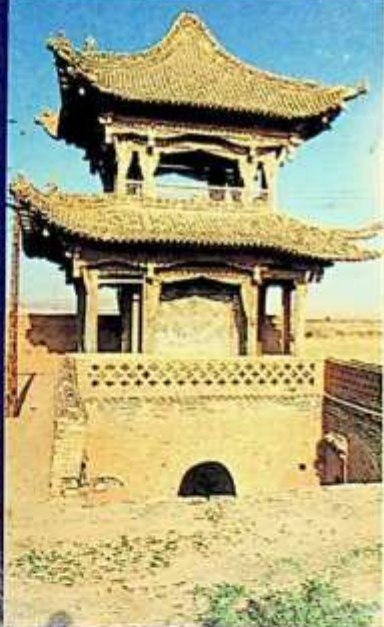
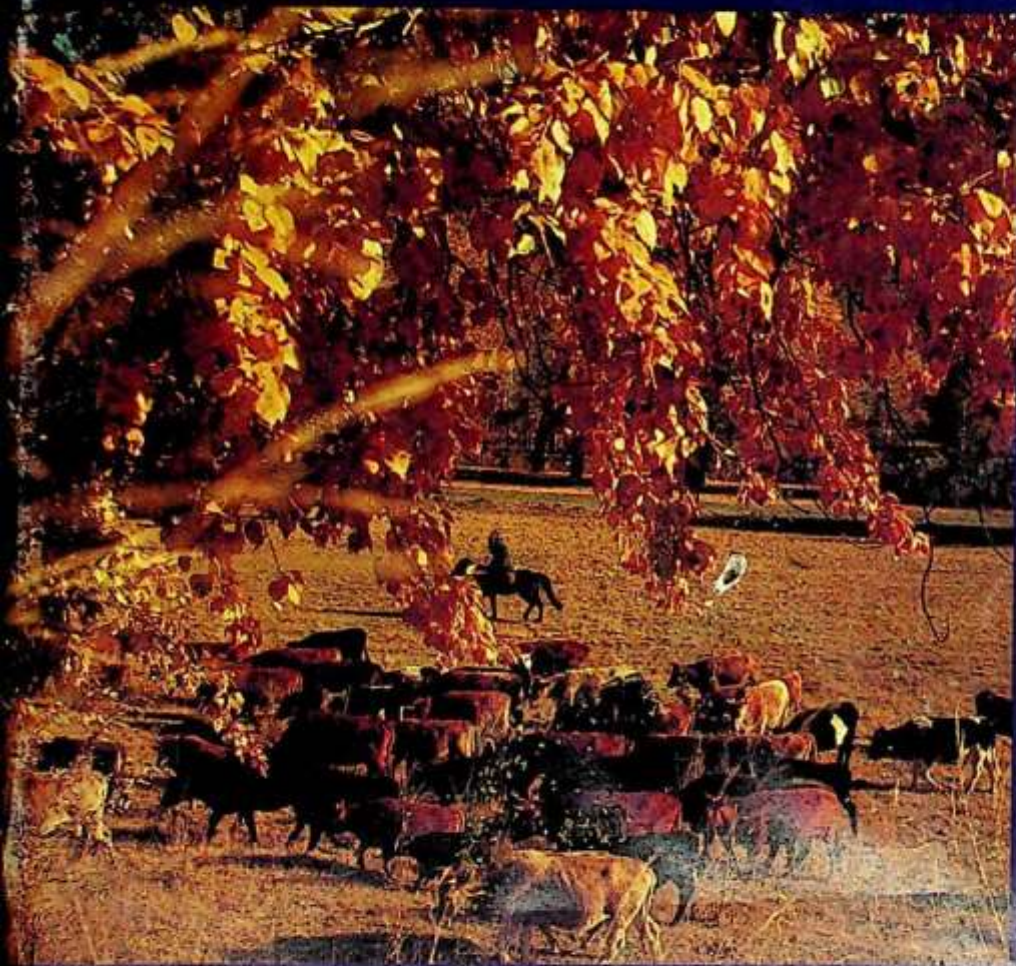




丝路游

Silk Road TOUR



Western Consultant
and Companion
to Your Silk Road
Explorations



SILK ROAD TOUR CONTENTS

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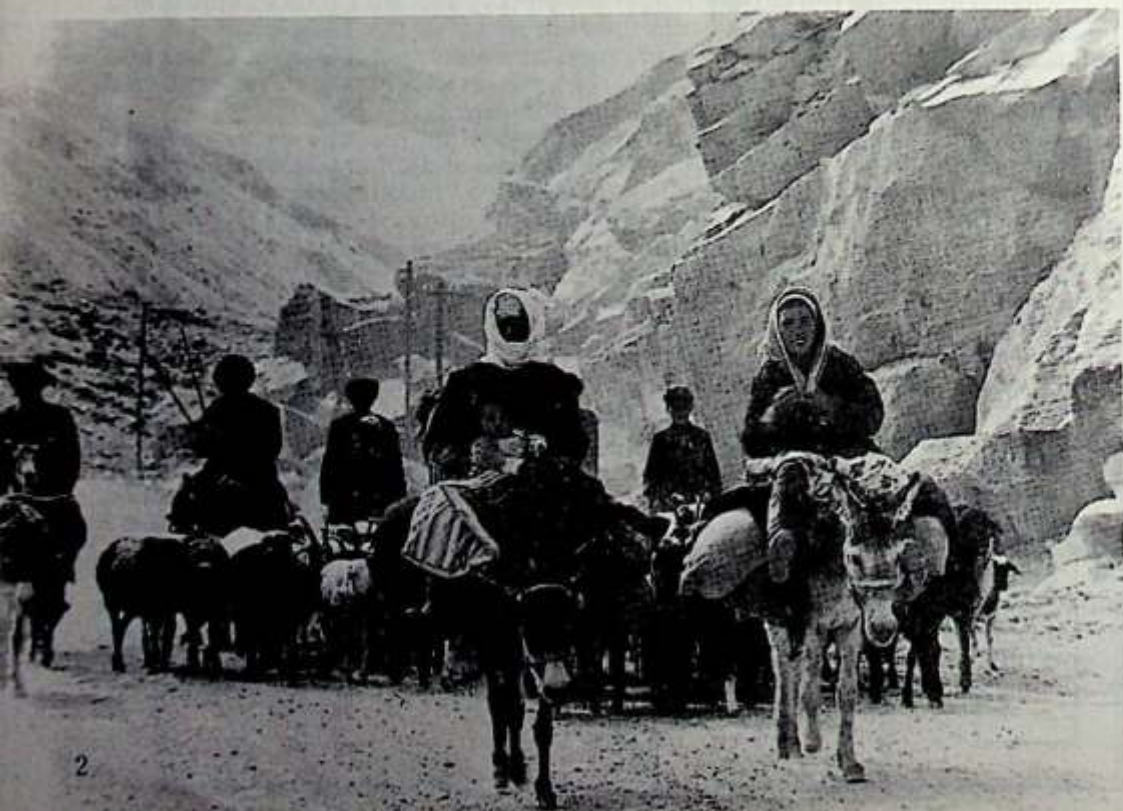
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《丝路游》主要篇目：丝绸之路——古代东西方文化交流的通道，P.4；沿着马可·波罗的足迹，P.6；畅游波斯腾湖，P.10；“魔鬼城”纪行，P.38；《大唐西域记校注》成书经过，P.14；“丝路”断想，P.16；天池的古迹和传说，P.12；马赫穆德·喀什噶里，P.20；龟兹乐舞，P.22；喀什巴扎，P.26；昭陵六骏案难记，P.18；新疆文物话围棋，P.24；克孜尔千佛洞中的瑰宝，P.34；丝路考古新发现，P.42；大蓬车来到喀什，P.32；丝路重镇酒泉，P.36；维吾尔族，P.44；塔吉克人的葬礼，P.40



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بۇرھان شاھیدی

Burhan Shahidi

Congratulations and Good Wishes for the Inaugural Issue

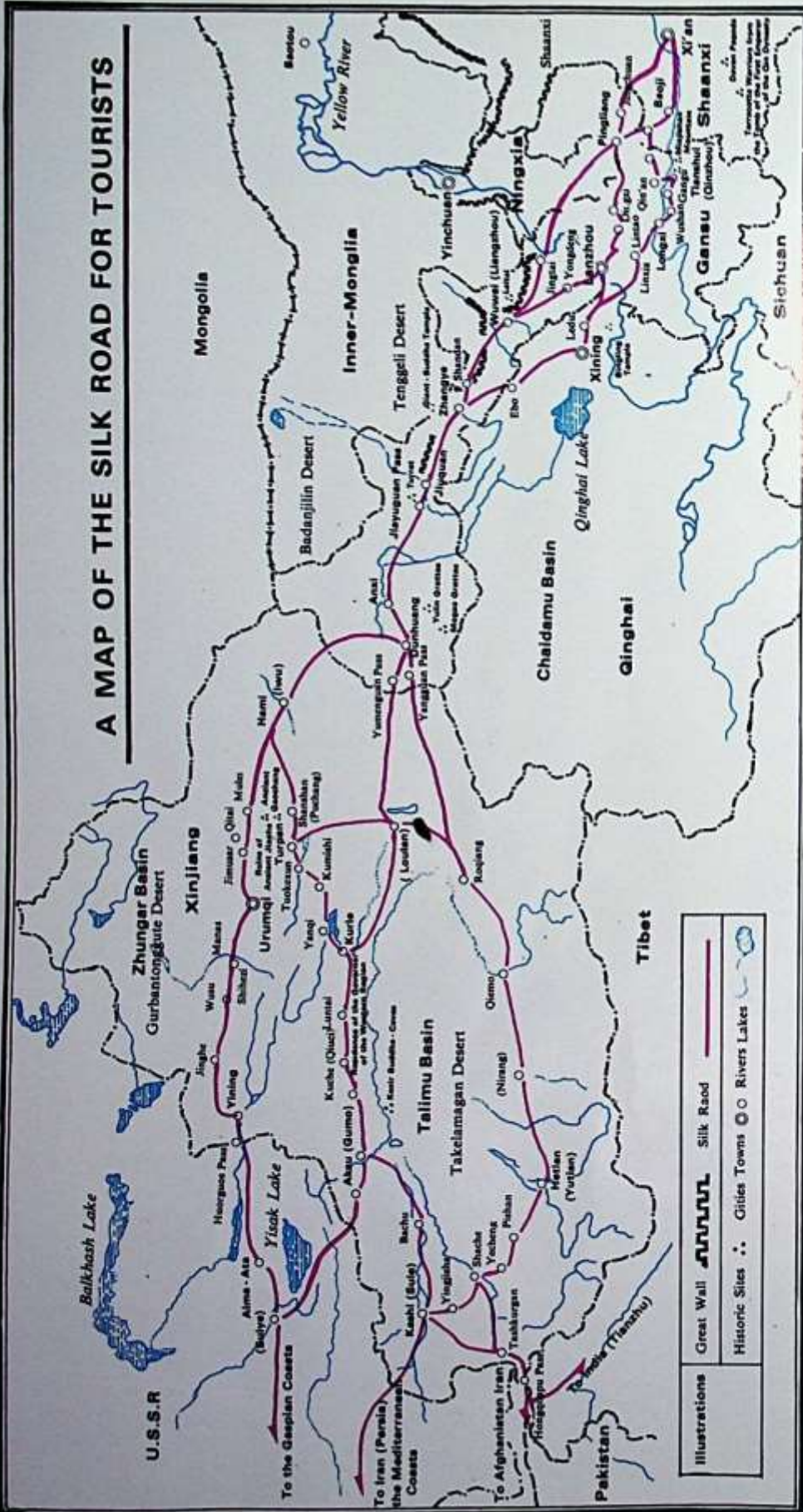
China was the first country in the world to grow mulberries, raise silk worms, and make silk fabric. When sea transportation was in an early stage, China's beautiful silk and other products were sent to central Asia and Europe mainly through the Hexi Corridor and several other passages in what is now Xinjiang. These ancient routes linking inland China with its western border and farther on to western countries are known today as the Silk Road. The name indicates the importance of silk among ancient China's exports and the admiration people had for Chinese silk. From the Han and later the Tang dynasties, the road has served as a thoroughfare for friendly exchanges between the peoples of China and the western countries. Though in its long history the dark clouds of war sometimes gathered over it, most of the time the route was harmonious and happy.

The famous Han dynasty envoy Zhang Qian took this road on his journey to the west. The monk Xuan Zang also followed it on his pilgrimage to India and other lands for Buddhist scriptures. It is also through this road that Kumarajiva and Marco Polo arrived in China. Broad areas of the eastern section of the Silk Road have long been the home of China's Uygur, Han, Hui, Kazak, and other nationalities. Their rich culture, abundant products and great number of historical sites add charm to this ancient passageway. Today, with modern transport and communications, the route still plays an important role in facilitating cultural and economic exchange in China's western regions, and between China and the central Asian countries. The area around it is of strategic importance in China's four modernizations. It will also be one of the country's great tourist attraction.

I am glad that the region's Travel and Tourist Administration and the Xinjiang People's Publishing House have decided to publish Silk Road Tour magazine, with the intention of telling both Chinese and foreign readers about the historical and present conditions along the Silk Road. The magazine will promote the unity between China's different nationalities, and friendship and understanding between the peoples of China and other countries. It is a significant event, and I wish the magazine great success.

I hope Silk Road Tour will keep its distinctive qualities among the country's many other tourist magazines, and follow the principle of seeking truth from facts in its writing and reporting. The magazine should also be of high artistic quality, its language down-to-earth and vivid, contents full of knowledge and interesting, and pictures well chosen. It should also try to be of academic value.

A MAP OF THE SILK ROAD FOR TOURISTS



photos by: Son sijin Liang Feng Qi Shaoshan MaiLi Qi Shing

制图: 杨克勤

GU BAO

bones as road markers. People who now travel by plane, train or car in these areas can never imagine what kind of hardships our ancestors had overcome when they traversed the Silk Road.

Today it takes two hours to fly from Xi'an to Urumqi. But in the Tang dynasty, the monk Xuan Zang spent more than a year on foot from Chang'an to Gaochang in the present Turpan Basin on his pilgrimage to India in search of Buddhist scriptures. Once he was nearly killed by garrison soldiers when he tried to steal their water. And another time, before he reached Dayiwu (present-day Hami), he almost died of thirst in the desert.

Among those who opened up the Silk Road and helped it flourish in ancient times were government officials and envoys, merchants and monks, Buddhists, Manichaeists, Muslims, and Zoroastrians of the countries along its path, as well as immigrants to the area and Chinese garrison troops. The merchants came from Rome, India, Persia and Central Asia. Many were of Han or other nationalities from China's northwestern regions. The traders on the road operated in relays, each doing business in only one section, with the goods passed on to the next set of traders. The Han, central Asian and Persian merchants were the most active.

In China's Yuan dynasty (1271 - 1368), the Silk Road gradually gave way to the rapidly developing sea trade. But the many historical sites and relics left along the route prove how it had prospered in earlier times. In China's Xinjiang and the area west of the Huanghe (Yellow) River in Gansu province, many sites of Han and Tang

dynasty cities have been discovered. The murals and painted sculptures found in the Mogao grottoes in Dunhuang, the Yulin grottoes in today's Xi'an, the Kumtula grottoes in Kuqa and Kizil in Baicheng are all treasures of art. The finding of the tens of thousands of manuscripts from many centuries at Dunhuang has inspired a whole new field of scholarly research. In addition, the discovery of foreign documents and documents in ancient languages of China's minority nationalities, as well as ancient Chinese and foreign coins, has provided reliable sources for study of history and cultural exchange along the road.

Today, China's policy of invigorating the domestic economy and opening to the outside world has imbued the Silk Road with new vitality. Every year it draws tens of thousands of foreign tourists. Overseas Chinese and compatriots from Hongkong and Macao also frequently visit this landmark of the Chinese nation. The number of tourists has been steadily increasing; never before has the old route seen so many visitors. Modern transport, especially air communication, have greatly shortened the distances between countries and areas. The hardships endured by travelers on the Silk Road in ancient time no longer exist. But this path of ancient east-west economic and cultural exchange will continue to shine as a bridge linking together peoples of different parts of world.

April 14, 1986
Jingfeng Hotel, Beijing



The Silk Road

—Ancient Path of East - West Cultural Exchange
For the inaugural issue of Silk Road Tour

The Silk Road was an ancient route of east-west cultural and economic exchange. It connected the world's four big cultural centers—Greek and Roman culture, Arabic culture, Indian culture, Chinese culture. Over many centuries it vigorously promoted economic and cultural development in both western and eastern countries, and especially those regions along the route. Its influence was of world significance. Silk was only one item in the abundant material and cultural exchange on the route. But people all over the world were happy to accept and call it the Silk Road, when a modern French historian gave it that name.

It is quite something to use the gorgeous and magnificent silk to symbolize the profound friendship existing in history among the peoples of different countries. China is the home of silk. Being Chinese, I feel gratitude to people all over the world who have conveyed their friendly feelings for us by using the term, the Silk Road.

Over its long history, the Silk Road was a remote and arduous path. Even before man had developed language to record things, the economic and cultural exchange between the east and the west had started. Archaeologists have proved this with their study of the shapes and kinds of pottery articles found in different places, and artifacts of neolithic culture. When recorded history began, frequent east-west exchanges were put down in writing.

The Biography of King Mu and the Book of Mountains and Seas written in

the Warring States period (475 - 221 B.C.) vividly described the legendary story of Zhou dynasty Emperor Mu Wang's meeting with the Queen Mother of the West in the 10th century B. C. These works also recorded the geographical conditions and products in the areas around the present-day Kunlun and Chunshan mountains. In the 2nd century B. C., when Zhang Qian and Hu Fu were sent for the first time to the western regions as diplomatic envoys, they saw in the Daxia Kingdom (today's northern Afghanistan) Chinese silk from Sichuan and Chinese bamboo (the latter for making monks' walking sticks) brought there by Indian merchants. A large number of items made of Hotan jade were discovered in the Yin ruins in inland China. These indicate that trade along the Silk Road has a history of more than 3,000 years.

The distance from China's Chang'an (present-day Xi'an in Shaanxi province) to Rome was enormously long in ancient times. To travel this route, one had to cross vast deserts, climb numerous mountains, and cross the sea. Some of the mountain passageways, due to their high altitude, caused serious altitude sickness and were thus known to the trading caravans as "big headache" and "small headache" areas. Some cliff paths were so steep that men and draft animals were able to negotiate them only with the help of ropes. To cross the deserts was even more difficult. Travelers had to bring everything—food, water and fodder—with them, and sometimes had to remember piles of human and animal





August 19, sunny
Today is my last day in Taxkorgan. The weather has turned fine for photos. The local people invited us to a Tajik nationality wedding. The night before we learned that, in the Tajik tradition, light blue and green are unlucky colors while red, yellow and white are considered auspicious. So we changed clothes, including the two Americans. Though we are only 60 km. from the bride's house, it took us four hours to reach there, as our car stopped many times on the way.

Tajik weddings are usually held in the bride's house. When we came it was already full of guests, the women in their colorful traditional costumes. We were invited to sit down and served with milk tea and pastries. While we were eating and talking with the hosts,

weds. Harry and Mike, our two American colleagues, joined in the jubilant dancing.

The wedding ceremony was conducted according to Islamic traditions. The Imam spread wheat flour on the bride and bridegroom, wishing them a harmonious family life. The bride and bridegroom exchanged rings that were tied with red and white cotton strips. After this the Imam produced a piece of meat, a crusty pancake, and a bowl of salt water which the bride and bridegroom ate together, a symbol that from then on they would eat from the same pot. Horse races and the game of "goat snatch" followed the ceremony. Harry and Mike presented balloons printed with the words "Marco Polo Expedition Team" to the riders. And we were soon

LUO XIAOYUN

snow, though it was already August. We put on all the garments we had brought with us. Two other photographers were suffering a great deal from mountain sickness. Their lips turned blue and their heart beat was quite fast. They were immediately sent to the foot of the mountain. At 4:30 a jeep arrived from the Pakistan side. We went up to welcome the Americans. They were the chairman of the American Marco Polo Foundation and the director of its planning committee. It was the first time that the pass was opened to people other than Chinese and Pakistanis. I purposely included the China-Pakistan boundary marker in my photos recording the meeting of the two expedition teams.

On our way back to Taxkorgan we visited an outpost where ancient couriers used to change their horses and rest, and Mingteke Pass on the border between China and Afghanistan. It was from here that Marco Polo started his journey in China.

Things have been smooth today. Hope this will continue.



we heard a commotion outside the house. The bridegroom's party had arrived to escort the bride. I rushed out with a camera. The bridegroom, wearing a new cap with a red and a white silk ribbon tied around its edge, was accompanied by relatives and friends, some playing local flutes and some beating drums. At this time the same musical instruments struck up in the courtyard of the bride's house. People sang and danced happily to give their best wishes to the newly

all known as "Marco Polos."

I used all four of my cameras to capture the wedding scenes. One was loaded with ordinary daylight film, another with very fast film for indoor pictures. Another had black and white film. I expected to harvest a good crop of pictures.

Wedding activities lasted until the evening. From noon to eight in the evening we had nine "meals," and we were told that for a whole wedding the guests would have 18 meals altogether. So we only



Following in the Footsteps of Marco Polo From My Tourist Diary

Some 700 years ago Marco Polo traveled from Venice all the way to Beijing. Last summer the Marco Polo Foundation of the U.S. and the China News Agency Press jointly organized a six-member expedition to travel the same route. In China the team spent two months, covering 10,000 km. in Xinjiang, Qinghai, Gansu, Ningxia, Inner Mongolia, Hebei and Beijing. They recorded the journey with many pictures and articles that vividly portray the present-day life of the people in this area, as well as relics and ruins along the old Silk Road. Luo Xiaoyun, a photographer-reporter from the China News Agency Press, took part in the expedition. Below are excerpts from her travel journal.

August 15

In Taxkorgan, a county town on China's westernmost border, the summer sun rises much later than in other parts of the country. Lying awake in bed, I considered myself lucky to avoid a misfortune yesterday.

