soviet Union and away from the National Government of China. From 1941 to 1942 he cut off his relations with the Russians roughly and suddenly, and threw himself on the support of the National Government in a manner suggesting he had little confidence in his own power in his own 76

province. In 1944, however, he tried — this time unsuccessfully — to break away again from the Kuomintang and the National Government, offering to assume a position of satellite dependency on the Soviet Union. 77

During the first period, Sheng Shih-ts'ai ran Sinkiang very smoothly, on the three wheels of friendly relations with the Soviet Union, democracy, and increased recognition of the identities and interests of the "nationalities" or ethnic groups of the province. In October 1938 he held a provincial congress of all nationalities, which condemned Japanese machinations in Inner Mongolia, pledged money to contribute ten airplanes to the Chinese Air Force, and promised to keep open an overland route through Sinkiang, facilitating the movement of Soviet supplies to China. Sheng himself visited Moscow, ostensibly in search of medical care.⁴⁹ Two years later, on December 8, 1940, he joined other Chinese leaders in condemning the Nanking puppet regime under Wang Ching-wei. In 1941, after the New Fourth Army incident (when Kuomintang troops attacked Communist-led troops in the Yangtze Valley), Sheng told a correspondent of *Ta Kung Pao*, China's great independent newspaper, that Sinkiang was devoting all its strength to transport work and reconstruction in order to hasten victory, and that all parties and cliques in China should continue in their united resistance to Japan.⁵⁰ 77

When Germany invaded Russia, Sheng was informed that he could no longer receive material aid from hard-pressed Russia. Later, with Nazi forces besieging Leningrad and Stalingrad, he appears to have been convinced that Russia, even if not defeated, would no longer be one of the dominating great powers. He turned about-face and made contact with Chungking, indicating that in his belief a man who holds power in Sinkiang must rely on outside support in addition to concentrating control within the province in his own hands. Adjusting his rule within Sinkiang to his new orientation toward Chungking, he converted his earlier

⁴⁹ Sa Kung-liao, *op. cit.*

⁵⁰ Chen Chi-ying, *A Bird's-eye View of Sinkiang*, Chungking, 1941. (77)

and relatively democratic policy into authoritarian repression of the Uighurs and other non-Chinese national groups, and began to round up not only his Communist advisers but liberal Chinese as well. 78

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The sudden shift of policy was marked by the imprisonment and secret murder of Tu Chung-yuan,⁵¹ a famous nationalist and liberal, once a schoolmate of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, who had been invited to come to Sinkiang during the democratic period to head up cultural work, and had brought with him a considerable number of progressive young Chinese. By 1944 about 80,000 people had been imprisoned, including Sheng's own Soviet-trained brother and his wife. Torture was used to obtain confessions. Christopher Rand, correspondent of the *New York Herald Tribune*, reported the case of a man "whom General Sheng's experts began to skin alive. After a square inch of skin had been removed, the victim wisely signed a 'confession.' The terror conflicted badly with General Sheng's 'new deal' program. He imported teachers and experts from China to develop the province; then he would become suspicious of them, throw them into jail and proceed to import more of the same. His schools turned out an increasing number of literate men who might conceivably spread ideas among the people — and a diploma came to be a ticket to jail."⁵² 78

The idea of a transportation route through Sinkiang but independent of Russia was explored — which meant an orientation more friendly toward Britain, although previously Sheng's "anti-imperialism," while emphasizing the menace of Japan, had also brought pressure on the trade between India and Sinkiang. In February 1942, however, when Chiang Kai-shek flew to India, he inspected part of an old trade route from Northwest India into Inner Asia which might be made part of a supply route to Sin-

⁵¹ For some details about Tu Chung-yuan's activities in Sinkiang and his final fate at the hands of Sheng, see two articles by Sa Kung-liao, in *Kuo Hsin National News*, semi-monthly, Hongkong, Nov. 11 and 25, 1947, New Series, Vol. 1, Nos. 3 and 4 (in Chinese).

⁵² *New York Herald Tribune*, Sept. 23, 1947. (787)

kiang. At the same time Chu Shao-liang, the general who was then the head of the Generalissimo's Northwest Headquarters at Sian, flew to Urumchi to talk with Sheng Shih-ts'ai (who had once been a subordinate of his); and a British-educated official, Chaucer H. Wu (Wu Chai-hsiang), was subsequently appointed Special Commissioner for Foreign Affairs. As part of the same series of moves, the Chinese Moslem General Ma Pu-ch'ing, who could be expected to consider himself a potential rival of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, was appointed Pacification Commissioner of western Ch'inghai, a border region forming part of the Tibetan plateau and overlooking the "back doors" of the southern deserts of Sinkiang. 79

For his successful mission Chu was offered, according to a Chinese report, a reward of 500,000 Chinese dollars, of which he accepted only a fifth.⁵³ Later in the same year, when Chiang Kai-shek was at Lanchow, capital of the province of Kansu, General Chu flew again to Urumchi, taking with him no less distinguished a person than Madame Chiang Kai-shek, together with Wu Chung-hsin, who was destined to become Sheng's successor in Sinkiang two years later. 79

In the fall of 1943 Sheng himself flew to Chungking to confer with Chiang Kai-shek. The Treasury was then instructed to allocate ten million Chinese dollars a year for reconstruction in Sinkiang. Chungking undertook a program of widely advertising the prospects of colonization in Sinkiang. The province was compared with California before 1849, and its Altai region with Alaska before 1867. Refugees from a severe famine in Honan in 1942-1943 were sent out to Sinkiang. Over 4000 of them arrived at Kuchengtze, and 1500 reached Urumchi, but though each household was supposed to be allotted fifteen acres of land, the project was mismanaged and in the end the refugees became tenants and hired farm hands. 79

In 1943 Chungking began to strengthen its position by sending

⁵³ Sun Hai-cheng, "Chu Shao-liang on the Wu Chuan Shan," in *Hsin Wen Tien Ti* (monthly), Shanghai, No. 12, April 30, 1946 (in Chinese). (797)

officials and troops into Sinkiang. At the same time the Russians capped the main oil well they had been exploiting west of Urumchi, and carried their refinery equipment back to their own territory. They also withdrew the armored and motorized unit known as the Altai Volunteers. This unit, which included Soviet-trained troops and men recruited among the "White" or non-Soviet Russians domiciled in Sinkiang, had been stationed since the 1930's near Komul, where it could guard the eastern approaches to Sinkiang against the possibilities of a motorized Japanese raid through Inner Mongolia. Since by 1943 it was clear that the Japanese were no longer able to strike so far west, the withdrawing of this unit made it clear that the Soviet Union was not intending to challenge a reassertion of China's own policies in Sinkiang.⁵⁴ 80

For Sheng Shih-ts'ai himself, the comparisons between his period of dependence on the Russians and his new dependence on the government of his own country must have been ironic. The Russians had supplied him with a great deal of material assistance and had also looked with favor on his program of democratic reform, which had for the time being made him popular among the non-Chinese nationalities of the province. Under the assertion of Chungking control, he received very little material aid, while the officials appointed by Chungking encroached on his personal power. At the same time his abandonment of his reform program had destroyed his popularity among the non-Chinese. 80

By 1944, accordingly, Sheng was ready for another shift. The Russians, in the meantime, had held and thrown back the German invasion. It was evident that, at the end of the war, they would be much more powerful than Sheng had once thought. In February of this year, therefore, Sheng declared himself ill and declined to appear at official conferences. In April, he began to arrest officials loyal to Chungking. During June, students and teachers were also imprisoned, on charges of being involved in plotting. In August, more Chungking appointees were impris-

⁵⁴ Eleanor Lattimore, *Far Eastern Survey*, New York, April 11, 1945. (80) oned without trial, and their property was confiscated.⁵⁵ With some 200 Chungking men out of the way, General Sheng, according to one report, "asked Generalissimo Stalin to incorporate Sinkiang into the Soviet Union. The Russian leader, who evidently had had quite enough by this time, refused. Chungking also had had enough, and decided to remove General Sheng by a delicate operation."⁵⁶ 81

General Chu Shao-liang was again sent to Urumchi, and persuaded Sheng Shih-ts'ai to leave Sinkiang and accept the post of Minister of Agriculture and Forestry in Chungking. (Under the Kuomintang, this Ministry had become a sinecure for men out of power, because of its inability to do anything challenging the interests of the landlords who had increasingly gained control over the Kuomintang.) On September 2, 1944, the provincial *Hsin-chiang Jih Pao* published the news that Sheng had been transferred to Chungking, and on September 11 he departed from Urumchi airfield. His reign was over. 81

Breakdown of Chinese Frontier Policy

Yang Tseng-hsin, Chin Shu-jen, and Sheng Shih-ts'ai had one after another established themselves as the rulers of Sinkiang, and had then been "recognized" by the National Government. After the deposition of Sheng, on the other hand, the National Government was able to name four men in succession as its own appointees to the post of Chairman of the Provincial Government. These men were Wu Chung-hsin, Chang Chih-chung, Masud Sabri and Burkhan. The contrast shows that since 1944 Sinkiang has once more come within the orbit of Chinese national politics.

After the surrender of Japan in 1945 the C.C. Clique and the Political Science Group became the main sources of Chinese national policy in Sinkiang. The C.C. Clique — the "Tammany" of

⁵⁵ Han Hai Ch'ao (*Tides of the Dry Sea, or Desert Tides*), Urumchi, January, 1947, p. 19; also Shanghai edition of the same date, p. 21 (in Chinese).

⁵⁶ Dispatch from Christopher Rand, dated Urumchi September 22, 1947, in *New York Herald Tribune*, September 23, 1947. (81)

the Kuomintang, controlling more political machinery and more key appointments than any other faction — 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. The Political Science Group — made up of experienced bureaucrats and administrators, with something of the subtlety and refinement of the old mandarin — preferred moderation whenever possible. 82

Both factions, however, required a strong military leader as a pivot around which to revolve, and both always revolved around Chiang Kai-shek. They have been used by him, at his discretion, in alternating phases of policy. They represent different expressions of the Confucian tradition that the function of officials is not to represent the people but to rule over them. Despite the friction of rivalry between them they held basically the same view with regard to minority peoples within the Chinese realm: these peoples are not entitled to equal representation in a Chinese federation, but should be ruled over by the Chinese. 82

This view differs from that of Sun Yat-sen, who definitely recognized the Moslem Turkis (the Uighurs) in Sinkiang as a distinct nationality. According to Article Four of his National Reconstruction Program, and also the Declaration of the First National Congress of the Kuomintang in 1924, all such "nationalities" in China are entitled to self-determination. Sun Yat-sen only developed this view fully at the very end of his life, almost certainly under the influence of Russian and Chinese Communist advisers, and probably under the influence of the successful example of the Soviet policy toward national minorities. After the death of Sun Yat-sen, however, this approach was abandoned by the Kuomintang. Even Kuomintang members who recognized the distinct nationality of such peoples as the Uighurs had no policy providing for self-determination in practice. The narrowest

(82) view of all is well expressed by Li Tung-fang, a historian patronized by the C.C. Clique, who asserted that the Uighurs are descended from the Huns, that the Huns (Hsiungnu) were in turn descended from the ancient Chinese, and that therefore there is no real difference of "nationality" between Uighurs and Chinese.⁵⁷ 83

The latest trend of Kuomintang theory was to ignore self-determination, and to discuss instead "equality of treatment" and "promotion of autonomous government." Both formulas, as will be seen, are subject to very special interpretation. At the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Kuomintang, Chiang Kai-shek declared that the essence of nationalism was to liberate the Chinese and to treat all nationalities within China on a basis of equality. In November 1944 Sun Fo restated this view.⁵⁸ The practical limits of this approach were laid down by Li Tung-fang, in stating the opinion that self-government—not self-determination—should not be applied to a unit larger than a district within a province, and should never be extended to a whole province. Chang Chih-chung apparently feared that self-determination might lead automatically to secession and independence. In a speech at Urumchi on May 13, 1947, when he was Governor of Sinkiang, he declared that though "scores of years or several centuries hence" Sinkiang might become independent, it could not be independent now.⁵⁹ Thus, in the later trend of Kuomintang theory, self-determination has apparently been fully identified with independence.

Under actual conditions in China, however, a demand for self-determination is not necessarily the same thing as a demand for independence. "Self-determination" is often in fact an assertion of the right to stay within the Chinese comity on the basis of a federation of provinces with equal status, and the demand for self-

⁵⁷ Li Tung-fang, "Are the People of Sinkiang Turki?" in *Altai*, Chungking, April 25, 1945, Vol. 1, No. 2 (in Chinese).

⁵⁸ Speech by Sun Fo at the celebration in Chungking of the twenty-seventh anniversary of the founding of the Soviet State, November 1944.

⁵⁹ Speech by Chang Chih-chung published in *Hsinchiang Jih Pao* (Sinkiang Daily), Urumchi, August 14, 1947 (in Chinese). (83)

determination often stems not from separatism but from resistance to the assertion of a central dictatorship over outlying provinces. 84

Thus the *New York Times* correspondent Tillman Durdin, in a Mukden dispatch of February 3, 1948, noted that "Perhaps the main cause of bitterness against the government among the Manchurians has been the policy of officials appointed by Nanking of treating the Manchurians as a people to be dominated militarily and exploited economically." The "Manchurians" are, of course, Chinese, closely related to the main stock of North China. The situation in Sinkiang, where most of the people are not Chinese, is similar but more marked. Thus even Masud Sabri, an Uighur who was regarded by other Uighurs as subservient to the C.C. Clique, felt constrained to say in 1945 that while the war against Japan was still going on the main characteristics of Chungking policy in Sinkiang were military domination by a large number of troops who were regarded as "human-faced locusts," and promotion of the kind of Chinese colonization that had contributed so much to such uprisings as that in Komul.⁶⁰ 84

When Sheng Shih-ts'ai left Sinkiang in September 1944 he left behind six divisions of his own troops. In addition, four divisions of Chungking troops had already entered the province. Two divisions of Chinese Moslem cavalry from Ch'inghai were added a year later, bringing the total up to twelve divisions. Strong fortifications facing west were then built, and though there have been a number of reorganizations, the total military force has remained at about 100,000.⁶¹ The economic strain and social friction associated with the maintenance of such a force in a distant and thinly inhabited province have been described by a Chinese

⁶⁰ *New York Times*, January 30, 1948. The comment on troops by Masud Sabri is contained in his article "Regarding Politics in the Northwest," in *Altai*, Chungking, April 25, 1945 (in Chinese).

