Return to Kashgar

Gunnar Jarring

Translated from the Swedish by Eva Claeson

Central Asia Book Series

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Central Asian Memoirs in the Present

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Contents

Central Asia Book Series

This inaugural volume in the Central Asia Book Series is a travel memoir by the distinguished scholar and diplomat, Dr. Gunnar Jarring. His account of two extended visits to Sinkiang (Eastern Turkistan) separated by a half-century interval gives this work an extraordinary perspective. Especially informative and interesting are Dr. Jarring's unusual and innumerable observations and insights based on his deep knowledge of the area he visited, of the language, and of the people—the Central Asian Uighurs.

Dr. Jarring's many writings about Eastern Turkistan and its principal Turkic language and literature include *An Eastern Turki-English Dialect Dictionary* (1964), *A Tall Tale from Central Asia* (1973), *Literary Texts from Kashgar,* edited and translated with Notes and Glossary (1980), *Some Notes on Eastern Turki (New Uighur) Munazara Literature* (1981), *The Moen Collection of Eastern Turki (New Uighur) Proverbs and Popular Sayings,* edited with Translation, Notes, and Glossary (1985), as well as his important study, *On the Distribution of Turk Tribes in Afghanistan* (1939).

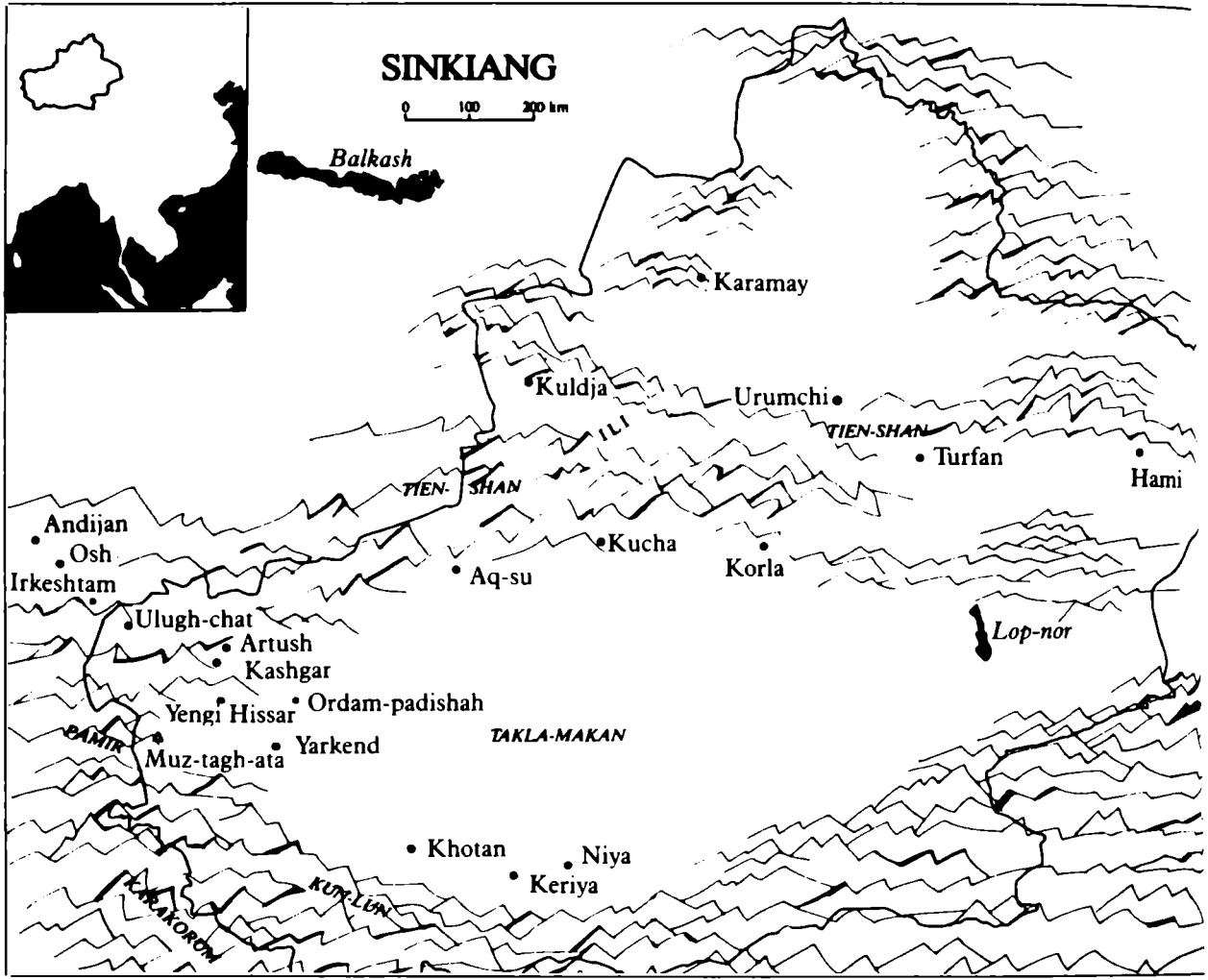
In his diplomatic work, Ambassador Jarring has served Sweden as minister to India, 1948–51; to Sri Lanka, 1950–51; and to Iran, Iraq, and Pakistan, 1951–52. From 1956 to 1958 he was

Sweden's delegate and ambassador to the United Nations, and from 1958 to 1964 served in Washington, D.C., as ambassador to the United States. Immediately thereafter began ten years of diplomatic service, first in Moscow, and then, in 1967, as special envoy to the United Nations for the Middle East.

Gunnar Jarring's valued contribution of his personal memoirs to the Central Asia Book Series initiates a publishing endeavor that will offer original research and analysis, reference books, eyewitness accounts, original and translated documents, and related categories of scholarship. Emphasis will be placed on publishing studies of contemporary developments in Central Asia's society, culture, and politics, using indigenous language sources. Historical documents and scholarship concerning events before the twentieth century may also be issued when these provide special insights into present affairs. Authors with manuscripts about Central Asia may write to Edward Allworth, Series Editor, 618 Kent Hall, Columbia University, New York, New York, U.S.A. 10027.

Editor's Note

In transliterating local place names into English, the author chose to retain Turkic forms rather than convert to the Chinese forms; he has retained Chinese names in standard (pre-pinyin) spellings.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Yengi Hissar
Ordam-padishah
PAMIR
Muz-tagh-ata
Yarkend
TAKLA-MAKAN
Khotan
Niya
Keriya
KUN-LUN
KARAKORUM

Returning

On 8 September 1978 at 12:55 P.M. our AN-24 of the CAA (Chinese Airlines) landed on the silvery bright concrete runway of Kashgar Airport. The flight from Urumchi had taken four hours, the whole trip from Peking nine.

On 14 September 1929 I set foot on Kashgar soil for the first time. The caravan which had started from Osh in Kirghizia on the Soviet side had taken almost two weeks to cross the high plateau of the Pamirs.

There were forty-nine years—or, let us say, half a century —between the first visit to Kashgar, south-western Sinkiang's largest and most important city, and my return.

The first time by caravan, the second by air, I traveled as though from the Middle Ages to the present.

This account of my return to Sinkiang contains no profundities, no exhaustive attempts to analyze what is happening in that border province of western China. I have not looked for conflict-laden subject matter. Nor was I led to such. The following are, on the one hand, recollections from the old Sinkiang, and on the other, present-day observations of a part of China situated outside the usual tourist routes.

The Road to Peking

One day in May, Cheng Yueh, the kindly and unassuming Cultural Attaché of the Chinese embassy, came to see me. After a while our conversation led to the research I had done concerning the Uighurs in Sinkiang, and it turned out that he had come for the purpose of forwarding an invitation from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences for me to visit China for a period of two to three weeks. They preferred my coming as early as June or July. I explained that that was out of the question, but that I could possibly make it somewhat later. I promised to give the matter some thought and give them my answer as soon as possible.

To see Sinkiang again after almost fifty years, and to be able to renew contact with its people was certainly appealing. Sinkiang had, for many decades, been a closed part of China. The last Swedes to visit the province were members of Sven Hedin's great expedition in the 1930s, and the missionaries who during those years were forced to discontinue their activities there: in Kashgar, Yengi Hissar, and Yarkend. Very few other foreigners had been allowed to visit, and certainly not for research purposes. The most important exceptions were Soviet scientists, but in the beginning of the 1960s the land was closed even to them. The only Swede

who has been allowed to visit the Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region in recent years is Jan Myrdal who in 1976, together with Gun Kessle, traveled widely in the province. *Sidenvägen* (The Silk Route), his detailed account of this journey, is of great current interest.

After a week's consideration I informed Cheng Yueh that I would be pleased to accept the invitation. I suggested 4–21 September as adequate dates. I met Chin Li-chen, the Chinese ambassador in Stockholm, on 16 June in order to discuss the planning of my trip. In a detailed letter addressed to the Academy, I specified my wishes and requirements. Because of my published work regarding Uighur philology and linguistics, ethnology and folklore, I suggested that I would like to visit universities, institutes, libraries, as well as cultural organizations in Urumchi and Kashgar. I asked furthermore to be allowed to visit cultural monuments in the area. I had no further detailed requests. As it turned out, I was able to see all I wanted, and to meet people to a much greater extent than I had even dreamed.

On Sunday, 3 September, I flew on Swissair from Zurich to Peking. Our DC-8 was practically filled to capacity—mostly West German and Swiss tourists and businessmen. Peking and all of China have lately become increasingly popular destinations for European tourists. We landed in Athens in the middle of the night, saw the sun rise over Dubai, and landed during the morning hours in a monsoon-humid Bombay. The air that hit us when the cabin door was opened smelled of mildew, and I remembered the monsoon seasons of the years I spent in India. The Indian morning papers were distributed. The most important news was, as always during that period of the year, the havoc caused by the monsoon rains. We continued our flight high above the clouds, and saw no more of India until Calcutta: a carpet of crowded habitations in pastel colors.

After Calcutta, clouds again obstructed our view of Bangladesh and Burma. When they finally dispersed, we were already far into

China, somewhere south of Kunming. The land below us was very strange. It looked as though strewn with sugar loaves of black lava with scattered white clouds sailing over them. Later we flew over the river Yangtze—a wide ribbon surrounded by a soft haze.