Early in the morning our car left Kashi and traveled beside the turbulent Gaizi River. At noon we arrived at Aklam and saw several dozen cars waiting there to proceed. A rainstorm caused by an avalanche the night before had damaged the road. The maintenance workers told us that they needed three days to clear off the 13-meter high wall of mud and stone that blocked the way. Hearing this, we grew very anxious. We had to reach Taxkorgan, still 150 km. away, that day to meet some American colleagues who would enter our country at the border town. We requested a car from the county government on the other side, and it was readily arranged. So we trudged through the sand and stone piles with our luggage on our shoulder. Arriving at the place we'd arranged to wait for the car sent by the county

government, we grew anxious when it didn't appear. Then we heard there had been landslide in Bulunkou, farther on, and the car had very probably been delayed. Thank goodness a truck passed on its way to Bulunkou. We asked for a ride, and the driver agreed on condition we pay for it. The truck crawled over the Pamir Plateau. We were huddled in the open space at the back, holding tight to our cameras. At dark we met the car coming to take us to the county town. It had detoured around the landslide in Bulunkou to pick us up. We felt even more grateful after we learned that the driver was running a high fever. At one o'clock the next day we arrived at Taxkorgan. Everyone was exhausted.

After breakfast the comrades of the county government told us that two American friends were to arrive at 5:30 pm. We went to Kunjirap Mountain Pass at the border of China and Pakistan to wait for them. This pass, an important communications link between the two countries, is 5,000m. above sea level. It was still a world of ice and

black lamb caps pinned on top. Uygur weddings are strongly traditional. For instance, the ceremony of taking the bride to the bridegroom's home is extremely special. Having gone through all the celebrations at her own home, the bride sits on a carpet, her head covered with a veil, and is carried by her relatives or friends out of the house onto a cart. Her feet are not supposed to touch the floor. The way to the bride-



groom's home is blocked by three ropes in separate places. When the cart arrives before each rope, members of the bridegroom's family have to say many nice words and symbolically hand over some money before the cart can pass through the ropes. When the bride arrives at her husband's home, she again sits on a carpet and is carried by others to the nuptial room.

Meanwhile, young women dancers abruptly lift the bride's veil, and everybody exclaims in admiration. This brings an end to the wedding ceremony. I shot many close-up pictures., which I hope truly convey the feelings of the occasion.

Today is Mike's 34th birthday. In the American tradition, a birthday cake is a must. Here, on the edge of the Taklimakan desert, we had no way to buy one. We made a cake mold ourselves and asked the cook to prepare a birthday cake. At the dinner table we surprised Mike. We turned off the light and presented the cake with lighted candles. Mike was very happy. We all wished him

a happy birthday.

September 18, sunny

We have fulfilled our mission in Xinjiang, traveling 6,000 km. This noon we arrived at Dunhuang in Gansu province. For a whole month we overcame immense difficulties — landslides, earthquakes, desert heat and wind storms and sickness caused by adjustment to new conditions (we consumed altogether 500 tablets of berberine). But our efforts have been worthwhile.

During the trip I learned a lot from our American colleagues. In every place they took pictures but also interviewed people for articles. Their interviews often had real depth. Mike had worked for a publishing house at home. He said that if a photographer is able to write, he has many more work opportunities. Mr. Herry, an expert on Marco Polo, had acted as adviser to the film made jointly by China and Italy. They stress "making a story" in covering things. Often simple and plain subjects became vivid and meaningful in their hands. Indeed, a good photographer should always be conscious of what he tries to create.

I strongly felt the importance of being able to use a foreign language, such as English, when I was working with our American collea-



gues. It is useful in professional cooperation and also personal understanding and exchange of feelings. Especially under tight schedules, if we can directly communicate with each other we can raise the work efficiency. Thanks to the people and organizations along the way who gave us great help, we fulfilled our task of reporting on the Silk Road. We and the American group were both satisfied with our cooperation.

Marco Polo made outstanding contributions to east-west cultural exchange and to the friendship of the peoples in those regions. By following in his footsteps, we hope to do the same thing.

Photo by Luo Xiaoyun

Photos on contents pages by Gu Chuansheng and Gao Lanqing

Photos on first page by Bi Yading



fulfilled half of our quota!

August 23, sunny

We leave Kashi tomorrow. We've really seen a lot in the city—the Aidkah Mosque, the Abakh Hoja Tomb, the handicraft factory, the nationality kindergarten as well as Uygur families. Yesterday we especially went to see a bazaar and evening markets.

I like the evening markets more than the noisy bazaar, as they have a strong local flavor. They are laid out in a small street near Aidkah square. When night falls, hundreds of lights are turned on. The markets are centered on traditional local food, such as mutton kebabs on skewers, Xinjiang noodles and steamed thin-skin stuffed buns. The noodles are very much like the ones in Xi'an, only they come with a lot of red pepper. They're very spetzizing. The kebabs live up to their reputation, tasting much better than the ones we get in Beijing. It is great fun to watch old Uygur men making noodles. They pull and twist the dough back and forth in their hands and instantly it becomes thin and even noodles. Some sidewalk food stalls even offered TV shows to entertain their customers while they ate.

I took lots of pictures.

An earthquake spoiled my plans to go to the evening markets again. While we were having dinner, the floor suddenly began to shake. Bowls and plates on the table struck each other. We dashed out of the dining room and saw buildings and cars swaying. The tremors did not end till a few minutes later. The foreign tourists were quite scared. I joked that we could make big money if we lent them our tents. Hearing what I said, Mike laughed.

August 27, overcast clearing

Today is the Corban Festival, the most important festival of the Uygurs, like the Spring Festival to the Hans.

It falls in the Hui calendar on the 10th day of the 12th month, or the 70th day after fast breaking. We had arrived in Hotan, an important town on the Silk Road, in time to attend the celebrations.

At eight o'clock in the morning we were already at the town's biggest mosque to wait for the grand religious ceremony. Because of time differences, the sun had just started to rise. But many Muslims had already gathered there. Soon their Chief Imam began chanting from the Koran. Thousands of Muslims maintained a solemn silence. Kneeling on the floor with their upper bodies bent to the ground, they earnestly prayed to Allah. I tried to take pictures of the most representative scenes. Using a telephoto lens I took close-up shots. One showed only the feet of several dozen people, vividly depicting their devotion. The ceremony ended in half an hour, and after that, on top of the gate of the mosque, musicians blew souna horns and played argela drums, their merry sounds bringing a holiday atmosphere to every corner of the city.

On the festival day every family butchers sheep. On the feast tables were roast pancakes, fried dough twists, mutton, grapes and other fruit. In every family the hospitable hosts treated us to their best food. They were not pleased if we didn't eat it all up—which became a real burden to us.

September 3, fine

we made a special trip to Damagou township in Qira county yesterday. When we arrived, it was already dark. We had long ago heard of a ruined ancient city not far north of this place in the desert. Marco Polo in his journal had recorded this place. Our cruiser could not make it into the desert, so the township provided us with a tractor.

It crawled very slowly over the sand and very often sank into "sand whirl pools"

from which we escaped only with great effort. The temperature rose higher and higher as we proceeded. Soon I was wet with perspiration that was mixed with the sand blown all over me by the desert wind. Luckily, I had a blanket to cover my camera.

The site of the ruined city occupies several dozen sq. km. The signs of streets, houses, courtyards and even cooking places can still be seen. But not one complete building is left. The walls were made of willow twigs covered with mud. The burn marks on many broken walls indicate that the city might have been destroyed by a big fire. We found remnants of pottery. Rejipu, the director of the Hotan Cultural Relics Protection Institute, was happy to discover a Buddha statue without head, arms and legs, but with very pretty designs on the clothing.

on the way back we saw many ancient tree trunks and branches. Hundreds of years ago there had been a flourishing forest here which was now buried in sand.

September 5, overcast

From Damagou we traveled farther eastward along the Silk Road and entered the vast desert area. In September the temperature in the Taklimakan desert is still over 40 C. We could see no vegetation, no people, no living things. Only hot waves whirled over the vast golden sand.

Finally we came upon an oasis. We had arrived in Yutian. It was these oases that helped the ancient traders survive and fulfill their missions along the Silk Road.

We attended another Uygur wedding this afternoon, the fourth since we came to Xinjiang. We joked that our Marco Polo Expedition team had become a wedding expedition team. The Uygurs in Yutian have unique customs. The old women all wear large pieces of white gauze on their heads and tiny

A vast misty expanse of water
at the end of the Gobi
Is it a sea?

LIN ZHANQING

guide if there was a way to save the lake.

"I don't know," he said, shaking his head. "You have to ask the water conservancy experts."

Before long our boat had covered 50 km along the longer edge of the lake. Our guide then turned us west, toward the small lake area.

The small lakes looked separate, but were actually linked together by narrow channels. It was a world of reeds and a paradise for birds. Our boat shuttled through the reeds, stirring up the swans, egrets, wild geese, and greenhead ducks, which flew suddenly up and almost darkened the sky. The mirror-like surface was full of beautiful ripples. The local wild lotus was in bloom. The flowers turned the entire lake pink. Fish swam happily among the lush green lotus leaves. The poetic scene made all of us carefree and joyous.

I asked the guide what kind of fish the lake produced. Two kinds are native, he said, one with a big head, the other with a long mouth. But now it teems with more than 20 varieties—carp, silver carp, variegated carp and grass carp, in addition to shrimps, crabs, muskrat and mink.

Talking about the fish, our guide told us another legend. The bighead and long-mouth fish, he said, were originally water snakes in the lake. Many years ago, when Monk Xuan Zang, on his journey to fetch Buddhist scriptures from India, passed this place, he was stopped by many snakes from the lake who asked him to grant them favors. He swung his long sleeve and refused. "Go to the lake and become fish." So the white, blue, yellow and long water snakes were all changed into fish in Bosten Lake.

Our guide said jokingly that Monk Xuan Zang might have the credit for turning the water snakes into big head and long mouth fish, but the other 20 varieties of fish were introduced from the Changjiang (Yangtze) and the Ertix rivers 20 years ago. The credit should go to the people's government.

Our guide added that in the gourmet sense we were out of luck. If the lake had

not been closed, he would have caught fresh fish from the lake for us to sample. Either boiled in the lake water, or roasted with reeds, he assured us, we would enjoy the fish very much and would then never forget Bosten Lake.

The lake has a reed area of 29,000 hectares, with an output of 300,000 tons—an important sideline product for the local farmers and herdsmen. The reeds are sold to places north and south of the Tianshan Mountains, and even to areas far south of the Great Wall. A big paper mill was being built when we were there. The people were thus making comprehensive use of their natural resources.

Our guide didn't need a map or a compass, his experience was enough to lead us on our tour of the vast lake. By noon we had covered a major part of the lake.

From the small lake area we returned to the main lake. Then we were brought to a pumping station. From its engineer we learned that the station was very important in adjusting the lake's water volume, besides generating electricity, irrigating fields, transforming alkaline land and lowering the mineral content of the water. The lake was 1,000 sq. km. in area, 58 km. from east to west, and 30 km. north to south. Its total capacity was 9.9 billion cubic m., the average water depth 15 m. Five years ago a headquarters was established to plan the lake's overall water conservancy construction. Now, after the big pumping station has been built, more water conservancy projects are under way to cooperate each other. With them, Bosten Lake won't dry up, and will become even more beautiful.

Photo by Zhao Junan

Touring Lake Bosten

At Wushitala in Hoxud county, our car turned southward off the highway from Toksun to Kashi. Passing through groves and farm cottages, we returned again to the edge of the Gobi. Still I saw no signs of the lake. Where was it?

"Just over there," the driver said, pointing forward with his chin.

Ah, a long misty ribbon lay ahead on the horizon. Was that the sea I had dreamed about? There were no signs of human habitation. Only after the driver had pointed it out did I see a glittering, rippling something, that seemed like a mirage amid heavy fog in the distance.

At the lake shore we asked the director of a local fish farm to provide us with a boat so that we could tour mysterious Bosten Lake.

He hesitated, explaining that fishing was forbidden in the lake from March to August. For the moment there were no boats, big or small, available. But he was kind enough to provide us with a junk and a worker from his farm to be our guide.

Our guide Old Wang, in his fifties, was of Hui nationality. He had been a fisherman all his life. Wrinkles were prominent on his stern, firm face. He first observed the lake for a while, and then connected the motor at the end of the boat. Soon the machine started, producing a rhythmic sound: "du, du, du."

The boat sailed along smoothly. Standing at its stern, I looked far ahead. Bosten Lake seemed as vast as the sea. There were no other boats around, no fish leaping out of the water or birds hovering above. The lake and the sky merged together. The sound of waves seemed to tell an old story. Later the sun came out and expelled the fog. Now I could clearly see the distant fields, farmers' houses with smoke curling from their chimneys, moving flocks of sheep and cattle, and shuttling cars. The scene was tranquil but lively.

We cruised from east to west along the bank, where often only sand and pebbles glistened in the sun. "Why does

this dry place have water?" I asked our guide. He took a long mouthful of smoke from his pipe and told us a story about the lake.

Long, long ago the lake was a fertile pasture. Bosten and his sweetheart, Ga Ya li, lived very happily. One day the God of Rain discovered her beauty and wanted her for his own. But Ga Ya refused. Very angry, the god stopped sending rain to the pasture. Continuous drought killed many people and livestock. Ga Ya sang every day, begging help from Heaven. But Heaven obviously didn't care about things on earth. Then Bosten shot at the sky with his bow and arrow to punish Heaven, so the God of Thunder received orders to punish Bosten. He struck Bosten and killed him on top of Mt. Kurutag.

But a kind-hearted goddess was sympathetic. While the drunken God of Rain was fast asleep, she pushed down his water calabash. Rain poured down for three days, turning the center of Yanqi basin into a big lake. Bosten ceased from singing day and night to beg Heaven for rain. Ga Ya fainted by the bank of the lake. When she recovered and heard that local people wanted to name the lake Ga Ya to honor her persistent efforts, she shook her head and said in a low but firm voice: "Bosten Lake."

In more realistic terms, Bosten Lake gets its water from the Kaidu River, which has an annual flow of 3 billion cubic meters of water. A small part is used for irrigation, the rest runs into the lake. Here the silt is deposited, and the clear water, after filling up the lake, flows out of its southern end at Arhongkou, where it forms the Konqi River. Recently, more and more irrigated fields have been added along the two banks of the Kaidu River. As a result, the water level of Bosten has started to drop. It is predicted that if this situation remains unchanged, the lake would dry up by the end of this century.

This worried me greatly. I asked our



gone, leaving no trace of the original sites. But in photos taken at the end of the Qing dynasty and the early period of the Republic, the style, layout and architecture of these temples seem similar to those of central China. During the years of the Republic, some important civil and military officials came to these monasteries to become monks in order to avoid persecution.

The formidable climb up the mountain in the old days dismayed many visitors. Now a road has been built to the lake, and pavilions, villas and restaurants provide accommodations for visitors. In summer, people boat on the blue water. They can look up at snowcapped peaks and redroofed, yellow-walled buildings on nearby mountain slopes. If one climbs up a peak to look down, the lake is within full view, its shore surrounded by lush pines and cypresses. Flowers are scattered among the green grasses. Kazak herdsmen on horseback graze sheep and cattle. Their singing vibrates through the crisp air.

The weather at Heavenly Lake is unpredictable. In a mo-

ment, black clouds come rolling down and it begins to pour. The next moment, a rainbow hangs over the water. Flash floods rush down gullies into the lake to make it swell suddenly. As the sun rises the snowy mountains glisten in the morning glow. The sunrise at Sky Pillar Rock is more majestic. At sunset the cliffs on the eastern lake shore are dyed a thousand shades of crimson. Heavenly Lake is never quiet except around nine or ten o'clock in the morning. Then there is a seductive tranquility. The pines, flowers, snow peaks and flying clouds are reflected clearly on the water, a favorite photo subject for visitors.

A smaller lake below Heavenly Lake is called Small Heavenly Lake. Legends say that the Queen Mother of the West washed her feet in it. A waterfall drops a hundred meters over cliffs. Ice caves of grotesque shapes and various sizes are everywhere, icicles hanging from the ceiling. In winter, Heavenly Lake is an ideal ice rink, and the weather is comfortable. Many skaters from Xinjiang and other places practice there. The lake has also

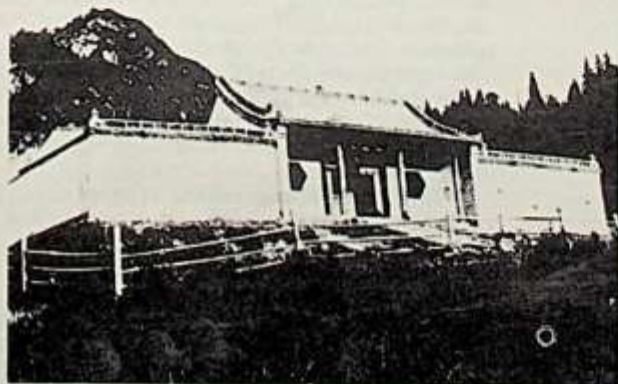
hosted national speed skating competitions.

The scenery around Heavenly Lake was acclaimed in Chinese history as the "First in the North." There are numerous rare animals and plants. Surveys have revealed more than 20 species of animals, 40 of birds and 100 of insects. Roe deer, snow cock and snow lily are the most well-known. Scaleless carp from the lake is a delicacy. Under the ice crust of the mountains are rich deposits of mica, copper, iron and other minerals.



Haifeng Pavilion
Fushou Temple
Dongyue Temple
Taixu Nunnery and Bagua Pavilion

photos by Fan Hao
(courtesy of Qi Xiaoshan)



Legends and Relics of Heavenly Lake

WEI CHANGHONG



Heavenly Lake in the Tianshan Mountains, shrouded in mystery, attracts many fantasy seekers. In 1982, the State Council listed it among China's first-class scenic spots.

Heavenly Lake is located in the middle of Bogda ("Divine" in the the Mongolian language) Peak at an altitude of 5,445 meters. The lake is 1,980 meters above sea level, and shaped like a half moon tapering slightly from north to south. The water surface is 4.9 square kilometers with an average depth of 40 meters, the deepest spot being 105 meters. The blue water is like a precious stone inlaid in the mountains. Three peaks, covered with permanent snow, rise high on the southeastern shore. On the lower slopes are dense forests and green grass. Herds of sheep, cattle and horses roam the grassland.

Historically the lake had various names: Divine Pool, Ice Pool, and Dragon Pond. During the reign of the Qing emperor Qian Long (1736-1796) Governor Ming Liang of Urumqi led a mounted team to explore the

lake and found that there was no outlet for the water. With court approval, Ming Liang sent workers to cut the blockading rocks so the lake water could flow down to irrigate crops. He erected a stone tablet bearing these words: "The peaks are like a screen soaring to the clouds. Amid the peaks is Heavenly Lake. Legends say it was the den of dragons. The lake hides in snow and ice. No one knows how it came about." Ever since then, Heavenly Lake has become famous.

The scenery there is magnificent. Among the many folktales about it is one recorded in the book Biography of King Mu, which goes like this: Three thousand years ago, the Queen Mother of the West entertained King Mu of the Zhou dynasty at the beautiful Jade pool in Heaven. At the banquet, the hostess and guest sang and composed poems. The king was so happy he didn't want to return to earth. Another tale says that the Queen Mother bathed in the pure water of the lake whenever she came down to earth.

Jade-white Bogda Peak is

the highest on the eastern range of the Tianshan Mountains. Buddhist monks called it "Bodhidharma Cliff" because they believed that a master monk read scriptures there. On the eastern shore are black cliffs like cascading hair. It is said they are the remains of the hair shaved off from ten thousand Arhats. On the southern side of Bogda Peak are piles of white rock, said to be the bones of the Arhats after their nirvana. There are stories about every scenic spot such as Heavenly pillar and Immortals-Meeting Terrace, some related to Buddhism and some to Daoism.

All the famous mountains in China once had either Buddhist or Daoist monasteries. Those in Xinjiang were no exception. But in Xinjiang, which was part of the route of the Silk Road and inhabited by many nationalities, many religions were propagated. The same nationality might practice different religions at different times. For example, Indian Buddhism was introduced to Xinjiang long ago from the Western Regions where Buddhism dominated. By the Tang and Song dynasties (from 618 to 1279) Daoism came to Xinjiang from central China and flourished for a time. Many temples and monasteries grew up around Heavenly Lake. In the Qing dynasty (1644-1911) there were "Eight Great Temples" including Longevity (or Iron Tile) Temple, Boyue (or Dongyue) Temple, Queen Mother of the West Temple, Wuji Temple and Zhenren Temple. All of these are



Ji Xianling

conclusion. For another example, we tried to use the latest information for the annotations. We had to re-examine all the previous ones for comparison. Some of them were contradictory. To present authentic data one needed patience.

During the compilation, several of us became impatient and wished to quit. But the persistence of Monk Xuan Zang, the author of *Records of Western Travels*, spurred us on. The book describes his hardships on the road: "There is nothing all around; no traces of humans or horses can be seen. At night, ghost shadows dance amid will-o'-the-wisps. Stars shine in the high sky. During the day, gales whip up sands to fall like rain." His sufferings were beyond the imagination any us of us.

Although the work was slow and difficult, our team was harmonious. Every note we put down took great effort. I don't mean our annotations are flawless. As our ancient predecessors said, annotating a book is like sweeping fallen leaves in autumn: the longer you sweep the more leaves there will be. Our book still has mistakes. Some appeared because of our limited knowledge, and some because of our carelessness. We hope readers won't hesitate to point them out so that the next edition will be better.

The comments of Chinese critics I have read so far on this book are all positive and full of praise. I haven't read comments by foreign critics, but only some encouraging words. Generally speaking, the book has been accepted by readers. It is a great inspiration and comfort to us who worked on it.

From the beginning we had a long-term plan for this book: the first stage was to re-examine the texts; second, to annotate them; third, to interpret the texts in modern language; and fourth, to translate the texts into English. The work of the first and the second stages was carried out simultaneously. The present book is the result. The third stage was the publication of *Modern Interpretation of 'Records of Western Travels'* by the Shaanxi People's Publishing House. The three stages were done by the same people. The fourth stage, to translate the texts into English, is of great importance but also will meet great difficulties. Many foreign scholars on the history of India are looking forward to its completion. We are making contacts, hoping to carry the fourth stage work out in cooperation with foreign specialists. In any case, we will fulfill this task.

My colleagues and I have worked happily despite setbacks. We understood the importance of our work. There had been no others before us who did it systematically. Yet we were not very experienced. All of us had to learn while we worked. Although I was in charge of the final reading, I was given willing

advice and suggestions from others. I often think that if I were asked to do another job like this, I would want the same people to work with me.