⁶¹ This figure was reported by Frank Robertson, who in 1947 spent about eight months in Sinkiang. See his dispatch of January 28, 1948, published in *New York Times*, February 1, 1948. For military establishment at the time Sheng Shih-ts'ai left Sinkiang, see press interview with Chang Chih-chung published in *Hsinchiang Jih Pao* (*Sinkiang Daily*), Urumchi, July 4, 1947 (in Chinese). (84)

writer. From Lanchow along the "panhandle" of Kansu, across the main desert gap and on to Urumchi, the distance is nearly 2000 miles. Yet a blockhouse was maintained about every twenty miles along the route. Supplies and transport were kept moving only by heavy requisitions in kind and in labor from the sparse population. The troops, who themselves were not well treated, were not under good discipline, and when turned loose they treated the people even worse.⁶² 85

Chinese colonization has resulted in the addition of very few owner-cultivators. Many famine refugees have died even after their arrival in Sinkiang, and in the cities and towns there has been a great increase in the number of beggars and thieves.⁶³ Heavy taxation and inflation stimulated bitter hatred against the Chinese, accompanied by much resentment even among Chinese against the political regime. As one American reporter observed, "to save Sinkiang, China would have to make spectacular reforms on a scale unknown in the Orient. But even if this were possible and if it were done, China's efforts might break down against the barrier of emotion"—meaning the aroused nationalism of the Uighurs.⁶⁴ 85

In the rivalry for power in Sinkiang in the last years of Kuomintang rule, the C.C. Clique had the upper hand over the Political Science Group most of the time. It was able to use, in succession, an old-line bureaucrat like Wu Chung-hsin, a general like Chang Chih-chung, and a wealthy Uighur landlord member of the Kuomintang like Masud Sabri. 85

Wu Chung-hsin, long associated with the C.C. Clique, long active in frontier affairs, and long distrusted by Mongols and Tibetans, was appointed provincial Chairman in October 1944. Though a graduate of the Paoting Military Academy, his most important posts had been in the Civil Service. He was Governor of Anhui, his native province, in 1929, Governor of Kweichow

⁶² Chung Shih, "The Puzzle in Sinkiang," in *Min Chu* (*Democracy*, weekly), Shanghai, March 16, 1946, Nos. 21-22 joint issue (in Chinese).

⁶³ Chen Ssu-ying, "Agriculture in Sinkiang," in *Central Bank Monthly*, New Series, Vol. 1, No. 6, Shanghai, June, 1946 (in Chinese).

⁶⁴ Frank Robertson. (85)
from 1935 to 1937, and Chairman of the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission from 1938 to 1944. During this period he headed an important and personally profitable mission to Tibet, and supported a land-grabbing colonization policy which did much to turn Inner Mongolian nationalism against China. 86

His appointment in Sinkiang was backed by General Chu Shao-liang, who has already been mentioned, who was then active on behalf of the C.C. Clique. The most important members of his staff were also members of the Clique, including Tseng Shao-lu, Secretary-General; Teng Chiang-hai, Civil Affairs Commissioner; Yu Tao-yun, Reconstruction Commissioner; and Hsü Lien-chi, Educational Commissioner. Only his Finance Commissioner, Lo Yo-wen, was an adherent of the Political Science Group. 86

By the end of November 1944 Wu had set free most of the Chungking appointees who had been arrested by Sheng Shih-ts'ai;⁶⁵ but many prisoners who had no connections with the C.C. Clique or with Chungking remained in jail, and much confiscated property was not returned. Political refugees who had fled to a number of cities in China, and even to Mecca, India, and Afghanistan, were not allowed to return. The passport fee for a merchant leaving the province was first trebled and then multiplied by ten.⁶⁶ Inflation and corruption increased to the point where the saying became current in Sinkiang that "one Sheng Shih-ts'ai went out, but two came in." 86

Opposition to the new trend in Chinese rule was not long in crystallizing. A rebellion broke out in the Ili Valley in November 1944. Fighting lasted for more than forty days, until Chinese forces gave up the city of Kulja and withdrew. This rising, referred to in the Chinese political literature as "the Ining Affair," marked the opening of a new phase of nationalism in Sinkiang. 86

A regime calling itself the Eastern Turkistan Republic was set up at Kulja, headed by a council of three — an Uighur, a Kazakh,

⁶⁵ Yu Han, "Sinkiang Memoir," in *Tu Chih Wen Chai* (Reader's Digest), Shanghai, July 16, 1946, Vol. 1, No. 6 (in Chinese).

⁶⁶ *Hsin Wen Tsa Chih* (News Miscellany), No. 8, Chungking, March 15, 1946 (in Chinese). Under Sheng, the passport fee had been \$150,000 (Chinese). By 1946 it had increased to \$2,000,000. (86)

and a "White" or non-Soviet Russian, a resident of the region. The military leaders were Ali Khan Türe, Osman Bator (a Kazakh who later turned against the regime), and Abdugani Bator. Leaders in administration and propaganda were Akhmedjan Kasimi, Rakhimjan Klojaev, and Abulkhair Türe.⁶⁷ The Chinese residents of Kulja cautiously declared that they had nothing in common with the oppressive policy of the Provincial Government. The Sibos, holding agricultural land near the city, delivered supplies.⁶⁸ Uighurs and Kazakhs joined in the fighting; an important development, in view of the fact that the Ili Valley is the most important region in Sinkiang in which Uighurs do not form the largest part of the population. 87

An American correspondent who reached the region somewhat later reported that there was "no evidence" to support Chinese charges that the insurgents were armed with "modern Russian equipment."⁶⁹ Most of the Uighur troops were in fact without rifles, and were armed only with hand grenades. The most important mobile troops were Kazakh cavalry. After hard fighting through the months of July, August, and September, the Kulja regime extended its control into the Chuguchak region. The insurgent forces then turned eastward and drove to Manass, the important town near which the trade route from Urumchi divides, with one fork leading to Ili and the other to Chuguchak. 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.⁷⁰ 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. 87

⁶⁷ *Revolutionary Eastern Turkistan*, Kulja, July 30, 1946, p. 1 (in Russian).

⁶⁸ Same publication, Dec. 26, 1946, p. 2.

⁶⁹ Frank Robertson.

⁷⁰ *Hsinchiang Jih Pao* (Sinkiang Daily), Urumchi, February 22, 1947 (in Chinese). (87)

At this point it was considered necessary to negotiate, and General Chang Chih-chung was sent from Chungking to Sinkiang in September 1945. Although a military man, General Chang, who has since become of steadily increasing importance both in Sinkiang and in Chinese national politics, has never been a war lord basing himself on a territory with troops of his own. After graduating from the Paoting Military Academy and studying in Germany, he was given command of a division and later of the Fifth Army. He took part in the defense of Shanghai against the Japanese in 1932, and later was made Dean of the Central Military Academy, since when he has not held active command of troops. From 1937 to 1939 he was Chairman of the Hunan Provincial Government; in 1940 he was aide-de-camp to the Generalissimo, and during the war he was head of the political training board of the National Military Council. Concurrently he was Secretary-General of the San Min Chu I Youth Corps, a stronghold of the C.C. Clique. He has never been fully identified with either the C.C. Clique or the Political Science Group, but has been one of the few important men able to co-operate with either of them in specific enterprises. Although his known preference for compromise set him aside from the disciplined authoritarianism of the C.C. Clique, the Clique did not oppose his assignment to Sinkiang to attempt to settle by negotiation a situation that could no longer be handled by force.⁷¹ 88

In the course of his negotiations with the Kulja insurgents, Chang Chih-chung had to make three journeys by air between Urumchi and Chungking, in September and October 1945 and January 1946. His first meeting with the Kulja delegates was promising. They were willing to abandon the "independence" of the "Eastern Turkistan Republic," if Chungking would grant autonomous self-government to the whole province of Sinkiang. 88

⁷¹ In 1949, after serving as chairman of a six-man Kuomintang delegation to Peiping to attempt to negotiate peace with the Chinese Communists, Chang Chih-chung — with four other members of the delegation — blamed the failure of the negotiations on the unrealistic intransigence of the Kuomintang, and remained in Peiping, reconciling himself to a Communist-controlled future for China. (88)

Chang was willing to let Kulja retain its armed forces as a local "peace preservation corps" (a common arrangement in China), but insisted that Chungking retain top military command in the province and full authority over diplomatic relations. 89

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The second conference took place in Urumchi in November, 1945. The insurgent movement had by then spread into the Tarim Basin. In the south of the province the government had lost control of Yarkand and Khargalik, and Khotan was surrounded by armed rebels. Chungking was unable to detach large forces for operations in Sinkiang. Although the war against Japan was over, delicate negotiations with the Chinese Communists were in progress. In this period, therefore, interesting parallel negotiations took place. While General Marshall, although America was regarded as primarily the friend and supporter of the Chinese Government, acted as mediator between the Kuomintang and the Communists, the Soviet Consul General in Urumchi, although Russia was regarded as friendly to the insurgents, acted as mediator between them and the Chinese authorities.⁸⁹

Between October 1945 and June 1946 there were eighteen official meetings and more than ten unofficial meetings. To enhance the prestige of General Chang in carrying on the negotiations, he was made Head of the Generalissimo's Headquarters for the Northwest.⁸⁹

The negotiations resulted in three agreements. The basic agreement comprised eleven articles. Attached to Article Nine of this agreement was a supplementary agreement on the reorganization of the Provincial Government. Both of these agreements were signed by General Chang and by three Kulja delegates — Akhmedjan Kasimi, Abulkhair Türe, and Bakhimjan Klojaev. A second supplementary agreement, attached to Article Ten and dealing with the reorganization of armed forces, was not signed until June 6, 1946 — on which day there was a grand celebration in Urumchi, and Wu Chung-hsin, as Chairman of the Provincial Government, telegraphed to all districts to release political prisoners.^{72 89}

The main agreement provided for adult suffrage, with district

⁷² *Ta Kung Pao*, Chungking edition, June 7, 1946 (in Chinese). (89)

officials to be elected locally instead of being appointed by the Provincial Government. The non-Chinese nationalities were granted the use of their own languages in primary schools, with Chinese to be taught as a compulsory language in middle schools. The Provincial Government was to be partly appointed by the Chinese National Government, partly nominated by Sinkiang provincial delegates. Moslem provincial troops were to be allowed Uighur and Kazakh as their languages of command. Their organization was to be brought in line with the national military establishment, but provincial troops and National Government troops were not to be stationed in the same places.⁹⁰

The first supplementary agreement dealt in detail with the fifteen members of the Provincial Government to be nominated by provincial delegates, and with the offices to be held by them. The second supplementary agreement dealt in detail with the organization, command, and expense of maintenance of Provincial Government and National Government troops, and provided for future agreement as to the places or districts where troops were to be stationed.^{73 90}

If these three agreements had been carried out, the non-Chinese nationalities in Sinkiang would have achieved a large measure of self-determination and autonomous local administration, backed by the preservation of a part of their armed forces. Equality of treatment would have been promoted by this improvement in status. The agreements were, however, never put into full operation. Their implementation was held up principally by the delaying tactics of the C.C. Clique, whose devotion to the "leader principle" required a stubborn resistance to representative government.⁹⁰

Under the first application of the agreements, however, Chang Chih-chung replaced Wu Chung-hsin as provincial Chairman in July 1946. One of his Vice-Chairmen was an Uighur, the other a Tatar. Liu Meng-hsun, a close associate of the C.C. Clique, was appointed Secretary General, with a Kazakh and an Uighur as his

⁷³ The three documents were first published in full by the official Chinese Government Central News Agency, Nanking, June 29, 1946. (90)

deputies. Wang Tseng-shan, Civil Affairs Commissioner; Chao Chien-feng, Social Welfare Commissioner, and Ku Chien-chi, Vice-Commissioner of Reconstruction, were all active C.C. Clique members.⁹¹

With this mixed team, General Chang made a real effort to improve government, at least in Urumchi. A basic law for the province, in ten articles, was immediately adopted. Under this law officials were forbidden to engage in trade, and private banks were encouraged to increase production. Requisitions were limited and tax reduction was provided for, at least as a hope. All district councils and magistrates were to be elected within three months.⁷⁴ To implement this law, the government ordered the liquidation of the provincial trading corporation which had been set up by Sheng Shih-ts'ai.⁷⁵ (General Chang ordered 25,000 Chinese ounces of opium to be burned in front of his headquarters.) To reduce the danger of riots, intermarriage between Moslems and non-Moslems was forbidden. Taxes in arrears were canceled, and a reduction of taxes was promised for 1947.⁷⁶ To cover the budget deficit, General Chang went to Nanking to ask for an annual subsidy of \$165,000,000 in Chinese dollars.⁷⁷

More than a hundred Chinese Communists who had been put in prison by Sheng Shih-ts'ai (many of them being men who had worked for him in his reform period), were released by Chang Chih-chung and sent to Yen-an in a special convoy of trucks.⁷⁸ In taking this step, he was following consistently the line which for some years had marked him as a moderate man who favored compromise. Certainly General Chang was sincere in his efforts to reach a workable compromise in Sinkiang. In a speech at Urumchi on May 13, 1947, for instance, he said, "Whenever I

⁷⁴ *Han Hai Ch'ao* (*Desert Tides*), Urumchi, January 1947, pp. 9-11 (in Chinese).

⁷⁵ *Ta Kung Pao*, Shanghai edition, August 13, 1946 (in Chinese).

⁷⁶ Details of sixteen tax reductions were published as an official announcement in *Hsinchiang Jih Pao* (*Sinkiang Daily*), Urumchi, January 12, 1947 (in Chinese).

⁷⁷ Same publication, April 11, 1947.

⁷⁸ *Han Hai Ch'ao* (*Desert Tides*), Shanghai edition, January 1947 (in Chinese). (91)

found myself not in accord with the minority over a question, I always settled the difference either by negotiation or by concessions. For this reason, a false impression has been created among outside circles that we were too weak and permitted the group led by Vice-Chairman Akhmedjan to control everything."⁷⁹ This reference to unfriendly criticism may well have been intended for the C.C. Clique, with which General Chang had to contend on the one hand while negotiating on the other hand with the non-Chinese nationalists. 92

Compromise was, in fact, the policy of realism at this time. At the end of 1946 the National Government troops, over which Chang had some degree of authority, though not the authority of actual command, were unable to push beyond the Manass' River. Products from west of the Manass, including gold, oil, coal, grain, flour, meat, and hides, were not coming into the Urumchi region. Most of the Uighur leaders, including many in the Tarim Basin, were still demanding that Nanking punish Sheng Shih-ts'ai.⁸⁰ They were unaware, presumably, that Sheng had already purchased immunity by his enormous gift of gold to the Kuomintang treasury. 92

Against the realistic moderation of Chang stood the intransigence of the C.C. Clique. Its influence had penetrated into Sinkiang as early as 1942, when Sheng Shih-ts'ai was beginning to shift from reliance on Russia to dependence on the Kuomintang. By January 1943 a provincial headquarters of the Kuomintang and a branch of the Central Political Training Institute, both controlled by the C.C. "machine," had been established at Urumchi. By the end of 1946 there were more than 2000 graduates of the Political Training Institute; and early in 1947, when the first provincial congress of Kuomintang delegates was held, a Sinkiang membership of 50,000 was claimed.⁸¹ As soon as General Chang became Chairman, branches of the Kuomintang (San Min Chu I)

⁷⁹ Speech by Chang Chih-chung, published in *Hsinchiang Jih Pao* (*Sinkiang Daily*), August 14, 1947 (in Chinese).