We landed in Peking at 7:10 P.M. exactly according to schedule. I said good-bye to my seat companion, a German industrialist who had entertained me with almost lyrical lectures about the fantastic possibilities that China offered now that it was interested in becoming rapidly industrialized. But it was important to keep out in front, he had added. The whole of the Western World, including the Japanese, had become aware of these enormous export possibilities. Nine hundred and fifty million Chinese were to catch up with the technical developments and production capacities of the West by the year 2000—very stimulating thoughts for the imagination of a businessman. And, he ended, how many people are aware of what the realization of this dream can mean for the whole world?

The Academy of Social Sciences had sent a large delegation to welcome me at the airport. I was taken to a VIP room with large portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin on the walls. Outside we had been greeted by a flood-lit giant portrait of Mao. The reception committee included the secretary of the Academy, the professors Fu Mao-chi and Wang Chun of the Institute for Research on Minorities, and Ms. Wang Jui-Chih, who spoke perfect Swedish. She was to be my interpreter during the entire visit. All formalities were quickly taken care of. In the car on the way to Peking, Fu Mao-chi informed me that on Wednesday—today was Monday—we were to fly to Urumchi and from there to Kashgar. Everything had been arranged. Hotel Peking, the large hotel for foreigners on Chang-An Avenue, was a pleasant acquaintance: it was modern, well-managed and well-organized, and I had a comfortable room on the eighth floor. After my Chinese hosts had left, I unpacked and then left my room to look around. I walked through long, softly carpeted hallways with the mandatory white spittoons placed

at regular intervals. They resembled the chamberpots of my childhood, but without the handles. I walked by elderly American women, apparently tourists, who were standing in the hallway ironing their skirts and blouses, while Chinese page-boys followed their energetic activities with great interest. I had difficulty deciding whether it was a demonstration of American technical assistance to what they considered an underdeveloped country, or whether it was an expression of folksiness and a do-it-yourself mentality. I returned to my room and looked out over a Peking that was settling down for the night. Chang-An Avenue, with its lights on both sides, looked like a gigantic and interminable runway on the largest airport in the world.

Books and Minorities

"We too were afflicted by the Gang of Four," the librarian at the Peking Public Library told me. "But now they are gone, and things will get better. However, we still have many problems to solve."

Wherever I went, everyone I met in China told me about the Gang of Four and their destructive measures. In Kashgar, it was the workers at the textile factory; in Urumchi, the students and teachers at the University; in Peking, the librarians and scholars at the Institute for Research on Minorities. Almost no area had been spared.

The names of the members of the Gang were never mentioned. It was assumed everyone knew that they were Mao's widow Chiang Chin, Chang Chun-chiao, Yao Wen-yuan and Wang Hung-wen. Indirectly they simply meant the Cultural Revolution. However, whereas the Gang of Four and their destructive activities had been a negative episode, a plan had now been worked out to help counteract the destruction. It too included the number four, and was referred to as The Four Modernizations. The implementation of this plan was to rapidly transform China into a modern industrial nation. The modernizations affected the following fields:

agriculture, industry, defense, and technology and science. The Gang of Four were spoken of with apologies and loathing—the Four Modernizations, on the other hand, with expressions of firm belief in the future. Even in the most isolated parts of Sinkiang, people talked about "The New Long March" and about a "New Leap Forward." All was based upon the Four Modernizations.

The fact that real progress in scientific research must be built upon good scientific libraries was accepted by all and stressed to me by the librarian of the Peking Public Library. The purchase of new literature and especially of a large collection of journals and periodicals had priority. The Peking Public Library, established in 1912, was quite old. The word "old," moreover, meant something else in Peking, where books have been collected since the Sung and Ming dynasties, that is to say, since the thirteenth century. At the time of the liberation in 1949, the library contained 1.4 million volumes, most of them in Chinese. There were only a small number in foreign languages. Today the library contains 9.6 million volumes of which 60 percent are in Chinese. The rest are in different foreign languages, about sixty of them, I was informed. I was allowed to visit the reading rooms, which were well filled with people studying. In the periodicals room, there was a rich selection of journals and periodicals. The natural sciences and technology dominated. I was informed that the library had approximately 10,000 foreign periodicals which were either purchased or acquired by means of exchange. In addition, there were several thousand Chinese periodicals. Seventy percent of these dealt with natural science and technology. The library had approximately 2,000 connections for exchange and an interurban network that gave service to the whole country, with priority for public institutions.

However, even though considered the "National" library, the Peking Library was not the only large library. There were, in Peking also, the municipal library, and the large library of the Academy of Sciences. In addition, all over the country there were university libraries, district libraries, and people's commune libraries.

As all other libraries in the world, the Peking Public Library had space problems. With nearly ten million volumes, new storage space was necessary. Since it was impossible to arrange this in the present location, an addition had to be built somewhere else. Furthermore, the library was in need of being modernized. The Central Committee had been very understanding about these present-day demands, our librarian stated. He proudly mentioned that Chou En-lai had personally intervened in order to bring about the construction of a new library. I wanted to know about the rules for "mandatory copies" of all that was printed in China, and was informed that ever since the People's Republic had come into existence, there was a law which ruled that three copies of every book printed in China had to be submitted to the Peking Public Library, thereby securing this institution's standing as a national library. I was also informed that the library was visited by approximately 2,000 people a day. At the lending desk I wanted to know whether many books "disappeared"—alluding to a well-known library ailment in the West. The answer was no, that this happened very seldom. I had not expected anything else. In one reading room there was a display of foreign literature acquired during the most recent week. I looked through some of the shelves of special interest to me, and found the latest edition of Bartold's basic and monumental work *Turkestan Down to the Mongol Invasion*, and, also published in London, the *History of the Ottoman Empire* by S. J. and E. K. Shaw. We visited a reading room which contained literature in the minority languages, well-ordered and catalogued. Finally, I was shown some of the library's real treasures, Buddhist manuscripts from collections dating from Tun-huang on the Silk Road, and old handwritten manuscripts from collections dating back to the time of the Ancient Empires. I was shown, as an example of how advanced the ancient Chinese were on the subject of the care of books, a box constructed of a strongly aromatic type of wood which kept insects and other vermin away from its valuable contents.

The visit to the library was obviously intended as an intellectual preparation for the main object of my trip, that is, minority studies and research.

During a luncheon with the vice-president of the Academy, the former ambassador in London, Huan Sian, as host, and in which a number of the active members of the Academy participated, I received my first introduction to the Academy's minority research program. Do we have any minority problems in Sweden? someone wanted to know. "You have the Lapps, don't you? Do they enjoy equality with the Swedish majority? Do they have the same high standard of living as Swedes in general?" I answered yes to the question about equality, but in reference to the standard of living, I had to make a reservation, which, of course, also had a bearing upon the equality, since it is quite obvious that a nomadic, or at any rate half-nomadic people, can not enjoy as high a standard of living as resident, highly industrialized Swedes. Questions about the Lapps continued to come up on many different occasions. It was clear that the Chinese had thoroughly studied minority problems in different parts of the world. This is not strange in view of their own complicated and multi-faceted minority situation.

But first a few words about the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. In Sweden it would most likely be referred to as an academy for the "humanities" to distinguish it from an academy of "natural sciences." The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences was established in 1977 as an outgrowth of the Academia Sinica, which thereafter was to be concerned exclusively with natural sciences and technology. The creation of the Academy of Social Sciences can be interpreted as one result of the relaxation of conditions for intellectuals and the liberation of scholars, which came about as a condemnation of the Gang of Four and the Cultural Revolution. It is organized into twenty different research institutes, and although I risk being accused of injecting altogether too much detail into this account, I shall mention all of them. They were the following: an institute for the literature of the world; five different

institutes for historical research—general history, Chinese history up to the Opium War of 1840, history of the world, archaeology, and one for research in the history of earthquakes in China, an unusual subject matter from a European point of view, but certainly both important and stimulating for the Chinese; further, there was a philosophy institute, an institute for research on nationalities (or minorities), a philological institute—it was being established at the time—the Cultural Revolution had caused a great scarcity of trained philologists, and they were absolutely necessary, also for other disciplines in the academy; there was also a press research institute, the five different institutes for economic research —general economy, industrial economy, agricultural economy, world economy, and an institute dealing with financial and foreign trade questions; there was an institute for research in the religions of the world, and two institutes for political science—these latter institutes were being established and apparently were to deal with regional studies according to a prearranged plan. Finally, there was an information center.

I was mainly interested in Chinese minority research and education. "Nationality" and "minority" were two concepts that seemed to be used interchangeably, though sometimes there was reference to minority nationalities. But my impression was that the term "minority" was the more important of the two. In the afternoon, a visit was arranged to the Institute for Research on Minority Questions. It was situated in the western outskirts of the city, in a large park, together with the Central Institute of Minority Nationalities, which is mainly an educational institution, and I shall describe it in detail later.

We drove through narrow streets and along shady avenues. At the Institute, its chief, Professor Yun—a Mongolian—was waiting with about fifteen of his co-workers. They were representatives for minority research in Sinkiang; most of them were Chinese or *Hans,* as they were called; there was one Uighur, one Kirghiz, one Kazak, one Tungan, and the rest were Uighur-

A group of Chinese academics with the author outside the Academy for Social Sciences and Minority Research in Peking. Furthest to the left in the front row is Professor Yun. Number three is Professor Fu. Second from the left in the second row is Professor Wang. Furthest to the left in the third row is the interpreter, Wang Jui-chi. 1978.

speaking Chinese. Professor Fu was with us. He has a Ph.D. from London University; his dissertation was a study of descriptive phonetics of the language spoken by the Lolo people. The Lolos are one of China's many minorities, and they are now called *Yi*. Also present was Professor Wang, who specializes in the South Chinese minority languages which are closest to the languages spoken in Thailand. In general, the competence at the Institute was impressive and convincing. I was made aware of this fact during an improvised symposium held in a comfortable room on the second floor, while drinking lots of tea. They were all informed about my own Sinkiang research. For example, they had read my article in the London periodical *Asian Affairs* dealing with Swedish research on Central Asia. In this article I had mentioned my

intention to publish a bibliography of the literary production of the printing press at the Swedish mission in Kashgar during the half century of its existence. They stressed that they were interested in such a publication, since it dealt with Sinkiang. Dr. Fu had read my article dealing with Turkic studies in Sweden, which I had published in a Soviet periodical from Baku. They wanted to know what had happened to the scholarly material, that is, the handwritten material from Sinkiang that was collected by Sven Hedin. I informed them that much of it had already been published and I promised to compile a report about what is happening presently with the material. Their interest in all that had to do with Sinkiang seemed boundless.