Through the work we came to know places in Shaanxi, Gansu and Xinjiang which are treasure sites of China. They not only have majestic scenery and historical sites, but also the Silk Road went through them. The Chinese people are proud of the Silk Road. We who worked in the compilation of *Annotations on 'Records of Western Travels'* feel happy to have done something for it. We hope the Silk Road will attract more and more attention in the world and more and more tourists. The Silk Road, which played a big role in promoting cultural and technical exchanges in ancient times, will play an even greater role in this regard today.



Annotations on 'Records of Western Travels'



We can safely say that without Chinese records, the Silk Road would still be shrouded in mystery today.

The Silk Road was an artery of Sino-Western cultural and technical exchanges in ancient times. Chinese travelers, Buddhist monks, merchants and diplomats have left valuable written material about this commercial traffic. Among all the writings, the Records of Western Travels by the buddhist monk Xuan Zang (Hsuan Tsang or Tripitaka) of the Tang dynasty (618-907) is the most prominent.

Xuan Zang surmounted all kinds of difficulties on his journey to India in search of Buddhist scriptures. After his return to China, he translated 75 Buddhist manuscripts. He also wrote, with the help of his disciple Bian ji, Records of Western Travels, in which he described the geographical features, customs and religious beliefs and practices of the 111 states he had visited as well as those of other states he had heard about. The book provides valuable material for the study of the history and geography of Southwest and Central Asia, and many scholars studied this work in the past. Modern researchers on the history of India and Central Asia pay even more attention to it. It has been translated into several languages. In the Japanese language alone, there are five versions with annotations. Many treatises have also been written about it. Indian scholars, in particular, give it the highest praise.

However, these translations contain some errors. Even the writings by Chinese specialists have defects. A common desire has been to check and annotate the great work with collective knowledge.

China Press accepted this challenge. In 1977 a meeting was called in Beijing of specialists from Beijing, Guangzhou and Shanghai cities and Sichuan province. The work was divided according to specialized fields. Those who were familiar with Xinjiang and Central Asia were responsible for Chapters 1 to 12; those who knew Sanskrit were to check the Chinese translation of Sanskrit names; those specializing in Chinese classics were responsible for the forward and postscript; and historians were to check the notes on history. The strenuous efforts of these scholars resulted in the publication of the book, Annotations on 'Records of Western Travels'. The China Press thus did a great job in preserving China's cultural heritage.

In the beginning, we thought we could do the job in a short time. But soon after we began, we realized it required tremendous, meticulous efforts. During the four to five years of work we experienced setbacks, but also happy moments. Some things seemed simple but were not. For example, for the name of a person or a place many previous publications had different spellings. We had to check these again and again before coming to a satisfactory

crosses the Xingdukushi Mountains on the south to get to Afghanistan and Iran. There the Middle Road joins the Southern Road. Before the Western Han dynasty (206 B.C. - A.D. 25) the eastern half of the Middle Road, i. e. the part east of the Yanqi Basin, went southward from Kashi to Taxkorgan to arrive in Pakistan and Afghanistan. After the Eastern Han dynasty (25 - 220), it went through Yiwu (in the present-day Hami area), Gaochang (in the present-day Turfan Basin) to reach Yanqi. After the middle of the 4th century very few people traveled the road through Loulan.

The Northern Road had existed in the Han dynasty. It became more important in later times. After leaving the Hexi

Corridor, the Northern Road goes to Yiwu, continues along the southern side of the Tianshan Mountains to Qijiajing, crosses the Tianshan Mountains to reach Mullei on the north or else it crosses the Grand Songshutang Slope at Yiwu to get to Puze (present-day Barkol grassland), then goes on along the northern side of the Tianshan Mountains to the Mori, jimsar and Urumqi areas to the west, then passes Ili and Yisak Lake to reach areas of Western Asia.

For over two thousand years, the several routes have basically remained the same, especially the one over the snowcapped Grand Songshutang Slope. But the towns and natural environment along the way have changed dramatically. Wars have left their mark.

Fields reclaimed by frontier soldiers during the Han dynasty are wasteland today. Famous towns such as Loulan, Yidun, Jingjue, Liexie and Jushide are ruins. Visitors today come to pay tribute to them for their contribution to human civilization and to recall the flourishing years of ancient times. But people also can learn some lessons from the past on how to protect our living environment by visiting the Old Silk Road.

Photos by Feng pei



A song of Liangzhou

ZHANG JI

Rain falls at dusk on the frontier town,
Wild geese fly low.
The new reeds grow,
Rising high and wild.
Countless camel bells ring
Over desolate sands.
Caravans are traveling
To An xi city with silk rolls.

The Old Silk Road traverses snowcapped mountains and immense deserts. In ancient times, grass and trees were rarely seen. Travelers trudged on and on, yearning for a couriers' post or an oasis to break their monotonous journey. Despite such hardships, the several thousand kilometers of the road carried an unceasing traffic of trading caravans, imperial envoys and frontier guards. Arab merchants with curly beards greeted Chinese traders with black eyes and black hair. They exchanged information on market prices and road conditions ahead. Some goods changed hands on the spot. They laughed heartily and wished each other good luck before resuming their journey in opposite directions, feeling

much refreshed.

The Old Silk Road bustled with activity from the 2nd century B.C. to the 12th century A.D. Sima Qian (c. mid-2nd century B.C.) wrote about the Old Silk road in his *Records of a Historian*: "When Marquis Zhang Qian went to the Western Regions as imperial envoy, his entourage included 300 people, each with two horses, 10,000 head of cattle and sheep, and a great amount of gold and silk." Afterwards, the Han dynasty court frequently sent imperial envoys to the Western Regions. A group might be as large as several hundred people or as small as five or six people. Sometimes it took them eight or nine years for a round trip, sometimes several years.

Other history books also

record information about the Old Silk Road: "The hundred states with their one thousand cities from west of the Congling Mountains to Daqin all submitted themselves to the imperial court. Western Region merchants brought treasures to the Great Wall to trade. The court ordered Fei Ju to supervise the trading at Zhangye city and to attract merchants to the capital for more profit." (*Records of Jialan in Luoyang*)

"On the road from Persia on the west to Yiwu on the east, officials and merchants are seen all the time." (*Collections of Tang Dynasty Decrees*) These records can help us learn the importance of the Old Silk Road in promoting economic and cultural exchanges between central China and other lands in ancient times.

Random Thoughts on the Old Silk Road

WANG BINGHUA



Over the past thousand years, many sea routes were opened up. The Silk Road traffic declined. Towns that had stood proudly in Central Asia were neglected. Many flourishing oases were devoured by deserts. What does the

Old Silk Road look like today? What caused the collapse of the famous towns, especially those in Xinjiang? Was it simply the change of transportation emphasis to the sea, or something else? These questions have lured many people to

Xinjiang. The Silk Road Tour magazine aims at helping to answer some of these ques-

tions.

The Silk Road became more arduous when it entered Xinjiang. The Kunlun, Tianshan and Altay Mountains tower on both sides, to the north and south. In between are the Taklimakan Desert and Gurbantunggut Desert. On the west are the soaring Pamir Mountains. Only the scattered oases on the edges of the Tarim and Junggar Basins could support living things. Since natural conditions in these places have not changed much over many thousands of years, the transport routes have remained much the same. The

Southern Road starts from Hexi (Western River) Corridor, goes west along the northern side of the Altun and Kunlun Mountains, turns to Shache (Yarkant) at Hotan, then climbs over the Pamirs to arrive in Pakistan and Afghanistan. It goes on to Iran and Iraq to reach the Mediterranean.

The Middle Road begins from the Hexi Corridor, goes west along the Shule River, turns west at Loulan along the Konqi River valley to enter the Yanqi Basin, goes on through Kuqa and Kashi, and crosses the Alai Range to reach the Ferganna Basin. After that it

The emperor's eyes shone as the moon;
 The horses' hooves kicked like steel.
 The emperor captured warlords Wang
 Shiyun and Bou Jiande.
 Arrows pierced the horses' flesh
 And blood soaked their hair.
 The emperor's tributes to the horses are
 immortal.
 The carvers carved them in marble.
 Yan Liben the Master Painter drew the
 lines.
 The stone horses guarded the queen's
 tomb at Zhaoling.
 To show their great loyalty.
 Now the tomb has long been neglected.
 Foxes and rats dwell among fallen walls.
 Only the six horses neighed at the winds.
 Reminding people of the Tang dynasty.
 What an evil person it was who wanted to

horde rare things!
 He stole the carvings on wooden carts.
 Two horses were stolen.
 I live in a hut on the sunny side of Mt.
 Lujun.
 I often saw in old days the royal things in
 Chang'an.
 Today I still go there, Feeling remorse for
 the past.
 The six horses have gone through many
 troubles.
 When I look at the remaining four,
 They seem to raise their heads to me.
 The fate of those six stone horses cannot
 happen now. The rich cultural relics of the
 Xi'an area, now under strict government
 protection, attract numerous tourists.

Photos by Yang Limin

The "Forest of Steles" inside the Shaanxi Provincial Museum in Xi'an is a gigantic collection of samples of calligraphy carved on stone over a thousand years. All the inscriptions were done by famous emperors, court officials and scholars. The represent a kind of history of Chinese culture and at the same time are of great artistic value.

The stone tablets are housed in seven exhibition halls. Visitors see first a square tablet elegantly decorated with a crown and a base under a pavilion. The inscription, "Rules of Filial Piety" with annotations, was written by Tang Emperor Li Longji in the Li Calligraphic style. The tablet was carved in A.D. 717 during the heyday of the Tang dynasty.

The first hall houses more than 100 stone screens bearing 12 Chinese classics such as the Book of Poetry and the Book of Rites, 650,000 characters altogether. They remain complete after a thousand years of natural and political changes. All these ancient classics were once to be memorized by scholars before they could enter officialdom. The quiet hall seems still to echo those young scholars reciting the texts.

The second hall also contains inscriptions from the Tang dynasty. Works of famous Tang calligraphers display the flourishing art of the time. Zhu Suliang's handwriting is powerful, as if drawn by an iron brush. Ouyang Xun's style is exquisite but rigid. Yang Zhenqing rendered succulent, plump lines. Liu Gongquan's strokes are clear-cut. Li Yangbing's writing style is mild, and the brushmanship of Zhang Xu and Huai Su is unrestrained. All the tablets are crowned by dragon carvings and sit on stone turtles. The solemn atmosphere brings to the imagination visions of all those

Stone Inscriptions in Xi'an

HE ZHENGHUANG

ancient scholars brandishing ink brushes.

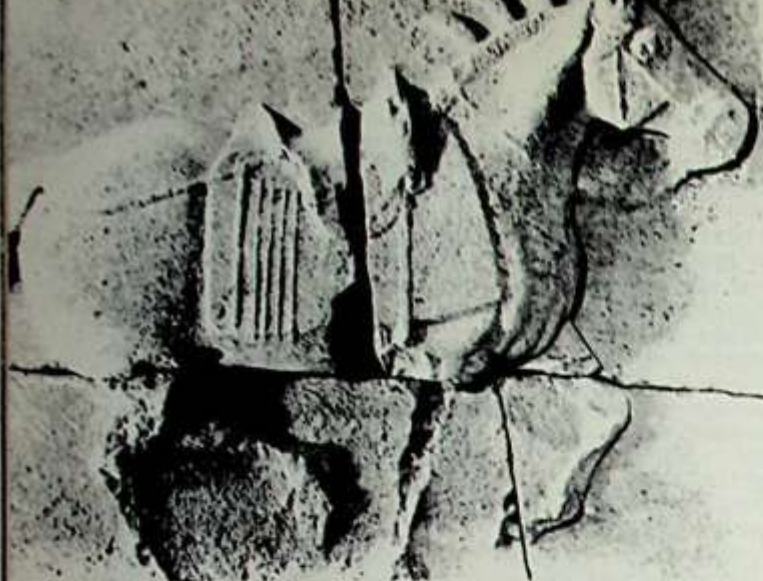
The other five halls display inscriptions done in succeeding dynasties. The "Cao Tablet" in the Li

style is jade black. The "Eastern Han Scripture" is written by famous scholar Cai Yong. There are inscriptions done by Sima Fang of the Western Jin dynasty; "Confucius' Teachings" written by calligrapher Wang Xizhi of the Eastern Jin dynasty; the "Tablet of General Guangwu" of the Fu Jian rule during the Eastern Jin dynasty; Song Emperor Hui Zong's inscription, and inscriptions by dignities of the dynasties of Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing such as Zhao Zi'ang, Mi Shi, Su Dongpo, Huang Tingjian, Dong Chichang, Zhu Yuanming, He Zhaoji, Lin Cexu and Xuo Zongtang. Qing emperors Kang Xi and Qian Long and Empress Dowager Ci Xi also left their handwriting on stone. Inlaid in the wall of this hall are several dozen epitaphs from the Northern Wei dynasty (386-543).

The "Forest of Steles" in Xi'an is not only an archive of Chinese calligraphy but also a witness to China's contacts with foreign lands in ancient times. One inscription records the introduction of Christianity into China when the Eastern Orthodox Church built a church in Chang'an (today's Xi'an, then the capital of the Tang dynasty). A part of the text is in the Syrian language. A sutra is inscribed in both the Chinese and Nepalese languages. An inscription about Tang dynasty Buddhist monk Bukong tells about a Japanese monk studying at Blue Dragon Temple in Chang'an city. Many such inscriptions remind visitors of past friendly exchanges between China and other countries.

The Robbery of the Stone Horses

WU BOLUN



In A.D. 636 Tang dynasty emperor Tai Zong buried his queen on Jiujun Mountain 20 kilometers northeast of the city Liquan in Shaanxi province. He ordered sculptors to carve six of his battle horses in marble relief for the tomb. Famous painter Yan Liben drew the lines, and the great calligrapher Ouyang Xiu copied Emperor Tai Zong's eulogies to the horses.

All the horses had helped the emperor in his battles to unify China under his rule, so the emperor gave them high praise. He said of Black Steed: "It has the speed of lightning, divine cleverness and steady loyalty." Scarlet suffered four arrow wounds in various battles. The emperor said about it: "It looks for tranquility in the mountains, but shows great courage in battle." The horse Mighty gallops in midair. Its neighing shakes half the sky. It never shows fear when it breaks into the enemy formation. "Morning Purple" is like a purple swallow riding through divine halls. It dominates the mountains and battleground with high dignity." The horse Curly sustained nine arrow wounds in a single battle, and drew this praise from the emperor: "It is indomitable under Heaven. It helped me to conquer the country." White Hoofs "can run with the wind. It fought with me in capturing the land of Long and Shu."

The stone carvings were erected to flank the queen's tomb at Zhaoling. Many poets sang songs about these exquisite sculptures. They survived over 1,300 years of exposure to the elements in the same place—until China declined into a victim of foreign imperialist aggressors in modern times. In 1914, an American merchant stationed in Beijing laid a plan to smuggle these rare sculptures out of the country. His major weapon was heavy bribes to dealers and petty officials.

many antique shops in Xi'an, especially larger ones, worked with their counterparts in Shanghai and Tianjin to sell antiques to foreigners. The American merchant knew, however, that to take away such large, valuable carvings as the horses of zhaoling couldnt possibly be handled by ordinary antiue dealers.

So he contacted Huang Hefang, the owner of Zunguzhai, a large antique shop at Liulichang in Beijing. Huang Hefang obtained a letter from Yuan Kewen, second son of the then president of China Yuan Shikai. It told Lu Jianzhang, the military governor-warlord of Shaaxi province, to help the American with the horses. Lu Jianzhang ordered his subordinate Zhang Yunshan to transport Morning Purple and Curly to the city of Xi'an. With the warlord's assistance and protection, the American merchant shipped the two horses to the United States, where they are now on display in a museum in Philadelphia.

Four years later, in 1918, the same American came to Xi'an a second time to get the remaining four horses. He asked help from Chen Peiyue, a silk merchant and the father of Chen Shufan, who had succeeded Lu Jianzhang as Shaanxi's military governor. Local gentry had learned about his first abduction and this time they were watchful, though the Chinese merchant claimed to be taking the horses to Xi'an for protection. The local people followed the cart carrying the four horses. Near Xi'an the porters broke the carvings into smaller pieces so they could be put into several crates and transported on the Weihe River. The local people reported this to the provincial council. At the same time, Hu Lisheng and Cao Junfu, two rival army commanders under the Shaanxi military governor, got wind of the incident. They issued a notice denouncing governor Chen Shufan's action in selling national treasures to foreigners. Chen Shufan, aware of his father's involvement, was cornered. He could do nothing but order his father beaten and the four horses taken to the provincial library.

The four broken horses are now in the Shaanxi Provincial Museum, but the other two are still in an alien land. A local poet, Cao Jiguang, wrote a poem about the event:

Emperor Tai Zong established the Tang dynasty.

He wiped out rival warlords on horseback.
He rode six dragon-horses like lightning
through battles.

Important Information Within 100 Words

husbandry, handicrafts, medical science, urban construction, the political hierarchy, the position officials, the military system, war and battle strategies, the calendar, studies of astronomical phenomena, plus everyday life, consumption, food and dress of the ancient Huihu people and Tujue tribes. Particularly strong in comparative linguistics, the author gave precise statements on the phonetic and grammatical rules of the Huihu language and other Tujue languages, and also provided a comparative study of the Arabic and Tujue languages. According to historical records, the author gave most of his lifetime to social and linguistic surveys and studies, and finally completed this book between 1072 and 1074.

The author and his great work are the pride of the Uyghurs as well as other Chinese nationalities. A modern Uyghur translation of the Dictionary of the Tujue Language has been published, and the Chinese translation will soon be out. This is an important cultural event for the Xinjiang peoples of various nationalities. The dictionary has become an international focus of study, and Chinese researchers of various nationalities have made important contributions in this field.

photo by Ai Shan

The Kunjirap Pass in the Pamir Mountains was a crucial passageway on the old Silk Road, and is still vital in overland travel in the area. With the approval of the Chinese and Pakistani governments this pass on the Sino-Pakistani border was officially opened to persons from third countries starting from May 1, 1987. Tourists of any nationalities are now allowed to ride buses over the pass between China and Pakistan.

Urumqi airport currently handles international flights, including Beijing—Karaqi, Beijing—Kuwait routes. More international routes will be opened as the number of passengers increases.

At the invitation of a Japanese news agency and corporation, some historical objects excavated along the Silk Road will be on exhibition in Hiroshima, Tokoy, Osaka and other Japanese cities, starting from the middle of March 1988.

Eight years ago Xinjiang hosted fewer than 100 foreign tourists annually. Last year the number of foreign tourists, overseas Chinese, compatriots from Hongkong and Macao touring the region totalled almost 20,000. Currently the region has developed over 109 tourist spots centering around four cities—Urumqi, Kashi, Turpan and Shihezi.

Telephone service via telecommunication satellite connects Urumqi with Beijing.

Nuomuhong Lake in Qinghai, 4,000 meters above sea level, is surrounded by reeds and marshes in which dwell hordes of wild ducks.

Is there really a "lake monster" in Kanasi Lake in the Altai Mountains, said to be able to swallow a horse? Or is it a ten-meter long red fish? Staff members of the Xinjiang Forestry and Hydropower departments and Xinjiang University are mounting a scientific expedition to try to answer these questions, and divers are now being trained for deep-water surveys.

Construction is underway on Urumqi's 24-story International Hotel.

In a 1100-square-km area in the Gobi Desert at Qitai county, Xinjiang, are the fossil remains of an ancient forest dating back about 180 million years. Among the thousand or so tree fossils is one trunk 30 meters long with a diameter of two meters. The rare fossil forest is under strict state protection.

Mahmud Kashgari

A. UTKUR



In the spring of 1075 a significant event occurred in Baghdad (in what is now Iraq), capital of the Abassid empire. In his ancient and luxurious palace the caliph of Baghdad received a gift from a Uygur scholar—the Dictionary of the Tujue Language written in Arabic. This event caused a stir in Baghdad. The author was Mahmud Kashgari, son of a man named Hoscain in Azik Village, Opal town, Kashgar (present-day Kashi). Although he died over 900 years ago, this great ancient linguist is worldrenowned for his masterwork.

Mahmud Kashgari lived in the period of the Carahan Dynasty. The dynasty was established in A.D. 840 by the Huihu (an ancient nationality in China) and some Tujue tribes in the Yili, Qihe and Chuhe areas, the original territory of the Huihu state. Later it encompassed a huge territory reaching westwards to Bukhara, southwards to Hotan, northwards to Yisaike Lake and eastwards to Kuqa. Balaaghun was the capital of the dynasty before Kashgar took its place in 893. According to Chinese historical records, the founders of the Carahan dynasty were called the "Western Huihu of Chongling."

Economic and social life developed rapidly during the Carahan period. Prosperous cities such as Kashgar, Farap and Bukhara became well-known economic and cultural centers. Because the main route of the Silk Road ran through the Carahan state, it became an important hub for trade between east and west. With economic prosperity, sciences and culture developed. In the middle of the 10th century, after the people had largely been converted to Islam, local intellectuals became part of the flourishing, expanding world of Islamic scholarship. Schools such as the Sagina Academy specializing in Islamic classics were established. Large numbers of scholars were

trained by these institutes of higher learning.

Meanwhile, the Buddhist Huihu people of the Gaochang state to the east of the Carahan state were translating Buddhist scriptures, philosophy and literature from Chinese, Sanskrit and Tuhar, and developing their unique religious differences, the Huihu people of Gaochang and of the Carahan state shared much of the same cultural tradition. Uygur culture flourished in the 10th and 11th centuries, and up to the 13th century excelled in most aspects of the contemporary Western culture. During this period there emerged a group of scholars, writers, poets and translators of Huihu and Tujue nationalities who turned out such genuine masterpieces as the Dictionary of the Tujue Language and Knowledge, Root of Happiness.

Unfortunately, the original copy of the dictionary handwritten by Mahmud Kashgari has disappeared. The current copy, discovered in Turkey, was hand-copied by a scholar from Damascus some 200 years after the dictionary was written. In 1912, a Turkish scholar published the first printed edition based on the handwritten copy and attracted great interest from academic circles. At present, complete translations are available in the

Turkish, Uygur and Uzbek languages, and excerpts have been published in Russian, Hungarian, German and other languages.

The author wrote his dictionary to show that the Tujue language had a long history. He wanted to prove that native speakers of the language had achieved a high cultural and spiritual level, and that the Tujue language was as good as Arabic, if not better, at a time when the two languages were in fierce competition. Due to various political and economic reasons, the Arabs then had close contacts with the Tujue people, and for their convenience in learning the language, the dictionary was written in Arabic.

