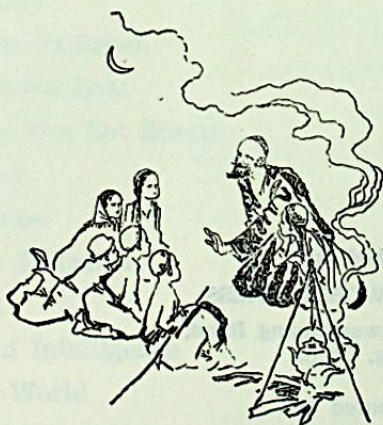


THE EFFENDI AND THE PREGNANT POT

— Uygur Folktales from China

Translated by
Primerose Gigliesi
and
Robert C. Friend



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These droll satirical stories belong to the folktale heritage of the Uygurs, a Muslim minority nationality who inhabit Xinjiang in northwest China. The Effendi Nasreddin, the hero of these tales, is known in China as Afanti, which is a transliteration of the word "effendi", a title originally given to a person of high culture and great esteem. Tradition presents him as a legendary figure, perhaps based on an historical person.

The tales of the effendi collected here underline the skillful wit of a folk hero. They are pure humor — with a sting. The effendi detested the stupidity and greed of the padishah, his nobles and the common merchants, and bested them in such ways that they could not retaliate. That the poor loved him is clear from the fact that these tales still sparkle with laughter that has come down to us through a number of centuries of time.

Most of the tales are illustrated with paintings by the Chinese artist, Li Shan, who spent much of his time working in Xinjiang and is thoroughly familiar with the Uygur people and their culture. He has superbly created the visual image of the Effendi Nasreddin.

The translator, Primerose Gigliesi, is a specialist in Chinese art, literature and language. Robert C. Friend, a writer and journalist, has co-operated with the English.