The symposium was followed by a detailed report about the work of the institute. It had been established in 1958 and was made up of four departments: one for the study of minority languages, one for the history of the minorities, one for their ethnology, and a fourth dealing with minority theory. The institute had suffered seriously as a result of the Gang of Four and their destructive measures. It had been almost impossible to work at all during the years of the Cultural Revolution. Now they had begun again, and they were determined to make up for all they had lost. But there were many serious difficulties. Large parts of the library had been lost—a complaint I was to hear again in Urumchi. And the premises were not large enough. At this time, it was important to assemble and to coordinate all of the people throughout the country who were involved in minority research. They also planned to publish a periodical dealing with minority languages and literatures. This had been impossible during the Cultural Revolution. They stated that it had been very difficult to publish books at all in Sinkiang, or to have articles printed in Uighur. The Gang of Four had opposed it. But now, times had changed. They were working on a large Kazak-Chinese dictionary, the first in Sinkiang, and there were plans as well for a comparable Uighur-Chinese dictionary. There was an enormous amount of

work to be done. There was no mistaking the enthusiasm and the will to work, and all of them were eager to receive advice and suggestions. I promised to visit again on my return from Sinkiang, after having seen and experienced the developments there on the spot.

Our conversation ended with a summary of the institute's most important task: to work out written languages for the different minorities. There were fifty-five different minorities in China, each with its own language. Possibly, there were more. An inventory was being made, and it was possible that additional minorities, up to now unknown, would be discovered. Another important task for the institute was to write the history of these minorities, combined and separately. This was important for the purpose of enhancing their feeling of having been born equal—that is, their feeling of "equality," as the word was translated for me. I believe that the use of the phrase "being born equal" was more justified, considering the factual contents of these histories. The minority peoples were also expected to realize that they would have to follow along with the developments in society. Furthermore, they had to agree to help bring about the Four Modernizations, to work toward putting an end to their cultural and economic backwardness, and this was to be accomplished by means of assiduous study and with consideration of the research politics of the party.

On my return from Sinkiang, I visited the Central Nationalities Institute, which is very different from the Research Institute for Minority Questions. The Nationalities Institute is the more important of the two. It developed out of the Minority Institute founded in Yenan as early as 1941, after "The Long March," but it was not until ten years later that it was established officially in its present form. Its task is to educate cadres from all of the fifty-five minorities for active participation in the work of reconstruction. Both institutes are situated in the same large park. The object of the Nationalities Institute is to educate the minorities, the object of the other is to do research on their histories and general conditions.

One of the leaders of the former institute informed me in great detail about its work. To begin with, he stated, ever since the liberation, the government and the party had considered the education of minority cadres and the development of minority cultures of great importance. Since 1951 the institute had trained 12,000 students who were now active in different parts of the country. Most of them had made important contributions to reconstruction in their own minority areas. At present there were 2,400 students at the Institute, and they represented forty different nationalities. There were 1,000 teachers and officials of different kinds, 500 of whom could be referred to as teachers. A large number of them were members of different minorities. All of the teachers of completely Chinese origin were proficient in at least one minority language. The institute was organized into eight departments: the departments of the Han-Chinese language, of history, of art, of mathematics and physics, the departments for education of the cadres, for their preparatory courses, the political science department and the department for minority languages.

The departments of mathematics and physics were new. When I think of it now, it occurs to me that they are a result of the fourth of "the Four Modernizations," the one dealing with the natural sciences and technology. The state finances all of the students' expenses: their education, food, lodging, books, etc.

My informant stated that both Mao and Chou En-lai had personally shown great interest in the work of the Institute ever since it had come into existence, and that they had done much to further its different functions. Mao had received the representatives of the Institute no less than fourteen times, and Chou En-lai had visited the Institute personally. Chairman Hua Kuo-feng, as well, showed much interest in the activities of the institute. In June 1977 he had received a delegation made up of 2,000 of the Institute's students and teachers.

This Institute in Peking headed ten similar institutes in different parts of the country. The largest minority area is the province

of Sinkiang, which covers one-sixth of the surface of China and has thirteen different minorities. Tibet is next in size. It is inhabited almost exclusively by Tibetans, though there exist five minorities there as well. In Peking, there are about 300,000 representatives of all of the fifty-five minorities, which make up only 6 percent of the total population of China, but inhabit 50 to 60 percent of the surface of the country. I was also told that among the minorities, there are two that have Chinese as their mother tongue. They are the Manchu and the Tungan.

We made a tour of some of the different school buildings scattered through the large park where many of the students were enjoying the beautiful fall weather. First we visited a classroom where a lesson in Uighur grammar was in progress. The teacher was Chinese and the students Uighurs from different areas of Sinkiang. I was allowed to ask them where they came from. It was obvious to me that the teacher was extremely proficient in Uighur. Later I found out that she had participated in the compilation of the large Chinese-Uighur dictionary. It was clear that the students were themselves proficient in Chinese. We went to a building which, on its ground floor, had been made into a minority museum. It contained much factual information about minorities, many objects used in daily life, and much very clear and easy to understand propaganda. Most of it was pictures describing the oppression by the former land owners. Many of them were quite brutal, especially those that illustrated conditions in Tibet, where the "aristocracy" had, according to the illustrations, employed frightful measures. Their ravages were demonstrated by photographs of human beings with severed arms, legs, or noses.

We went to the Institute library; I must admit I was disappointed. Shelf after shelf was filled with Mao's writings translated into Uighur and other minority languages. I saw very few Uighur or Kazak books. No one blamed the Gang of Four, but I am convinced that the scarcity of original minority literature was connected to the opposition to the minorities during the Cultural

Revolution. We looked into the teachers' reading room, and it was spacious and light and contained a rather well-equipped reference section. A copy of Webster's unabridged dictionary was on display on a separate table.

After our tour we discussed the Institute and minority education. Here, as elsewhere, I was asked for comments and criticisms. I said that it was not up to me to criticize, but that I would be happy to give them some of my ideas. For example, I wondered about a Sinkiang bibliography. It is true that such a bibliography had been compiled and published in Japan, but it was quite outdated. Bibliographies are primary requisites for all research and there could be nothing more useful than a complete bibliography of all that had been published in the Silk Route Province of Sinkiang, concerning all disciplines: history, archaeology, language, ethnology, and folklore. The Lapps were brought up again. It was obvious that our Swedish minority interested them for purposes of comparison. I stated that Lapp linguistics was an important liberal arts subject in Sweden, that Lapp scholars had done much research, that there were elaborate records of Lapp sounds in phonetic transcription, and lists of Lapp place names, myths, ideas and beliefs. I suggested that in Sinkiang there was a similarly rich amount of material to work with. The Uighur dialects had not been studied much, and the number of dialect samples in phonetic transcription was minimal. There existed a wealth of folk tales, folk literature, riddles, proverbs, and speech mannerisms, which all, most likely, dated back to cultures that have long since disappeared. You have asked me for advice, I said, and my advice is: save all that can be saved of Sinkiang's folk literature because it is in danger of disappearing. It is based upon an oral tradition, upon memories, not upon books and periodicals. Find people who are fifty, sixty, and seventy years old. They can remember and tell the stories. But there is little time. The twentieth-century modernizations will soon change their way of life. If the minority cultures and literatures are to survive, it will be necessary to spare no effort.

To Urumchi

Pouring rain can make any city, even Paris, look miserable. Peking is no exception. When we, the two Wangs and I, left Hotel Peking early in the morning of 6 September in order to drive to the airport, it was pouring rain. The streets were filled with innumerable rows of cyclists all dressed in grey-green ponchos or covered with pieces of plastic fabric in many shapes, but all in the same grey-green shades as the uniforms and other clothes under them. The monotony was interrupted only by one or another lighter green or blue covering. At the bus stops people stood and shivered under their umbrellas. In the center of the city the streets were crowded with trucks, but traffic became lighter after a while. Then came a more open section, the long avenue which leads to the airport, with tall trees, bushes, parks and fields on both sides. Despite its size and its stony aspect, Peking is a rather green city.

The plane to Urumchi took off at 9:25 A.M., exactly on time. It was a British Trident, filled to capacity with Chinese, except for a couple of Afghans and myself. I have seldom seen passengers carrying so much paraphernalia divided into all sorts of small packages, but everything was stowed away cheerfully. The three of us were seated farthest back. I asked for the aisle seat because of

my long legs. Space is well-utilized on Chinese Airways domestic flights and it is, of course, easier for the smaller Chinese to sit on the inside. Service during the flight was excellent. Stewardesses, who spoke English, handed out chewing gum, candy, Chinese cigarettes and fans with Mao quotations printed on them. The latest issue of the illustrated periodical *China Reconstructs* in different language versions was passed around during the two and one-half hour flight to Lanchow, the only landing between Peking and Urumchi. My appearance gave rise to a certain amount of discretely camouflaged interest. After a while, people began to question Wang Jui-chih about me. Her information must have been both thorough and positive because I received friendly nods from all over the plane. There was an Uighur who spoke Uighur with the Chinese around him. Ms. Wang found out that he was head of an industrial bureau in Urumchi and that he, together with some of his co-workers, had been in Peking for a meeting —most likely it had to do with the Four Modernizations. After a while we began to converse in Uighur. He told me that he was actually an *Aqsuluq* "from Aq-su." Another man who was sitting diagonally across the aisle joined in our conversation and said that he was a *Khotanliq,* "from Khotan." But the man from Aq-su objected and said that that was not entirely true, that he was a Chinese born in Khotan, but that he was not Uighur, even if he did speak Uighur. It was obvious that this difference was of importance for the man from Aq-su. He was asserting his identity as a member of a minority.

At Lanchow Airport there were large portraits of Mao and of Hua side by side. There was the same sort of equality at Urumchi Airport. Inside the terminal at Lanchow there was one single decoration, a large frame surrounding a reproduction of one of Mao's poems written in his own calligraphic hand. We had an hour's stopover in a rainy Lanchow. There was no food service on the plane. Passengers were to have lunch at the airport restaurant, and we were taken to a special dining room on the second floor, a

room with bare walls except for the mandatory portraits of Mao and Hua. The two Afghans and their Chinese companions were already there. Another table was occupied by Chinese military personnel, and although it was not obvious, I suppose that they were officers since they were eating in this special dining room.