But actually the book is more than a bilingual dictionary. It is a kind of encyclopedia of the Tujue people's economy and cultural life, academic and artistic achievements, political policies and practices, philosophy, morals, customs and habits. In his book the author gave a detailed introduction of the history of the Tujue tribes and described their geographic environment. He included 200 passages from literary works, including excerpts from long poems on ancient wars between the Tujue tribes, ancient ballads on the theme of love, labor and hunting and over 200 proverbs and mottos. The book also provides details of agriculture, animal



The magnificent Tang dynasty was the golden period for introduction of Qiuci songs and dances into the Central Plains. Gifted artists streamed endlessly into the area. They settled down and taught the locals their traditional arts, and trained a number of famous local artists. Li Mo, renowned as the top flute player in the prime of the Tang dynasty had been a student of a Qiuci artist.

The influential and charming Qiuci song and dance entered even the imperial court. Starting from the Northern Wei dynasty, Qiuci music served as the "yanyue" (a general term for popular music played at court) for recreation. During the Sui and Tang dynasties, "yanyue" from the Western Regions gained force and influence. Qiuci music was one of the most important western music at court. At the height of the Tang Dynasty, Qiuci music and Xiliang music reached an unprecedented peak and attracted great attention from the court. The famous Tang poet Yuan Zhen described the prevalence of Qiuci and Xiliang music in a poem.

Xiliang music reverberates wherever you wander;

Qiuci music of various kinds thunders endlessly.

With the growing prestige of the Sui and Tang governments and the increase in international contacts, Qiuci music crossed the ocean and reached Japan and Southeast Asian countries as well.

For many reasons, Qiuci song and dance began to decline after the late Tang. Most historical remnants of Qiuci music sunk into oblivion over time. Fortunately, people can still enjoy some Qiuci dances of the time from the existing cultural relics in the Kuqa area. There are over 500 Buddhist grottos on cliffs in Kuqa where Qiuci dances are depicted on murals. The dance movements and musical instruments on the murals were all based on contemporary life in Qiuci, providing precious materials for exploring and studying Qiuci dance and song.

After the disintegration of its original form, the essence and positive traditions of Qiuci music and dance was handed down, particularly in Kuqa. The

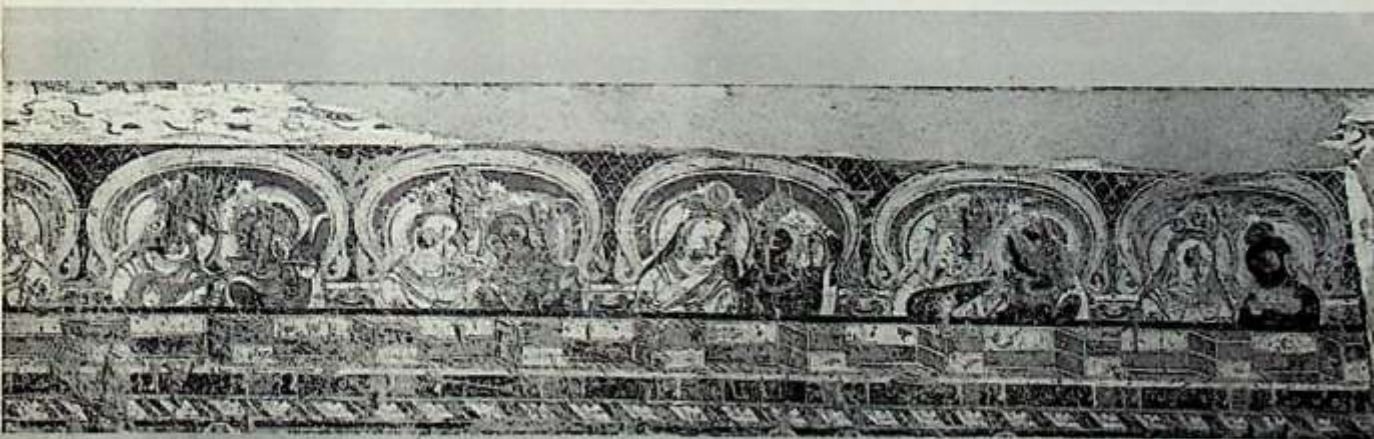
The Monk, Xuan Zang of the Tang Dynasty once praised that "Qiuci's songs and dances are excelled by none."

Uyghur people there are still quite adept in singing and dancing. They retain the characteristics of Qiuci music in mode, key, melody and rhythm and also adhere to many of the original methods of making Qiuci musical instruments in making their own instruments. Current dances such as Maxilaipu have a relation ship to the Qiuci Sumuche dance. Performances using props remain a major characteristic of present-day dance at Kuqa. Above all, song and dance are a most important part of Uyghur spiritual life. So the inheritance of traditional Qiuci music and dance has come down in one continuous line.

In an effort to explore and reflect Qiuci music and dance--the precious art of the Silk Road, artists of various nationalities in the Xinjiang Song and Dance Ensemble have created and performed a dance entitled Reflections on Qiuci Music and Dance after years of hard work.

The dance brings alive the ancient Qiuci music and dance of various kinds, and has enabled foreign and Chinese audiences of different nationalities to get some idea of the charm of Qiuci art.

Photos by Song Shijing and Feng Fei





Qiuci Music and Dance

Huo Xuchu

If you compare the Silk Road to a string of ornamental pearls of various sizes, clasp of the string is a radiant and enchanting diamond - the time-honored Qiuci music and dance.

Qiuci, the name of a place in ancient times covers the four counties - Kuqa Baicheng, Shahyar and Toksu, in the present-day Xinjiang-Uyghur autonomous region. Over 2,000 years ago, Qiuci was an economically advanced city-state in the Western Regions. The Silk Road connecting the Asian and European continents ran through the area, linking the oasis with the contemporary advanced civilizations of the East and West. It flourished through economic and cultural exchanges and developed and preserved many traditions, creating a fertile soil for the birth and development of Qiuci music and dance.

Qiuci music and dance originated in about the Western Han (206 B.C.-25 A.D.) dynasty, matured during the next thousand years, and declined during the Song dynasty (960-1279 A.D.). According to historical records, Qiuci music and dance had achieved a high standard of artistry by the end of the Southern and Northern dynasties (420-581 A.D.). The types included Jiequ (instrumental music), song and dance music. It was a developed musical system. The Qiuci orchestra, using over twenty musical instruments from middle China, India,

Persia and Qiuci, was fairly big in size and composition. The highly artistic dances included group dances locally called Sumuzhe, solo dances, and two-person dances. They were unique for using various kinds of props.

Popular in Qiuci were song and dance, dramas, religious musical dances and operas as well. These contributed much to the local spiritual life. As recorded in a book written by Duan Chengshi in the Tang dynasty, at the beginning of every year a musical dance contest was held in Qiuci, and "men and women sang and danced day and night." Qiuci people were creative artistically. It is said that rulers, ministers and ordinary people of the city-state all drew inspiration from nature in their art.

One story says Emperor Xuan Zhong (702-756), who reigned at the height of the Tang dynasty, enjoyed and played personally a piece using a Jie drum (an ancient Chinese drum, said to be from the Jie ethnic group). The creation of this piece of music was actually, it was said, based on the sound of a spring in Qiuci. The Monk Xuan Zang of the Tang dynasty once commented on the high artistry of Qiuci music and said that "Qiuci's dances and songs are excelled by none."

The frequent contacts and exchanges over the Silk Road took Qiuci's songs and dances out of the small oasis and spread it to other places. With close political and economic ties with the Western Regions, plus a close cultural connections, the Central Plains (comprising the middle and lower reaches of the Huanghe River) was the area to adopt Qiuci's dances and songs. In addition to the Silk Road which penetrated into the eastern regions, several other contacts laid a good foundation for Qiuci music taking root in the Central Plains.

In 384 B.C., when Qing Luguang led his army on a crusade to the Western Regions, large numbers of Qiuci female singers and dancers were taken to Liangzhou (the present Wuwei in Gansu province). Consequently, the blending of the arts of the nationalities in the Central Plains with that of ethnic groups in the northern part of China brought about "Xiliang Music", which became as popular as Qiuci music and dance in the Central Plains. This started a large-scale infusion of Qiuci music and dance into the Central Plains.

In 568 A.D. Emperor Wu Di of the Northern Zhou (557-581) married Princess Asna of the Tujue (a nationality in ancient China) and made her his empress. Along with the princess came the cream of the songs and dances of different places in the Western Regions. As a result, quite a number of Qiuci dancers and singers migrated to the Central Plains.

One of them was Su Zhipo, a much-imitated music theoretician and Pipa player. He passed on the theory of "five evens and seven modes" (Wudanqidiào, each of the five different notes forming seven modes by a seven-tone scale, five notes making altogether 35 modes) in the Central Plains, thus exerting far-reaching influence on the local music.



Following in Marco Polo's Footsteps

4		1
		2
5	6	3
9	8	7

1. Mingteke Mountain Pass, where Marco Polo started his journey into China.
2. Stone Castle on the Pamir Plateau.
3. Moslem prayer time.
4. Goat snatch, a popular team competition played on horseback.
5. The Mogao Grottoes at Dunhuang.
6. The Great Mosque of Tongxin county in the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region.
7. Jiuquan Park in Gansu Province.
8. The grottoes at Bingling Monastery, Lanzhou.
9. Five-Pagoda Temple at Hohhot.

Archaeological Find: Antique Weiqi Game

Zhang Yengcai

This year's International Weiqi Contest was held in our neighboring country, Japan (where the game is called 'go'). Weiqi (Chinese chess, a game played with black and white pieces on a board of 361 crosses) has a long history and originated in China.

Weiqi was invented in remote antiquity. There are clear records of the game dating from the Spring and Autumn (770 B.C.-476 B.C.) and Warring States (475-221 B.C.) periods. Confucius once said of Weiqi: "One can become clever by playing the game." Later Mencius said: "One cannot play the game well without concentrating the mind." Weiqi is not just a game of recreation, but an intellectual pastime involving knowledge of mathematics, logic, strategy and military science.

A stone board, 69 cm. on a side and 14 cm. high, with 17 lines and 289 crosses, was found in a tomb from the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220 A.D.) excavated at Wangdu county, Hebei province in 1952. This is the earliest discovery so far of a Weiqi game. Weiqi was introduced into the Xinjiang area no later than the Tang Dynasty. A wooden Weiqi board 18 cm. on a side with 19 lines and 361 crosses was unearthed in the tomb of Zhang Xiong, a Tang Dynasty general at Astans, Turpan in Xinjiang. This Weiqi board is small in size and was placed in the tomb as an ornament or symbol; it was not for practical use.

Playing Weiqi is like fighting a



battle. Each side tries to defeat the other. When two persons sit face to face and play Weiqi, it is as if two armies were facing each other, ready to charge. The board is the battlefield. In his lifetime, Zhang Xiong was a capable general and a master of defense and attack. In his command tent he worked out strategies that assured victory for his armies. The unearthed Weiqi board implies that Zhang was a masterful player of Weiqi as well.

According to historical records, Weiqi started with 17 lines. During the Sui and Tang dynasties, the number of lines increased to 19. This fact was confirmed by the unearthed

archaeological objects in Xinjiang.

The silk painting Tang Court Ladies Playing Weiqi, which has attracted worldwide attention after being unearthed in a tomb in Astana, Turpan, is a very important archaeological discovery of the Silk Road area. On the painting's left side is a dignified-looking, full-figured court lady with an elaborate hair-style decorated with precious ornaments, a colored spot on her forehead (of religious significance), dressed in a red gauze robe with a flower pattern and wearing a yellow jade bracelet on her wrist. This is the typical dress of Tang noblewoman. In the painting the lady is looking attentively at the board and holding a piece between her slim index and middle fingers, hesitating over where to place the piece on the board. The fresh and bright-colored surface, delicate and even lines and skillful strokes reveal the high artistry of this painting. It is a gem of Tang court art.

Weiqi was very popular in the Tang Dynasty. A poem by the noted Tang poet Liu Yuxi reports that men along the Yangtze River and soldiers of Dongling read art books and play Weiqi in their leisure time. With the opening of Silk Road and the increasing contacts with foreign countries, Weiqi was introduced to the Western Regions as early as 1,300 years ago. It also traveled to Japan and later to Europe and the Americas. Today it is an international sport.

**New Books on
the Silk Road Published by the
Xinjiang People's
Publishing House**

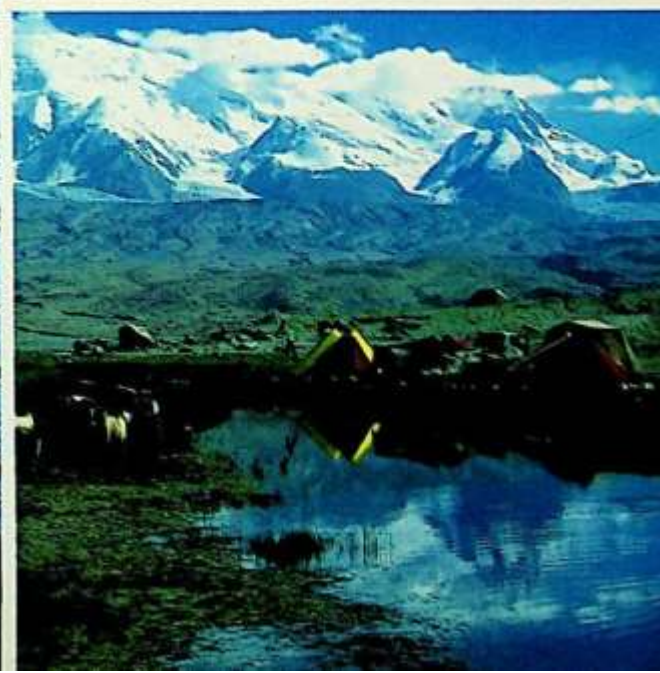
**A Painting Tour of the
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The Silk Road**

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Western Regions from
Various Dynasties
Selected Novels of the
Western Regions by
Yasushi Inoue**

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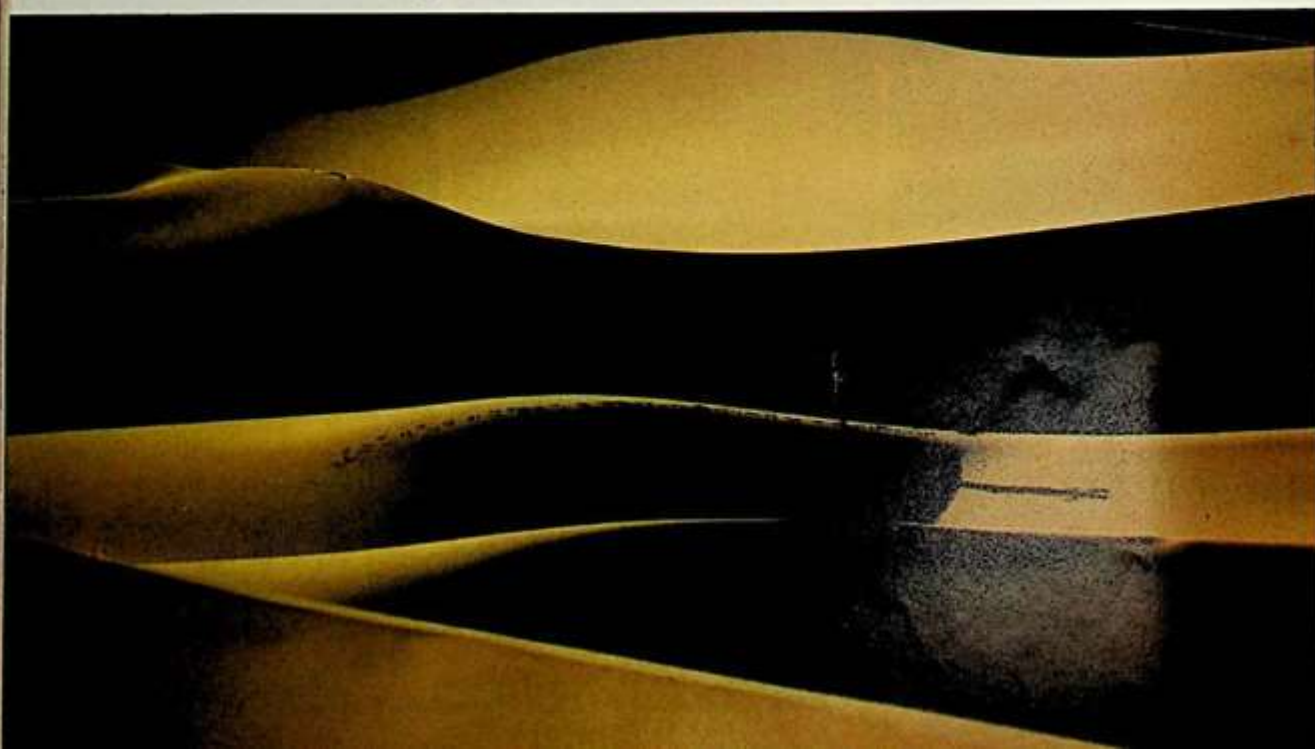


The Land of Xinjiang

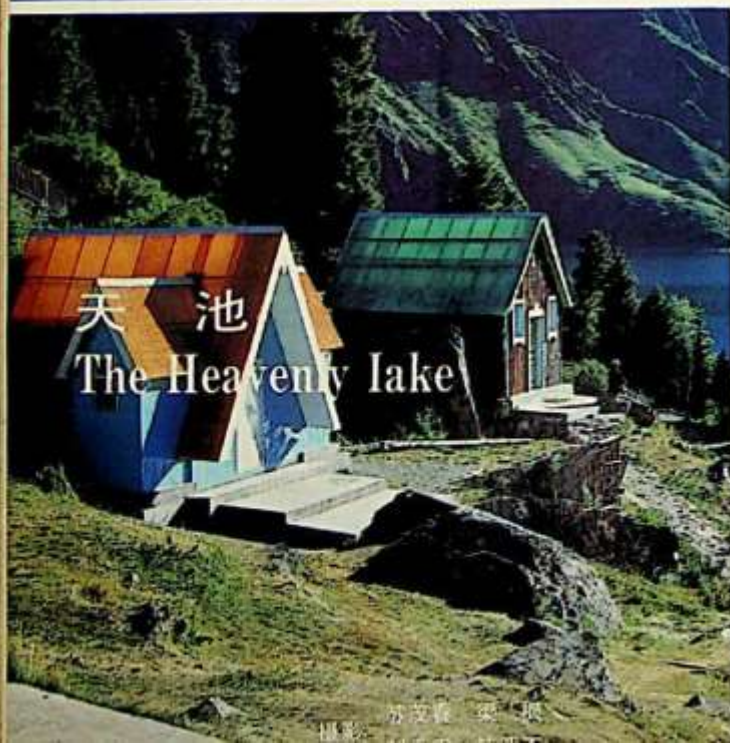
1. Pasturelands in the Tianshan Mountains.
2. In the desert.
3. Birch forest.
4. Diversiform-leaved poplars in the Gobi.
5. Tianshan highway.
6. Roasting fish by the lakeside.
7. At the foot of Mt. Kongur.

Chen Jiakai
 Song Jiabin
 Su Maochun
 Wu Chunzhan
 Cheng Minggui
 Wu Chunzhan
 Liang Feng

1	3	5
2	4	6
		7









A typical Uyghur family yard.

A street scene.



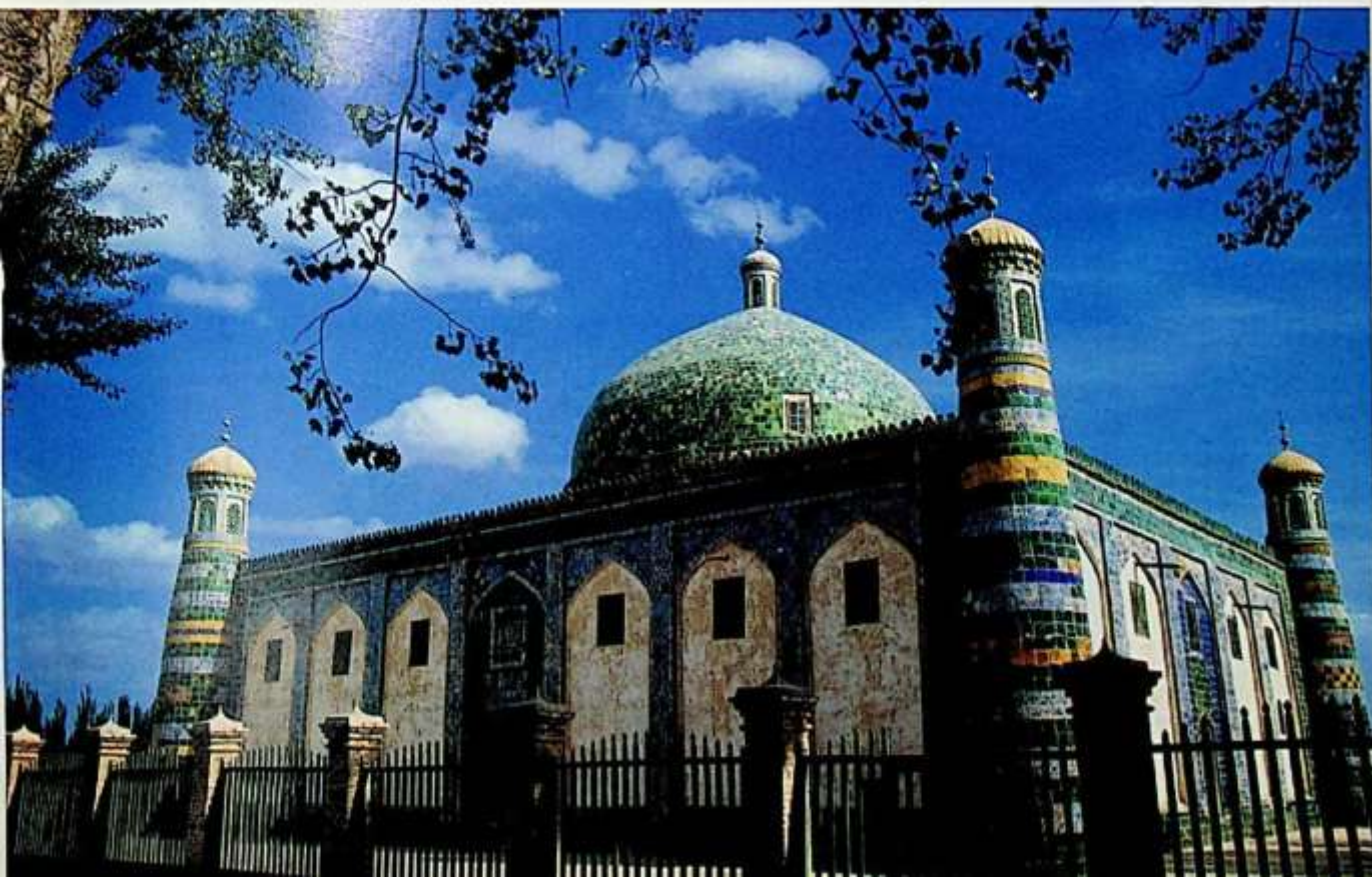
Local musicians.