⁸⁰ *Ta Kung Pao*, Shanghai edition, November 16, 1946 (in Chinese).

⁸¹ *Hsinchiang Jih Pao* (*Sinkiang Daily*), Urumchi, March 1, 1947; also *Han Hai Ch'ao* (*Desert Tides*), Urumchi, January 1947 (both in Chinese). (92)

Youth Corps were set up at Urumchi, Aksu, and Kashgar. The C.C. Clique member controlling all of these activities was Ch'en Hsi-tseng, who was able to count on co-operation not only within the Provincial Government but on the part of the garrison commander and the police. 93

Whereas Chang Chih-chung had no strong staff of his own, the C.C. membership penetrated all political ranks. In spite of the unpopularity of the Chinese, it was able to recruit members among all non-Chinese nationalities through its ability to open the way to public office. The Clique has never hesitated to use graft as an auxiliary to party organization, and accordingly in Sinkiang, as elsewhere in China, its party officers and magistrates and military officers affiliated with it have been accused of organized corruption.⁸² Organized association with gangs is also widely attributed to the C.C. Clique, especially for the purpose of breaking up elections and popular meetings. Among "incidents" attributed to the C.C. Clique were the murder of a government delegate at Emin, near Chuguchak, in November 1946; a big riot in Urumchi in February 1947, in which five were shot and many wounded; and riots in Turfan, Toksun, and Shanshan during July 1947. The pattern follows that long established by the C.C. Clique in China, down to the detail of having such incidents reported in controlled newspapers in such a way as to imply that the blame for them lay on the Uighurs and other non-Chinese.⁸³ 93

With a deteriorating situation in China itself, Chang's policy of moderation and compromise in Sinkiang was bound to appear more and more like a policy of temporizing, and to seem, to the non-Chinese peoples of Sinkiang, more like a reluctant retreat

⁸² Detailed accusations in *Observer* (weekly), Shanghai, March 22, 1947 (in Chinese).

⁸³ See editorial in *Hsinchiang Jih Pao* (*Sinkiang Daily*), Urumchi, July 1, 1947 (in Chinese); also article by Chang Chi-yun (member of the C.C. Clique), in *Ta Kung Pao*, Tientsin edition, September 21, 1947 (in Chinese). The other side is given in a manifesto of Chinese in the Chuguchak district (under control of the Kulja dissidents), denouncing the Chinese riot of February 1947 in Urumchi, published in the Chinese edition of *Ta Cheng Min Sheng Pao* (*Justice and the People's Livelihood*), Chuguchak, April 30, 1947. (93)

from reason and less like a hopeful, though cautious, approach toward reason. First deadlock and then crisis developed in the early months of 1947. 94

In February of that year Akhmedjan declared that "the expression 'Eastern Turkistan' does not mean that we advocate an independent Eastern Turkistan. It means solely that the people have finished with the former policy of oppression and do not want it to continue. . . . The problem of our day is the confirmation of national unity [i.e. the unity of the "nationalities" of Sinkiang] and the putting into action of the democratic policy." He put forward his program under three headings: unification of all the peoples of the province; executive power to rest with the Uighurs and other non-Chinese nationalities, except for defense; and a Kurultai, or assembly of the nationalities of the province, to be the supreme judiciary body. He declared that in Sinkiang the supremacy of any one nationality was not needed. "The condition for peace and unity is unity of the nationalities and a democratic policy. This is written in the Kulja Declaration."⁸⁴ 94

Akhmedjan made the accusation, supporting it with considerable detail, that in many oases of the Tarim Basin elections had been interfered with by the police and the Chinese troops. People were beaten, students and teachers imprisoned, meetings forbidden or broken up, and once the military even boasted that they had the atom bomb with which to destroy Sinkiang.⁸⁵ While making a stand against Chinese claims to arbitrary authority, however, and by clear implication against the C.C. Clique influence in Sinkiang policy, Akhmedjan held out the possibility of reconciliation between the Chinese people as a whole and the non-

⁸⁴ The full text of this speech was published in *Sinkiang Gezeti*, Uighur language edition, Urumchi, February 19, 1947. Owing presumably to Chinese Government pressure, it does not appear to have been published in Chinese.

⁸⁵ The attitude of some of the Chinese military at this time was typified by the warning of Sung Hsi-lien, then the top military commander in Sinkiang: "If our first enemy is the Kulja party, our second is the nationalist group. The nationalists had better forget their slogan 'Turkistan first' or there will be trouble." See dispatch from Frank Robertson, *New York Times*, February 1, 1948. (94)

Chinese of Sinkiang. "In this province," he declared, "it is impossible to maintain peace by means of persecution, corruption, trickery, and fraud"; but on the other hand "the enemies of our people are not the Chinese nation, but those individuals who advocate oppressive government, who want imperialist policies, who are against rights for the people."⁸⁶ 95

In April 1947 Chang Chih-chung made a tour of the most important oases of the Tarim Basin. In May, fortified presumably by the firsthand knowledge he had acquired, he made an important speech at Urumchi in which he put forward a Chinese policy countering the policy of Akhmedjan. There should, he pleaded, be no resort to revolution. Theoretically, Sinkiang should have an autonomous and democratic system of rule; but autonomy and democracy should be based on a choice between the Sun Yat-sen pattern and the Soviet pattern. The Kulja group, he asserted, because of its opposition to the Chinese Government, must be regarded as opposing the San Min Chu I or Three People's Principles of Sun Yat-sen, and must therefore be pro-Communist. 95

General Chang also dealt with a number of the substantive issues standing between the Chinese Government and the Kulja group. Akhmedjan, as the spokesman of the Kulja group, was willing to recognize the right of the Chinese Government to control the national defense of Sinkiang. General Chang, however, contended that reorganization of the six regiments in the three frontier regions of Kulja, Chuguchak, and the Altai district should be preceded by the complete surrender of those regiments to the Chinese forces. His demand in this respect was parallel to that of the Chinese Government in its 1945-1946 negotiations with the Chinese Communists, through the Marshall Mission: the Communists offered to reduce their forces and to place them under a united high command, but demanded that their identity as units be preserved and that the units continue to be stationed in Communist districts; the National Government insisted on its right not only to take over such forces but to disperse or reassign them. 95

⁸⁶ Akhmedjan, in the speech cited above. (95)

In addition to other minor demands, General Chang wanted the assent of the Sinkiang nationalist leaders to the building of a railway into Sinkiang. From the government point of view, this was a reasonable project for the linking of a frontier province to the main body of China. From the point of view of the non-Chinese peoples of Sinkiang, railway communication meant the danger of being submerged by a flood of Chinese colonists.⁹⁶

• General Chang's final demand was that Sinkiang give up its separate provincial currency and adopt that of the National Government. From the Chinese point of view, this was a rational demand. From the Sinkiang point of view, it carried with it the danger that the wealth of Sinkiang would be freely pumped into China, without a compensating flow back from China into Sinkiang.⁹⁷

Before the deadlock could be broken General Chang gave up his post as Chairman of the Sinkiang Provincial Government. He retained, however, the post of Commander of the Generalissimo's Northwest Headquarters, which gave him general supervisory powers in Northwest China and Sinkiang. He was succeeded as Chairman in May 1947 by Masud Sabri, the elderly representative of an Uighur family of rich landholders and merchants.⁹⁸

In 1904, at the age of seventeen, Masud Sabri had gone to Turkey to study. After eleven years, spent mostly in Istanbul, he returned to Sinkiang in 1915, strongly influenced by the Turkish nationalism of Kemal Atatürk. In 1934, after practicing medicine in Ili for several years, he traveled through Kashgar to India and then by sea to China, where he soon became associated politically with the C.C. Clique. Through the support of this clique, and not through any process of nomination by supporters in Sinkiang, he was made a delegate from Sinkiang to the Kuomintang National Conference of 1936 and subsequently a member of the Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang. During the war against Japan, the C.C. Clique placed him in the National Political Coun-

⁹⁶ The full text of Chang Chih-chung's speech was published in *Hsinchiang Jih Pao* (Sinkiang Daily), Urumchi, August 14, 1947 (in Chinese). Note the long delay before publication, indicating the political tension during these months. (96)

cil. In 1942 he became a member of the National Government.

Thus in 1947 when Masud Sabri became Chairman of Sinkiang — the first "native" ever to hold that position — 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. The fact that he was not stepping up to the governorship from within Sinkiang but was returning after an expatriation of many years was underlined by his arrival from China in the company of General Sung Hsi-lien, commander of the Chinese "expeditionary forces" that had been sent into Sinkiang, and General Tao Shih-yueh, provincial garrison commander.⁹⁹

It is not surprising, therefore, that even before Masud Sabri's arrival several members of the provincial assembly signed a letter to General Chang Chih-chung protesting his appointment. On June 4, after his inauguration on May 31, no less than 63 members of the assembly out of 90 present adopted a resolution opposing him, while outside of the assembly the opposition to him was headed by twelve popular organizations.⁹⁹ Handbills distributed by these organizations stressed the fact that Masud Sabri had not been in Sinkiang when the nationalist risings began, that he had not shown himself as soon as Sheng Shih-ts'ai fell from power, and that he had no local record in either administration or leadership.⁹⁹

In spite of these protests conservative Uighurs, especially landholders in oases occupied by Chinese forces, gathered around Masud Sabri in numbers sufficient to split the nationalist movement. With the backing of the C.C. Clique and the Chinese military, confirmation was withheld from elected members of the provincial judiciary, command appointments in the provincial peace preservation corps were held up, and district magistrates elected by local councils were forced to continue to take orders from the Chinese military. Out of 421 appointments to the police bureau in Urumchi only 48 were Moslems, with Chinese holding

⁹⁸ *Min Chu Pao* (Democratic Daily), Kulja, June 18, 1947 (in Chinese).

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, July 3, 1947.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, June 24, 1947. (97)

84 per cent 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 1946.⁹¹

Tension mounted. Only a month after Masud Sabri's inauguration the secret police and members of the San Min Chu I Youth Corps, supported by the regular police, attacked a moving picture theater where more than a thousand people were gathered and beat up members of the provincial assembly and a former Deputy District Magistrate from Turfan, and at the same time people in the street who had been reading a wall poster denouncing Masud Sabri were arrested, beaten, and imprisoned.⁹² Pressure by Masud Sabri prevented the holding of a protest meeting which had been planned by Kulja members of the provincial assembly. (98)

The split between Masud Sabri and the militant Kulja nationalists then became open. In July 1947 a group of twenty-seven members of the provincial assembly left Urumchi for Kulja; this group included representatives from Kharashahr, Turfan, Khotan, and Aksu as well as from the Kulja region itself. They were joined shortly afterward by twenty-two members from the Kashgar region, and finally in August the rest of the Kulja delegates withdrew to Kulja, headed by Akhmedjan Kasimi.⁹³

From his supervisory position as a backer of Masud Sabri, General Chang Chih-chung in September addressed an open letter to Akhmedjan, as the leader of the dissidents, asking in effect if there was to be war or peace: "If you have no intention against peace, you will return to Urumchi and reopen negotiations with the government."⁹⁴ The Kulja reply, in November, denied that secession from China was intended and offered to return to Urumchi if the government would meet certain demands, includ-

⁹³ *Ibid.*, June 24 and 29, 1947.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, July 9, 1947.

⁹⁵ *Hsinchiang Jih Pao (Sinkiang Daily)*, Urumchi, July 11 and 14, 1947 (in Chinese).

⁹⁶ *Time*, New York, October 6, 1947. (98)

ing the removal of Masud Sabri. In December Chang Chih-chung answered that the Chinese Government would not consider replacing Masud Sabri without an election; but at the same time he renewed his invitation for further negotiations. The Kulja response merely reiterated the demand for the removal of Masud Sabri.⁹⁵

In the meantime General Chang Chih-chung had returned to Nanking, where he submitted to the government a "five year plan" for the development of agriculture, forestry, mining, cattle raising, and industry in Sinkiang. In January 1948 the Chinese Government appropriated NC fifty billion dollars in the depreciated currency of the period as compensation for private property confiscated by Sheng Shih-ts'ai. A high official, P'eng Hsueh-p'ei, was sent on a six-week "fact-finding" tour of Sinkiang, and on his return urged immediate improvement of health and transportation facilities.

In the main, however, the situation continued at deadlock through the year 1948. The Chinese Government maintained a force of about 100,000 troops in Sinkiang, many of them American-equipped, and these troops were effectively immobilized in the civil war against the Communists. Opposed to them were troops of the Kulja coalition, mainly Uighurs and Kazakhs, whose numbers were variously reported at figures ranging from 20,000 to 60,000. These troops were frequently reported to be receiving aid from Russia.

In military action, however, the most sensational events were not on the frontier between Kuomintang-held Sinkiang and the dissidents of the Kulja coalition, but on the Outer Mongolian frontier, around the knot of mountains known as the Baitik Bogda. These mountains are an outlying spur of the main Altai range, and stand at the edge of the Jungarian Desert of northern Sinkiang. When Sinkiang, Outer Mongolia, and China were united under the Manchu Empire, this frontier was not of great impor-

⁹⁷ Dispatch by John Roderick from Lanchow, Kansu Province (General Chang's headquarters), dated April 5, 1948, published in *China Daily Tribune*, Shanghai, April 7, 1948. (99)

tance. The grazing grounds of the western slopes of the Altai were used not by Khalkha tribesmen of the main group of tribes in Outer Mongolia, but by Torguts and Ölöts of the Western Mongol groups of tribes, whose pastures were partly in northwestern Outer Mongolia and partly in Sinkiang.

In the same region there were Kazakhs, whom the Imperial authorities had considered as "tenants" of the Mongols, paying the Mongols for the pastures that they used and having no claim to territory of their own. Some of these Kazakhs made use of summer pasture in the Baitik Bogda. The Baitik Bogda were also partly occupied by Mongols, who practiced a certain amount of agriculture in addition to owning livestock. In the winter it was the custom of the Kazakhs to leave most of their horses in the Baitik Bogda, horses being able to paw down through the snow to get winter feed, but to bring their sheep, cattle, and camels down into the Jungarian Desert, where they were clearly within the jurisdiction of Sinkiang. 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; but the policy of the Sinkiang authorities was to drive them back toward the Baitik Bogda and to keep them out of the jurisdiction of Sinkiang, because they were regarded as cattle thieves and troublemakers. In practice, therefore, the attitude of the Sinkiang authorities was that the Baitik Bogda lay outside of Sinkiang.

By 1948, however, the attitude of the Sinkiang provincial authorities and of the Chinese military command had changed. The Kazakh leader Osman Bator, who has already been mentioned, had at first joined the Kulja coalition, had later broken with it, and had withdrawn to the foothills of the Bogda Ula. The policy of the Chinese authorities was to encourage him to move northward from this region and to occupy the Baitik Bogda, which were accordingly claimed as Chinese territory.