About half an hour west of Lanchow the rain clouds disappeared. We were approaching the northern part of Sinkiang, the part of the province that has always been called Dzungaria. Sinkiang is divided into two parts by the massive Tien-shan (the Heavenly Mountains) range. The country south of Tien-shan, the less accessible and less frequented, is called Alte Shāhār (the Six Cities) by its Turki inhabitants, the Uighurs. Dzungaria has always been more open and accessible, both from the east and from the north, that is, from China and Russia. It is from there that all of Sinkiang has been governed, and political life has been intensive, often dramatic, as a result of the many conflicts between the two large neighboring countries. From the air we could see how the landscape changed in character from a lunar landscape of bare mountains and deserts, to a well-cultivated plain bordered in the south by the Tien-shan mountain range, a barrier of snow covered peaks. The highest of these is Bogdo-ula. From its 5,470-meter peak the life-giving snow melts and rushes down into the irrigation ditches of the plain.

Urumchi is the capital of the Sinkiang-Uighur Autonomous Region. At present, the city has 800,000 inhabitants, but before the establishment of The People's Republic, it led a rather declining and sleepy existence. Now, its airport was a Central Asian surprise. During my travels in different parts of the world I have always been very much influenced by first impressions. They have, justifiably or not, made me feel positive or negative toward a country. Of course I have had to change my mind whenever I was confronted with undeniable proof that I was mistaken, but these impressions have often stayed with me stubbornly for long periods of time. The Urumchi Airport was a positive experience. It was

modern, and had long, even runways of concrete. The terminal building was extremely attractive even from the outside, and the large hall gave an impression of light, spacious comfort, and all was very clean.

A large reception committee was waiting for the Afghan delegates, and they were allowed to leave the plane first. Then we were taken to our reception committee: five Chinese and one Uighur, representing the region and the Revolutionary Committee. We went to the VIP room and had tea, the large thermos bottles filled with the boiling water standing on parade here as elsewhere in China. Then followed the usual introductory conversations—as always when one arrives at a new place. I was given a quick description of Urumchi, which had developed into an important large city with a good deal of industry. The nearby city of Karamay was mentioned briefly. It is northwest China's petroleum industry center and has, in recent years, changed Sinkiang's whole economic situation. My hosts talked a lot about Sinkiang's extensive unexploited natural resources and its development possibilities, and I said a few complimentary words about the airport. There was no mistaking their dream that Urumchi would become an important airport in the international network. Chinese Airways landed at Urumchi on its flights to Europe. Pakistan Airways was allowed to fly over Urumchi on its Pakistan-Peking flights, without, however, the right to land for the time being. The reason was that there simply was no real demand for flights between Pakistan and Urumchi. Many foreign delegations came to Urumchi nowadays, one of my hosts told me, and he added with a mixture of amusement and sarcasm, "Sometimes they ask 'Can you take a bath at the hotel, can you get your laundry done?' They think that we are completely backward in Urumchi. But we're not *that* backward. You can see and judge for yourself." It was obvious that they were somewhat irritated with the common prejudice that Sinkiang is a backward part of China, and I soon came face to face with their will to demonstrate the contrary.

The ride into the city showed that we had come to a new land, with a different material culture than that of the China we had left a few hours earlier. The speed of present-day travel makes differences more noticeable. The slow caravan journeys of the old days gave one time to get accustomed and adjusted to new environments. I am convinced that I wouldn't have thought about the contrast if I had taken the four-day-long train trip from Peking to Lanchow to Urumchi. I would have been eased into the Central Asian world slowly: in the countryside, low, flat-roofed Turkistan houses built of mud, the irrigation ditches with swiftly running water criss-crossing the fields; inside Urumchi, poplar-lined avenues and broad streets, all clean and tidy, but with an architecture that, except for the modern concrete and brick buildings, was unmistakably reminiscent of the old Russian building style that has spread over large parts of Central Asia since the latter part of the nineteenth century. Here and there the streets were decorated by large frames containing Mao quotations in Chinese or in Uighur, written in the new Latin alphabet. From time to time there was a moralizing and work-stimulating quotation from the writings of Ley Feng, the model soldier who died young. But what impressed me most in the streets was that the faces were mostly Chinese. Where were the Uighurs? We were, after all, in the Uighur Autonomous Region. After a while we reached parts of the city that looked Uighur, a mosque built of wood, Uighur faces. But, my first impression of Urumchi was that the Han-Chinese dominated, and that was an understanding I did not have to change.

Urumchi has a large modern hotel called Kun-lun, after the high mountain range which has always been an effective barrier between India and China. But I was not taken there. We drove through the city and left it again, and were soon in the countryside. In front of us a high factory chimney belched out smoke. It was a heating plant, I was informed. We turned to the right into a lush park and arrived suddenly in front of a building that looked like a hotel. It was "The Guest House for the Welcome of Foreign

Visitors," and it was to be my home during the time I would spend in Urumchi. Originally called Yenan Guest House, it had changed names for some unknown reason. In front of us was the heating plant, but the direction of the wind was apparently constantly such that the smoke was blown far away towards the mountains. The guest house was new, neat and clean, and almost elegant. The three of us were given rooms on the second floor, where the furniture seemed brand new, hardly used at all. We saw no other guests.

A New Interpretation of History

The fact that Sinkiang is an autonomous region does not mean that its history is separate from that of China. It does not, in other words, mean that it has an autonomous history. Sinkiang does have its own history, but the region has been part of the Chinese system since ancient times. This is very clearly demonstrated when one visits the museum in Urumchi. And it is very clearly stated by Urumchi scholars when they lecture on the history of Sinkiang.

The museum in Urumchi was an impressive building situated in the outskirts of the city. The reception committee consisted of five ladies, all Chinese, three of them so young that they could be called girls. One of them very competently showed us around the museum. We began with objects from the Stone Age, were taken to replicas of excavation sites at Turfan (called Tu-lu-fan in Chinese), Lop-nor, and Niya in southern Sinkiang. We saw staves and documents with early Chinese writing. There were also some old Uighur documents in Sogdian or Brahmanic writing. Later, we were shown photocopies of classical Uighur scripts: Mahmud al-Kashgari's important lexical work from the eleventh century and the didactic poem *Qutadghu bilik* (Happiness-bringing knowledge) from the same period. But the interval was long between the latter and a

volume of *Tarikhi Eminiye* (The history of Emin) from the middle of the nineteenth century. The museum was obviously well organized and maintained. There were many Mao quotations in Chinese and Uighur on the walls. Mao's now classic remark: "The past should serve the present" must, incidentally, be considered stimulating for every Chinese archaeologist and historian. It has, without a doubt, helped much to increase interest in peoples of the past and in their cultures. In this connection I would like to mention that an excellent pictorial work dealing with archaeological findings in Sinkiang both from more ancient times and from excavations as recent as 1972, with captions in both Chinese and Uighur, was published in Peking in 1975. It includes several of the treasures from the Urumchi museum. Also in 1975, an addition to this work came out, with German, English, and French texts. The German title is *Ausgegrabene Kulturschätze in Sinkiang.*

The day after our visit to the museum we had a meeting that can more adequately be described as a symposium, together with a number of cultural representatives and scholars from Urumchi. We met at the guest house, and Abdullah Qadir, the assistant chief of foreign relations in the Revolutionary Committee, presided. It was a relaxed get-together and we all drank a lot of tea and ate a lot of melons, since it was melon season in the whole of Sinkiang. Culture and science were represented by two Han-Chinese, three Uighur men, and one Uighur woman—all employees of the Urumchi university in different capacities. The two Chinese were responsible for history. One of them reported on the period from the Stone Age to 1840, the other on the history of more recent times.

As a whole, they followed the present official division of Chinese history into the following periods: primitive society from approximately 1.7 million years B.C. to 2,000 B.C., slave society 2,000 B.C.–476 B.C., feudal society 476 B.C.–1840 A.D. The older periods were subdivided in greater detail. The lecturer began by stating that the history of Sinkiang was part of the history of

the whole of China. He briefly called attention to the importance of the archaeological findings that had been made both before and after the 1949 liberation and that dated back to the Stone Age. Between 500 and 400 B.C., Sinkiang began to turn into a class society. At that time the land north of the Tien-shan range was inhabited by Huns and *Usun* or *Wusun*. The area south of the mountains was settled by an agricultural population. The two Han dynasties, the Western one from 206 B.C.–24 A.D. and the Eastern one, 25 A.D–220 A.D., were especially important. During these dynasties the whole of Sinkiang became united under one common ruler. As early as the year 138 B.C., Chang Chi'en was sent as an envoy to the countries west of Sinkiang, to what is known today as the Central Asian Soviet republics. The connections between Central China and Sinkiang were very close during the Han dynasties. In the year 60 B.C., a special administrative department was created for the province, and it also administrated regions in Kirghizia, Kazakstan, and Ferghana, which today are parts of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union, however, was not mentioned by name. The three geographical appellations were evidence enough. From that time on, Sinkiang was considered an integral part of the territory of China. The silk routes that went through Sinkiang were important connecting links with China.