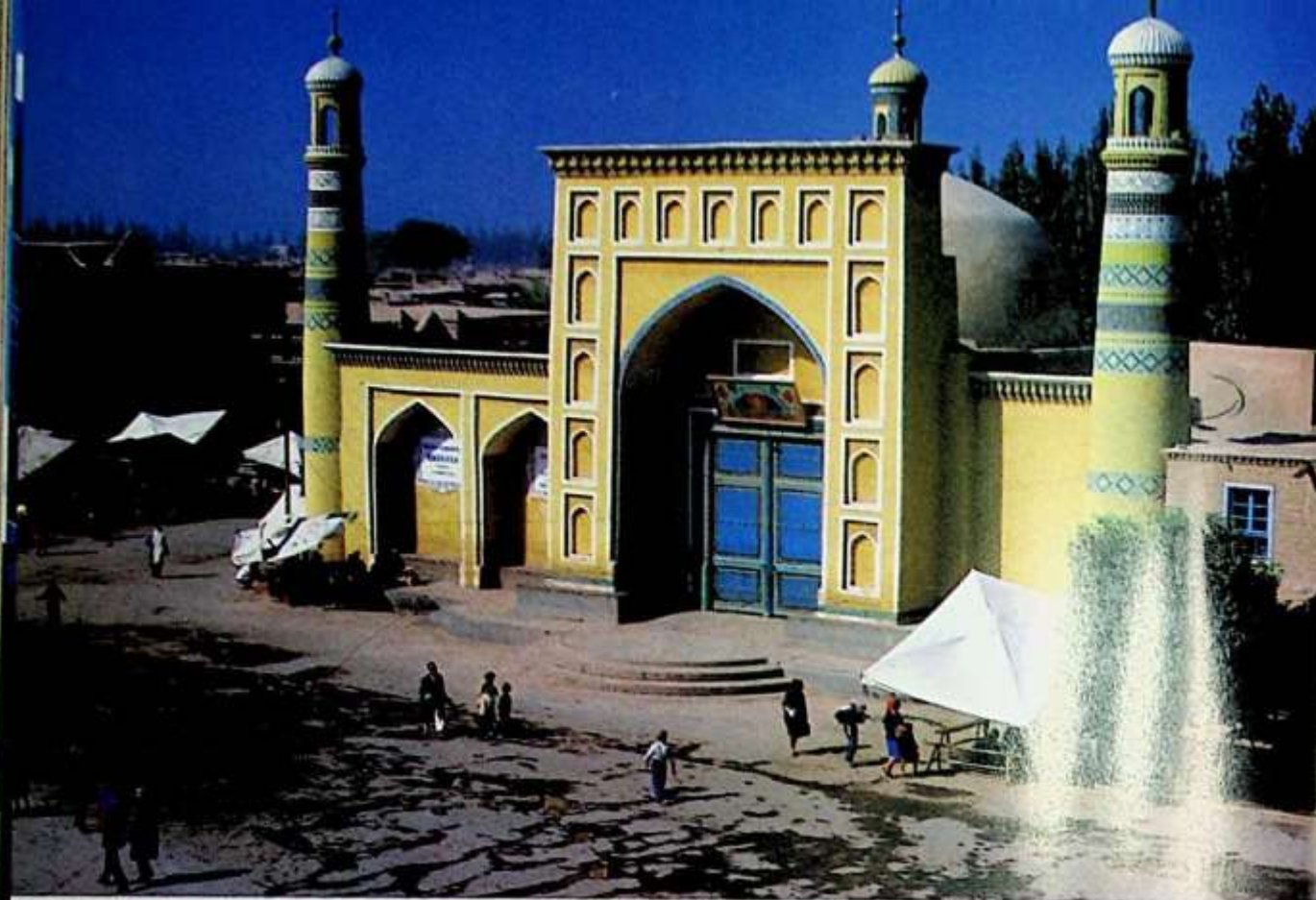
Honeydew melons of Jiashi county.



(本版照片除署名外, 均为宋士敬摄)

The Abakh Hoja Tomb.





The Aidkah Mosque.

Kashi



Local Silk.

This ancient city is famous for pottery products.



A cap market. Lou Wanghao

Poems and Drawings on a Tour in the Western Regions



现代航空 (现代)

YE QIANYU

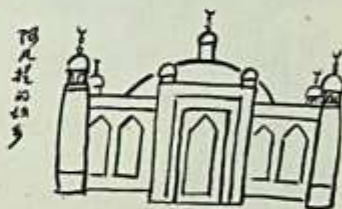


An Exciting Trip

Flying in the sky 10,000 meters high,
We are on a 6,000-li voyage to the Western Regions.
Looking down, we see ice-bound Dabancheng,
And then pay a visit to the illusive residence of the Queen Mother of the West in the distance.

Kashi City

The city of Kashi is the native place of Xiang Fei,
On its main street looms the grand Islamic Mosque,
Donkey-drawn carts run back and forth,
Each usually carrying a whole family.
The hawking cries of kebab peddlers rise and fall in the air,
Girls vie to buy flowery kerchiefs at the bazaar.
On top of the ruined city wall stand buildings row upon row,
They present the very image of the ancient palace in Lhasa.



伊斯兰教的清真寺



Tianchi (Heavenly Lake)

There is a nip in the air in August,
Yet the Queen Mother of the West still plays Tianchi Lake,
Where the water is over her knees.
Above the sky of Urumqi exists a higher sky,
Bogda Peak is always snow-capped,
Over the luxuriant fir forests surge waves of clouds,
After a sweep of shower, drops of water remain dripping from the needles and branches.
Scattered on the green slopes are sheep and cattle.
Tourists passing the night in felt tents enjoy the sound of a flute.



天池 (Heavenly Lake)



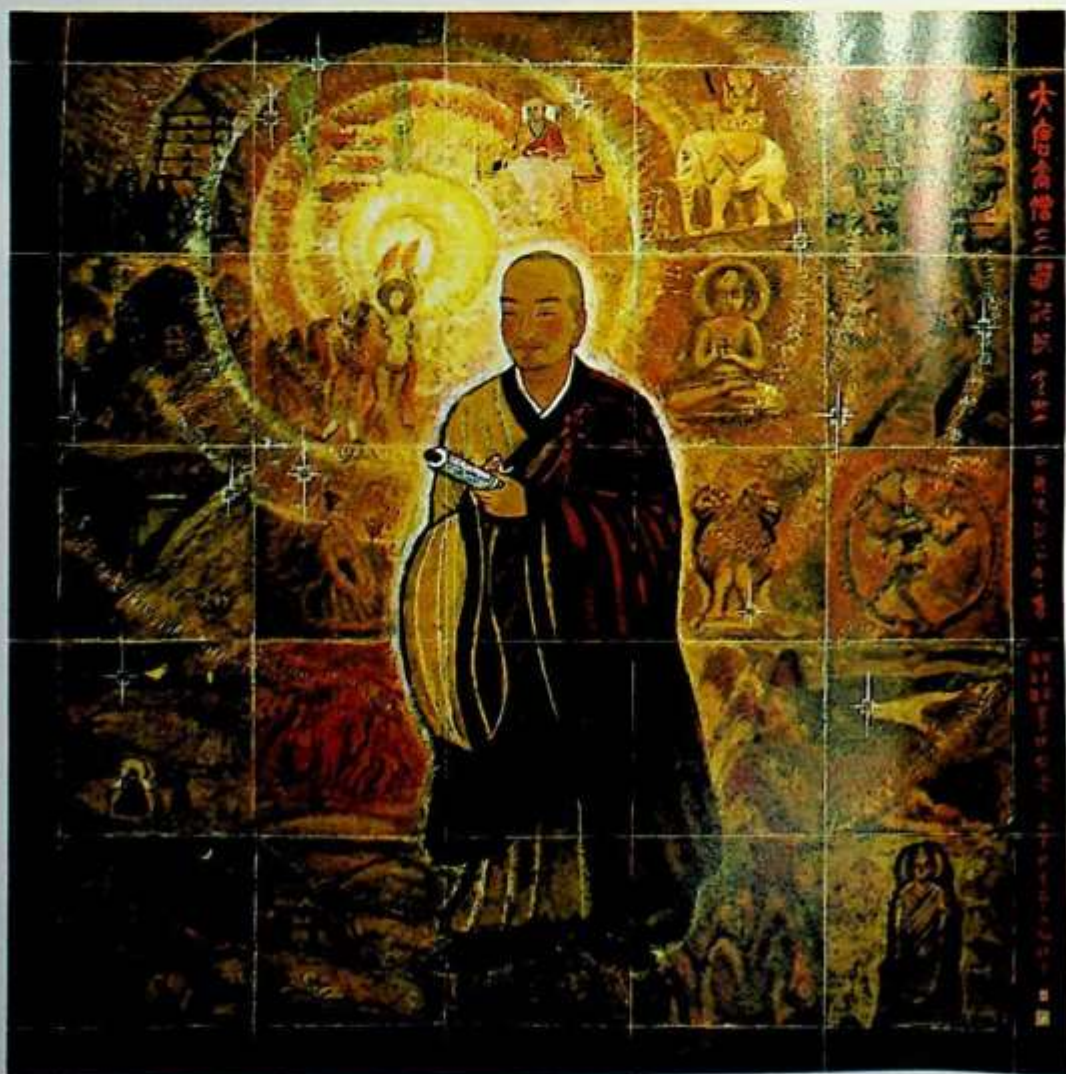
天池 朱乃正

The Heavenly Lake



紫驼夜渡交河月 朱乃正

Crossing the Jiayu River
on Camelback in the Moonlight



玄奘像 耿玉琳 赵以雄

A Portrait of Xuan Zang

西 域

画 页

The Western
Territories

the sounds of men's shouting, peddlers' hawking, singing to the accompaniment of stringed instruments, broadcast music, as well as horses neighing and carriages creaking. The bazaars' odor and sound encourage people to do their business in an active way. The flaming charcoal fires of barbecues, the steaming hot stuffed buns on sale, the bargaining between buyers and sellers, the rosy cheeks of gaily-clad young women and the faces of the old beaming with joy are symbols of a happy and vigorous life. People of every sort in the bazaars strive to reach their goals in different ways.

Bazaars are a product of the local economy, which has developed to a certain stage. Kashi's bazaars are reminder of the busy trade on the old Silk Road. During the Western Han dynasty over 2,000 years ago, a city-state called Shulei was set up at the oasis of Kashi. It was one of the then 36 kingdoms in the Western Regions. This small kingdom had only about 1,500 households with a population of less than 19,000 mainly engaged in agriculture with some animal husbandry, industry and commerce. Hence the emergence of the primitive bazaars. In 138 B. C., when Zhang Qian was sent as an envoy to the Western Regions, some barriers to long-distance trade were removed, and the Silk Road opened. Kashi became a transport hub for the central section of the road. To the west it was linked to Central Asia, Western Asia and Europe, and to the east it was linked with the Western Regions and the hinterland of China. It was the westernmost gate of the country. Traveling traders, diplomatic envoys, soldiers, monks and priests stopped there to rest from their journeys, replenish provisions, get fresh mounts, repair their gear, gather information, organize new trade caravans, etc. The growing east-west communications led to the



existence of the bazaars, and in turn the bazaars served to increase the exchanges between east and west.

Today China has entered a new stage of socialist construction -- making the domestic economy more flexible and opening to the outside world. Kashi has become an open city in the western region. It is only a distribution center of specialties from southern Xinjiang, but also a center for China's trade with the countries of Central Asia and the Soviet Union. From Kashi there are many new air and land routes. The local economy, collective economy and individual economy are developing rapidly. Urban construction is forging ahead, and bringing changes day after day. This has filled the bazaars with fresh vigor.

For the convenience of buyers and sellers, there are specialized bazaars such as those selling caps, ready-made garments, shoes and boots, articles of daily use, homespun cloth, musical instruments, fruits, livestock, vegetables, second-hand goods, pettery items, bronze ware and hand-ware, and earrings, rings and other ornaments.

The largest bazaar is called Aidkah. Located at the center

of Kashi, it is named after the Aidkah Mosque. The Aidkah Bazaar blends the characteristics of modern life and of medieval times: high buildings, low booths and simple stores, street gardens, public squares, automobiles, donkeys, young people in Western-style clothes, middle-aged and old women in handwoven clothes and with veils covering their faces. During the day, this bazaar is the largest and most lively trading center. At night, singing and music resound through the streets. During the Muslim festivals of Corban and Fast-Breaking, Aidkah turns into a place seething with swarms of people -- male and female, old and young -- dancing and singing in celebration. The joyous activities last several days and nights. In some ways the Aidkah Bazaar is a symbol of Kashi, an epitome of this developing ancient city in the western region. People who come to Kashi never forget this wonderful experience.

Photos by Liang Feng and Bi Yading

Kashi's Bazaars

LIU YONGNENG



On a trip to Xinjiang, one should visit its southern region; in the southern region, one should see Kashi; in Kashi, a tour of the bazaars is a must. These bazaars give tourists a taste of the old trade system along the Silk Road, and they open their arms to welcome visitors from all directions.

Kashi (formerly known as Kashgar) was a hub of transportation in the days of the old Silk Road, a cultural center of the Uygur nationality in ancient times, a place of strategic importance in the westernmost border area, and a city famous for its historical interest and contacts with other countries. Today its population includes many different nationalities. It is a commercial center east of the

Congling Mountains, with great varieties of goods on sale and a high concentration of merchants. It also ranks among the few large cities in Central Asia. Since the Qing dynasty, it has become even better known than Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang, especially in the Islamic world. When one visits Xinjiang, the trip is incomplete without a visit to the southern part of the region. Likewise, a visit to the southern region of Xinjiang is incomplete without a visit to Kashi. And when in Kashi, a tour of its bazaars is a must.

In the southern region, the vast expanse of the Gobi Desert, the setting sun over the river, and the Pamirs all provide magnificent views. The clouds of wind-blown sand, the green oases, the mountains, rivers, and the spirit of the hard-working people of the borderland always make a

deep impression on visitors. In Kashi, the atmosphere is a blend of unique local customs recalling the past as well as the present, the beautiful music of the Uygurs, the bright and enchanting architecture of the frontier city, the street crowds, the hawking of the peddlers, and the bustling activities of the bazaars. It stimulates the feelings and leaves an aftertaste. If you are a scholar engaged in studying the Silk Road or a person just beginning such a study, you might take your impressions of Kashi as a starting point to the exploration and analysis of the old Silk Road.

Kashi's bazaars are international markets linking east and west, as well as inland China and the outside world. Once you enter them, you will feel as if getting into a grand garden. Bazaars are part of Kashi's old traditions, and the locals like them very much. For visitors they provide a window through which one can observe, experience and understand Kashi.

People rush to the bazaars with various purposes of their own. Some intend to buy things, some to sell local specialties, some to transport foreign goods, some on a special trip to the Islamic mosque to pray for good fortune. Some sing there for a living, and some seek nothing but fun. People who frequent the bazaars come from all directions; they are of various nationalities and from different walks of life. They include men and women, old and young, Chinese and foreign. Some come on horseback, some in sedan chairs, some ride camels or motorcycles, and some walk on bare feet. They come from several kilometers away, dozens of kilometers, and even hundreds of kilometers.

With many varieties of goods and people, business at the bazaars is always brisk. The air is filled with the odor of human perspiration, the smell of animals, dust, and the fragrance of foods and goods of all kind. The bazaars ring with

Rugs, known as palas or zilqa in the ancient Xinjiang area, are now commonly Gelem by Uygurs.

Long, long ago, according to an old Uygur legend, on the bank of Yurungkax River of the Hotan area lived an old Uygur man named Nahxiwan. He worked hard all his life and invented a method of making rugs using cotton and wool yarn. Leaving the method with the Hotan people, he himself sat down on a small carpet and flew to the place where the sun rises. The local people called him the father of rugs.

Inheriting his craftsmanship, Abedulla, an apprentice of Nahxiwan, set up a carpet workshop near the Yurungkax River. Seeing that the business could be very profitable, Ruzixilta, a tricky and unscrupulous man, set up another workshop and asked Abedulla to work for him. Abedulla refused, and was kidnapped by Ruzixilta to weave for him. He said he would rather die than work for Ruzixilta. Cutting off his own



Uygur Gelem Rugs

ZHANG HENGDE

fingers, he seized an opportunity and fled.

Ruzixilta was very angry. He captured Gelem, Abedulla's wife and bound her with an iron chain, threatening that if she refused to work for him, he would not unlock the chain until she died. Gelem didn't yield to him, and suffered greatly before she died.

It was said that the spirit of Gelem went immediately to see Nahxiwan, telling him how greatly she and her husband had suffered. Nahxiwan summoned wind and fire to blow down Ruzixilta's carpet work-

shop and burn his manor. He captured the vicious man, raised him high in the sky and then threw him into the Yurungkax River. People in Hotan were overjoyed, and shouted toward the sky the names of Nahxiwan and Gelem to pay their respects to them. Since then the local people have called carpets Gelem. They weave a rug design with a pattern of river torrents to commemorate Nahxiwan.

Today the Hotan area is still the most famous home of Xinjiang rugs, hence the name -- Hotan rug. Almost every household there weaves rugs. They can be seen everywhere in their houses: on the floors and beds, on the walls, and even on saddles and chairs. Rugs with distinctive Uygur designs in beautiful colors are sold everywhere, and enjoy a high reputation for their durability. It is said that rugs dozens of years old still retain their bright colors and the nap is still springy. No wonder Hotan rugs are regarded as a treasure of the Silk Road.

walked toward us. He was not angry, but his facial expression was serious. We worried that we had violated nationality policies or infringed upon the interests of the local people. Some even wanted to pay for what they had eaten. We were astounded to see the old man climb up a tree and shake a big branch with all his strength. The ripe apricots rained down. Then he gestured to us, "Eat these, please, picking up several ones to show us, he said." The darker, glossy ones are fresh and edible, while the lighter, grayish ones are stale because they fell several days ago. Don't eat them." We were very grateful to him for his kindness. Some produced money from a pocket, but the driver stopped him right away, saying in his poor Han Chinese, "It isn't respectable for the Uygurs to sell apricots which have fallen under trees."

As we were going to eat more, the driver urged us to get in the car. At this juncture, the old man rushed up with colorful things in his hands to return them to us. These were gifts we had left behind the tree for him to show our thanks. We waved goodbye. Maybe the driver realized we were reluctant to part, for he apologized, "It's the old man who asked me to carry you away."

His words confused us. Was the old man so narrow-minded and afraid that we would eat too much? If so, why did he climb up the tree and shake down the fruit for us? Finally the driver said, "There are still plenty of apricots ahead. You'll have loose bowels if you eat too many of them at one time." Hearing this, we could not help turning around to watch the old man. He stood on the rippling-green-water-like lawn, his silvery beard and red waistband floating in the wind, and gradually faded from our eyesight.

We turned to look forward to see that the car was running into the depths of the endless Gobi Desert. Just as the driver had said, on the rest of our Journey we got plenty of apricots to satisfy our hunger and quench our thirst.

The experience of this time will always live in my memory. During the season when apricots ripen every year, I invariably think of the silvery-bearded old man. Sometimes I feel sorry that I did not ask his name, and that he did not ask mine. However, he knows we were people of Han nationality, and we know he was an old Uygur.

photo by Bi Yading

Memories of the Apricot Season

Chang Zheng

I hold in my hand an exquisite wicker basket filled with various varieties of apricots, a present from a friend coming to Urumqi by airplane. As a rule, I have received this kind of gift every year since I left Kashi. There is a saying in inland areas, "I'd rather have one bite of a fresh peach than eat a whole basket of stale apricots." But why does my friend bring this gift from 1,500 kilometers away? Only those who have experienced life in Kashi can understand that the apricots in southern Xinjiang are as delicious as lichee, the favorite fruit of Yang Gui Fei, the well-known imperial concubine of Emperor Ming Huang of the Tang dynasty.

Apricots usually ripen from the end of May right up to early August. The variety which ripens first is called Maoxing (apricot with villus). Small in size, it tastes both sour and sweet. Next comes Hongxing (red apricot), which is half red and half yellow, and very fine in outward appearance. It tastes a bit sweet but mainly sour, and is considered a variety that really quenches thirst. Closely following it is Guangxing (bright apricot). Golden in color, shiny as pearl, looking a bit like a plum, its pulp is thick and crisp and tastes very good. When a great quantity of red apricots and bright apricots are on sale, the Baixing (white apricot) comes on the market. Milky in color, large, oblong, and with less fiber, it is soft and juicy, something like a grape—seemingly better than red or bright apricots. Finally comes Youxing (oily apricot). Oblate, big, as if covered with oil, its sugar content is too high for many people.

It was hot summer in 1955, and we were on our way to Xinjiang to help with construction there. After the car got over the Tianshan Mountains, the vast Gobi Desert came in sight. No trees, no wind. Everything we saw was dry, everything seemed to be reaching the melting point. Even the gravel beside the road had turned jet black under the scorching sun. We would immediately draw back our elbows when they accidentally touched the steel door of the car. Everyone drank quantities of water from our carrier bottle, but not a single drop of sweat was seen on any face—the human body had simply become a dry sponge.

We were already out of water by early afternoon. The hot, suffocating air made us dizzy, but thirst



made it difficult to fall asleep. At the time, even a slight draft of air caressing our hair or a green leaf coming into sight would really excite us. After some time, when the car climbed over a ridge, the temperature dropped several degrees, and we were happy to find green trees ahead. Then the car made sharp turn and went over a spur, and stopped at a spot where a stream ran nearby. This was a small village of about five households surrounded by green trees, among which were several apricot trees. In the center of the village was a pond. Getting out of the car, we found ourselves in what seemed a paradise.

"Go and have a wash. There are apricots here," exclaimed the driver.

That's true. Spreading on the lawn under the shady trees was a layer of yellowish egg-sized apricots. Although very thirsty, none of us dared to touch a single one. We had been given lectures nationality policies and mass discipline before we set out. But the driver did not care about that. Having finished washing, he went straight to the fallen fruit to choose the best ones to eat. This sight made our mouths water. Then we followed him (he is of Uygur nationality) and began eating. The apricots were as juicy as grapes and soon quenched our thirst. We had never before eaten such tasty apricots.