These attempts on the part of the Chinese-supported Kazakhs were resisted by Outer Mongolian frontier patrols, and the frontier incidents which resulted were sensationally reported. No

(100) widespread fighting broke out, however, and American reporters who went up to Sinkiang after the first reports tended to minimize the significance of the incidents.⁹⁶ 101

The exact location of the frontier in this region remains unclear. Recent Chinese maps show the entire Baitik Bogda within Sinkiang, and the Outer Mongolian frontier running along the main crest of the Altai.⁹⁷ Older maps, however, both Russian (Tsarist) and British, show the frontier running either right through the Baitik Bogda or somewhat to the south of the main height of the hills. 101

In December 1948 the Chinese Government made a new move of major importance by dropping Masud Sabri as Chairman of the Province and replacing him with Burkhan, the former Vice-Chairman, who as a "middle-of-the-roader" was more acceptable to the Kulja dissidents. Burkhan, a Russian Tatar by origin, with large trading interests, had been a man of influence in Sinkiang since Tsarist times. He had managed to maintain himself under the regimes of Yang Tseng-hsin, Sheng Shih-ts'ai, and the Kuomintang. 101

In January 1949 Chang Chih-chung returned to Sinkiang to attempt to negotiate a new Sino-Soviet economic treaty, to replace a ten-year agreement signed in 1939 under the regime of Sheng Shih-ts'ai. It was reported at the time that the Russians were attempting to acquire monopoly rights in mining and trade. There was also speculation that on the Chinese side an elaborate maneuver was being carried out to create a conflict of interest between the Russians and the Chinese Communists, by granting to the Russians exclusive rights in this frontier sector of Chinese territory. In the upshot, no new treaty was negotiated, but the Russian monopoly right to an air service between Komul and the

⁹⁶ See, for example, dispatch from Henry R. Lieberman, from Urumchi, August 27, 1948, in *New York Times*, September 8, 1948.

⁹⁷ See the map on p. 59 of the article by Chang Chih-yi, "Land Utilization and Settlement Possibilities in Sinkiang," in *Geographical Review*, Vol. 39, No. 1, New York, 1949. (101)

Soviet frontier, secured under the old treaty, was continued for five years.⁹⁸ 102

Returning from Sinkiang after the first few meetings of these negotiations, Chang Chih-chung later joined a five-man "peace team" of the Kuomintang which went to Peiping to negotiate with the Chinese Communists. There, together with the other members of the delegation, he denounced the Kuomintang and declared his adherence, not to the Chinese Communist Party, but to the movement for a coalition government headed by the Communists. 102

Finally, in September, 1949, all the threads of the politics of Sinkiang were drawn together and tied in one knot: Seyfuddin, of the Kulja coalition, went to Peiping as a delegate to the People's Consultative Council — called by the Communists — where another delegate was Chang Chih-chung, once the Kuomintang's top representative in Sinkiang. Almost simultaneously the oasis of Komul, key to the eastern approaches from China proper to Sinkiang, declared in favor of the new Communist regime, and the Sinkiang provincial government immediately followed with a formal declaration of adherence.⁹⁹ A chapter in the history of Inner Asia had definitely closed. The first words of the next chapter were yet to be written. 102

⁹⁸ See, among others, the following newspaper dispatches: Henry R. Lieberman, Nanking, January 31, 1949, in *New York Times*, February 1, 1949. United Press, Nanking, February 13, 1949; *ibid.*, February 14, 1949. Henry R. Lieberman, Canton, February 28, 1949; *ibid.*, February 28, 1949. Walter Sullivan, Urumchi, April 1, 1949; *ibid.*, April 6, 1949. Walter Sullivan, Urumchi, March 30, 1949; *ibid.*, April 18, 1949. Unsigned dispatch from Shanghai, May 11, 1949; *ibid.*, May 12, 1949. Frank Robertson, Canton, in *Christian Science Monitor*, June 6, 1949.

⁹⁹ See the following newspaper dispatches: Henry R. Lieberman, from Shanghai, September 24, 1949, in *New York Times*, September 25 and 26, 1949; unsigned dispatch from Hongkong, September 25, 1949; *ibid.*, September 26, 1949; Tillman Durdin from Hongkong, September 28, 1949; *ibid.*, September 29, 1949. (102)

The Feudal Heritage

HALF A CENTURY AGO, when Western travelers in Sinkiang were most frequent, stagnation was the aspect which they found most striking in the societies of both the oasis dwellers and the steppe nomads. Here in the heart of Asia, time seemed to be standing still. In human society there seemed to be an unending continuity and repetition, but no evolution.¹⁸²

Yet the archaeologists among these travelers, by their startling discoveries of the past as reflected in wall paintings and manuscripts, revealed that the social history of Sinkiang, like its cultural history, had been complex. Here, for twenty centuries of recorded history, the civilizations of India, Iran, and China had interacted. The cultures of settled peoples and pastoral nomads had never ceased to work upon each other. A number of the religions of Europe and Asia had here lived for long periods side by side. To this day, no other Chinese province is so diversified ethnologically, linguistically, in the political importance of its religions, and in the contrasts between the economic systems enclosed within its administrative framework. ¹⁸²

Cycles of Centralization and Decentralization

Throughout their long history the societies of Sinkiang have, in fact, been climbing the ladder of evolution; but, like other societies, they have at times slipped back several rungs down the ladder. This alternation between evolution and devolution can be most simply described in terms of an alternating centralization and decentralization of social and political structures. ¹⁸³

The geographical factors favored decentralization. A population separated by deserts and scattered in oases, mainly self-sufficient and similar to each other, tends to develop social microcosms with no strong superstructure to unite them into a larger state. Similarly in the wide steppe the tribal needs of pastoral nomads are satisfied by the formation of small social units. The evolution of larger, more centralized units requires the stimulus of interaction between the pastoral society and urban and agricultural society. In Sinkiang, the most important agency in keeping the pendulum of social change swinging has therefore been the alternation between centralization under powerful empires and decentralization, with reversion to small social units, in periods between great empires. ¹⁸³

This alternation, in turn, was influenced by a recurring phenomenon: the tendency of the ability to conquer to outrun the ability to integrate economically and to administer efficiently. Great empires repeatedly broke up because, instead of becoming more cohesive through the circulation of trade, they found it impossible to organize a profitable interdependence of production in different regions. The mechanism of administration was so crude that too high a proportion of revenue was eaten up by the costs of collecting revenue. The costs and hazards of transport were so high that there was always a tendency for trade to be profitable only if the goods could be virtually confiscated from the original producer. ¹⁸³

To a large extent, ancient and even medieval trade was carried on in things which the original maker, grower, miner of metals, or hunter of valuable furs did not produce for profit, but surrendered as tribute under some form of organized compulsion. Empires based on the economics of compulsion fell apart all the more readily, when they lost the power to compel, because in each of their component parts the really essential economic life was relatively self-contained. ⁽¹⁸³⁾

In periods both of centralization and decentralization the societies of Sinkiang have reflected different aspects of a slowly evolving feudalism. We have no historical description of a truly "primitive" society in Sinkiang; though the Stone Age finds prove that primitive peoples did once exist there, as in China itself. But the oasis "kingdoms" which the Chinese described some two thousand years ago were feudal, rather than primitive or tribal, both in their structure of rank and power and in such relationships as war and the collection of tribute. Nor do the Chinese chronicles describe steppe nomadism at a truly primitive level, but rather at the level of the formation of war bands and the development of early institutions to regularize personal loyalty which can be called "early feudal" or "proto-feudal."¹ ¹⁸⁴

In general, it can be said that both the oasis society and the steppe nomad society tended to evolve toward higher feudal forms of development in periods of centralization, and to devolve back toward earlier forms in periods of decentralization. The main difference between the oasis society and the steppe society was that devolution in the steppe society tended to be more extreme, and to fall back to the war-band stage of development at the very threshold of feudalism. ¹⁸⁴

封建传统

五十年前, 结伴不绝访问新疆的西方旅行家都感到绿洲居民社会和草原牧民社会的停滞现象是非常突出的。似乎那里是一个毫不变化的不断延续、不断重复的社会。

集中与分散周而复始

28

A description of the societies of Sinkiang in terms of feudalism must in itself be a test of theories of feudalism. Many Western writers on feudalism are not prepared to admit that there is any society in Asia that can properly be described as "feudal." Lack of material from Asia in Western comparative studies of feudalism is, however, in the main attributable to the lag in Western studies in the social sciences as a whole in Asia. 184

A more serious difficulty is the fact that there are no criteria of

¹ An interesting attempt to describe what may be called the "process of emergence" of feudalism has been made by Professor S. Yushkov in his article "On the question of the pre-feudal ('barbarian') state," in *Questions of History*, No. 7 of 1946, Moscow, 1946, pp. 45-64 (in Russian). The article is of particular importance because it attempts to compare as "contemporary" (in Toynbee's sense) material taken from ninth and tenth century Kievan Russia, sixth to ninth century Anglo-Saxon England, and eleventh and twelfth century Mongolia. (184)

feudalism to which equal acceptance is given by all students of the subject. Thus Dr. Helen Maud Cam, writing of English feudalism, points out that "the social, the economic, the legal and the constitutional historian approach it with different mental assumptions." To the social historian, it is the consecration of inequality or the insistence on subordination. To the economic historian it is the organization of land cultivation by the exercise of rights over persons. To the legal historian it is the contractual relationship guaranteed by land and determined by tenure. To the constitutional historian landholding is the source of political power, and government functions are bound up with land tenure.

"Thus in studying different periods," she concludes, "the social, the economic, the legal and the constitutional historian will each apply his own test to the state of things he finds, and declare that this is, or is not, 'genuine feudalism,' while his conclusions will be hotly questioned by those who use a different criterion." ² 185

On the other hand a great deal of the most important modern literature on Inner Asia, including Sinkiang, is in Russian; and even in Tsarist times the vocabulary of feudalism was usual among Russian scholars in dealing with the societies of Asia. With the Soviet writers, this practice becomes universal. On the other side of Sinkiang, Chinese sources are of the greatest importance for early and medieval history, and Chinese scholars are doing increasingly important work in the analysis both of historical data and of contemporary problems. The terms of feudalism are quite as important in the work of these Chinese scholars as they are in the Russian literature. In China today, scholars are divided by a controversy similar to the famous nineteenth-century debate between "Westerners" and "Slavophiles" in Russia. As in Russia, the heart of the discussion is whether the Chinese culture is so much a thing apart that it is inappropriate to use the terms used in discussing other cultures, or whether the phenomena of Chi-

² Helen Maud Cam, "The Decline and Fall of English Feudalism," in *Liberties and Communities in Medieval England*, Cambridge, 1944, p. 203; paper originally read before the International History Conference at Zürich in 1938. (185)

nese history are comparable to other historical phenomena, and can therefore be intelligibly described in universally accepted terms. Western scholars, even when dealing with an outlying province like Sinkiang, must keep abreast of the discussions among Chinese social scientists. 186

The Residue of History

In their first great historical period of penetration into Inner Asia under the Han Dynasty, for about two hundred years before and two hundred years after the birth of Christ, the Chinese were concerned primarily with defending the frontier of civilization in China against barbarian incursions from Mongolia and Inner Asia. The maintenance of this frontier was, for the state itself, a perpetual expense, not a profitable expansion. Trade there was, and individuals grew wealthy by it, but the Chinese were not "imperialists" planting the flag farther and farther forward in order to have trade follow it. They were not opening up colonial conquests in order to get at bulk supplies of cheap raw materials — the costs of transport were too high — nor was there a surplus of production in China forcing them to seek new markets.³ 186

The curiosities and luxuries brought to China through the Inner Asian trade contributed to the ostentation of the court. On the other hand the commodities going by caravan from China to Inner Asia consisted in large part of tribute collected by nobles and by the state, before being consigned to the hands of privileged merchants, and therefore were in fact a tax on the people. Certainly the volume of goods leaving China was not determined by the buying power of Inner Asia, because the Chinese records

³ Frederick J. Teggart, in his *Rome and China: A Study of Correlations in Historical Events*, Berkeley, 1939, lays great emphasis on "interruption of trade" along the Silk Route through Inner Asia as a cause of "correlated" wars on the Roman and Chinese frontiers, but does not raise the question of the difference between profitable expansive trade and trade which, though politically promoted in order to keep warlike barbarians contented, is a drain on the civilized country providing commodities for the barbarians. (186)

show clearly that the amount of trade allowed was politically regulated. 187

In this period the standard of Chinese policy was to see that the settled oases were not used as bases by the steppe tribes and exploited by them as sources of food and subordinate man power. To some extent, Chinese garrisons were established in the oases. In addition, the petty rulers of the oases were brought on state visits to the Chinese Court, and occasionally they were punished if they aided the nomads — and if China at the moment was strong enough to punish them. 187

Relationships of this kind, as we know from the history of other countries, are part of the origins of feudalism. The rulers of the oases, whom the Chinese called "kings," had their own kind of power in their own states; but when they became the personal instruments of Chinese policy — and also when they were made personally responsible for tribute to the nomads — the kind of power which they had in their own states was altered. They could then properly be called "vassals." 187

The parallel Chinese policy among the nomads was to encourage war between tribes in order to prevent unity of the tribes against China. In spite of everything the Chinese could do, however, the nomads at times had the upper hand. They then thrust in between China and the oases, exacting a severe tribute from the oases and demanding disguised tribute or subsidy from China. Feudalism was fostered by these relationships. The frontier chieftain who in return for a subsidy or a regional monopoly of trade undertook to keep other "barbarians" at a distance was in fact experimenting with early forms of feudalism, and with the feudal identification of power with personal status and personal obligations. 187

When China could not hold these frontier chieftains under control as vassals, a decentralized feudalism succeeded the imperially centered feudalism. Nomad chiefs, in competition with each other, laid parts of North China under tribute. In the four hundred years of confusion between the fall of the Han Dynasty in A.D.

220 and the founding of the T'ang Dynasty in 618, a decentralized feudalism with no strong imperial overlord spread from the Great Wall far into China. 188

In the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries, on the other hand — when under the T'ang Dynasty the power of China was even more broadly asserted over Inner Asia than it had been under the Han Dynasty — the local feudalisms of Inner Asia were again oriented toward the imperial center of China, either in subordination or in opposition. 188

Thus the society of the Orkhon Turks of Outer Mongolia had at one time been tribal. Both in their period of subjection to the Chinese from 630 to 680, however, and later when they themselves began to conquer other nomads and to become the overlords of oases, their institutions began to redefine the obligations of subjects and the rights of rulers in a manner that showed an emerging feudalism.⁴ 188

In the oases, in this period, the Chinese pilgrim Hsuan Tsang in the early seventh century said of Turfan that high officials met every morning to make administrative decisions. They did not keep records, but there was already a rudimentary bureaucracy, as officials were assigned to look after the land, the census, and irrigation. In Kucha, the "king" and his high officials met in council in the middle and at the end of every month, and the decisions of this council were also discussed with the heads of the monasteries before they were promulgated.⁵ 188

In the eighth century, all the households in Lukchun, near Turfan, were in 716 mentioned as listed by the officials according to whether they paid tribute or not. A document unearthed by Sir Aurel Stein at Dandan Oilik, near Khotan, dated March 23, 768, mentions annual tribute paid by the peasants in the form of

⁴ Much the most detailed attempt that has yet been made to reconstruct the society of the Orkhon Turks and related peoples is that by A. Bernshtam, *Social-Economic Structure of the Orkhon-Yenisei Turks of the VI-VIII Centuries*, Moscow, 1946 (in Russian).