Between the second and fifth centuries A.D., Sinkiang changed into a feudal society, and as a result became inseparably connected to China. Turfan was founded at that time, as well as some districts south of Lop-nor. The transition from slave to feudal society brought about an era of prosperity both culturally and economically. Then came Buddhism from Afghanistan and from the region that today is Pakistan. During the Tang dynasty, 618–907 A.D., all of China was consolidated, including Sinkiang. The Tang dynasty introduced prefectures and districts in the Turfan region, and government offices were established in Kucha. North of the Tien-shan a local government office was established, and it administered Central Asia all the way to Samarkand and Bukhara. Uighurs

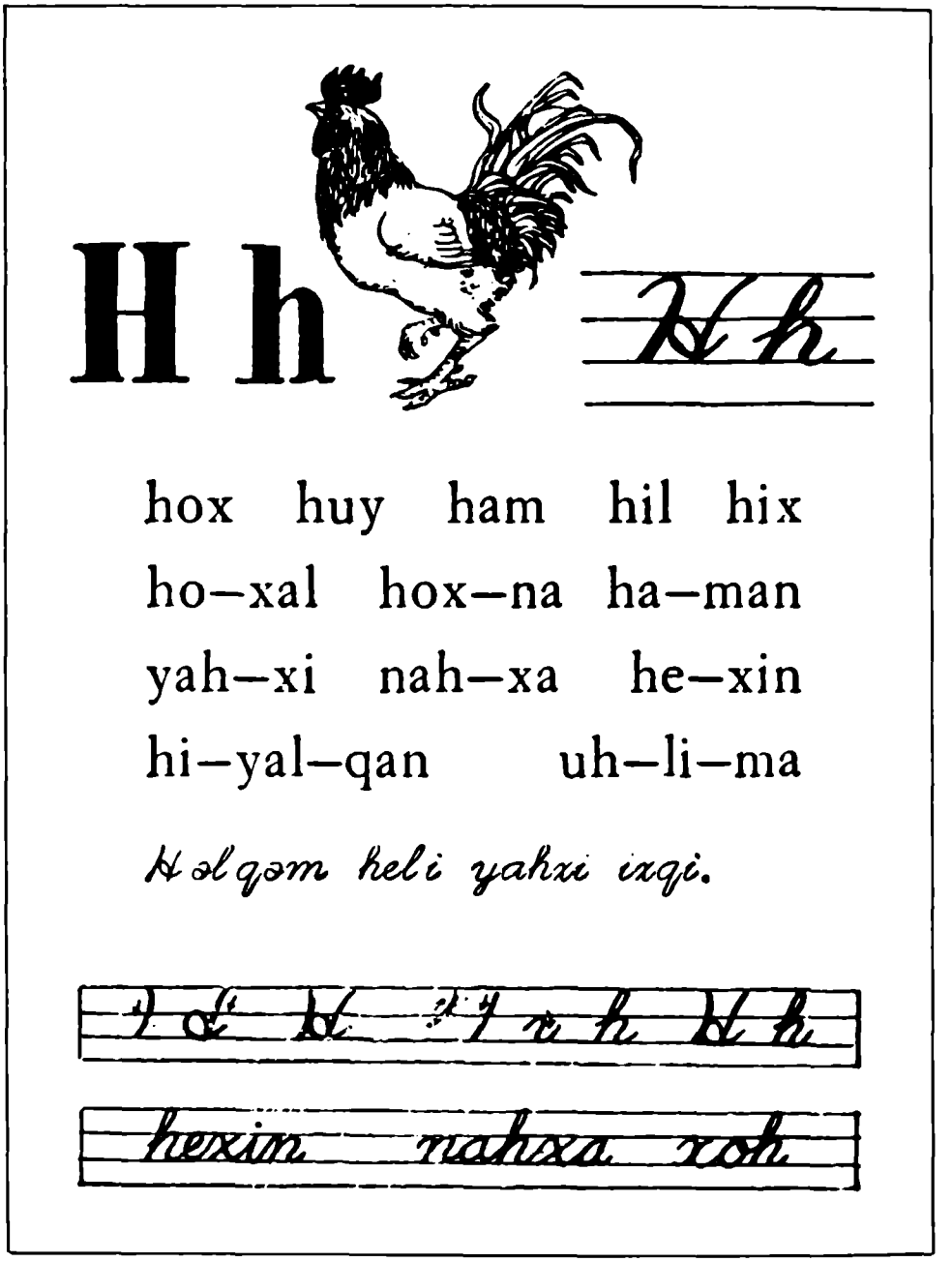
immigrated to Sinkiang from Mongolia during the latter period of the Tang dynasty, becoming the dominant part of the population and its most important minority. The speaker used the term "minority" also for this early period. The Uighurs established three states in Sinkiang: one in Kashgar, one in Keriya, and one in Kaochang. Then came Islam in the tenth century, and spread over the whole region. During the Ming dynasty, 1368–1644, and its immediate predecessors, the Mongolian aristocrats led by Chinggis Khan made their way into Sinkiang and founded many administrative bodies of their own. Archaeological findings show that culture prospered during that time. This is evidenced by the many findings of manuscripts. These manuscripts, or rather scripts, showed that the art of printing was introduced very early—it was the so-called "block printing" method (my addition). During the latter part of the fourteenth century, while Sinkiang was still governed by the Mongolian aristocrats, cultural and economic commerce with China was considerable. During the fifteenth century, the Kazak minority made its appearance. The Kazaks consist of many different Turkic speaking tribes. It is quite possible that they are related to a people called *Wusun*. There is, by the way, a Kazak tribe called *Uzen*, the speaker said. During the Ch'ing dynasty, 1644–1840, the religious leaders of Islam were suppressed because they had become too powerful. A military government was set up, and it governed not only Sinkiang, but the Lake Balkhash region as well. As a result, the Kirghiz also became Chinese subjects. In Sinkiang the minorities were the same as those of today. They were the Uighurs, the Kazaks, the Kirghiz, the Uzbeks, and the Tatars, who all spoke Turkic languages. There were also Mongolians, Dagurs, and Hui. The Ch'ing dynasty was subjected again and again to aggression from the outside, aggression by imperialists. While in the process of changing over to a half-feudal society after 1840, Sinkiang, like the rest of China, was subjected to Russian aggression. The Russians entered the province south of Lake Balkhash. By means of the Tarbagatai Treaty of 1851 between

Russia and China, the Russians secured further advantages in Sinkiang. The result of this was several insurrections in the province. In 1864 there was a peasant uprising directed against the feudal system. The peasants were also influenced by revolutionary movements taking place at that time in Central China, especially the Taiping Revolt, about which information was put up on the walls. There was an uprising against the tenant farmer system. Different government officials were in conflict with each other. In 1865 Yakub Beg came into power, but China definitely recovered control over the province after his short time in office. A treaty was signed by China and the Russians, who in 1871 had occupied Ili in the northwestern part of the province. This treaty resulted in the Russians thereafter occupying 70,000 square kilometers. The province of Sinkiang was officially established in 1874. Until then it had been governed by generals who were interested only in military matters and not in administrative duties, which were taken care of by local chiefs. By establishing the new province, ties were again strengthened with Central China. Then came a time of new uprisings. The Boxer Rebellion affected Sinkiang as well, but was suppressed. An uprising in Ili was, however, more serious. The period that followed was characterized by intrigues in different parts of the province and by Russian interference in its internal affairs. The Russians annexed Outer Mongolia at that time, tried to annex Sinkiang as well, but were unsuccessful, mostly because of the resistance of the people. After that, there was a time during which the province was governed by various warlords who divided it among themselves into separate districts. Then came Chiang Kai-shek's dispute with the generals in Sinkiang, which he won. But the uprisings continued, among them those in Ili that were put down by peaceful means. Then came Mao, and he condemned Chiang Kai-shek's aggression, and so the latter soon lost his power over the province. In 1955 the Autonomous Region of Sinkiang was established.

The lecture was long and much more detailed than this report.

Since it dealt with the history of Sinkiang—although from a Chinese point of view—I felt justified in asking whether there was a history of Sinkiang in New Uighur. Chairman Abdullah passed the question on to one of the Uighur scholars, who, after a while, with what seemed to me an embarrassed smile, answered: "*yoq*, there isn't any." I suggested that after all there must be some Sinkiang history in school books, that is, in New Uighur. The little group that surrounded me began to discuss the matter among themselves, and then the answer came: there was only a course in Chinese history; more was not necessary, since the history of Sinkiang was included in the history of China. It was, of course, a logical and correct answer, and it also answered my unspoken question about the meaning of autonomy. It obviously did not mean that the history of the province was to be considered separate. A hundred years ago someone had written a "History of Kashgar" which began with the time of the Flood and followed closely all historical events up to the late nineteenth century. It doesn't seem likely that that sort of history writing will be repeated in present day Sinkiang.

Our conference continued. We began to talk about the new Latin script for New Uighur, which now replaces the Arabic alphabet. It was supposed to have been introduced much earlier, but the Gang of Four had sabotaged the reform, I was told. The new Latin script was used not only for New Uighur but also for Kazak, the other large Turkic minority language in Sinkiang. The Uighurs and other minorities have been in charge of their regions since the liberation, I was told, and they also wanted to be in charge of cultural matters now. Cadres have been trained to work with the introduction of the Latin alphabet since the end of the 1950s. In 1958 a committee was created for the script reform; in 1959 this committee presented a proposal, and in 1960, a model for the new Latin alphabet for the Uighur language. Starting that year, the new alphabet was taught in the primary schools on a trial basis, and other courses were taught in its usage. The model was



A page from a New Uighur reader, with the new Latin alphabet. It contains thirty-three letters altogether, nine of which are additions specially adapted to the Uighur phonetic system. Among these are a *ü* (the same as a German *ü*) and an *ɵ* which corresponds to the German *ä*. Unusual in this new alphabet is the *x*, which corresponds to *sh*, and a *q*, corresponding to *ch*.

based on the system used for latinizing Han-Chinese writing, called *Pin-Yin,* which was worked out in 1958. This new Latin alphabet, which is now in use in New Uighur and Kazak, has thirty-three letters, of which nine are additions especially adapted to the Uighur phonetic system.* Nevertheless, an Uighur text causes considerable difficulty for the introduction of the new alphabet. There are no points of comparison for the Uighurs. They simply have to learn a new alphabet, and, of course, it is easier for beginners than for those (the majority) who were born and brought up with the Arabic alphabet. In August 1976, after close to ten years of practice, during which both alphabets were used concomitantly, with most likely a greater predominance for the Arabic, Sinkiang's revolutionary committee decided to change over to the new alphabet altogether and to abolish the old. According to the information I received, 70 percent of the intellectuals and 50 percent of the common people now use the Latin alphabet. The mass media use the new alphabet exclusively. All official publications are printed with the new alphabet, but exceptions are made for certain publications read by older people. The fact that it took as long as ten years to get used to the new alphabet was ascribed to the destructive measures of the Gang of Four by the speaker. And he continued: "They sabotaged the project, but now the future looks bright for the Latin script."