Now a door opened with a squeak. An old Uygur man in homespun white clothes with a red waistband

在那遥远的地方

In a Faraway Region



Sheep Lies a Man Who Misses You." He was deeply excited by it, and created the song "In a Faraway Region" using the same tune.

Returning from Qinghai, he developed a strong desire to go to Xinjiang to study its rich folk music. His opportunity came in 1949, when he joined General Wang Zhen's troops and came to Xinjiang. Since then he has forged indissoluble bonds with the people and music of Xinjiang, and created and revised several hundred songs. Recently the Gansu People's Publishing House issued the book *A Collection of Luobin's Songs* with musical notations and a preface by Zhao Feng. *In a Faraway Region*, another collection of his songs with staves and piano music, was published by the Xinjiang People's Publishing House in both Chinese and English. The two collections of 130 songs include some very familiar to the Chinese people, such as *Dabancheng*, *In a Faraway Region*, *Alnihan*, *Mahila* and *A Half Moon Is Rising*.

Today Wang Luobin is a composer with the Xinjiang Military Area Song and Dance Ensemble. He has spent almost his whole artistic career in the areas of the Silk Road. He cherishes special feelings for the music of major sections of the road, and has a deep understanding of its characte-

ristics. "Xinjiang folk songs" he says, "have beautiful melodies and always accompany folk dances, providing people with artistic enjoyment".

Xinjiang folk songs are really a great treasure of Chinese music. Following the extensive development of contacts between China and the Western world, Silk Road music has become a special theme studied by experts of many countries. Since the Silk Road opened over 2,000 years ago, Xinjiang was a site where Chinese and Western cultures mingled. Experts want to know how Xinjiang absorbed both Chinese and foreign music to enrich and develop its own unique folk music. Wang Luobin agrees with many Chinese and foreign scholars who consider that Xinjiang music has a certain representativeness in a great part of the globe.

As to why he published his songs in a foreign language, Wang explains that it is to enable Xinjiang music to spread widely in different places of the world, and to promote international cultural exchange and academic studies of Silk Road music. Another of his Chinese-English collections of Xinjiang folk songs, *Love Songs of the Silk Road*, will be published in the near future.

Xinjiang Folk Songs Paul Robeson

Once Sang

YU YANG

At the mention of Xinjiang many Chinese who are over fifty, abroad or at home, will instantly recall ("Dabancheng" or "Horse - Drawn Carriage man") and "In a Faraway Region," two Xinjiang folk songs that were once very popular. The words of the first song went:

The stone roads of Dabancheng are hard and flat,
Its watermelons are big and sweet.

Maidns there wear long braids and have beautiful eyes ... The second song included these lines:

In a faraway region,
There lives a good maiden.
Men passing by her yurt,
Turn their heads and don't wish to leave.

In the early 1940s, these beautiful songs were sung all over China. They were popularized by Zhao Feng, a musician, and the singer Zhao Qihai in the Chongqing area of central China's Sichuan province, and caused a great sensation among young intellectuals. Later the musicians Zhao Feng, Guang Weiran and Li Ling organized an overseas Chinese wartime service troupe in Southeast Asia to support the resistance against the Japanese invasion. They brought the two songs to rangoon, Mandalay, Singapore and Hongkong. Overseas Chinese here sang the songs to express their feelings for the motherland.

Paul Robeson, the famous

black progressive singer and actor from the U.S., became very fond of these songs, and performed them many times in both English and Chinese in the U.S. and the Soviet Union. The songs won the same warm applause from audiences as the American and British songs he sang. The two Xinjiang folk songs spread throughout the world and were appreciated by many foreign singers. Taking them as representative works of Oriental music, the Paris Conservatory of Music added them to its vocal music teaching repertoire.

But the man who first brought the songs out of Xinjiang in the 1940s was Wang Luobin. Now 70, he still devotes himself to the study of Xinjiang folk music. In 1938, a year after his graduation from Biejing Teachers University, Wang worked in an opera troupe in Lanzhou, Gansu province. He got to know some of the Uygurs who were transporting supplies for the anti-Japanese war, and heard a Uygur truck driver sing the song "Horse - Drawn Carriage Man." He was fascinated with its distinctive tune and humorous words. He took notes while the driver was singing and revised it the same night.

In 1940, when Wang Luobin went to the Qinghai grasslands to collect folk songs of the Tibetan and Kazak nationalities, he heard a Kazak folk song "With a Flock of

come to a stop, people at once converge around them with cheers and laughters. Everyone is wreathed in smiles.

After the caravans arrive, there is a steady flow of Pakistani local products such as piecegoods, commercial ware, clothing, scarfs, dried fruit, ornaments and so on to the markets of Kashi. Many things are transhipped from Kashi to other places. In addition, local products, industrial goods from southern Xinjiang, or aid materials for Pakistan are collected and shipped from Kashi. As an international market along the Silk Road, Kashi has become brisker and its bazaars more flourishing with a variety of goods in rich and colorful patterns. The recent decision of the two countries to open the highway connecting them to third countries has significant implications for enlarging China's trade, increasing the friendship and strengthening her contacts with other countries. Because of this, hundreds of varieties of general merchandise are now to be seen in Kashi's bazaars. In addition to goods from other parts of China, there are many things shipped by colorful caravans from India, Pakistan, Central Asia or the Islamic countries of western Asia. These articles are warmly welcomed by Xinjiang's Muslim people. Kashi people's lives have become more colorful, and the ancient Silk Road is once again a source of prosperity.

photo by Liang Feng

里加湖览临高多此地风光
 殊心奇景与舞形空迎贵客来
 策马之行新篇一洒浓墨
 看尔亦未忘笔挂羊头更在
 今晨渡抱子节运助其流
 如影 郭沫若诗

Guo Moruo's poem 'A Visit to Heavenly Lake' in Zhu Naizheng's brushwork.

登高看古郡
 残垣迷乱径
 访古易故城
 灯火照归途

A poem by Shen Peng on his visit to the ancient town of Gaochang:
 At dusk I look for a tranquil spot.
 Riding a car, I climb to the old city.
 Broken walls confuse the paths.
 Lights are on when I return.

Pakistan's colorful caravans move to an exotic music, as in a wedding procession.

Whenever they hear the exotic music and the sound of truck horns from a distance in Seven - Li Bridge, south of Kashi city, the people realize that another Pakistani trade caravan has arrived and streamed out into the streets. The overjoyed children shout and jump about. Old men smile and stroke their beards. With feelings of great joy, everyone welcomes those foreign traders from far away.

Located on the west side of the Pamirs, Pakistan is a good neighbor of China. Since ancient times the two countries have a history of friendly contacts. They helped supply each other's needs through the channel of the old Silk Road. Especially in cultural and economic exchanges, both of them gained tremendous benefits. After the China - Pakistan Highway was constructed across the Pamirs, the "roof of the world" turned into a thoroughfare and modern motorcades replaced ancient camel caravans. It is more convenient than the old Silk Road. Caravans of the two countries come and go endlessly year round. In every variety and quantity of the goods, the scale of exchange greatly exceeds that of a few years ago.

The fleets of Pakistani



Colorful Caravans to Kashi

Li Kai

traveling traders generally include from several dozen to one hundred heavy-duty caravans. A long line of fully loaded trucks are led by a jeep. All the vehicles are evenly spaced and proceed at the same speed. They drive along and stop together, maintaining the same order behind the jeep. The caravans stretch in a long line for one to two kilometers, and are quite magnificent.

Of special interest is the appearance of the trucks, which are much different from those made in China. Chinese trucks are painted in plain colors without any decoration. But those made in Pakistan have unique decorations. They are as

gay and gaudy as a bride dressing and making up for her wedding. From the front to the back, from one side to the other of the car body, and even on the roof, the trucks are painted with different patterns such as tigers, lions, elephants, camels, flowers and human figures. Others carry a variety of colorful designs present sharp contrasts, or are in alternating red and green. These trade caravans are the same as those described in the Indian film "Caravan", and the Pakistani music of pipes and drums which accompany them are also similar. The caravans are well-received by people in Kashi and elsewhere. When they



by sitting Buddhas. They took the form of a sitting Buddha inside a pagoda, and then finally evolved into thousand-Buddha portraits painted on the vaulted ceiling of the grottoes.

On the side walls of the main chamber in Qiuci-style grottoes and on the four walls of square grottoes are murals of Buddha's life stories. The former takes the form of a large portrait of Buddha at the center, sitting or standing, surrounded by Bodhisattvas, Devas, Bhikshas, Brahman, etc; the latter depicts the various periods of Buddha's life; Sakyamuni riding an elephant to veincarnation, born from under the ribs; going out of the royal city at midnight; subduing demons; and turning the wheel of law in Deer Park, etc.

In addition, there are also many paintings depicting scenes such as Sakyamuni and Maitreya expounding sutras, Bodhisattva and Bhiksha sitting in meditation, Sovereign Sakra listening to the expounding of sutras, celestial musicians and dancers, and Buddhist worshippers.

The murals are mature in composition and painting technique. Although they have lasted a thousand years, viewers can still see the contents. Some paintings use bold and vigorous lines to draw the outline, and then colors are applied. They have a fine perspective, giving a three-dimensional effect. Some of the lines look like bent iron wires,

with the convex-concave methods popular in the Xinjiang area. The lines are smooth; combining bold and thin lines, evidently in "water-shield" style. From these murals people can enjoy some of the great art created by many nationalities in ancient China.

The murals in the grottoes had the aim of spreading Buddhism. But the artists, through observation of social realities, secularized the contents skillfully. For instance, the Buddhas have expressions of grace and dignity, and are filled with human touches. The celestial musicians and dancers are in various postures, having a rich flavor of life. The monkeys, deer, goats and peacocks are lifelike and appealing. There are also armored warriors on horseback, Qiuci worshippers in local-style overcoats and boots, laborers holding mattocks, farmers plowing with oxen, pottery craftsmen, and undertakers carrying corpses shoulder-high in funeral processions. All this shows that the artists were familiar with the social life of the time.

One thing worth mentioning is that there are many musical and dance performances depicted in the murals. Cave No. 38 is known as "Musical Cave." The murals there show a dozen kinds of musical instruments, such as flute, harp, pipa and ranxian (the latter two are plucked string instruments.) In the painting Princely Entertainment, the court ladies are in graceful

dancing postures. In another painting, Listening to the Exposition of Sutras, the disciples of the Bodhisattva twist their bodies in graceful dancing gestures. This shows that since ancient times Xinjiang has been the home of song and dance.

The Kizil Thousand-Buddha Grottoes are not only a historical artistic sites, they also provide precious evidence for research on local music, dance, clothing and ornaments, printing and dyeing, as well as on the history and nationalities of Xinjiang. It is the crystallation of creativity and wisdom of these ancient people, a treasurehouse of ancient art in the Western Regions. Tourists can climb the cliffs, sometimes using both hands and feet on steep stone paths, to enjoy the wonderful grotto arts, benefiting both in body and mind, and experiencing a unique wonder of Xinjiang.

Painting by Zhang Ting

Treasures of the Kizil Thousand-Buddha Caves



On the vast and beautiful land of Xunjiang there are many ancient treasures of art. Among the most outstanding are the Thousand Buddha Caves dotted along the Old Silk Road. Traveling westward from Urumqi along the middle route of the Silk Road at the southern foot of the Tianshan Mountains to Kuqa and the Baicheng area, one can see many man-made stone caves on the cliffs. These are the famous Qiuci grottoes, of which the Kizil Thousand-Buddha Caves rank first in terms of number of caves, and size and richness of murals.

Located on the cliffs of the Qoltak Mountain seven kilometers southwest of Kizil town in Baicheng county, the Kizil Thousand-Buddha Grottoes have 236 caves. The Muzat River flows in front of the caves. A limpid spring gushes from among the caves, producing a small oasis. The reddish mountain, white river, blue spring and green field make a very pleasant scene. When summer comes, flowers of all sorts bloom in a riot of colors. In autumn, rich fruits hang on the tree branches. What a treasureland in the wilderness!

The Kizil grottoes are the most ancient Buddhist caves in China. Starting in the 3rd century, the carving of the grottoes lasted several hundred years. They were deserted in the 14th century. Of the 236 caves, most are in Qiuci style, with wide entrances and a central column dividing the cave into two chambers,

front (main) and rear. Most of the front chambers have longitudinal vaulted ceilings. On both sides of the central column are paved paths. One may walk along the path around the central column clockwise, the ritual route of Buddhist worshippers. Generally, on the front wall of the main chamber is a statue or a color portrait of Sakyamuni (Gautama Buddha, the founder of Buddhism), and on the side walls are murals depicting his life story, and how he attained Buddhahood through self-cultivation. The rear chamber has murals describing Sakyamuni's nirvana, his disciples wailing in mourning, the cremation of his body, division of his relics, and construction of his stupa (burial tower). Narrow and dark, the rear chamber has a mystical atmosphere. The ancient artists designed the layout this way to highlight the main subject and strengthen the artistic effect. In addition to Qiuci-style caves, there are also some square caves with vaulted ceilings.

Most of the sculptures in the Kizil grottoes are painted clay sculptures, though there are also some wooden and stone ones. Unfortunately, all the statues are damaged. In the rear chamber of a cave renovated in 1973, one can see three fragmentary statues. One is a reclining Buddha, the other two are standing Buddhas. The head of the reclining Buddha is broken, and the two standing ones are whole only below the waist. Nevertheless, from

these fragmented statues one can see the features of Qiuci figure sculpture: strong, muscular and graceful. The robes stick to the body, as if dampened. Even the folds of the cloth are vividly sculptured.

The artistic gems of the Kizil grottoes are the exquisite murals, mostly depicting Buddhist stories of Jataka; Sakyamuni's ascetic practices before he attained nirvana, Buddha's magic power, believers' worship, and so on.

At the center of the vaulted ceiling of the front chamber is painted a star atlas. Around it are picture stories of Jataka in rhombus-shaped frames linked by mountain designs depicting how Sakyamuni in his previous incarnation sacrificed himself to save others, practiced benevolent deeds and abstained from evil. The Pigeon King burns himself to attain nirvana; Renfa Dragon rescues the Venomous Dragon; Elephant King sacrifices himself to help the poor; Bear King donates food to save the starving; Tortoise ferries people on its back; Monkey king sacrifices himself to save his subjects; King Sivi cuts his own flesh to trade for the life of a pigeon; a single-horned beast carries a girl to her home city; Prince Sattva offers himself as food to save a hungry tiger....

These picture stories have vivid, distinctive features, and constitute a school of their own in Buddhist art. Later, the story pictures were simplified, and gradually replaced



City on the Silk Road

ZI MIN

thought of killing his master. Seeing that he was not pious, Xuan Zang sent him back to Guazhou.

After the Southern Song dynasty, sea navigation developed rapidly, and gradually replaced land transport. Yet the Silk Road remained an international route. In the Mongol-dominated Yuan dynasty, Jiuquan was an important traffic hub between the capital at Dadu (Beijing) and other Khanates, so the Silk Road again flourished. The court sent important officials to be stationed there. Following this second Flourishing of the Silk Road, Jiuquan became a place inhabited by various nationalities. The Han Chinese, Mongolian and Huihe lived in harmony, together with people from other countries such as Persia, Dashi and India. It was at this time Marco Polo traveled to Dadu via Jiuquan. In 1372, the Ming dynasty Emperor Tai Zu sent troops headed by General Feng Sheng and two aides, Chen De and Fu Youde, to march along three routes toward Jiuquan and Guazhou. They built the Jiayuguan Pass, now the western end of the Great Wall, not far from Jiuquan. Then the Yangguan and Yumen passes became mere historical terms. Government delegations, merchants and monks from Persia, Dashi, India and Afghanistan all passed through Jiayuguan Pass to reach inland China. Some government delegations were composed of over 100 members, and all were received by officials stationed in Jiuquan. The embassies, hotels and postal stations mushroomed, bringing prosperity to the city. From that time on, another route, from Jiayuguan, crossing Xingxing Gulley, to Hami, Urumqi and Yili, replaced the Old Silk Road.

There are many historical sites in Jiuquan. Suoyang Fort in the middle reaches of the Shule River is strategically located and difficult of access. The novel Xue Rengui's Expedition to the West has a chapter entitled "Besieging Suoyang Fort." The military barricades mentioned in the book such as "Hanjiang Barricade," "Zoulong Barricade," "Kafangzi," "Zhuque Barricade" and "Jizhao Mountain" are all scattered around Suoyang Fort. In the Nanshan Mountain there is a stone castle built on a 50-meter high ridge, said to be built by Xue Rengui. Others say it was built by Fan Lihua. According to archaeologists, it was built during the Eastern Han and Jin dynasties, a military outpost of the Qiang nationality people. Fifty kilometers north of Jiuquan there is a place called Prince Village (now in Jinta county), where Juqu Mujian, son of King Juqu Mengxun of the Liang Kingdom, lived as a herdsman. In 401, Juqu Mengxun proclaimed himself Duke of

Zhangye. Later, he became ruler of the Liang Kingdom, with Zhangye as his capital. One day, on an inspection tour to Jiashan, north of Jiuquan, he saw the flourishing vegetation, vast land and mild climate, and decided to give this place to his son, thus the name.

Since ancient times the area around Jiuquan has been home at various times to the Da Roushi, Xiongnu, Huihe, Tubo, Qiang, Xianbei and Mongolian people. Now it is inhabited by a dozen nationalities, including Han, Mongolian, Hui, Uygur, Tibetan and Kazak. The Uygur nationality is worth mentioning. In 840, the strong Huihe Khanate was overthrown, most of its people moving westward. A branch emigrated to Xizhou (Turpan), called Xizhou Huihe. Another branch moved to the Hexi Corridor, called Ganzhou Huihe. The former were Muslims, while the latter were Buddhists, and they became known as the Uygur nationality. In Jiuquan prefecture there are Yugur autonomous counties and townships. The people have kept many customs of ancient Huihe in their wedding and funeral rites, and their language has many ancient words. These have aroused the attention of many scholars and specialists.

The luminous jade cups from Jiuquan, exquisitely carved and of superb workmanship, are considered rare for their beautiful shape and natural veins. Many ancient poems have praised this traditional handicraft item. They now come in many varieties. Entering the Jiuquan Arts and Crafts Factory, one can see luminous jade cups in blackish green, emerald green, yellowish green and milky white. The many different products are enchanting.

The fruits and melons of Jiuquan are also famous. A kind of apricot with a thin skin and fleshy pulp is called the Li Guang apricot. A legend is attached to the name. In ancient times a general named Li Guangli led troops to conquer Dawan. On the way, at Hexi, they lost their way on the Gobi desert and had no drinking water. The Queen Mother of the West sent two fairies down to become an apricot orchard, and the soldiers were saved. So the apricot is named the Li Guang apricot. In recent years canned apricots have come into great demand. All tourists to Jiuquan want to buy some to bring home as gifts for friends and relatives.

The Jiuquan area also produces a melon called kekeqi, as sweet as honey and as crisp as pears, with a high sugar content. The great Qing dynasty (1644-1911) scholar Ji Xiaolan was once exiled to Xinjiang for years. He became familiar with the local customs and lifestyles. In a book he described this melon, saying that since Hami melons are too far away from the capital at Beijing, kekeqi melons were sent to the emperor as tribute under the name of Hami melons.

Jiuquan is a beautiful city. The local inhabitants have kept their fine tradition of sincerity and hospitality. Tourists from China and abroad come here in streams. They enjoy the scenery of "Wine Springs" and gasp in admiration at the historical sites and hospitable people.

Photos by Guo Fengbin and Luo Xiaoyun



Like a jewel set with Huashan to the east, the Qilian Mountains to the south, Yi Wu to the west, and Gobi to the north.



Jiuquan, meaning "Wine Springs" in Chinese, is a city filled with the fragrance of wine. The name itself is romantic and pleasing. For centuries it has been praised by scholars and poets. Li Bai, the famous Tang dynasty poet, once wrote, "If Heaven didn't like wine, there wouldn't be a Star of Wine in the sky; if Earth didn't like wine, there wouldn't be Wine Spring on the ground" Du Fu, another Tang poet, had this to say of it, "The wine cart on the street makes me droll, how I wished to emigrate to Jiuquan."

In explaining the origin of the city's name, a saying of Ying Shao is quoted in the "Geography Chapter" of the History of the Han Dynasty: "A golden spring gushes from the city with water tasting like wine, thus the name." But the local inhabitants prefer this legend: Huo Qubing, a general of the Western Han dynasty, defeated the invading Xiongnu. The Emperor Wu Di sent an envoy with a jar of wine to reward him. Huo thought he should not drink it himself, so he poured the wine into the spring so as to share it with all his soldiers. With this came the name Jiuquan.

In the center of the city there is a magnificent three-story tower with upturned eaves built on a terrace, called Drum Tower. On four sides of the terrace are four arched doors linking four thoroughfares. Above each door there is a plaque with an inscription. The four of them read, "Huashan Mountain to the East," "Qilian Mountains to the South," "Yi Wu to the West," and "Gobi to the North." From these inscriptions one can see the geographical importance of the city.

Jiuquan is an ancient city with a long history. In the second year of the Yuanshou Reign of Emperor Wu Di (121 B. C.) Jiuquan prefecture was formally set up. Military barricades were built between Jiuquan and Yumen, together with two passes, the Yumen Pass and Yangguan pass. After Zhang Qian finished his mission to the Western Regions, Jiuquan was not only a militarily important city, but also acted as a traffic hub along the Silk Road. Merchants, envoys and monks, riding horses and camels from the capital at Chang'an, came to Jiuquan carrying silks, porcelains, medicines and handicrafts, then went from there to Dunhuang. One route is to turn south, go out Yangguan Pass to Loulan along the northern foot of the Kunlun Mountains, to Yutian, crossing the Congling



Jiuquan, a Once - Important

Mountains, then to Anxi, Tiaozi and Daqin. Another route is to turn northwest, go out Yumen Pass, to Cheshi, Qiuci, Shule, crossing the Congling Mountains, to Dawan and Kangju. When Dou Gu and Ban Chao, both envoys of the Eastern Han court, went to the Western Regions, they all made Jiuquan and Dunhuang their base camps. Pei Ju, a famous official of the Sui dynasty (581 - 618), once held official posts in the area of Zhangye and Jiuquan. Based on his experiences he wrote the three-volume Geography of the Western Regions. The book is lost, except for its preface, which recorded the different routes leading to the Western Regions, the most systematic record of the Old Silk Road. This same Pei Ju once held one of the grandest ceremonies in local history. In 581 the Sui dynasty unified the whole of China, ending the 280-year split between north and south. In 609 Emperor Yang Di made an inspection tour to Jiuquan and Dunhuang. All the 27 local regimes of the Western Regions sent envoys to pay their respects to the emperor.