⁵ Hsuan Tsang, in the edition entitled *The T'ang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions*, Shanghai, 1922, Vol. 1; also Li Kuan, *Research on Sinkiang*, Chungking, 1944, p. 191 (both in Chinese). 188

⁶ These peasants may have been individual serfs, or they may have been collective tribute-payers of the kind described by Vinogradoff in his discussion of the origins of serfdom: 189

In a state of backward agriculture and natural economy it will sometimes be more profitable for the conquerors as well as the conquered to leave the dependent population in their own households and on their own plots, at the same time taxing them heavily in the way of tribute and services. . . . We shall not be astonished to find, therefore, in the Hellenistic states of Asia a population of peasants who seem to have been in a condition of hereditary subjection and adherent to the glebe or the great estates of the Seleucid kings.⁷ 189

This kind of system, Vinogradoff thought, might be traced as far back as the Persian monarchy. He added: "In any case these peasants were certainly not slaves, while, on the other hand, their condition was closely bound up with the cultivation of the estates on which they lived." 189

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The next great period of decentralization was in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries when no one empire held either the whole of China or the whole of Inner Asia. In this period overlordship passed, on the whole, from settled peoples to nomads or peoples of nomad origin in North China, Northwest China, and Inner Asia. The trend toward a feudal development of society, however, continued. In periods of Chinese empire, as we have seen, frontier chieftains were accepted as vassals whose duty was to hold in check the more distant tribes; and conversely, when nomads ruled over settled lands they took into their service part of the ruling class, whom they deputized or made vassals for the collection of tribute. 189

In this period the Uighur Turks, nomads by origin, who had branched off from the stock of the Orkhon Turks of Outer Mon-

*Obata, *History of Civilization in the Western Regions*, Chinese translation from the Japanese by Cheng Yuan-fang, Shanghai, 1934, pp. 60-61.

⁷Paul Vinogradoff, article "Serfdom," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th ed., Cambridge, 1911, Vol. XXIV, p. 664. (189)

golia, built up the most powerful state in Sinkiang. The oases of Komul and Turfan were the main Uighur centers; and the Uighurs became of special importance when, after being conquered by the Mongols at the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, they were able to provide the Mongols with bureaucrats who could read and write, plan the regular collection of taxes, and handle the engineering problems of an irrigated agriculture. 190

Accompanying the Mongols, their influence reached eastward into China and westward as far as Russia. Vernadsky points out that the Uighurs had three kinds of large landed estates: those of local nobles; those of members of the family of the Khan or supreme ruler, and those of the Khan himself. Other lands seem to have been granted in return for military and other services, and resembled the fief in Europe, and Vernadsky even suggests that this form of land grant, when used by the Mongols in Russia, may have had an influence on the development of the Russian *pomestie*.⁸ 190

Out of the Mongol conquests at the beginning of the thirteenth century arose the greatest centralized empire that ever occupied China and Inner Asia. Its subdivision between descendants of the "golden clan" of Jenghis, its attempts to create a centrally controlled bureaucracy controlling the subdividing tendency of feudal inheritance, and its trade all revealed a rapidly developing feudalism. Both in the sudden burst of its original conquests and in the relatively rapid weakening of its administrative structure, the Mongol Empire is the best of all illustrations of that discrepancy between the effective geographical ranges of military conquest and economic and administrative integration which played so great a part in the alternating cycle of centralization and decentralization. 190

The limits of bureaucratic centralization under feudalism are shown by the failure of Jenghis Khan's own concept of empire. He provided for feudal kingdoms and smaller fiefs grouped

⁸G. Vernadsky, "Feudalism in Russia," in *Speculum*, Cambridge, Mass., 1939, Vol. 14, No. 3 (July), p. 312. (190)

around an imperial center, with bureaucratically appointed governors who, in each domain, would represent the imperial interest and authority; but real power soon reverted to the local authority.⁹ Within fifty years the major Mongol kingdoms and empires began in fact to become independent of each other, though ceremonial respect for the Great Khan was maintained for longer. Within a hundred and fifty years the whole system had fallen to pieces. 191

This period was matched by the next three hundred years of decentralization — from the middle of the fourteenth century to the middle of the seventeenth century. In China, this was the time of the Ming Dynasty; but although the dynasty was strong in China, its range of penetration into Inner Asia was extremely shallow.¹⁰ In Sinkiang and the heart of Asia — the region which, in this period, was most distant from any center of imperial power — the society of the nomads showed the readiness with which it could, after being built up into a vast system of empire, fall apart into small tribal fragments. This process of devolution showed that in spite of the unlimited mobility of which a nomadic society is capable, the natural unit of survival is a relatively small cluster of families or clans, moving within a relatively restricted geographical orbit of migration, maintaining its livestock in good condition through the changing seasons of the year. 191

In the same period the settled oasis society "devolved" back to its essential unit — the self-contained oasis. As in the past, however, the self-sufficiency of the individual oasis as an economic unit of production and a social unit of organization was modified by the similarity of all oases to each other, which encouraged uni-

⁹ B. Vladimirtsov, *Le Régime social des Mongols. Le féodalisme nomade*. French translation from the Russian original, by Michel Carsow, Paris, 1948, p. 129. See also V. V. Bartold, *Sketch of the History of Semirechie*, p. 43 of the Frunze (Kirghizistan, 1943) reprint of a study first published in *Notebooks of the Provincial Civil Commission of Semirechie*, II, Vernyi, 1898 (in Russian).

¹⁰ D. Pokotilov, *History of the Eastern Mongols During the Ming Dynasty from 1368 to 1634*, St. Petersburg, 1893, Part I; translation of the Russian text by Rudolph Loewenthal, Chengtu, *Studia Sinica Monographs*, Series A., No. 1, 1947.

formity of culture. In this period of political disunity and decentralization, the expansion of Islam continued to enhance the cultural uniformity of the oasis world. 192

The ascendancy of Islam among the religions of Inner Asia had begun before the Mongol Empire and continued through that period and on into the time of political disintegration. The Arabs under Kutayba invaded Western Turkistan and perhaps reached Kashgar at the beginning of the eighth century.¹¹ By the middle of the tenth century — when Buddhism, Nestorian Christianity, Manichaeism, Zoroastrianism, and other religions were still strong in the settled oases — Satuk Bughra Khan of the Khara-Khanid Turks, who were at that time in control of Kashgar and other oases, was converted to Islam.¹² In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the Inner Asian rulers who claimed imperial Mongol descent rapidly went over to the language and culture of the Turks and to the religion of Islam. In the meantime the conversion to Islam of the Uighur Turks of the Urumchi-Turfan region had been going on since the eleventh century, though Buddhism and Nestorian Christianity lingered until the sixteenth century.

At the beginning of the fifteenth century the development of the institutions of Islam in Sinkiang made a long step forward with the arrival in Kashgar of the Khoja Makhtum Azyam, a learned theologian of Bokhara and a descendant of the Prophet.¹³ He was granted land by the Khan of Kashgar, and from the later struggle for the control and revenue of this estate there developed a new mode of politics, that of the Khojas. 192

The two sons of the first Khoja founded rival sects which were at the same time political factions, that of the Ak Tagh or White Mountains and that of the Khara Tagh or Black Mountains. At

¹¹ See W. Barthold, *Turkestan Down to the Mongol Invasion*, translated from the original Russian [1900] and revised by the author with the assistance of H. A. R. Gibb, London, 2nd. ed., 1928, especially Chapter II.

¹² According to Barthold, *op. cit.*, pp. 254-255, this event must be regarded as a mixture of history and legend; but the rapid spread of Islam among the Inner Asian Turks at this time is beyond doubt.

¹³ A. N. Kuropatkin, *Kashgaria: Eastern or Chinese Turkistan*. Translated from the Russian by Walter E. Gowan, Calcutta, 1882, p. 102. (192)

first the heirs of the Khoja line were attached to and patronized by the rulers of the greater oases, and received successive grants of land, both in what is now Sinkiang and in what later became Russian Turkistan. Eventually they themselves became rulers, but the combination of religious authority and secular rule did not put an end to the rivalry between the two sects and did not provide unity or continuity of rule. 193

Land was held both by the Khoja family and by mosques as corporate institutions. Some of the deeds granting land to the Khojas show that there were grants which conveyed titles and privileges in addition to the land. Grants to mosques were called *wakf*, and the *wakf*-lands gave rise to a special class of managers with rights and interests of their own (see Chapter V). Since the grants included rights over the serfs on the land, a clerical feudalism became established parallel to secular feudalism.¹⁴ 193

In the first half of the seventeenth century, while the Manchus were gathering headway for their conquest of China from the east, the oases of southern Sinkiang passed completely under Khoja rule. In 1622 the leader of the White Mountain faction, Mullah Fazil, with the aid of the powerful Khojas of Khokand, captured Kashgar. Shortly thereafter Khoja Hidayat Ullah, also known as Hazrat Apak, whose shrine at Kashgar is still venerated, became the ruler of all the oases of the Tarim Basin. Though a Moslem "saint," he negotiated with the Dalai Lama at Lhasa and was alternately in alliance and at enmity with the Jungar Mongols of northern Sinkiang.¹⁵ "His bearing exercised a marvellous effect on the people, and his appearance amongst them produced the most extraordinary manifestations of fascination. Some wept with joy, some sang with delight, others danced and leaped and whirled around, and others again fell senseless to the ground,

¹⁴ For Khoja land deeds granted at Yarkand in 1587, 1592, and 1602, and at Kucha in 1608, and collected by the nineteenth-century English traveler Shaw, see *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Extra No., Calcutta, 1897, Vol. 66, part 1, pp. 2-3. For *wakf* deed in the Khoja period, see G. Raquette, *Eine Kaschgarische Wakf-Urkunde aus der Khodscha-Zeit Ost-Turkestans*, Lunds Universitets Årsskrift, N. F., Avd. 1, Bd. 26, Nr. 2.

¹⁵ Kuropatkin, *op. cit.*, p. 105. (193)

whilst all were irresistibly attracted to him by an ecstatic devotion of spiritual love." ¹⁶ 194

We have some notes on the theocratic feudalism of the Khojas made by the Portuguese Jesuit Father Bento de Goes, who reached Yarkand, then the capital of the Kashgar kingdom, toward the end of 1603. In February, 1604, he described Yarkand as an emporium on the long overland route between China and Europe. The severity of Moslem rule was such that as soon as the Friday service was over, twelve men left the mosque with scourges to punish those who had not attended the service. ¹⁹⁴

Both trade and mining were administered under the feudal practice of granting privilege and monopoly. The right of organizing and leading a caravan was sold by the "king" to the highest bidder, who then became an "ambassador," with absolute authority over those traveling with the caravan. He recovered a part of his investment by selling positions under his authority to four associates, who also received the title of ambassador; another seventy-two privileged travelers also paid for their places in the caravan. ¹⁹⁴

Similarly, the monopoly for exploiting the famous jade of Khotan was also for sale. "For a high price the king sells the quarrying rights to some merchants, without whose consent no one is allowed to take away any stone as long as the contract lasts." ¹⁷

It was a little more than a century after their conquest of China that the Manchus invaded Sinkiang in 1755. Their campaign was aimed at the Jungars or "East Wing" of the Western Mongols, called Kalmuks by the Turkish-speaking peoples of Inner Asia and by the Russians. The Jungars at this time had for decades, under a succession of military leaders, been fighting savagely among themselves, had been intermittently exercising overlordship in Tibet and over the oases of the Tarim Basin, and more recently had several times defeated the Northern Mongols or

¹⁶ Ney Elias, in *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1897, pp. 6-7.

¹⁷ C. Wessels, *Early Jesuit Travellers in Central Asia, 1603-1721*, The Hague, 1924, pp. 24-25 and 28. (194)

Khalkhas of Outer Mongolia. It was the breaking of the Jungar power that rounded out the Manchu Empire by giving the Manchus control over Outer Mongolia, Sinkiang, and Tibet. ¹⁹⁵

There were two distinct phases of this conquest. In the north, the power of the Jungars was broken by terrible massacres. It is said that half of the population was killed, 20 per cent died of disease, another 20 per cent fled into the steppes of Southern Siberia, and only 10 per cent survived, scattered through the land. Such figures, deriving from the eighteenth century, do not represent statistical accuracy, but they do indicate with rough accuracy the scale of devastation. ¹⁸ ¹⁹⁵

In the south, there were massacres in some of the smaller oases and deportations from some of the larger oases in order to deplete their military man power. From the Kashgar region some 12,000 people were deported to the Ili Valley and settled on state lands. It is from these deportees that the Taranchis (literally "cultivators") of the Ili region are descended. ¹⁹ Militarily and administratively, however, the problem of the Tarim Basin was easier to handle than that of Jungaria; the Manchus established garrisons, and then imposed an imperial superstructure on top of the existing social order. ¹⁹⁵

In Jungaria, the terrible massacres made it necessary to bring in a new population, under state supervision. The population became highly diversified, and ever since that time the administration of Jungaria has involved problems of the conflicting interests of different peoples. In order to replace some of the Mongol population, some of the tribes akin to the Jungars who had been at war with the Jungar federation and had fled to Russia were invited back; those who did not return but remained in the region

¹⁸ Fan Wen-lan and others, *A Short General History of China*, Shanghai, 1947, pp. 663-664. See also Wei Yuan, *The Sacred Military Records* (an account of the Manchu imperial campaigns), first published in 1842; also Chun Yuan, *General Records of the Western Regions*, a work written in 1776 but first published in Tientsin in 1818, Ch. 3, p. 26; another edition of this work is *Informal Records of the Barbarian Regions* (all in Chinese).