The mere mention of the Gang of Four and the Cultural Revolution brought up the subject of Sinkiang's folk literature. Before the Cultural Revolution there had been a great deal of interest in folk literature, fairy tales, folk songs, proverbs, and other manifestations of folkloristic creativeness. "We used to send people to southern Sinkiang, to Kucha and Aq-su in order to collect folk tales," one of the conference participants said. Another mentioned that Uighur folk literature was very old, and that he knew that Uighur folk tales had been translated to Chinese as early as the

**Editor's note:* But for a subsequent change, see the Postscript, p. 239.

fourth and fifth centuries. Mahmud al-Kashgari was mentioned again, correctly, as a good source for Uighur folk literature of the eleventh century. Manuscript findings from the different excavations contained a lot of folk literature. "The Gang of Four sabotaged our research," one of the participants said, "but now that we are rid of them, we can begin anew. We have sent recorders of folk literature to both Hami and Turfan, and we are planning to translate the material they collect into Chinese. At present we are doing research in Uighur literature at the university here." "We are planning to give lectures about Uighur literature soon," said one of the lecturers from the department of literature and language. I was to hear the Gang of Four criticized again whenever I came in contact with Uighur intellectuals, whether in Urumchi, Kashgar or Turfan, and I was also told about the renewed interest in literature everywhere. As a result of this interest, special "Societies for Art and Literature" had been organized.

The university in Urumchi dates back to an institute of higher education called Sinkiang Institute, which was founded in 1935. It was not until 1955 that the central government in Peking officially decided that a university should be established in the province. It is said that it was Chou En-lai who made that decision. In 1960 the name "Sinkiang Institute" was definitely changed to "Sinkiang University." The new university has had a stormy history. In 1935, at the time of the founding of the Institute, there was a strong Communist movement in Sinkiang. During the defensive war against Japan, many Communists were arrested, and during the years before the liberation there was much political instability in the province, which very much affected the intellectuals. The president of the university said that at the time of the liberation there was only one building that was not damaged. The damage had been enormous, he continued. In the library there were only 10,000 books that were in good enough condition to be used. There were 270 students, and for these only 7 teachers. By the beginning of the Cultural Revolution the number of students had

increased to 2,300 and the teachers to 500. The number of books at that time was 800,000. The president then went on to speak of the impact of the Cultural Revolution upon the university, and his description was extremely depressing. It was again, of course, the sabotage of the Gang of Four. The university did not develop during that time. A good many books disappeared or were destroyed. "At present we are building up again; today we have 770,000 volumes," the president said, and he continued: "On your way here you saw that we are constructing several new buildings. That is a result of the new administration. We are making progress again." He returned to the books. It was obvious that the university library was of special interest to him. Before the Cultural Revolution, a large amount of material about minorities in Sinkiang had been collected, and most of the books that had disappeared had had to do with minority questions. They had now started all over again to build up these collections. The president gave me a lot of interesting information about the organization of the university. The term "faculties" seemed to imply something different there than it does in Sweden; perhaps "group of subjects" would be a closer description. Altogether there were eleven faculties at the university. Six were in the department of the humanities, and they were: history, political science, Chinese literature, Chinese language, foreign languages, and physical education. Uighur literature and language were part of the faculties of Chinese literature and language. The Department of Natural Sciences was divided into five faculties: mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, and geology. At present there were 1,300 students, of which 60 percent came from the minorities. There were 694 teachers; more than 50 percent of these were Han-Chinese, the others coming from the minorities.

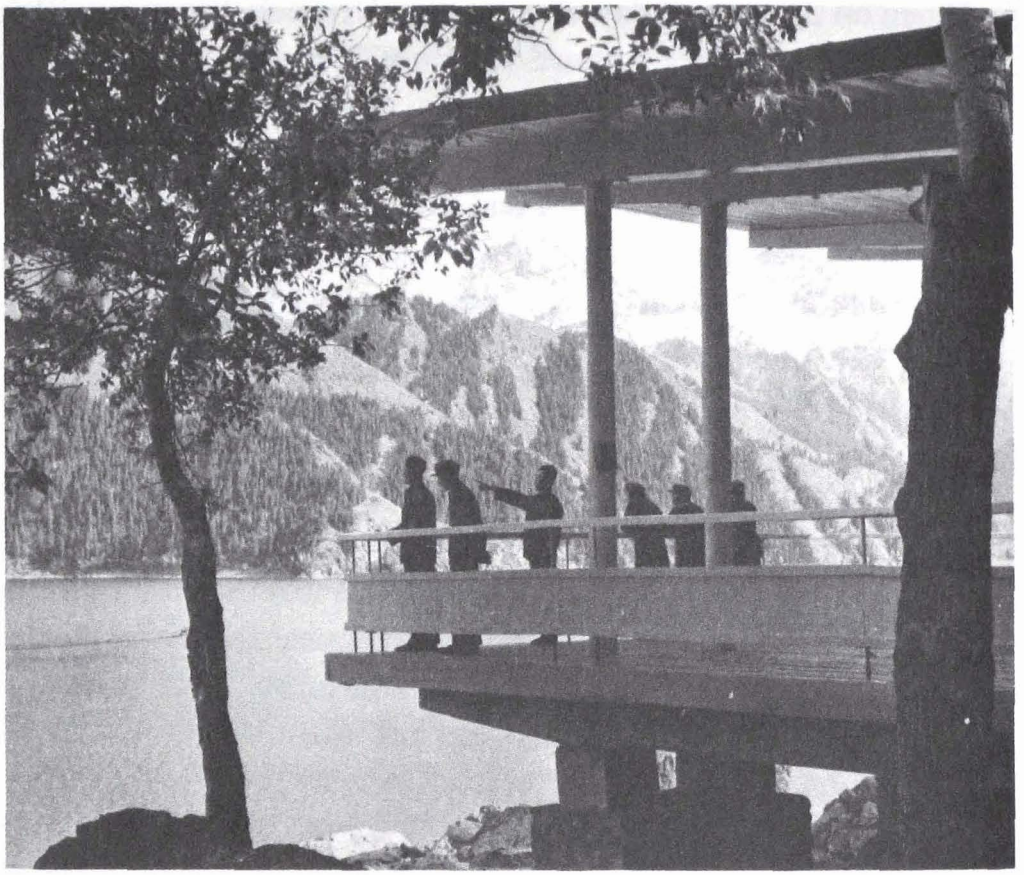
An Excursion to the Countryside

Metropolitan Urumchi is definitely not beautiful. It is surrounded by a well-cultivated plain, but the smoke from the industrial outskirts often hangs heavy over the city. Despite its lack of natural beauty, the capital of Sinkiang is now open for tourists and it is meant to become an attractive tourist destination. I can very well understand the thinking behind such a decision. For one thing, the Tien-shan range with its snow-covered peaks is visible in the south, and for another, Turfan, one of the world's deepest depressions, lies within a few hours by car from Urumchi. Turfan, by the way, is not only a depression. It is one of the world's richest archaeological open-air museums. Although not open at that time for foreign tourists, I was told that it would be so some time during the following year.

Abdullah Qadir is the man who is to develop the tourist industry. He is an Uighur from Kashgar, and he has a thorough education from the Minority Institute in Lanchow. In addition to his Uighur mother tongue, he speaks Chinese fluently and he is ambitious, experienced, and enterprising. During our fortnight in Sinkiang he went with us everywhere, and he was the man who could open doors when necessary, the man who could answer questions.

When on the second day of my stay in Urumchi he suggested an excursion to the area around Bogdo-Köl up in the Tien-shan mountains, my reaction, I must admit, was not entirely positive. I had a feeling that such an excursion was much too touristy for my taste—it wasn't exactly what I had wanted to see during my short visit to Sinkiang. But I accepted without complaining. Getting up to the mountain valleys of Tien-shan instead of seeing them only from the air should, after all, be a worthwhile experience. We left the guest house at about 9:30 A.M., drove through the whole of Urumchi with its teeming streets, and then through the extensive industrial outskirts with its numerous factories. There was a cement factory belching white smoke and a textile factory. An oil refinery, not entirely finished, would of course get its raw material from the oil fields in Karamai northwest of Urumchi, near the Soviet border. Beyond the industrial area, there was farming. Lots of people were working in the fields, and we met them on the road with carts, wagons, on bicycles and on foot. Judging from their features, the farming population was mostly Chinese. We drove through village after village where pigs rooted around the houses—black pigs, black-and-white pigs, many-colored pigs. They were the surest sign that we were in a Chinese area, since the Uighurs, though hardly religious any longer, still have an instinctive dislike for pigs which, according to Islam, are unclean animals.

After driving east across an endless plain for about an hour, we turned off toward the mountains. Bogdo-ula's snowy peak shone almost irritatingly white in the clear morning air. We drove through a wide valley, along a rushing river with clear, transparent water —melted snow from Bogdo-ula or Bogdo-köl. It was a bucolic landscape with sheep grazing on parched grass. It reminded me of the mountains north of Teheran, which had been a favorite outing destination during my years in Persia. We came to a Kazak region. We saw the first of the round felt tents near the river. The further up the valley we drove, the more numerous the Kazak tents became. Time and again, the road was obstructed by enormous flocks of



At Bogdo-Köl, up in the Tien-shan, "The Heavenly Mountains," a wildlife sanctuary with brilliant sunshine and deep forests. September, 1978.

sheep and goats with their Kazak herdsmen and women. We met Kazaks driving oxen loaded with all sorts of paraphernalia and household utensils. They were all on their way down to the valley. We met whole caravans of Kazaks, people and animals. It was the time for the move down from the summer encampments high up in the mountains, where it already was cold and where snow had begun to fall. They were moving to a milder climate. The Kazak migration was a genuinely nomadic phenomenon. There was nothing here to remind one of a modern industrialized society. This was the nomad society that had lived on the Tien-shan range since time immemorial and they had no connection with life in the modern world.