Emperor Yang Di ordered a large number of young women dressed in holiday best from Zhangye and Wuwei to stand in a line which circled dozens of kilometers, to show China's prosperity. Nowadays people still remember his inspection tours to the south, but very few people know of his tour to the west.

The fantastic novel Journey to the West tells how Tang dynasty monk Xuan Zang, on his way to India to fetch Buddhist scriptures, accepts as his disciple Monkey King. The original story comes from Guazhou (present-day Anxi). In 627, Xuan Zang arrived at Guazhou, which was then under the jurisdiction of Jiuquan. Unfortunately, his horse died. The governor of Liangzhou, Li Daliang, used every means to obstruct him from going further west. He issued a circular saying, "A monk named Xuan Zang is going to the Western Regions. All the prefectures and counties should keep close watch to arrest him." From the phrase "keep close watch" one can imagine what a difficult situation he was in. The two young monks sent by Master Huiwei of Liangzhou to escort him deserted him. Li Chang, a local official of Guazhou, was a pious Buddhist believer. He did not arrest Xuan Zang, but instead let him go on his way. Xuan Zang bought a horse, but could not find a guide. A local man named Shi Pantuo volunteered to be his disciple. Xuan Zang consecrated him, gave him a Buddhist name, and let him go on the westward journey. From this man a Monkey King was invented. But actually Shi Pantuo did not accompany Xuan Zang to India. Not long after he became a Buddhist disciple, he

millions of years.

Outside of its unique appearance, Ghost Town has deposits of numerous treasures, many of them rare in the world. The first is *Dsungaropterus* fossils. It is said that hundreds of millions of years ago, there was a vast blue lake here frequented by stegosaurs, pterodactyls and many other now-extinct animals. Later crustal movements turned the area into a desert plateau. Some rare fossils have been unearthed. Several years ago, in the course of oil-prospecting, a geologist named Wei discovered an entire pterodactyl fossil, which was lately named the Wei pterodactyl and is now on display at the Natural History Museum.

A second treasure is the valuable crude oil recovered from between rock strata of the palaeozoic Era. This seldom-seen type of deposit proved turned up deep beneath today's Karamay oilfield.

The third thing of value is natural asphalt. Along the hills lie several thousand-meter-long open deposits of asphalt of the highest purity, needing almost no refining.

Fourth, decorative stones can be found everywhere in Ghost Town. The stones are a riot of color and of good quality, much valued on the international market. It is said that attentive persons can pick up gorgeous agates there.

Where there are treasures, there are excavators. Not far from the derrick I climbed stands a lofty "gate arch" which looks like the Potala Palace. From another derrick nearby comes the rumble of a motor. A group of young oilworkers received us as guests. They live a lonely but interesting life here, full of color and romance. They stay in field trailers which were transported there by trucks. Two to four persons share one room, each of which is furnished comfortably with welded iron beds, tables, stools and reading lamps. Hearing the noise of our bus, young workers in their oily

work clothes came out to welcome us. All of them were very young, hospitable and forthright. One round-faced 18-year-old girl wore a red checked blouse and a blue down jacket. She had her hair pinned on top of her head and covered with white kerchief. She joked that if she were not on duty that evening she'd really like to go with us to Karamay to buy herself a pair of fashionable leather shoes.

We heard that oil well was drilled last year and produced high-density crude oil, which has very important uses and is much valued on the world market. But to get it up from underground, one must dilute it by heat treatment — injecting 280°C vapors down into the oil layer to a depth of 400 to 500 meters and then piping the oil out. Now the oil output is on average 7 tons per day, each ton having a value of 4,300 yuan.

These young workers work steadily every day. One evening, 16-year-old Xiao Zhou, a new worker, was on duty watching the generators when his group leader Xiao Liang, 19, made a bet with him. He bet that Xiao Zhou would be frightened enough to cry when the wind whistled like a ghost at night.

"What a joke! Can an oil worker be afraid of ghosts?" Xiao Zhou thumped his chest.

The wind was force 9 that evening.

In the depths of the Ghost Town, eight or nine days out of ten are windy. Mostly it blows at night. There is a saying that a big wind blows in Xinjiang, a bigger one in Karamay, and the biggest one in Ghost Town. The fierce winds create strange noises as they make their way through the Ghost Town. Sometimes it sounds like a dog barking, a horse neighing or the roar of a tiger. Sometimes, it is like a baby wailing aloud, or a woman's wild laughter. At other times fierce winds seem to turn the town into a downtown area — noises like heavy traffic, bikes, peddler's shouts or quarreling voices seem


to mix in one's ears. Suddenly the wind changes direction and becomes stronger, darkening the sky and obscuring everything. Clouds press down with peculiar reflections. Again, the wind wails like a ghost and howls like a wolf. One is unable to get one's bearings.

At midnight, Xiao Zhou was alone in Ghost Town. He heard the wind blow harder and harder. Suddenly it sent forth bursts of unaccountable sounds, mournfully wailing from far to near. Xiao Zhou boosted his courage and held his spanner tightly in hand. But at once he remembered that for several kilometers around there was only himself. He could not help shivering from the cold. He climbed up to a small "window" to watch outside and saw nothing. The howling wind, like a girl's cry, pierced his ears. He suddenly stopped up his ears and burst into tears. He was so frightened that he hid behind an empty oil drum, and finally crawled inside it for safety.

Of course, this can only happen to a newcomer. The experienced hands say that oil devils are not afraid of the windy ghosts, and even if anybody appeared, the machines would just go on working.

After saying good-bye to those charming young workers, we left to return to Karamay. As the minibus turned on to the shiny asphalt highway, we looked back several times, and it was a long time before we calmed down. Nature presents people with this wonderful place. And it generously bestows oil and other mineral resources. In addition to what we can see today are the fervent youths and their life of stirring struggle.

The Visit to "Ghost Town"



气流在“魔鬼城”中穿、行、挤、撞，
发出种种怪声。

突然袭来的恐惧使他紧紧抱住一
个空油桶，又一下钻进这个油桶……

the terrifying,
howling, screeching
and screaming of the
fierce winds as it
made its way through

the Ghost Town so
frightened me that
I hid behind an empty
oil drum, and finally
crawling inside it for
safety.

Ling Yu

photo by Liang Feng

As soon as I arrived in Karamay, I was anxious to visit "Ghost Town." The forecast said the next day would be gloomy and cold. Nevertheless, we started off by a minibus.

Located in the Urho area northeast of the Junggar Basin, Ghost Town is 120 kilometers from Karamay. Encyclopaedias say it is made up of towering, wind-eroded rock formations which look like ruined castles or crumbling square buildings. Some geologists call it a "windy city" or "wind-ghost town." The local Mongolian and Kazak people both call it "Ghost Town" in their native languages.

Ghost Town is about 30 kilometers around. Leaving the highway, one can see what seems like a grotesque high building and with two city gates as lookout posts.

There are some real oil derricks about, and I climbed one to take in the whole area at a glance. Under a brownish sky, I could see a forest of fantastic peaks and mountains. Some were like pillars of strength supporting the sky or tremendous round towers. Some seemed like exquisite carved pavilions, alters arches and towers. Some, with clear edges and corners, were exactly like the magnificent ruins of ancient castles. Some, thick at the bottom and thin on top, look like sharp swords spearing into the sky, while others slant upwards like eagles ready to fly. What uncanny "workmanship"! Facing such wonderful scenery, I think it would be hard even for a poet or a painter of rich imagination to reproduce its lifelike essence. One thinks of the wind that has sculptured this wonderland over

her hair is braided. The body is wrapped in white cloth and felt. A blanket is stretched over the grave. After prayers are said, the dead person is lowered into the grave under the blanket and then the grave is covered with a stone slab. After one week or on the anniversary of the death, a small hut is built over the grave.

It happened that a family was holding a grave hut completion ceremony three days after our encounter with the old Tajik man. We took a bus there. The dead man was formerly the director of the county's epidemic prevention station. More than 200 people came for the ceremony, including some county government officials. The women wore white head scarves for this special occasion, but men wore their usual clothes. Among the crowd was Xiamuhan, the Sayyid (lord), the highest religious position in the county. I was told that his family has held this position for several generations. Their sons could only marry daughters of other Sayyids. All the Tajiks kiss his hand to show respect.

My friend and I were among the county officials to be invited first into the family house. The widow, in a white head scarf, stood by the door to greet guests. Everyone shook hands with her. Several people took from their

bags pieces of white silk and baked cakes to hand to family members. The atmosphere was extremely solemn. At the dinner, three baked cakes by the stove were lit, and smoke rose from them. I supposed they were for the dead.

Near noontime, women began weeping in the courtyard. Those guests inside the house filed out and started toward the mountain slope behind it. No one spoke.

The new grave hut was two meters high and four meters square. The door faced west (the direction of Mecca). Two windows of wooden strips were on either side of the door. On the each side wall was a painting in green. On the lower part was the dome of a mosque and on the upper part were trees and grass. In groups people walked slowly into the grave hut, knelt down at the head of the grave and said prayers in a deep and sorrowful tone.

We left one by one. Inside the grave hut, on top of the stone slab, were an apple and a pear, the offerings of relatives from faraway places.



Burial Customs of the Tajik People

XIN MING



A friend and I had visited a village at the foot of Afors Mountain in Taxkorgan county, and were exhausted from a whole day's walk, crossing a dozen rivers. The sun was setting on the Pamirs. We looked up a cliff and saw many round and square small huts on the slope. But when we climbed up to it no single person could be seen. It was very quiet, as if the world had gone to sleep. The setting sun dyed the mountain and the houses purple. Peeping into a hut, we saw heaps of sheep bones. On a yellow earth slope nearby were several big rocks, one like a human foot, another a knee-length boot. Someone suddenly spoke behind us, "They are sacrificial things." Turning around, we found an old Tajik man looking at us suspiciously. Hurriedly we explained why we were there. The old man smiled and told us that this was their cemetery, and the small huts sheltered graves. The round ones were called Gongbazi, and the square ones Makebula.

"Can we go in and have a look?" we asked, getting more curious.

"You may," the old man said, leading us deeper into the cemetery.

The old Tajik told us that when someone died, the family would notify all the friends and relatives immediately, sending messages on horseback for those living afar. No matter what time of day it was, even midnight, the friends and relatives must come to the house of the deceased. All the people in the village also called on the family to express their condolences.

The Tajiks' religion is the Shute branch of Islam. According to their religion, a Caliph (spiritual head) presides over funerals and weddings. He reads prayers and chooses an auspicious day for the interment. But when someone dies on Friday (the Muslim sabbath), he must be buried right away. When the date is decided, the family of the deceased is supposed to entertain guests with a dinner of sheep meat and ask people to dig the grave. The pit is rectangular. For a man, it must be at a depth above the diggers' waist; for a woman, the depth has to be above the diggers' shoulders.

On the burial day, all the villagers turn out at the cemetery. The dead body is washed. If it is a man, his head is shaved. If it is a woman,

and ornaments--rings, earrings and bronze mirrors. Whole horses, and heads of horses and sheep, have also been found in a small number of graves. The graves probably date back to the Warring States period (475 - 221 B.C.) and the Han dynasty (206 B.C. - A.D. 220). Experts believe that the ancient tombs found by the Wulabo Reservoir might belong to Gushi people, who lived in the area.

Ancient Tombs at Alagou, Southwest of Tuokexun

Moving southward from Urumqi and crossing the Tianshans, one comes to Alagou, where the southern Xinjiang railway passes. Nearby is the Tuokexun Bus Stop on Wuke Highway. Heading southward from Tuokexun and then turning west, one reaches the Yinshan ancient road (today's Gangou, or Gan ditch) on the Central Route of the Silk Road. Another stretch of graves has been discovered at the site of Dongfeng (East Wind) Factory, 10 kilometers from the outlet of the ditch following the graves found in the 1970's. Apart from that, a castle-fortress of the Tang dynasty (618 - 907) was found by the outlet of the ditch.

The tombs found by the factory lie in the Alagou Valley and stretch east and west. The water of the Alagou runs below a plateau. The earth surfaces of the tombs were covered with round and square bricks, and some were surrounded by low walls of brick. The coffin chambers were also built of brick, most in the shape of an ellipse with small tops and large bottoms. The entrances leading to tombs were covered with logs or blocked up with big bricks. Most of the tombs held a few to a dozen bodies. Funeral objects were mainly painted pottery, such as pots with one handle, jars, basins and cups painted with red and black lines against a red background. There were also wood and bronze articles such as wooden basins and bowls, and bronze knives, earrings and mirrors, as well as iron artifacts in special graves. Some bodies were well preserved. The occupants of the tombs wore long braids with hair nets, felt caps and felt boots. They were dressed in woolen or fur-lined clothes. Heads of horses and sheep, and cattle skeletons were popular funeral objects. The graves date from the Warring States period, and hold the remains of ancient Gushi people.

The castle-fortress ruin of the Tang dynasty lies at the eastern end of the Alagou, linking north and south Xinjiang. It is well preserved and looks like a square fortress with 20-meter-high walls of brick and wicker. Inside the fortress are ruins of houses where documents of the Tang dynasty were found by archaeologists.

Ancient Tombs at Har Moden in Hejing County

With proper conditions for developing animal husbandry, Hejing county in the hinterland of the Tianshans used to be under the jurisdiction of Yanqi State. Now a newly built southern Xinjiang railway passes the county's eastern part. The newly discovered ancient tombs are at Chaibuhegou, north of Har Moden on the alluvial plateau by the outlet of the Tianshan Valley. The tombs are divided into eastern and western sections. The former are round and the latter are square and round and piled with stones. The preliminary archaeological excavations show that one kind of ancient tomb is piled with stones and surrounded by stone walls. The walls of the vertical coffin chambers are also built with bricks. Most of the graves held a few to a dozen bodies. Funeral objects are mainly earthenware jars and pots characteristic of unearthened relics from Xinjiang, and painted pottery. A 16 cm-high painted pottery pot with an ear handle has a mouth 9 cm in diameter. With red trellis design, and lines and dots against the white background by its mouth and neck, the pot is of strong national and local flavor. The tombs date from between the Warring States period and Han dynasty, and the early cultural relics of the Yanqi State.

Ancient Tombs at Astana, Lop

Yutian (today's Hotan) was one of the 36 states in the Western Regions and a place of strategic importance on the Southern Route of the Silk Road. A number of important ancient tombs have been discovered in recent years at Astana, 11 kilometers south of Lop county town, Hotan. One tomb excavated there had 133 bodies (calculated according to the skulls) and the other had 146. Of another 16 single-coffined tombs, one held a mother and son. Almost 1,000 funeral objects, including woolen and silk articles, have been unearthened. The woolen items are great in variety and bright in color, rare treasures indeed. The silk articles are typical Han brocade pieces. This shows that silks produced in the interior of China were widely spread along the Silk Road since the Han dynasty. Apart from these, Han dynasty bronze mirrors have also been unearthened from the graves in Hotan. They belong to the Yutian people of the Han dynasty.

Carvings in Tubo Language in the Altun Mountains

The Altun Mountains in the southeast of Xinjiang joins Qinghai in the south, Tibet in the west and Xinjiang and Gansu in the north. In the 7th century, the Tubo people crossed the Altuns and came to the Tarim Basin, causing the loss of Anxi's four towns in the Tang dynasty for a time. By then they believed in Buddhism. Over the past few years a number of stone inscription in Tubo have been found on the Qiman pasture in the nature preserve area in the Altuns. Neatly inscribed on pieces of shell, they have been initially identified as scriptures.

photos by Liu Yusheng



The Silk Road opened up 2,000 years ago extended some 5,000 kilometers by way of over 100 countries. Known as the longest vital land communications line in ancient times, the Silk Road in Xinjiang has three routes: the Northern Route runs westward along the northern edge of the Tianshan Mountains, the Central Route heads west along the southern edge of the Tianshans, and the Southern Route stretches along the northern edge of Mt. Kunlun. Ruins and tombs of the people of ancient times have been found along the three routes in recent years, which are of great scientific value in study of the Old Silk Road.

Neolithic Cultural Ruins at Chaiwopu in Urumqi

Between 1983 and 1985, ancient cultural ruins were discovered on the bank of the Lake Chaiwopu, 50 kilometers east of Urumqi, the region's capital, where the Northern Route of the Silk Road passes. North of the ruin are a highway and the Lanzhou—Xinjiang railway. Archaeologists found ancient stone implements on the lake's northeast and southwest edges, and collected over 150 items such as cores, leaves, flakes, scrapers, pointed implements and arrowheads as well as a few rough-hewn blocks of stone. Cores shaped like the bottom of a boat date from a relatively early period of the Stone Age. Stoneware in the shape of a leaf is one of the most typical and common artifacts of the neolithic period. The culture discovered in Xinjiang dates back 7,000 or 8,000 years, and the discovery

of the Chaiwopu ruins shows that there were human beings Urumqi area as early as 8,000 years ago.

Ancient Tombs at Wulabo in Urumqi

From 1983 to 1984, a number of ancient tombs were found near the Wulabo Reservoir, in the southern outskirts of Urumqi ten kilometers from the city proper. Some of them had been inundated, and 46 have been cleaned up. They were all covered with slabs of stone. Some coffin pits were surrounded by earthen pits and others built with flat stones. A meter-deep coffin pit was so small that it was big enough for only one body. A few graves were found to have two or three bodies. Funeral objects were mainly relatively rough hand-made pottery, such as jars with handles, a small number of painted vessels in black and red with design of triangles, whirlpools and rhombuses, and bronze, gold and iron articles including small knives



New Discoveries in Xinjiang

Mu SHUNYING

Road in Tarim. The languages of the Mongols and Manchus developed from it.

The Uygurs had both movable type and block printing by the 13th century. Archaeologists have found block-printed manuscript in the Huihu language from Turpan and Tuokexun. A Frenchman took away several hundred of wooden movable type letters from the Thousand-Buddha Cave of the Dunhuang Grottoes.

The Uygurs were for a long time one of most culturally developed nationalities in Central Asia, in view of their written language and their location on the route of the Silk Road in Central Eurasia. There were many ancient Uygur scholars, scientists, writers and historians, and such distinguished writings as the Dictionary of Tujue Language compiled by Mahmud Kashgari between 1072 and 1074, which is the most important encyclopedia for studies of Central Asia of this period. Knowledge, Root of Happiness by Yusup Has Hajip in the same century is an immortal masterpiece of philosophy and literature. The ABC of Truth compiled by Ahmat Yuknaki in the 12th century is an outstanding poem in feeling and story.

During the Mongol Yuan dynasty, the Uygur nationality made great contributions to the unity of the country, the expansion of production and the flowering of culture and science. Notables of the period include military theorists Ark Hiya and Barqut Art Tigin; the statesmen; Bruhiya, Lian Xixian and his son, Guan Yunshi, also a noted poet and writer; Lianhuishan Hiya, a historian who compiled and revised the History of Liao Dynasty; Lu Mingshan, agronomist and writer of The Fundamentals of Agriculture, Sericulture, Clothing and Food; Sinku Sali, a great translator who was a master of the Han, Weiwei, Mongolian, Tibetan and Sanskrit languages. After the Yuan dynasty, the Uygurs also produced many famous writers, historians and scientists. Notable writings in Uygur include the poem "Flower and Spring" by Lutfi in the 15th century; the long lyrical "Love and Labor Poem" by Kirkiti (1634-1672); lyrics by Zalili; (1685-1759); Collection of Love Poems by Abdureyim Hizari (1770-1848) who was brought up in Kashi, of which Rabiya--Saydin parhad--Xirin and layli--Majnun have long been on the lips of people; Biography of Hojas, written between 1768 and 1769 by Muhammad Sadik Kaxkari; the History of Hamedee from the 19th century by Molla Msa Sayrami; and the History of Kaxkariya.

Traces of various religions, including Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Nestorianism, Manichaeism and Islam, can be found in the Tarim Basin since the Uygurs used to believe in them. Apart from Islam, which is still strong today, there are many relics of Buddhism. Thousand-Buddha caves can be found in Shanshan (piqan), Turpan, Yanqi, Kuqa, Baicheng and Kashi, on the Old Silk Road. The superb array of cave murals mirrors the splendid culture of this earlier period.

Most Uygurs today are Muslims, and Islamic influence can be traced in Uygur architecture and customs. For instance, there are mosques almost everywhere in urban and rural. Aidkah Mosque in Kashi is the most famous. Apart from mosques are also a great number of tombs, the most famous being the tomb of Sutuk Bugrahan, Khan of the Kara Khanate who is believed to have been the first Uygur Muslim. The tomb of Apok hoja, the head missionary of the Baishan Sect, is the most magnificent. Hotan prefecture has the largest number of ancient tombs. Troops representing Buddhist and Islamic forces fought there for 24 years, from the late 10th to the early 11th century, and both sides suffered great loss of life. Some leaders of the

Islamic side who died in the war are buried there, and their tombs became famous. Mansions and tombs of the Huihu and Emin pagoda in Turpan are all notable architectural items in the Islamic style, and are well worth study.

Travelers in the Tarim Basin are greeted with pleasant songs and dances under grape trellises and by orchards of apricots. Centuries ago the music of Gaochang, Guizi, Shule and Yizhou from the Tarim Basin became very popular in central China among the court officials and nobles of the sui there, and tang dynasties, and among ordinary people of

various nationalities. One poem says that "A woman married to a man of Hu (non-Han nationalities living in the north and west in ancient times) will dress your hair

and apply makeup as the women of Hu do, and you will love her music as well." Another poem of the period said that every family in Luoyang was learning the songs and dances of the Hu. Those graceful dances still exist. Uygurs have developed them into Twelve Mukama, or the twelve grand suites, including poetry recited to a musical background, ballads and dance music.

Because of their strategic location on the Old Silk Road, the Uygurs absorbed elements of both eastern and western culture and played an important role in economic exchanges between east and west. A great number of Uygurs traveled and traded on the Old Silk Road. They loved the silks of central China since ancient times. The states in the area of the Tarim Basin derived considerable economic benefits from the Silk Road. Silks from central China were shipped to the Western Regions by carts, horses and camel caravans. The "Song of Liangzhou" by Zhang Ji describes camel caravans going westward:

Rain falls at dusk on the frontier town
wild geese fly low,
The new reeds grow
rising high and wild.
Countless camel bells ring
over desolate sands,
Caravans travel to An xi city
with rolls of silk.