¹⁹ See Ch. IV. (195)

of the lower Volga are the Mongols whom the Russians call Kalmuks. The princes of the returning Mongol tribes were treated as favored vassals of the Manchu Emperor. ¹⁹⁶

In addition, settlements were established wherever cultivation was profitable. The settlers included the Taranchis, deported from the Tarim Basin; Manchu troops settled as military colonists; and a certain number of Chinese and Chinese Moslems. Under this colonization policy the land under cultivation in Ili and Jungaria increased from an estimated 240,000 mu (approximately 40,000 acres) at the end of the eighteenth century ²⁰ to an estimated 790,000 mu (approximately 116,666 acres) at the end of the nineteenth century. ²¹ ¹⁹⁶

In Sinkiang, as in China itself a century earlier, where the Manchus had come to power at the end of a period of terrible devastation, early Manchu policy endeavored to bring land back under cultivation by a policy of lenient taxation. Thus in Turfan and Komul Uighurs bringing land back under cultivation were allowed about five acres to a household, with seeds, implements, and working animals furnished by the state. For the first four years, after deducting seed grain from the harvest, 60 per cent of the remaining grain was to be kept by the cultivator and 40 per cent paid to the state. From the fifth year, a somewhat higher land revenue was to be assessed.²² 196

In Ili and Jungaria the Manchu settlers, being regarded as unquestionably loyal to the Manchu dynasty, were granted land at the rate of roughly three acres for each man (presumably each man of military age), with seeds, implements, and work animals. Some especially favored Manchus received six acres. Chinese criminal exiles, in contrast, received only two acres. The Manchu land could be considered as held on feudal tenure, inasmuch as all Manchus, Solons, and Sibos were subject to call for military

²² *Sacred Military Records*, as cited, Ch. 4, figure for 1795.

²¹ Wang Shu-nan and others, *Hsinchiang T'u Chih*, or *Sinkiang Gazetteer*, compiled in 1911, published at Tientsin in 1923, Ch. 30, pp. 2-3 (figure for the period 1900).

²³ *Hsinchiang T'u Chih* as cited, Ch. 28, p. 11. (196)

service. In 1812, however, an imperial decree allowed the garrison commander at Kulja to divide the Manchu-held land as permanent private property, exempt from tax. Under the terms of grant, such land was not to be leased to others for cultivation, and if farm hands were hired, they must be Manchus.²³ In the course of time, however, these terms became a dead letter and the land was freely leased and even sold to Chinese cultivators, officials and merchants. 197

In their main lines the structures of both the settled and the nomad societies of Sinkiang, as administratively revised under the Manchu Empire, outlasted the great Moslem rebellions of the nineteenth century and the Chinese Revolution of 1911. They even proved strong enough to contain the gradual commercialization of economic life during the past hundred years. Only now are they finally breaking down, caught between a securely established socialized state in Soviet territory and a rapidly spreading social revolution in Chinese territory. 197

As they break apart, these structures reveal a multiple stratification, the layers of which can be classified both socially and historically. Socially, they are graduated from arbitrary powers and privileges at the top to disfranchisement at the bottom. Historically, the stratification is more confused. In the alternating cycles of feudalism centralized under a strong imperial overlordship and feudalism decentralized under local oasis-states and rulers of nomad tribes, the incoming phase never completely swept away and replaced the institutions and administrative practices of the outgoing phase. Some of the characteristics of decentralization always lingered here and there, though unevenly, in the strongest phases of centralization; and conversely, even when oases were most completely independent of each other politically, and nomad tribes rejected the overlordship of other nomad tribes, the larger community of the oasis society as such and the society of the pastoral nomads as such was never entirely obliterated. 197

²⁴ *Institutes of the Manchu Dynasty*, edition of 1818, section "Shih Li" ("Precedents"), Ch. 842, p. 13 (in Chinese). (197)

As both societies break up, they first dislodge the top structure of the Chinese administrative bureaucracy. This bureaucracy represents all that is left of the centralizing overlord power of China in Inner Asia. It may soon be succeeded by another bureaucracy, as the Communists take over power in China; but for the moment it is breaking up. 198

Though for nearly forty years it has been ruling in the name of a Chinese Republic, this bureaucracy is essentially the same, both in its functions and in its lack of function, as that which the Manchus set up in the eighteenth century. Economically, it is a surtax on the total revenue of Sinkiang. Politically and administratively it has functioned to keep Sinkiang the same color on the map and to maintain, internationally, the convention that in Inner Asia the domains of the Chinese touch the domains of the Russians. Yet it has never integrated Sinkiang with China, making the life and wealth of Sinkiang a part of the life and wealth of China. The individual Chinese bureaucrat has returned from Sinkiang wealthy; but the Province of Sinkiang has contributed little to the State of China. 198

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Below their own level, the Chinese cut into but at the same time conserved the feudal powers of the local ruling classes. The village elder, the landholding oasis magnate, the Mongol prince, the Kazakh chief — whatever they might be called — were forced to yield a double tribute: one to maintain the Chinese bureaucracy as such, and one to enrich the individual Chinese bureaucrat; but in order to enable them to yield this tribute, they had to be enabled to collect it, and for this purpose their traditional powers were maintained. In this way the surtax necessary to support the Chinese bureaucracy was in fact collected from the oasis farmer and the nomad herdsman. 198

Trade, in spite of the steady penetration of commercialization in the form of a money economy, preserved the essential feudal characteristic of privilege: both the Chinese bureaucrat and under him the "native headmen" prevented the operation of a free market by selecting individual merchants to whom they extended their protection, enabling them to evade taxes and to become monopolists, sometimes locally and sometimes on a provincial scale. In this way the provincial revenue from trade was cut down, but individually the protected merchant got rich, and enriched the individual bureaucrat or the clique of associated bureaucrats to whom he paid a tribute for his protection. 199

At the bottom level the individual cultivator and herdsman collected tribute from none, and paid out — in rents and taxes, in forced labor for special projects and in "customary services" to his immediate rulers — the tribute which those above him divided according to their position in the stratification of privilege. Though no legislation declared them to be serfs, both cultivator and herdsman were in fact survivors of the feudal system of enslavement, having duties but no rights, and being prevented from selling their services in a free market by administrative enforcement of the rights of all those above them to collect tribute in kind, forced labor for the community or the province, and "customary services" to individuals. Even the nominal significance of private property in land or cattle, among the poor, was blurred by debt obligations which prevented them from acting as free agents. 199

"When a society breaks up, it never breaks up at random. Every society has its own kind of cohesion, and usually its cohesiveness is unequally distributed over different parts of the society. Between the units of cohesion are lines of stress; and cleavages, when they take place, usually follow these lines of stress. In considering the influences coming from Russia now at work upon the societies of Sinkiang, and the influences that may be expected to develop rapidly from a China in which Communists are consolidating their power, we must take into account both the influences themselves and the balance between cohesion and cleavage already existing within the societies on which they work." (199)

CHAPTER VII At the Crossroads of Inner Asia

DURING the years of the second World War and the years of rapid change that followed it, the situation in the territories adjoining and surrounding Sinkiang has changed even more profoundly than the situation in Sinkiang itself. For more than half a century all writers have described Sinkiang as a partial vacuum which was being filled competitively from China, India, and Russia. The Sinkiang of today, teeming with its own nationalism, can no longer be considered a vacuum; and the most important aspect of its position is that it stands between a Communist-dominated China and a Communist-controlled Soviet Union. 200

Until this change took place British policy in Sinkiang was directed partly from London, partly from Britain's position as the imperial power ruling India. British policy alternated between two aims: that of establishing a sphere of influence, especially in the Kashgar region and the Tarim Basin, tacitly conceding to Russia a sphere of influence in the Ili Valley and Jungaria, and that of co-operating with the Chinese authorities and supporting the full claims of Chinese sovereignty, thus indicating that the extension of Russian influence would be undesirable. In the last years of Kuomintang rule, and after Britain negotiated withdrawal from India and Pakistan, British policy settled down to the second of these two alternatives, because the British interest is to prolong a relatively weak Chinese overlord rule in Inner Asia, whether under the Kuomintang or the Chinese (200)

Communists, rather than to accelerate the development of a strong Russian overlord rule, or overriding interest. 201

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In the same period Russia and its dominions in Asia passed from a centralized imperial rule under the Tsars to a federated structure of Soviet Communist Republics. China began its revolutionary changes before Russia but completed them later. Before 1911 the authority of the Manchu Empire had been weakening both in China and in the frontier territories and in 1911 it was overthrown. From 1912 to 1926 China was a republic in which power was divided between war lords; there was no firm central authority either in China or in the frontier territories. After 1927, China was a republic governed by the Kuomintang, whose central authority tended to increase within China, but to decrease in Sinkiang and other frontier territories. Finally, China has now passed under the ascendancy of the Communists; and a trend toward federalization can now be foreseen. Within this federative trend, it is likely that the new Central Government of China will have more authority in the frontier territories of Manchuria, Inner Mongolia, and Sinkiang than any Chinese government for many decades. 201

All of these changes must be evaluated in themselves and in their relation to and interaction on each other. The Sinkiang of today cannot properly be described as a vacuum. It has become a crossroads at which meet a number of different nationalisms and the policies of two great powers, China and Russia. These two great federative states are similar to each other in their Communist orientation, but not identical with each other in their domestic interests. 201

The Russian Revolution and Its Effects

A unique colonial revolution took place within the general Russian Revolution. The colonial domains of the Tsar adjoined and merged into the Russian lands. The degree of interpenetration between Russians and subject peoples was much greater than it could possibly be in any overseas colony. All of the British in (201)

India, for example, were isolated within India as well as isolated from Britain. The British foreman in a textile mill in Bombay, as much as the tea planter or the British civil servant, felt himself to be one of the ruling caste, and was just as ready to resist Indian demands for equality in competition. Conversely, it was extremely rare for the Indian who went to Britain for a university education to be able to make a career in Britain. He had to return to India, and more often than not he had to accept employment that was both below the level of his qualifications and under the orders of a British supervisor whose qualifications might be less than his. 202

In Russian Central Asia, on the other hand, the time-expired Russian soldier who settled in a city like Tashkent often worked with his hands, in some artisan employment in which he shared the market and the competition with non-Russians. The Russian colonist farmed land adjacent to an Uzbek village. In some ways, the standing of Russians was higher than that of Inner Asians; but both formed part of the subject population of Russia as a whole. Where the Tsarist government bore heavily on the subject people, both Russians and non-Russians felt its weight. 202

The "upper classes" also interpenetrated. The Inner Asian whose father could afford a Russian education for him was able to enter the general Russian service, military or civilian, not a separate colonial service. One example among many is Valikhanov, the son of a Kazakh "sultan," who graduated from a Russian cadet school and carried out a brilliant early reconnaissance of unknown and hostile Kashgar at the end of the 1850's. He held a Russian, not a colonial military commission, was lionized in St. Petersburg, and was a friend of Dostoevsky in Dostoevsky's years of exile. He was a schoolmate and a lifelong friend of the great explorer Potanin; and for Potanin he was not a "trustworthy native" to be taken along on expeditions as an interpreter or subordinate, but an independent colleague who conducted his own daring expeditions.¹ 202

¹ See Yu. N. Bessonov and V. Ya. Yakubovich, *Through Central Asia*, Chapter on "Valikhanov and G. N. Potanin," Moscow, 1947 (in Russian). (202)

There was interpenetration in political thinking as well as in administrative classification. In overseas colonial possessions the colonial society as a whole is not in contact with the society of the ruling country. Typical colonial nationalism begins by aspiring toward the democratic ideals of the European ruling country, while bitterly resenting the fact that its democratic institutions are not extended to the subject country. Its aspiration toward the democratic ideal therefore stands apart from criticism of any defects in the actual working of democratic institutions in the ruling country. 203

In Russia, on the other hand, Tsarist rule was despotic in theory as well as in fact. Among the Russians themselves aspiration toward democratic rights and liberties was impossible without a demand for drastic reform of the existing system. Among the non-Russian subject peoples, therefore, those who were influenced by Russian democratic ideals also fell in step, as a matter of course, with democratic Russian criticisms of the existing system. This political tendency was strengthened by the Russian system of political exile, which in trying to stifle criticism within the Russian population sent exiles to live in non-Russian territories and in close contact with non-Russians. Repression was so severe that moderate democrats as well as political revolutionaries were sent into exile. As soon as a modern intelligentsia began to form among the peoples of Inner Asia, therefore, it came in contact with discontented and critical Russians, who were able and educated men; and this contact took place in the homelands of the new colonial intelligentsia as well as in the intellectual circles in St. Petersburg and Moscow that corresponded to Bloomsbury Square in London. This kind of mutual stimulation between discontented intellectual elites was impossible between Indians and British in India, or Indonesians and Dutchmen in Indonesia. 203

Accordingly when the Russian Revolution broke out it could not possibly be isolated within the Russian population. It could not take the form of replacing the rule of Tsarist Russians over non-Russians with the rule of Bolshevik Russians over non-Russians. From the beginning, it inevitably took the form of a revolution 203

and civil war in which some of the non-Russians were on both sides of the fight among Russians. As the revolution deepened from a political struggle into a class war, the lines of cleavage more and more grouped together the possessors, Russian and non-Russian, fighting to preserve at least something of the old order, and the dispossessed, Russian and non-Russian, trying to take complete possession of the new order. 204

In many of the regions in which the Russians were in a minority, the outcome of the revolution was determined by non-Russians who took the side of the Russian Bolsheviks.² Before the final outcome, however, there were two intermediate stages, and during each of these stages, and after the victory of the Bolshevik Revolution, there were important migrations out of Russian territory which carried the effects of the revolution into the adjoining lands of Inner Asia. 204

In the first of these intermediate stages non-Russian nationalists came into power or almost within reach of power in their own territories. In Inner Asia there were two groups of these nationalists. One — including such potentates as the Emir of Bokhara and lesser representatives of the old systems of nobility and chieftainship which had been subjected to the Russians — was not guided by political theory. Individuals of the group, rather than the group as a whole, simply tried to resume as much as possible of the power that they had had before the Russians came. If the power they could take into their hands was not enough to make them feel secure, they were inclined to look for protection to the British, who were intervening against the Russian Revolution from the side of Asia as well as from the side of Europe. 204

The second group — many of whose members stemmed from families in the first group — was led by non-Russians who had had some years of Russian schooling and who, very often, had

² See above, Chapter I; also Owen Lattimore, "Yakutia and the Future of the North," *American Review on the Soviet Union*, New York, Vol. VI, No. 2, February 1945; reprinted in *New Compass of the World*, ed. Hans Weigert, Vilhjalmur Stefansson, and Richard Edes Harrison, New York, 1949, pp. 145-146. (204)

held positions in the Russian service. This group had some idea of political theory and modern politics. On the whole, its ambitions did not go beyond local autonomous government, with members of the group holding higher positions than they had formerly held — especially, of course, the top positions once held by Russians. For allies, this group looked to the Russian Mensheviks; as the Mensheviks weakened and failed, they also looked to the British; when the British intervention failed, those who could gave up the struggle and fled into exile — a few to Europe, but many more to Iran, Afghanistan, and Sinkiang. 205