It took us a good two and a half hours to get to Bogdo-köl, which has an altitude of 2,000 meters and is surrounded by snow-covered peaks. The last stretch of road was miserable, but buses apparently drove all the way up to the vacation village. Up there, nature was as beautiful as on a picture postcard. It was the tourist paradise for all of Sinkiang. The sunshine was brilliant, there were dark shadows and clear, cool air. The lake was blue or green, depending on how the sun's rays fell on the water. It wasn't especially deep, a hundred meters they said, but the water was so cold that no one dared bathe in it, even during the warmest months of summer. A couple of brightly painted boats were moored at the beach for the use of tourists, and one more was pulled up on a strip of land which must have been the only wharf in coastless Sinkiang. A number of simple wooden cottages sat on the slope down to the lake. You could rent them for the day, but you could not spend the night. The tourists we saw walking around were mostly Han-Chinese. Abdullah said that people were now beginning to come from as far away as Peking. There had been tourists from Japan, Australia, Yugoslavia, England and the United States —not very many as yet, but more were expected. The whole area was closed to visitors from October to far into March because the snow was deep and closed all the roads. One could tell that winter was on its way by the looks of a potato field, where the tips of the plants were hanging frostbitten and black. We ate our box lunches in one of the cottages, but the cold was penetrating and we quickly hurried out to the sunshine on the terrace. Everything was very clean. There was a special outhouse a bit up a hill, a wooden hut with a hole the shape of a heart cut out of its floor. There was no litter except for melon rinds, which were left for animals in the forest, who in this way could benefit from lowland delicacies.

In Bogdo-köl, or Bogdolik, the Bogdo district, as it was also called, I found the beginnings of a tourist industry. It was the result of the industrialization of city life and also of a central government investment in tourism for the northwestern border regions of the country.

On my return from Kashgar ten days later, I saw a Kazak ranch, a "production team," also on the Tien-shan range, but in an entirely different direction, somewhere toward the southwest. This "team" was part of an Urumchi folk commune called "Easterly Wind." We drove for about an hour through a farming area, again mostly inhabited by Chinese on a good highway with heavy traffic of mostly trucks, then, turning off to the right, we began to climb toward the mountains on a good gravel road which easily took us through increasingly pleasant nature with meadows and wooded slopes. We came to a fence with a stile of the sort we have in southern Sweden which was opened for us by an obliging Kazak. We found ourselves in an area with low houses built of mud. They seemed uninhabited—the reason for this we found out later. We could see one or another Kazak round felt tent. The higher up we came, the more beautiful it was. Spruce forests covered the slopes, with majestic high trees down in the valley, to Christmas-tree size at timber line. We saw wide pastures, green meadows, and masses of sheep which obstructed the road from time to time. It was the same sort of bucolic countryside as on the way to Bogdo-köl. Then the valley widened and became an extensive pasture. Kazak tents were here spread out on a green meadow, like grey conical monuments. We stopped at one of these tents called *aq öy*, "white house" by the Kazaks and were greeted by its owner, a young man with a pleasant, open face. Next to the entrance lay one of those Central Asian sheep dogs, a strong beast who looked angry and suspicious. Next to the dog there was a skinny runt of a cat. That was the first time I saw a cat living with nomads. But there is an explanation for everything. The uninhabited mud houses which we passed further down were these Kazaks' permanent winter dwellings. That was where the cat belonged, but it had come along up to the summer mountain pasture. The Kazaks had become half nomadic. They lived in real houses half the year. The cat had also turned into a half nomad, just as the dog, for that matter. June to September was the time for life on the mountain, the real nomadic life.

Our host's wife was waiting inside the circular tent. The unusual braided wooden lattice work which holds up the walls formed a geometrical pattern on them. There was a portrait of Mao. The ground was covered by embroidered felt rugs. A sewing machine testified to the family's material prosperity. A little stove, a *bokhari*, stood in the middle. It was most likely necessary to use it even on summer evenings. A felt rug covered a wide bed, and the one single rickety chair was offered to me. All the others sat down on the floor. The wife offered us tea in large bowls in the Kazak manner, with milk and a lump of yellow butter. It reminded me of my childhood in rural Scania where we used to put a lump of butter in our coffee. With the tea we were offered *qurut*, a kind of goat cheese, and deep-fried cakes. Hens looked in through the open tent-fly from time to time and were chased away. When they became too forward, the fly was closed. After a while it was opened again by two little boys, five or six years old. They were the children in the family. They didn't say anything, only looked at us with big eyes—mostly, I suppose, at me, since I was the most unusual in our group. After looking for a while, they disappeared again. Our host began then to describe his "production team."

First he described the folk commune "Easterly Wind." Seven different nationalities lived and worked there. They were the Kazaks, the Han-Chinese, the Tungans, the Uighurs, the Uzbeks, the Tatars, and the Kirghiz. The Kazaks were in the majority, about 70 percent of the population. Cattle raising was their most important occupation, but there was a little farming as well. The commune was divided into four "production brigades," and these were divided into twenty "production teams." "Before the liberation," our host said, "we worked as farmhands for the 'bays' [rich men], but now we are organized into cooperatives. Before the liberation, we lived on barley, didn't have enough clothes, and had to use goat skins to protect ourselves against the cold. Our standard of living is higher now. We have homes both here and down in the valley. We use flour in cooking. We make our own butter

and cheese. In the winter we eat more meat, in the summer we have a lighter diet. Before the liberation we owned nothing. Now we own even sewing machines. [They were obviously status symbols.] Before the liberation, there were no schools, only the rich bays' children were allowed to go to school down in Urumchi. Now every production team has a primary school, every production brigade a lower middle school, and the people's commune has a higher middle school. All our children can also attend the university, for example in Peking. After having graduated from the different schools, children from our commune have gotten jobs as technicians and as teachers. One of our children is employed by the Nationalities' Publishing House in Peking, another has worked for Radio-Peking. Before the liberation we had no doctor, there was no medical care. Now every production team has its own 'barefoot doctor' and a cooperative health-care center, and every people's commune has a hospital that is equipped to treat common illnesses. More serious cases are sent to Urumchi. Our people's commune owns seven trucks and fifteen tractors. Every family owns one horse, three to five oxen and seven to ten sheep. Every year our folk commune delivers 10,000 sheep and 160 tons of wool to the state. In the old days, each sheep gave one kilogram of wool, but that was coarse wool. Since the 1950s our sheep give fine wool, and no less than four kilograms a year. Fine wool pays better and our yearly earnings are therefore increased." Finally I was told that Sinkiang was responsible for 60 percent of China's production of wool.

We went out to the bucolic countryside. We walked around among the sheep. They pointed out which of the sheep gave coarse wool, used only for rugs, and which of them gave the really fine wool for use in weaving fine fabrics. There were also a few goats. In answer to my question, I was told that their function was to lead the sheep to pasture. Sheep are not enterprising; goats, on the other hand, are active and lively. They look for new paths,

discover the best pasture lands, and the sheep follow after. As sheep do, I almost said.

Further up the valley there was a vacation village with a number of simple cabins of the same sort as those in Bogdo-köl. They were empty because it was winter now, as far as the inhabitants of Urumchi were concerned. From this village you could hear the sound of a waterfall. Clear, transparent snow water poured down into a brook from a twenty-meter-high mountain ledge. "There are no fish in the brook," the Kazaks said. "The water is too cold." And if the water was too cold for fish, it was too cold for people as well. An ideal recreation area, where nature kept human beings at a distance.

Back down in Urumchi, it was warm and muggy. A lid of yellow-grey smoke hung over the city—a by-product of industrial society. The Kazaks up in their valley had spoken with pride about their children who had come so far in their education that they had been able to get jobs in Urumchi and Peking. And people in Urumchi longingly looked forward to the time when the vacation villages in the Tien-shan range would open for the season. One man's meat . . .

To Kashgar by Plane

A full storm blew up that night. Window panes rattled, doors and windows slammed, the wind roared and howled. In the morning the storm continued unabated, and I began to wonder about our flight to Kashgar. On the way to the airport I saw that some of the tall poplars which bordered the irrigation canals had been blown down. Abdullah informed us that the part of Urumchi where we had stayed was known to be windy. There would be no wind at the airport and, he continued, in New Uighur there is a saying, "The wind will be small." Abdullah's forecast turned out to be right.

At 7:30 A.M. Urumchi was a very quiet city. But 7:30 was actually Peking time. In reality it was only 5:30 A.M. A lot of Chinese were out jogging, and we saw still more of them when we got out of the city. There were people jogging among the poplars, others doing calisthenics, either alone or in a group, and all were dressed in the same grey-green material. Further on, we saw soldiers running at a fast pace in groups of ten to fifteen. It was obvious that people got up early in Urumchi to keep in shape. But they were all Chinese. I didn't see a single face that looked as though it belonged to a minority. I concluded that the Chinese had jobs that necessitated additional physical exercise, and the others got their exercise while working.

The plane to Kashgar was scheduled to leave at 8:50 A.M. and did so exactly. While we were waiting, Abdullah began to tell us *Apándi* stories. *Apándi* is the Uighur pronunciation of the Turkish *efféndi,* and the stories have to do with Mollah Nasreddin, the Turkish comedian from Asia Minor. His stories have spread across all of Central Asia, and no one there is aware of their Middle Eastern origin. The stories are numerous, and their humor is subtle and profound. Abdullah and I had an unplanned competition in telling them. I have published a good many in my research on Uighur folk literature, so all I had to do was to dip into the wellspring of my memory.

The plane was a Soviet AN-24, a little turboprop which seated about thirty passengers. The Russian on the signs had been replaced by the more international English. Chinese and English were the languages used in the cabin. About 80 percent of the seats were occupied, almost exclusively by Chinese, most of them in uniform. There were two young stewardesses, one from Shanghai, the other from Peking, who both spoke a tolerable English, and who at this time were doing their stint on one of China's most remote domestic lines. All was scrupulously clean. These passengers carried just as many small packages as the passengers mentioned before on the flight from Peking to Urumchi. Everything was stowed into all sorts of hiding places, nooks and crannies. A Chinese man carrying a large object in a wooden frame tried to put it furthest back in the cabin, but was firmly told by the stewardess to place it either over, under, or next to his seat. The package was so large that it fit nowhere, and the controversy was finally resolved when the poor man agreed to hold the bulky parcel on his lap all the way to Kashgar. Discipline on the plane was rigorous—and liberal as well.

The route to Kashgar goes over the Tien-shan range to the desert region of southern Sinkiang, with an intermediate landing in Aq-su. We left smoky, industrial Urumchi and flew over a long, well-cultivated valley, where there were several small industries.

Then, high up in the mountains, we could see a densely built-up area. A freight train left a long trail of white smoke. It was a local train, and the whole area was an important mining corporation. We flew at low altitude over the peaks, which were covered with a thin layer of snow; we saw the infinitely desolate uninhabited mountain masses, and then came out over a cultivated region south of the range. You could see the long, arrow-straight Urumchi-Kashgar asphalt highway. It looked like a black ribbon in a landscape that little by little turned into a desert—that is, into salt flats. The ground was covered with nitrate, white as snow, hopelessly sterile, a landscape characteristic of large areas of Sinkiang. To an uninitiated observer this landscape could seem without value, but it most likely hides unsuspected and unexploited riches.