Products of the countries in the west such as woolen knitwear, jewelry, colored glazes and spices were transported to central China through the Tarim Basin.

Now the Uygurs, along with other Chinese nationalities, are working to develop socialist modernization. They have made great contributions to the economic and cultural exchanges between China and other countries. As a people with a long tradition of trade and cultural exchange with other countries, the Uygurs can play a major role in China's efforts to enter the international arena and forge ties with nations all over the world.

Photos by Song Shijing

The Uygur Nationality

SU BEIHAI



With a population of 5.95 million the Uygur nationality has, among the 13 nationalities in Xinjiang, the largest number of people. Though there are Uygurs in almost every county in Xinjiang, 90 percent live in the area of the Tarim Basin, South of the Tianshan Mountains near the ancient route of the Silk Road.

The Uygurs are an old nationality, and developed out of people known historically as the Northern Di Dingling, Tiele and Huihu. In the third century, the Northern Dis lived in Shanxi, northern Shaanxi and around the Taihang Mountains together with people of Huaxia (an ancient name for China). The two peoples had close economic contacts. The Uygurs and Hans learned from one another and worked together for the unity of the country for many centuries. At certain times of civil war the Uygurs fought on the side of the central authorities. The rebellion of An Lushan and Shi Siming in 775, for instance, was put down with the help of the Huihu. The Huihu established the Kingdom of Kara in the Western Regions during the endless disputes of the Five Dynasties, but they still considered themselves under the overlordship of China.

The Taklimakan desert, lying in the central Tarim Basin, is known for its dry and windy climate. In the desert, oasis after oasis has been cultivated by the wise and industrious Uygurs. Those who visit the oases, are immediately attracted by the stretches of new houses surrounded by trees, clusters of grapes hanging heavy the vines, the Hami and watermelons, and acres of wheat. Beautiful Uygur songs and dances entertain guests from afar. Farmland is irrigated with melted snow water from the Tianshan, Kunlun and Karakorum mountains and with water from the karez, or underground wells and pipes. Taking advantage of the sandy soil, the Uygurs raise the worldfamous Turpan grapes, Hami and Shanshan melons, Korla pears, Kashi figs, Yecheng pomegranates (akrgilik), Hotan walnuts and watermelons, and fine varieties of rice, wheat and corn. They have grown cotton and mulberries since ancient times, along with sericulture and weaving. Silk from China's central plains was shipped to the Western Regions in exchange for cotton and jade stones from Tarim.

During a long period feudal society, the Uygur nationality developed comparatively advanced handicraft industries such as spinning, cotton weaving, cotton ginning, cotton fluffing, iron and copper smelting, jade carving, dyeing and embroidery. The Uygurs made fur caps, leather boots and fur-lined coats, woolen felt, rugs, ropes, woven mats, water mills and water-powered trip hammers (for husking rice), and were skilled in carpentry and bricklaying. They are known for their rugs and jade carving from Hotan, small knives, embroidered caps from Kashi and sable fur from Kuqa. Cotton weaving and pinning were the most popular household sidelines.

The Uygurs were one of the nationalities of Central Asia which had their own written language. They began to use the language of the Huihu and the Tujue under the rule of the Tujue. The language of Huihu became an international language used by many nationalities in Central Asia after the fall of the Tujue Khanate. It had been the official language of the Kingdom of Kara, Huihu in Gaochang, the Western Liao dynasty, the Jinzhang Khanate, the Chahetai Khanate and Tiemu Empire. Edicts of Cenghis Khan and certificates of appointment of Chahetai Khanate, orders, letters, poems and songs, history and stories were also written in the language of Huihu. "Those who know the Huihu language will never suffer from poverty," said one Arabic historian. Many books in the Huihu language have been discovered on the Old Silk

home and abroad. The ones produced by the Urumqi Carpet Factory and a carpet factory run by the city's foreign trade company combine traditional Uygur styles with new designs, such as pomegranate flowers, fairy maidens spreading flowers, and panda cousins. They are popular among both Chinese and foreign tourists.

Jade carving is another specialty of the area. The most famous is the kind from Hotan, also called Kunlun jade. Other varieties such as Manasi jade and Hami yellow jade are from the Altay, Tianshan and Kunlun mountains. The Urumqi Jade Carving Factory and the geological bureau's jade factory use the material to make exquisite products that sell well to visitors.

Embroidered caps and garments, traditional daggers and boots, and musical instruments are also popular Xinjiang nationality products. They are on sale in the city's big stores, nationality handicrafts shops, the local Friendship Store for tourists, as well as the arts and crafts shop and retail shops in the city's different hotels.

In the Heart of Asia

Situated in the heart of the Eurasian land mass at 43°54' N and 87°28' E, Urumqi is one of the world's cities which is the longest distance from the sea. It thus has a distinct continental climate. Spring, at the end of April and the beginning of May, has temperatures from 10 to 20°C. Summer lasts from the end of May to the beginning of September. July and August are the hottest months, the average temperature being 25.7°C. Autumn starts in mid-September and ends in October. The temperature gradually drops to about 10°C. Winter is long, starting from the end of October to March the next year, the temperature ranging between -10 and -20°C. The lowest recorded temperature is -41.5°C. The frost-free period is only 175 days a year. The annual average amount of sunshine is 2,680 hours. The best time for tourists is between May and October.

Convenient Facilities

From Urumqi, trains go to Beijing and Shanghai, with express trains to Xi'an, Lanzhou and Zhengzhou. Within the region, trains link the capital with Korla in the south. Regular airline flights go to Beijing, Shanghai, Xi'an, Lanzhou and Guangzhou, and also the region's Kashi, Hotan, Aksu, Kucha, Qiemo, Yining Altay, Kramay, and Fuyun. Long-distance buses reach almost every part of the autonomous region. The Xinjiang tourist bus company and the city taxi company provide different types of cars, buses, and mini-buses for

tourists to visit Heavenly Lake, White Poplar Valley and other scenic spots. Among the city's top-class hotels are the Xinjiang Friendship Hotel (tel. 23991, 23992), Xinjiang Overseas Chinese Hotel (tel. 24406), Kunlun Hotel (tel. 42411), and Bogda Hotel (tel. 22913). Big hotels in the city proper are the Xinjiang Hotel (tel. 27304), Hongshan Hotel (tel. 24973), Hundred Flower Village Hotel (tel. 22016) and Hongchunyuan Hotel (tel. 27469).

Flexible Tourist Schedules

One-day tours to Heavenly Lake are available, with returns on the same day.

Two-day tours include an itinerary of one day at Heavenly Lake and the second day at White Poplar valley. In between, stops are arranged at museums, for shopping in arts and crafts shops or local bazaars.

Three-day tours include the same itineraries as the two-day tour programs, plus a third day on which visitors are taken to Hongshan Hill, People's Park or tours of the city to taste traditional foods or visit carpet and Jade carving factories.

If time allows the Hall of the People, the exhibition of science and technology and other new constructions, as well as street sculptures such as "Watering Horses by the bridge" and "Harvest Celebration" can be included.

If nationality songs and dances are being performed in the People's Theater, visitors shouldn't miss the chance to see them.

Bus tickets to Heavenly Lake and White Poplar Valley are sold at the front gate of People's Park. To hire Buses, dial 22240 and 25989, the Xinjiang Travel Bus Company, the telephone number of the city's taxi company is 41009.

Photo by Shen Qiao

YINGSHAN MOUNTAINS

Qiu Chuji

Three peaks soar through cold clouds,

Streams wind on sheer cliffs.

No men come to the snow world,
Ice pond under the glistening sun is
not for common eyes.

Deep gullies are hiding places
from the war,

The abundant waters can nourish
crops.

The first city in the North,
Has not been painted on paper.

1. The Yinshan Mountains are the Tianshan Mountains.

2. The three peaks are on Bogda Mountain, the highest in the eastern part of the Tianshan range.

On August 12, 1935, I stayed at Lingshan Monastery at Heavenly Lake. Since I couldn't sleep I wrote this poem.

Yu Youren

I have Flown over the Tianshans
several times.

Today I am here to see the real look
of them.

There are waterfalls in the clouds
and glacial snow,

The moon shines over Jade Pond,
But it rains behind the mountain.

Long travel tests good horses,
I climb high in defiance of my gray
hair.

I feel agitated deep at night,
The forests mourn over an ailing fir
tree.

JADE POND

Deng Zaxian

The palace halls of Jade Pond
reach mountain caves.

The mountains appear and disappear
in the mist.

At dawn, a heavenly horse gallops
beyond the Milky Way.

In autumn stone whales swim over
jade waters.

Dew gathers on fairy flowers like
emerald corals,

The sun shines on gold stems like red
agates.

I follow the immortal to seek
immortality.

The terraces and halls are full of
autumn winds.

Urumqi

BIYADING

Urumqi, capital of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, is situated at 600-900 m. above sea level on the vast grassland north of the Tianshan Mountains. To its east is Bogda Peak, the mountain range's highest point in its eastern section. To the south is the 1,000-km-long Tianshan forest belt. The Junggar Basin, Xinjiang's second biggest, borders it to the north and west. The Urumqi River crosses the city north to south, flanked by Hongshan and Ghost hills. With a city proper of 72 square kilometers, Urumqi has 1.15 million people consisting of 13 nationalities, including Uygur, Han, Kazak, Hui, Mongolian, Kirgiz, Tajik, Uzbek and Tartar.

Scenery and Customs

Hongshan Hill, 910 meters high with a pagoda on top, stands aloft in the heart of the city. According to legend, the hill was originally a giant red dragon which flew here from Heavenly Lake. After it landed, it crawled slowly toward Ghost Hill, which was just across the way. Seeing that the dragon was soon going to block the Urumqi River, a local Qing dynasty governor ordered two seven-story black brick pagodas built, one on the dragon's head, and the other on Ghost Hill, to subdue the monster. Now Hongshan Hill and the Pagoda have not only become the city's big tourist attraction, but also its symbol. On top of the hill one can get an ideal bird's-eye view of Urumqi.

People's Park, known also as Western Park, is on the western bank of the Urumqi River. Among its sites of historical interest and scenic spots are Yuwei Hall, built at the beginning of this century to commemorate Qing scholar Ji Xiaolan, Facing-the-Sun Hall, the Monument to the revolutionary martyrs, Jianhu Lake and the lake pavilion, a children's playground and a flower nursery. The park is green from spring to fall, and flower, calligraphy and painting and photo exhibitions are frequently held there. In the severely cold winter season it attracts visitors with good skating facilities and ice lantern shows.

The famous Heavenly Lake is 110 km. east of the city among the icy gorges of Bogda Peak. It is 1,928 m. above sea level, with a perimeter of 8 km. and an area of 4.9 sq. km. The deepest point is 105 meters. In 1982 the lake and its surrounding areas were named one of the country's major scenic spots. Here, as one climbs, different forest scenes appear resulting from the different altitudes—glacier and snow region, alpine and semi-alpine forest belt,

hilly land conifer forest belt, and low hilly land forest belt. Surrounded by snow-capped mountains, the lake has water as thick as ink in an ink slab and trees towering like brushes on its sides. Boating on the lake is like cruising in a heavenly land. Other places of tourist interest in the area are the Small Heavenly Lake, the Lamp Pole Mountain, the Stone Gorge and some newly renovated ancient structures. Restaurants, teahouses and hotels are located on the bank of the lake. Kazak herdsmen have also opened a reception station by the side of the lake to accommodate tourists.

White Poplar Valley, 2,252 meters above sea level, is another of the city's unique summer resorts. About 75 km. south of Urumqi proper, the area is dotted with mountain springs, rapid streams, flocks of sheep and yurts (felt tents). Between May and October many Chinese and foreign tourists visit Kazak herdsmen's yurt homes here. They are entertained with milk tea, mutton and other traditional Kazak food. On the lush green mountain slopes the herdsmen perform their traditional games, horse races, "chasing the girls," or goat snatch from horseback, for the guests, who can also experience life on the pasture-lands by horse or camelback rides.

The autonomous region's main library at Urumqi too is a must for tourists. It now has two sections. One displays the customs of Xinjiang's 12 nationalities, their costumes, yurt homes, diet, festivals, wedding, funeral and religious ceremonies, traditional sports and games, and other aspects of their life. The other houses cultural and historical relics unearthed in Xinjiang—silk products, earthenware, clay figures, coins, weapons, rubbings, documents and books, all revealing the brilliant ancient culture of this

region.

Urumqi has several dozen big and small bazaars. The most popular ones are the Hongshan farmers market, the Red Flag Road market and Erdaoqiao farmers' market. People buy various local products and nationality articles here, such as raisins, preserved apricots, Mohe tobacco, and Xinjiang rugs and daggers. Even in midwinter, frozen watermelon and Hami melon are on sale. The visitors like these markets also because they can get some idea of how the local people live here.

Unique Local Foods

Traditional dishes of Xinjiang's different nationalities enjoy good reputations in China and abroad. Mutton kebabs, rice to be eaten with the hands and baked stuffed buns are on sale everywhere in the city. Lamb roasted whole is a famous Uygur dish. After being cleaned and having the viscera removed, the lamb is coated with a mixture of salt, fennel (aniseed), egg and other ingredients, and placed in a pit used for baking local crusty pancakes, or in an oven to be slow roasted. With a yellow crisp skin, meat is tender and fragrant inside. Often when the waiters deliver it to the table, guests burst into applause and insist on taking photos before it is carved.

Visitors can enjoy whole roast lamb and other traditional Xinjiang food in the city's big Muslim restaurants and hotels.

Xinjiang abounds in fruit, which keep the markets full from July to October. Its watermelon, grapes and Hami melon, with a high sugar content, are the sweetest fruit in the country.

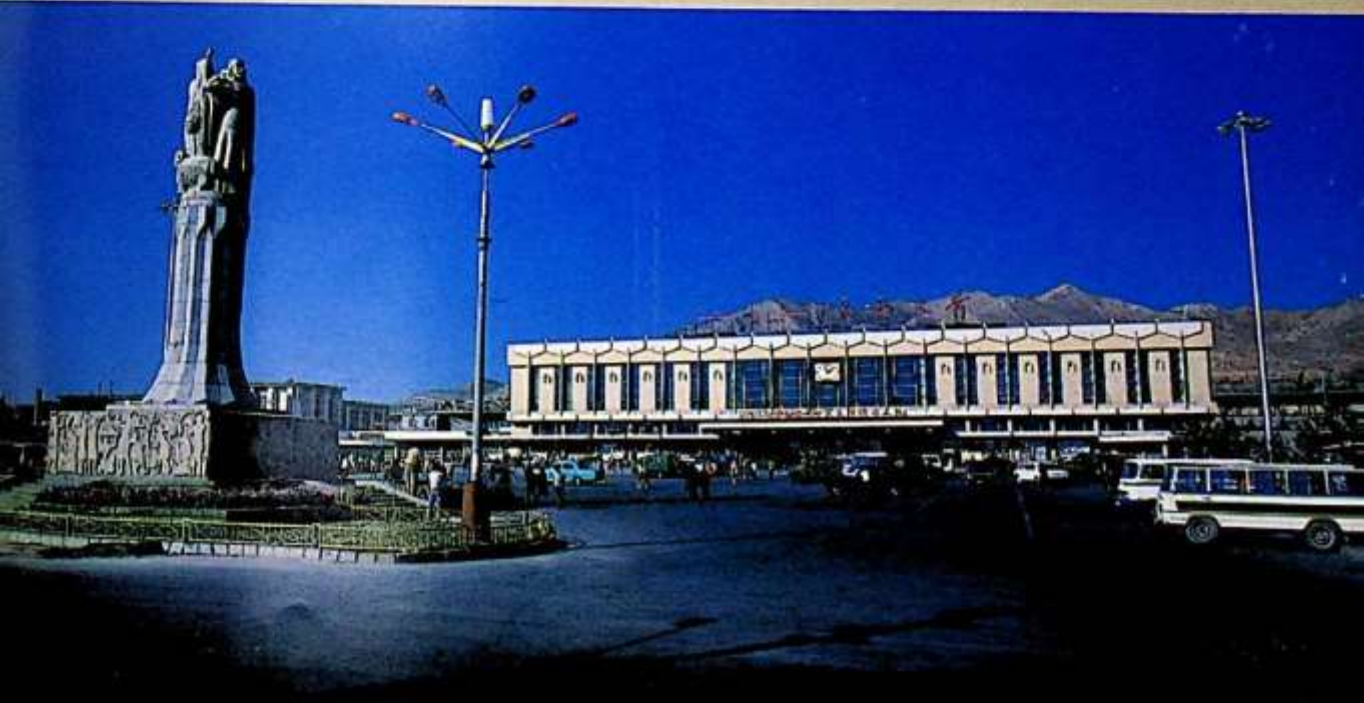
National Handicrafts

With a long history, Hotan rugs are traditional Uygur handicraft products famous at

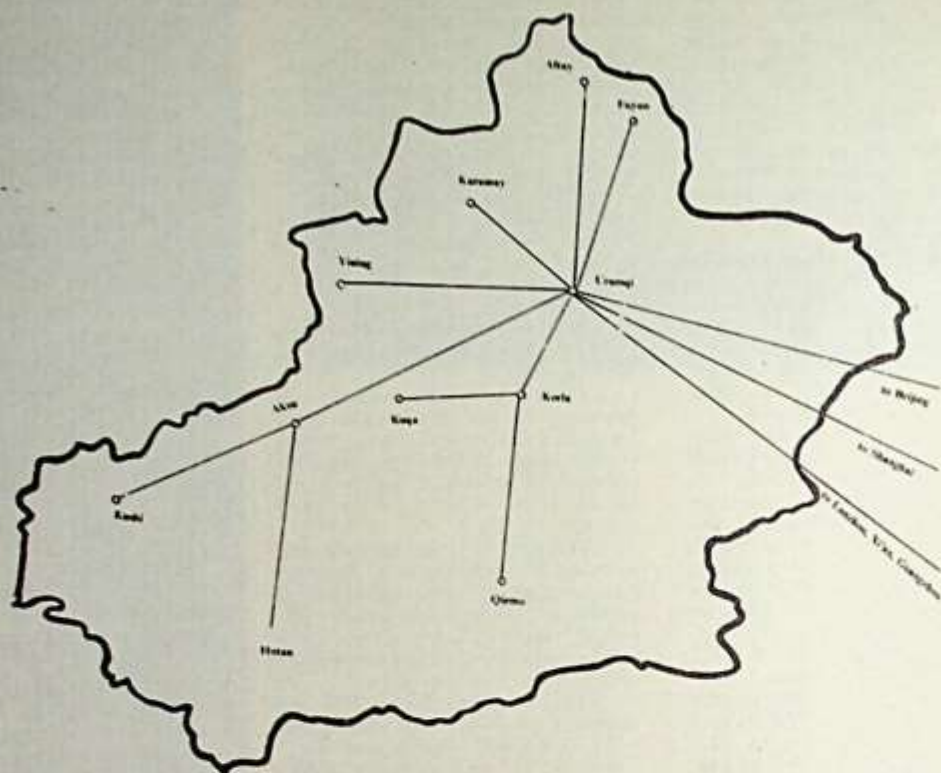


Urumqi

photos by: Liang Feng



Map of Xinjiang Air Routes



列车时刻表 TRAIN SCHEDULE

车次 TRAIN NUMBER	发车时间 (北京时间) DEPARTURE TIME (BEIJING TIME)	到终点时间 (北京时间) ARRIVAL TIME (BEIJING TIME)
69 (北京 — 乌鲁木齐) BEIJING — URUMQI	9 : 01(am)	12 : 11 (am)
70 (乌鲁木齐 — 北京) URUMQI — BEIJING	19 : 45(pm)	21 : 22 (pm)
53 (上海 — 乌鲁木齐) SHANGHAI — URUMQI	11 : 28(am)	20 : 30(pm)
54 (乌鲁木齐 — 上海) URUMQI — SHANGHAI	15 : 20(pm)	23 : 00 (pm)
143 (西安 — 乌鲁木齐) XIAN — URUMQI	20 : 51(pm)	10 : 27 (am)
144 (乌鲁木齐 — 西安) URUMQI — XIAN	22 : 42(pm)	12 : 11 (am)
171 (郑州 — 乌鲁木齐) ZHENGZHOU — URUMQI	16 : 30(pm)	17 : 54 (pm)
172 (乌鲁木齐 — 郑州) URUMQI — ZHENGZHOU	9 : 40(am)	7 : 37 (am)
243 (兰州 — 乌鲁木齐) LANZHOU — URUMQI	9 : 18(am)	7 : 48 (am)
244 (乌鲁木齐 — 兰州) URUMQI — LANZHOU	18 : 09(pm)	19 : 46 (pm)
512/3 (乌鲁木齐 — 库尔勒) URUMQI — KORLA	12 : 47(am)	7 : 19 (am)
514/1 (库尔勒 — 乌鲁木齐) KORLA — URUMQI	14 : 24(pm)	9 : 08 (am)

(火车南站问事处电话: 23771 INFORMATION OFFICE TEL:23771)

China International Travel Service Urumqi Branch Pays its Sincere Respects to the Tourists From All Over the World

CITS Urumqi Branch Arranges Oversea tourists to travel in all the opened cities in China. we provide tourists with guide interpreters speaking Chinese, English, Japanese, German and French. We also offer various other services such as booking tickets for airplanes and trains, reservations for hotel rooms, and travel information. Within Xinjiang, our branch organises silk road tour, folk custom tour, desert tour, hill - area walking tour, bus tour, grassland tour and so on. We are

always ready to satisfy the interests of the tourists from all the levels. CITS Urumqi branch always follows the principle of "Guests being the king and reputation first", making your trip a pleasant one.

At present, the main tour itineraries are as follows:

1. Urumqi - Turpan - Kule - Kuche - Aksu - Atushi - Kashi - Tashikulgan - Khunjerab (to Pakistan);
2. Urumqi - Turfan - Kule - Kuche - Aksu - Atushi - Kashi - Shache - Hotan;
3. Urumqi - Ining - Holgus (to Alma - Ata, USSR);

4. Urumqi - Turfan - Shanshan - Hami (to dunhuang, Gansu Province);
5. Urumqi - Heavenly Lake - Mt. Tianshan;
6. Urumqi - Yellow River - Poplar - Yellow Mountains;
7. Urumqi - China



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