The second stage, marked by the British intervention, began where the first had ended. The British intervention was directed from Iran and Mesopotamia. It endeavored to mask Afghanistan, where suspicion of British policy was very strong, and it also operated, to a minor though significant extent, from Kashgar in Sinkiang.³ Beginning as an attempt to prevent German and Austrian prisoners of war interned in Russian Turkistan from being repatriated to Germany, and to prevent accumulated stocks of cotton from being delivered to Germany after the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, it quickly turned into an attempt to prevent the Bolshevik Revolution from seizing the Baku oil fields, and to complete the *cordon sanitaire* around Russia. As they failed and withdrew, the British carried along with them an ebb tide of people fleeing from the Revolution, both Russians and people of every Inner Asian nationality. 205

Nor did emigration end with the Bolshevik victory. With each new phase of Bolshevik policy, and especially during the bitter struggle over collectivization, which was virtually a new civil war, new waves of refugees sought an escape into Sinkiang and the other Inner Asian lands around the Soviet frontier. In this way the primary effect of the Russian Revolution was to spread alarm far and wide beyond the Russian frontiers. 205

In time, however, a second or long-term series of effects began to become apparent. These effects were enhanced by the fact that

* See, especially, Lt.-Col. F. M. Bailey, *Mission to Tashkent*, London, 1946; also L. V. S. Blacker, *On Secret Patrol in High Asia*, London, 1921. 205

everywhere in Inner Asia the Soviet frontier is in one sense artificial: because it originated in the Tsarist conquests, and stops where the Tsarist conquests stopped, it everywhere divides similar peoples from each other instead of separating different peoples from each other, as has been pointed out in previous chapters. The same languages are spoken on both sides of the Soviet-Turkish, Soviet-Iranian, Soviet-Afghan, and Soviet-Sinkiang frontiers. And, in most cases, they are spoken by people who are minorities under both the sovereignties under which they live. The effects in Inner Asia of the Soviet Revolution must therefore be studied especially from the standpoint of peoples who are minorities in the states under which they live, and who talk in the same language and against the background of a common cultural and social tradition about the different conditions under which they live on the two sides of the frontier that divides them. Five principal phases, which followed each other in chronological order, can be distinguished among the long-term effects of the Soviet Revolution. 206

1. As the possessors of advanced skills, refugees from the Soviet Revolution became an elite in Sinkiang. Among the Russians, especially, there were doctors, geologists, and other scientists; engineers, mechanics, and many artisans. Among the Uzbeks, Tatars, and others there were also many whose literacy, skill, and experience in trade—or proficiency as carpenters, builders, leather tanners, or metalworkers—put them above the average level prevailing in Sinkiang. Having escaped from the disorder and insecurity of revolution, they now found that the country to which they had come was culturally and politically even more backward than the one from which they had escaped. They learned that if the superior skills which gave them the qualities of an elite were not enough to make them a political elite, and frequently not enough even to assure them economic security, it was because of the backwardness of the society in which they had settled, and the corruption or incompetence of the officials to whom they now had to defer. 206

2. Having fled because there was no force in Russian Inner Asia capable of resisting the Revolution, the refugees now found that there was no adjoining state capable of intervening successfully against the Revolution. As the years of the interwar period went by, they found that in Sinkiang and in every other territory in Asia adjoining their old homes there was not a single anti-Russian government that was able to build up political and military strength as fast as the new Soviet Republics of Inner Asia, or to open up educational and employment opportunities as fast. In their old homes, there was still suffering, and often persecution of those who had belonged to the old order of politics and society; but this was the suffering of revolutionary dislocation, and the same dislocation also offered new careers for those who were willing to work hard and those who were able to profit by education. In their new homes, however, there was also suffering: the suffering of old and stagnant societies, in which opportunities were decreasing, rather than increasing. Even the rich man might suddenly be impoverished if he fell foul of a corrupt official; and there was a steady production of landless peasants in the rural districts and beggars in the towns. 207

3. In the atmosphere of rapid change and spreading insecurity after the second World War, both the refugees and the peoples among whom they live have begun to fear the Soviet Republics of Inner Asia, and the Russia standing behind them, more in some ways but less in other ways. They fear them more, as the source of a power that may reach out and take over the adjoining territories or parts of them. They fear them less, because in comparison with most of the adjoining territories, such as Sinkiang itself, Afghanistan, and Iran, and even to some extent Turkey, they have become a focus of stability and of that "law and order" which all stabilizing empires proclaim. The Soviet Republics do not offer security for the investments of the rich, but they do offer a new kind of security, never known before in the "back blocks" of Asia—in a multiplying number of careers, especially for the young and especially for those who pass through universities and technical training schools of all kinds. 207

4. A cycle has, in fact, been completed. The old Russia was

(207) once the greatest and most stable state in Inner Asia. As far as men of the Inner Asian peoples could hope for modern training and modern careers at all, it was in Russian employment or the Tsarist service. A "Russian-trained man" was a man who had escaped from the old ruts of the tribal or oasis life. Even when the Tsarist Empire fell, the refugees who scattered into other Inner Asian countries were respected for their superior knowledge and skills. In the new cycle, the new Russia has regained this position. Its ideology is feared by those whose social or economic advantages are protected by the old orders that still stand just beyond the Soviet frontiers; but these old orders are old, and they are weak, and all know it. The present influence of the Soviet Union beyond its own borders in Inner Asia therefore bears heavily on the stress lines of class conflict and economic inefficiency in weak social structures that have little confidence in themselves. This influence has, especially, a marked tendency to divide the old and the young. Among those who are old enough to know that they could not adapt easily to great changes, fear is strong. Among those who are young enough to know that they could take advantage of new opportunities in education and the making of careers, there is a stir of curiosity and adventure. 208

5. The gathering momentum of Soviet prestige is enhanced by the withdrawal of other powers that were once great in Inner Asia. The overlord power of China in Sinkiang is diminishing. Even the Communists, triumphant in China itself, have to handle the Inner Asian frontiers of China more by negotiation than by the issuing of decrees. With British power withdrawn from India, neither the Union of India nor Pakistan has the kind of power that can project its influence as deeply into Inner Asia as that of Britain once did. British power has also receded in Iran, and has not been fully replaced by American power. The American influence in Iran is that of a country which is strong enough to fight Russia, but not that of a country with the knack — which Britain once had — of simultaneously propping up both a weak government and a decaying social order. In the short run, the American

(208) influence greatly strengthens the Iranian Government. In the long run, on the other hand, there is an ironic resemblance between American influences and Russian influences: both promote modernization, and new social ambitions, much more rapidly than the traditional British type of policy. The difference is that Communist Russians, out of theoretical conviction and by planned methods, dismantle social structures that have survived from the Middle Ages; Americans, pursuing economic efficiency and promoting education to serve economic efficiency, unheedingly undermine medieval institutions as they go along, and destroy the prestige of the way of thinking that goes along with the institutions. 209

Sinkiang under the Japanese Shadow

In measuring the recession of the old forms of empire and overlordship in Inner Asia in their relationship to the rise of the Soviet forms of power and prestige, it becomes clear that the retreat of Britain began long before it became visible. The withdrawal, carried out with such skill and orderliness by the British Labour Government, after the war, had been made inevitable by the Baldwin-Chamberlain years of appeasement of Germany and Japan under a Conservative Government. The consequences of the policy that culminated in Europe at Munich can be instructively studied in Inner Asia in the decade between Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931 and Pearl Harbor in 1941. 209

After World War I, observers of the Japanese General Staff were sent to Sinkiang. There seems to have been a plan for providing Japanese military instructors in the Ili region, but the project failed for lack of funds.⁴ By the 1930's, Japanese interest in Moslem lands and Moslem politics had been systematically organized. Contacts were made in Turkey and Iran as well as in Sinkiang, and also among Chinese Moslems in China proper. The names of three paid Japanese agents, Moslems with Turkish

⁴ P. T. Etherton, *In the Heart of Asia*, London, 1925, pp. 125-126. (209)

names, are given by a well-informed German writer.⁵ One of them had been in Germany. They penetrated into Soviet Turkistan as well as into Sinkiang, and while the German writer says that he does not know what they accomplished in Soviet territory, he asserts that "they did succeed in arousing the feelings of the Sarts [Uighurs] in Sinkiang, and it is undoubtedly through the propaganda of these men that the Sart Rebellion of 1933 and 1934 took place." 210

The year 1933 was critical for another reason. At the end of February and the beginning of March, the Japanese overran the province of Jehol and annexed it to their puppet state of Manchukuo. In this campaign a hundred thousand square miles of territory, much of it mountainous and all of it extremely primitive in communications, was taken in only ten days — by the use of motorized columns. It was this campaign of 1933, and not that of the Germans in Poland in 1939, that first demonstrated on a really large scale the military potential of air-supported motorized columns, carrying their own maintenance and disregarding old precepts by moving with their flanks exposed and leaving enemy troops in their rear to be mopped up later. 210

In previous years the American explorer Roy Chapman Andrews had shown that motor vehicles could range widely through Mongolia, the Swedish explorer Sven Hedin had shown that a motor caravan could penetrate through Inner Mongolia to Sinkiang, and the French Citroën expedition had made the journey in the reverse direction. The Japanese campaign in Jehol therefore demonstrated that at any moment a Japanese column could strike all the way to Sinkiang, cut communications between China and Soviet territory, and put the Japanese Army in a position to make bids for alliance both to Turkish-speaking Moslems in Sinkiang and to the virtually independent war lords of the Chinese Moslems in Northwest China. 210

⁵ Anonymous, "Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien," *Berichte des Asien Arbeitskreises*, Vienna and Peking, No. 1, February 1939. The author is described as having spent twelve years of travel in Central Asia, and was apparently a Nazi Intelligence agent. (210)

All through the first years of their resistance to Japanese invasion the Chinese were never free of the danger of such a flanking move. The danger did not lessen until the increasing dispersion of Japanese forces after Pearl Harbor made it difficult for them to assemble the vehicles and supplies for such a drive. It was this danger that was the primary justification for the stationing of a Russian motorized unit at Komul, in Sinkiang. Only motorized mobility could counter the danger of a raiding Japanese motorized column. The Chinese had no units of the kind needed; the Russians did, and for this reason the Chinese Government, though intensely suspicious of the Russians, did not protest against Russian occupation of the oasis at the point of convergence of motorable routes from China, from Inner Mongolia, and from Soviet territory.⁶ 211

Immediately after the Jehol campaign, and until Soviet aid enabled Sheng Shih-ts'ai to consolidate himself in power in Sinkiang, the shadow of Japan stretched visibly into Inner Asia. Ma Chung-ying, the Chinese Moslem adventurer who challenged Sheng Shih-ts'ai for power, had at least two Japanese advisers at his headquarters.⁷ In addition Ma's chief military adviser, a Turk from Istanbul named Kamal, may have had Japanese connections. Kamal had studied as an officer in both Germany and France before 1914. In the first World War he was taken prisoner by the Russians, and after the war he reached Harbin, where he taught Turkish in a school. It may be conjectured that he was sought out by the Japanese agents at this time. 211

Be that as it may, Ma himself is described by the German source already cited as "practically and morally supported" by the Japanese, by the Chinese National Government (which considered him a dangerous troublemaker in his native province, Kansu, and was satisfied to see him move into a more distant one), and by "the British régime in India," all of whom "hoped, through a

⁶ See Owen Lattimore, Introduction to Martin R. Norins, *Gateway to Asia: Sinkiang*, New York, 1944, p. 17.

⁷ See, among others, Aitcher K. Wu, a civil servant of the Nanking Government, who visited Ma's headquarters: *Turkistan Tumult*, London, 1940, pp. 236-237. (211)

Tungkan [Chinese Moslem] regime, to set up an obstacle to the penetration of Soviet Russian influence."⁸ 212

Willingness to flirt with Japanese penetration into Sinkiang as a lesser danger than Russian penetration, in spite of the damage done to Chinese control over Sinkiang and to British interests in that province, was a characteristic of the appeasement policies of the time, in Asia as in Europe. For, curiously enough, even the Nazi writers whose articles were published for the purpose of stimulating anti-Soviet feeling did not attempt to conceal the fact that it was Japan that was taking the initiative and that the Russian policy in Sinkiang was defensive in nature and designed to counter a Japanese penetration that had already begun. 212

Thus the anti-Soviet exile Fuad Kazak states that Japanese expansion was making the Soviet Union feel insecure along its entire frontier with China.⁹ The German writer already cited, attributing the uprising at Komul in 1933-1934 to Japanese agents, goes on to say that "this thrust of Japanese policy toward the west must have been the main ground on which Soviet Russia considered it necessary to bring the Province of Sinkiang under its knout."¹⁰ And finally in 1934 Yurenev, then Soviet Ambassador in Tokyo, said to Ambassador Grew that General Hayashi, who had just become Japanese War minister, "had constantly worked against Soviet Russia, particularly in Sinkiang."¹¹ 212

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In the same interview with Mr. Grew Mr. Yurenev made a remark which opens the way to an understanding of the British policy of that time. "He also said that according to his information England is showing a distinct pro-Japanese tendency. England, he said, is in a very difficult position because she has good

⁸ Anonymous, *op. cit.*, pages 7, 9, and 15. It should be noted, as a sign of the confusion of the times and the versatility with which individuals turned and twisted, that after their defeat both Ma Chung-ying and Kamal eventually passed under Russian protection.

⁹ Fuad Kazak, *Osttürkistan zwischen den Grossmächten*, Königsberg-Berlin, 1937, p. 75.

¹⁰ Anonymous, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

¹¹ Joseph C. Grew, *Ten Years in Japan*, Simon & Schuster, Inc., New York, 1944, pp. 123-125. (212)

reason to be afraid of Japan becoming too strong."¹² The Soviet Ambassador seems to have detected a hesitancy in British policy that is echoed by a double note running through the British writing of this period: hope that Japan might take over part of the traditional British opposition to Russia, and anxiety because, while the Japanese might at some time in the future clash with Russia, they were in the meantime, year by year, encroaching on British trade and political interests everywhere in Asia. This double note was sounded characteristically by Sir Eric Teichman, the greatest British political expert of his time on the Inner Asian frontiers of China. Summing up the situation in Sinkiang, he referred half in complaint and half in sympathy to the Japanese who, claiming "to be the bulwark against the advancing waves of bolshevism in the Farther East, render confusion worse confounded by the steps which they find it necessary in their own interests to take in Inner Mongolia and North China."¹³ 213

Under the double pressure of fear of Russia and nervousness in face of an unpredictable Japan, British policy as reflected by British writers was intensely suspicious of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, especially in the reform period of his administration of Sinkiang, and looked with favor on Moslem religious politics as a safeguard against nonreligious nationalism. The Moslem leaders in southern Sinkiang, who held out longest against Sheng Shih-ts'ai, were accordingly looked on with favor; they were described as friendly to British travelers, and as having "formed friendly relations with the British Consul-General" at Kashgar.¹⁴ Later, when a fresh Moslem-led rising against Sheng Shih-ts'ai broke out in 1937, *The Times* said that "these events would seem to mean the temporary collapse of Soviet political influence in Kashgaria."¹⁵ 213

The British policy, or drift, was not successful in any way. The Japanese never quite came to the point of going to war with Russia. British influence waned even in the Kashgar-Yarkand-Khotan

¹² Grew, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

¹³ Sir Eric Teichman, *Journey to Turkistan*, London, 1937, p. 191.

¹⁴ Peter Fleming in *The Times*, London, 7 December, 1935.

¹⁵ *The Times*, 21 August, 1937. (2137)

region, in which it had always been strongest; and Sheng Shih-ts'ai, in the years in which his policy was most active, most progressive, and most successful, bracketed the British with the Japanese as imperialists menacing Sinkiang. Partly as a device for turning the pressure of the nationalisms of the Uighurs and others away from his administration, he directed it against the British. The shadow of Japan over Sinkiang never hardened into the reality of a Japanese invasion or even raid; but in the years in which British policy appeased Japan the shadow of Britain over Sinkiang wore thinner.¹⁶ 214

The Chinese Revolution Reaches Sinkiang

It was only after Russian revolutionary influences had become strong and well established in Inner Asia, and after the decline of British power and prestige in the 1930's had obviously begun that the effects of China's own revolution really began to penetrate into Sinkiang. In the 1911 Revolution, all that really happened in Sinkiang was that the title of the Manchu Empire passed to the Chinese Republic. The governing group remained essentially the same, guided by the strong hand of Yang Tseng-hsin. That same strong hand sealed Sinkiang off from the stormy events and heady ideas of the Second or "Great" Revolution of 1925-1927.

Revolutionary developments began with the Moslem and nationalist risings at the beginning of the 1930's, which were rebellions against Chinese rule that turned into revolutions against the traditional social orders of Sinkiang. By an odd twist, however, it was these rebellions that gave the first opportunity of action for those Chinese in Sinkiang whose minds were also turned toward revolution. 214

There seems little doubt that Sheng Shih-ts'ai, at the time he came to power, was a mixture of the revolutionary and the mili-

¹⁸ For contemporary expressions of Chinese hostility to Britain on the subject of Sinkiang, see Edgar Snow, *Battle for Asia*, Random House, New York, 1941, p. 307 and note, citing the most important independent Chinese newspaper, *Ta Kung Pao*; also Martin R. Norins, *Gateway to Asia: Sinkiang*, New York, 1944, pp. 48 and 56, also citing Chinese sources. (214)

tary adventurer. In the Northern Expedition of 1927 he had accompanied the famous First Army column which was commanded by Chiang Kai-shek with Ho Ying-ch'in as Chief of Staff and Pai Chung-hsi as Assistant Chief of Staff, and had himself served in the Planning Section of the Staff. He had, therefore, watched at close hand those military leaders of the Kuomintang who boldly used class conflict to create a situation in which they could control the balance of power. They developed, and for a time seemed to have perfected, a method of riding the revolutionary tiger without losing control of it and becoming unable to dismount. Sheng Shih-ts'ai may well have thought, when he first assumed power in Sinkiang, that he too could use the methods of revolution without losing control of the process of revolution.

What Sheng Shih-ts'ai faced in Sinkiang was not revolution, but a widespread rebellion which could not be suppressed by force with the military resources at his command. On the other hand, he had no mandate to protect the vested interests of the colonial Chinese families that had long been established in the province. He was a newcomer. There lay before him the opportunity to take command of the situation if he could do so by use of the means available to him. 215

These means included:

1. Getting material aid from the Russians, in return for preventing Japanese infiltration into Inner Asia. 215

2. Getting the Russians to repatriate, into Sinkiang, Chinese troops which, after being defeated by the Japanese in Manchuria, had retreated into Siberia and had there been interned. As a Manchurian Chinese himself, he could present himself to these troops as a sympathetic commander, while they in turn had no local political loyalties in Sinkiang, and made him independent of reinforcements sent from China. 215

3. Concessions to Uighur and other non-Chinese political leaders at the expense of the old Chinese official clique in Sinkiang — a clique to which Sheng was not bound, and whose interests he did not have to defend, if by abandoning them he could create new interests allied to himself and dependent on his new policy. (215)

As was shown in Chapter III, Sheng's "nationality policy" was worded as if it had been based on concessions to peoples, but was in fact directed primarily to winning over some of the leaders of those peoples, whose ambition was simply to hold offices that had been open previously only to Chinese. 215

4. The recruiting of a new body of Chinese experts and advisers who, like himself, were not tied by common interests to the old regime, and would support his two bold policies of dealing with the Russians and making greater concessions to the non-Chinese nationalities of Sinkiang than their Chinese rulers had ever made to them before. 216

The first three points have been dealt with earlier in this book, in Chapter III. They are mentioned again here only because of their connection with the fourth point, which concerns the manner in which the characteristics of the Chinese Revolution became, after so long a delay, transplanted to Sinkiang and began to operate there. 216

Sheng had no difficulty in collecting Chinese, previously strangers to the province, who were far enough to the left to go along with him enthusiastically in his first years of radical innovation. Between the loss of Manchuria in 1931 and the formation of a united front between Communists and Kuomintang at the beginning of 1937, China was a bitter and disillusioned country. Thousands of ardent patriots, who did not want to follow the Communists, were disappointed in the Kuomintang's refusal to make a stand against the Japanese and its insistence, instead, on continuing the civil war against the Communists. Afraid of the Communists as "too revolutionary," but eager for reform, they were ready to rally to a leader like Sheng Shih-ts'ai who was proclaiming internal unity, democratic reforms, and unlimited hostility to imperialism. 216

Nor were Chinese who felt this way easily frightened by Sheng's friendly association with the Russians. Many Chinese were in favor of good relations with Russia, in view of the clear menace of Japan. To keep one foreign nation balanced against another was an old Chinese tradition; a great many Chinese (216)

feared that this technique was being turned against them when they were warned that, because of Russian Communism, they must not seek friendly relations with Russia even in face of the rapidly increasing encroachment of Japan. 217

In addition to leftists and liberals, Sheng Shih-ts'ai also enlisted Chinese Communists. These were not concealed Communists; Sheng invited them to enter his service, and employed them deliberately for the sake of their techniques of popular organization, and also as economic and financial experts, feeling sure that he could take the upper hand over them whenever he felt it necessary to do so. When, in his opinion, Russia at the time of Stalingrad had become so weak that he thought it prudent to come to terms with the Kuomintang, he arrested both his Communist and his liberal assistants and tortured and killed many of them, including a brother of Mao Tze-tung. Only at the end of the war with Japan were a few of them released from jail and allowed to go to Yen-an.¹⁷ 217

The men of whom Sheng Shih-ts'ai made use brought with them into Sinkiang the thought, the emotion, the methods of organization and some of the factionalism that had been developing in revolutionary China for more than twenty years. Their scope of action, however, did not lie within a Chinese environment. Whether they turned to the problem of strengthening the state or to the problem of reforming society, they found themselves part of a Chinese minority surrounded by peoples of several nationalities, all of them differing from the Chinese, and from each other, in their responses to social and political issues.

In this situation theories of nationalism and the policies based on them became of more and more importance in determining all political alignments. Among the Chinese, at one end of the scale stood those who considered that they must maintain themselves as the ruling people, treating the non-Chinese as subjects. Next to them stood Chinese who, in contrast, considered themselves

¹⁷ For the foregoing information I am indebted to unpublished notes by Miss Anna Louise Strong of her interviews in Yen-an with some of these surviving Communists. (217)

generous and progressive because they believed that non-Chinese should acquire equal status, as individuals, as fast as they could acquire the Chinese language and assimilate themselves to the Chinese culturally; but this attitude was not accepted as "progressive" by non-Chinese who had their own loyalties to their own languages and cultures. At the other end of the scale stood Chinese who believed in conceding full citizenship to all non-Chinese, combined with independence — including independence in education — in the use of non-Chinese languages, and local self-government based on recognition of the language community rather than on the territorial unit; but while these Chinese were considered liberal and progressive by the Uighurs, Kazakhs, and others, they were considered dangerously radical and disruptive by other Chinese. 218

Among non-Chinese, the appeal to nationalism also evoked many responses. There were individuals whose hereditary position or political privileges were so closely associated with Chinese rule that they hesitated to approve any change. There were others who wanted, as individuals, to rise to positions formerly held only by Chinese; but did not want to change the structure of government and administration in any other way. There were Uighurs who considered that the Uighurs, as the most numerous nationality, constituting an absolute majority, should take over the province and should have the same rights over minorities that the Chinese had formerly had over all Sinkiang. There were Kazakhs, Mongols, and others who wanted to be as independent of the Uighurs as of the Chinese. And, finally, there were radical nationalists who wanted to change the social order as well as the political structure: to unseat their own Begs, Sultans, and Princes as well as to govern themselves without the Chinese District Magistrates. 218

All of these groups and tendencies worked out their relationship to each other in a pattern of constantly changing coalitions. In the politics of reform and revolution, coalitions are the characteristic phenomena. They are formed by groups which have interests in common to defend or to assert and which, in forming

(218) the coalition, emphasize convergent interests and avoid emphasis on divergent interests. The coalition breaks up when one of its component groups has secured the interest that it thinks most essential, and is unwilling to risk this gain by pushing ahead in support of interests more essential to other groups. New coalitions then form, grouped on the one hand around those who wish to stabilize the situation and on the other hand around those who still have unsatisfied interests to assert. 219

Sheng Shih-ts'ai, in the first phase of his rule, achieved considerable success by building around himself a left-of-center coalition of progressive, radical, and Communist Chinese — together with non-Chinese leaders, to whom he granted more freedom of political action than had ever been granted by any previous Chinese Governor. In the second phase of his rule he tried, and eventually failed, to build a new right-of-center coalition by combining representatives of the Kuomintang, freshly sent in from China, with those of his own followers whom he considered personally loyal to himself rather than to political principles. 219

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After the fall of Sheng and the end of the war with Japan, different factions of the Kuomintang, frequently weakened by purely factional quarrels with each other, formed a series of unsteady coalitions in which they enlisted representatives of the most conservative interests among the non-Chinese, especially the Uighurs and Kazakhs. These Chinese-controlled coalitions were opposed by the Kulja coalition in the Ili Valley and western Jungaria, which rested on leftist and pro-Communist groups among the non-Chinese nationalities, but at the same time sought to maintain contact with moderate representatives, such as Chang Chih-chung, within the right-wing coalition which dominated most of the Tarim Basin and eastern Jungaria. 219

*The Kuomintang, the Chinese Communists,
and the Russian Frontier*

In coalition politics of this kind the shifts of allegiance of Osman Bator, the freebooting Kazakh leader, who has been fre-

quently interviewed by American correspondents, were typical. First, as a military leader with an independent following, he sought to take advantage of Chinese military weakness by joining the Ili coalition. Later, failing to dominate the Ili coalition, he went over to the Chinese side, where by this time his price had risen because popular sympathy was turning away from the conservative Uighur and other leaders who had accepted Chinese protection. 220

During this phase of Sinkiang politics the Ili coalition, holding territory along the Soviet frontier, received aid and comfort from Soviet Kazakhstan. The coalition of Kuomintang officials and generals, conservative Uighur figureheads supported by the Kuomintang, and Kazakh auxiliaries received subsidies and American arms from the American-supported government at Nanking. This phase ended when the advances of the Chinese Communist armies across the Yangtze cut off the Kuomintang outposts in Sinkiang from any hope of support from within China. 220

An entirely new situation was thus created. Ever since the Russian Revolution, the non-Chinese peoples of Sinkiang had stood between a government controlled by Russian Communists on the one side and a government controlled by non-Communist or anti-Communist Chinese on the other side. They now stand between a government controlled by Russian Communists and a government dominated by Chinese Communists. 220

In this new situation the aims of the Russian Communists and the Chinese Communists, as Marxists, are generally the same; but the domestic interests of the Chinese Republic and the Soviet Union are not necessarily identical. In the Soviet Union the Russians are the dominant people; but there are vast territories inhabited by many millions of people who are not Russians. In the Chinese Republic the Chinese people are the overwhelming majority; they dominate China much more decisively than the Russians dominate the Soviet Union; but in the Chinese Republic also there are vast territories inhabited by peoples who are not Chinese. The geographical center of gravity of the non-Chinese territories of China lies in Sinkiang. The frontiers of Sinkiang

touch the Inner Asian Soviet Republics, the most important block of territory in the Soviet Union inhabited by peoples who are not Russians and not Slavs. 221

This situation gives a new aspect to old problems and creates new problems of its own. There is the question whether, in the Soviet Union, the interests of the Russians are to override the interests of the other peoples, and the question whether, in the Chinese Republic, the interests of the Chinese are to override those of all others. These are old problems, the development of which has long been watched warily by the neighbors of Russia and China. In addition, there is now the new problem of the relationship between the Soviet Union and China: are the interests of the Soviet Union, as a state, to be made paramount over those of China, as a state? 221

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If statesmen were efficiency engineers, and no more than that, a very good case could be made for annexing parts of Sinkiang to the Mongolian People's Republic and to the Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Tajik Republics of the Soviet Union, and for setting up most of the Tarim Basin as an Uighur Republic, also to be annexed to the Soviet Union. In terms of the affinities of peoples, languages, and cultures, geographical accessibility, the most economical laying-out of modern communications, and the rapid promotion of material progress, the natural orientation of Sinkiang is toward Mongolia and the Soviet Union, rather than toward China. On the other hand, however, the material and sentimental interests of China in Sinkiang, though they have been much abused, are real; and so are the interests of Sinkiang in its connection with China, if this connection is wisely handled. 221

The probability is that the Chinese Communists will, as Chinese, renounce no sovereignty in lands long claimed as Chinese. At the same time, it is to be expected that they will attempt to apply new policies — not only to Sinkiang, but to Inner Mongolia, to the districts in which Chinese Moslems predominate in Ninghsia and Kansu, and to such parts of Tibet as they can penetrate. It is to be expected that, as Marxists, they will model these policies on those of the Russians in Soviet Asia. The Sinkiang of (221)

the near future is, therefore, likely to resemble what already exists under the Kulja coalition in the Ili Valley and western Jungaria, since the Kulja regime has clearly followed Soviet models to a considerable extent. It is also to be expected that in the vast mass of China — and the equally vast masses of its adjacent territories, with their uneven populations and poor communications — it will be impossible to match practice exactly to theory. 222

The Chinese Communists, however, like the Russians, are under two urgent pressures: to convince non-Communist governments throughout Asia that they have established a powerful new state, which cannot be overthrown; and to convince the peoples under those governments that, where the Communists win, the people who lose are outnumbered by those who gain. 222

China itself, the homeland of the Chinese, is cut off from most of the rest of Asia by mountains and jungles. Sinkiang, in its pivotal position in the heart of Asia, will most rapidly transmit to India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iran the news that passes from mouth to mouth where few people read or hear the radio — news of the meaning in their lives of great political changes in China. Once more, as in the days of the rise of the Han Empire, more than two thousand years ago, Sinkiang has become in fact a pivot around which revolve politics, and power, and the fates of men. (222)