It was 11:00 A.M. when we landed on an apparently brand new runway in Aq-su. There was no terminal building, only a couple of low, flat-roofed mud houses. We were met at the plane by a young Chinese who represented Aq-su's committee for taking care of foreigners, and he led us to one of the mud houses, the most respectable of the two, I suppose. It was a rectangular room with braided grass rugs under the roof, which was supported by thin wooden beams. It was like the buildings I remembered from my earlier visit to Sinkiang. A young Uighur girl came in with tea, grapes, yellow, green and white melons, and red watermelons. We had come to melon country in southwestern Sinkiang, and from then on they lavished on us melons, grapes, apples, pears, figs and everything that belonged to the luxuries of the fruit harvest. Our Chinese host asked right away whether I was acquainted with Jan Myrdal. He had had to spend a night in Aq-su because of bad flying weather, and he had obviously left an unforgettable impression. Wherever Jan Myrdal had been, people asked about him, and I had to report on his health and well-being. I informed them that he had just written a book about the Silk Route. Neither in Aq-su nor in Kashgar did they know about it, and I did my best to introduce it for knowledge-thirsty Uighurs and Chinese. I

asked our Chinese host whether many foreigners came to Aq-su. He answered diplomatically that their number was increasing. Recently some Japanese newspaper reporters had been there to write an article for the magazine of the Japanese-Chinese Friendship Union. He invited me very kindly to come to Aq-su and spend some time, which was certainly very tempting for an old linguist who knew that the Aq-su Uighur dialect was entirely unknown and could uncover many secrets about the oldest of the Uighur dialects. But I had to thank him as politely as possible and postpone acceptance to a very dubious future. Therefore, I did not bother Aq-su's 90,000 inhabitants with my linguistic research activities. The whole of the Aq-su region had 1.2 million inhabitants, I was told, and that reflects a very heavy population increase during the past fifty years.

An IL-14 from Kashgar on its way to Urumchi landed on the runway, and that was the signal for our departure. There are three to four communication lines a week between Urumchi and Kashgar, and they all land in Aq-su, which is significant in terms of the importance of the city. I saw it only from the air. The buildings were constructed mostly in the Turkistan style—that is, low houses of sun-dried brick—but the crowding that had characterized any built-up area in the old days was no more, the streets were straight and wide. On the outskirts of Aq-su there were high loessal hills with deep canyons, which were perfect for Buddhistic cave temples of the sort that were found in similar terrain in other parts of Sinkiang.

From Aq-su we flew to Kashgar through a light red haze and could not see the ground. I spent the time helping Mrs. Wang translate Chinese scientific terms via English to Swedish. She carried a very handy little Chinese-English dictionary which contained a surprisingly large number of words needed for both everyday life and research purposes. I have seldom seen such a good selection of words in other dictionaries.

The trip through the light red haze was monotonous. I had

expected to be able to approach the Kashgar I hadn't seen in almost fifty years in a visually more stimulating way. The Chinese with his wooden frame parcel seemed relieved by the thought that his ordeal would soon be over. One of the stewardesses walked down the aisle with a fiercely determined expression on her face. She was looking for something. Then I saw her take out a fly swatter and quickly send a fly, which had apparently boarded in Aq-su, to a better world. She was a very special stewardess, for out of a pocket of the nearest seat she took an air-sickness bag, put the dead fly in it carefully, and then placed it on the restroom floor.

At 12:55 our AN-24 landed on Kashgar's gleaming white concrete runway.

PART TWO

1929–1930

Why Kashgar?

One question people keep asking me is, What made you take up Turkish? To tell the truth, I have to admit that I don't know the reason exactly. The following is an account of the way it all came about.

In the fall of 1926, I registered at the University of Lund. My chosen field was the humanities. I began with a course in German taught by Ernst Albin Kock, known for his own personal system of spelling Swedish, and a course in Nordic languages taught by Emil Olson who, because of his general cool and southern Swedish corpulence, was called "Rock of Ages" by the students. These two classes were very popular. Most of the students, including me, were planning teaching careers. As I look back now, I can see that I very early began to wonder whether teaching was the right choice of a life occupation for me. I began to look around for other subjects.

The university had a lot to offer. I decided that a study of Sanskrit and comparative linquistics would constitute a good basis for studies in modern languages. Therefore I began to take a course taught by Herbert Petersson, the kind and very scholarly professor who was able to turn tedious and dull Sanskrit grammar

into poetry. He died before I could finish the course, and was replaced by the energetic, eloquent Assistant Professor from Uppsala, Helmer Smith, the great Pali specialist. Professor Smith and I developed a friendship that lasted to the end of his life. A long time after our years at the university, our friendship blossomed again when I was ambassador in New Delhi and Colombo, 1948–51. We corresponded regularly about Singhalese and Indian linguistic and literary problems. My studies in Sanskrit led me to Slavic languages, and my teacher there was the rather eccentric professor and poet Sigurd Agrell, a colorful personality who livened up the academic world in Lund. In those days you had to study two of those languages for the equivalent of two credits; I chose Russian and Czech. My teacher in Russian was former Captain of the Guard Mikhail Khandamirov. After his time spent as a prisoner of war in connection with World War I, he landed in Sweden and with the help of Professor Agrell got a job at the University of Lund. His teaching methods were, perhaps, not always strictly academic, but they were remarkably effective. I am still grateful for the thorough education in Russian that I got through him, and that has come in handy later in my life. Professor Khandamirov was, like Professor Agrell, an unusual man. His broken Swedish gave rise to many anecdotes, his dark complexion —his family had originated somewhere in the Caucasus—made him interesting and stimulating.

Going on to Turkic language studies was mostly the result of my wanting to broaden my general knowledge of languages, and also perhaps because my curiosity for Turkic had been increased by Professor Khandamirov's etymological explanations of Russian words. A word would come up from time to time which he would call "Tatar," a concept I later understood to encompass most Asiatic Turkic languages, as well as Mongolian and even sometimes Persian. "Tatar" was for the Russian Khandamirov a collective term for all that is unknown and mysterious in the connections between Russian and the various Asiatic languages and cultures.

This is so, still today, for many modern Russians. Now, so much later, I think there was still another reason for my taking up Turkic studies, and that was Sven Hedin's book, *From Pole to Pole (Från Pol till Pol)*. It was a book I had read innumerable times during my early youth, an exciting, dramatic and sometimes terrifying description of our world, and also of Sven Hedin himself. The book was extra-curricular reading for all Swedish school children at that time. There is hardly a doubt in my mind that this book contributed strongly to my interest in Central Asia.

The teacher of Turkic at Lund was at that time the former medical missionary Gustaf Raquette. He had spent the major part of his life in East Turkistan, alternating between the cities of Yarkend and Kashgar, and he was a recognized international authority on East Turkic languages. This group of languages is today called New Uighur. He was a self-taught man who originally only had a Swedish primary school education, but he had added studies in diverse subjects, and crowned it all with a degree from Liverpool which had given him the title of Doctor of Tropical Medicine. Medical care had been the major part of his work with the Muslims of East Turkistan, but he had combined it with a strong interest in language and literature. Mostly responsible for getting Gustaf Raquette to Lund was Professor Hannes Sköld, assistant professor in comparative philology and linguistics. He was known to have radical political opinions, and was therefore regarded as somewhat of an "enfant terrible" in conservative Lund. It should be mentioned, parenthetically, that he was the son of Johan Sköld, the well-known missionary to China. Others responsible for Dr. Raquette's connection with the university were the sinologist Bernhard Karlgren, and the professor in comparative linguistic research in Gothenburg, Evald Lidén. Their help and support resulted in Dr. Raquette's coming to the University of Lund in 1924, thus reviving there the teaching of Turkic languages, which had been at a standstill since the middle of the eighteenth century.

In his teaching Dr. Raquette of course devoted his greatest interest to the Turkic languages, since he had spent a considerable part of his life in the region where they are spoken, but the course included Turkish, the so-called Ottoman Turkish spoken in present-day Turkey. Dr. Raquette was well versed in that language as well. He had lived in Istanbul a longer period of time, and had written a dissertation on its rather complicated accentuation system. I began with modern Turkish for pedagogical reasons, and my first assignment was to learn the Arabic alphabet, since the Latin alphabet had not as yet been introduced in Turkey. Since modern Turkish, in its literary form, was made up mostly of Arabic and Persian borrowings, I also had to make use of the university's facilities in Arabic studies. Together with the Turkish, I took a course in Arabic, taught by Axel Moberg, a well-known authority in that subject who was also the chancellor of the University. I studied Persian a few years later in Copenhagen; the teacher there was Arthur Christensen, whose scholarship included subject matter all the way from Iranian languages to the interpretation of dreams. I reinforced my studies in Persian by simultaneously attending and patiently listening to Eric Hermelin's long monologues about classical Persian poetry. His teaching was highly unconventional, given, as it was, from his involuntary sojourn at St. Lars Hospital near Lund. It has been described with great feeling by Per-Eric Lindahl in his excellent biography.

I got my B.A. (filosofie kandidatexamen) in spring 1928 and decided to go on with Turkish philology and linguistics. Many of my friends thought that I was absolutely crazy for considering something as bizarre as Turkish. Getting a few credits in the subject was acceptable—or no more than mildly eccentric—but to work for a higher degree in something one could not expect to earn a living with was considered foolhardy. People around me studied and worked for well-planned jobs with teaching institutions in Sweden. I ventured out to the unknown and acquired a reputation of being an academic bohemian. Dr. Raquette sup-

ported me strongly, which was not surprising since I was living evidence for the raison d'être of his subject. He obviously didn't have many students. Professor Agrell supported my decision mostly because deep down he was an academic romanticist. Most important for me was the fact that my parents supported me. My father, a very down-to-earth sort of man, could very well have vetoed my choice of such an impractical subject for economic reasons. I was entirely dependent upon his financial help. It was he who provided the underwriters for my loans. My father believed in me and continued to do so, and I never felt that he had the slightest doubt about my succeeding in the career I had chosen. He was a farmer, and therefore it was impossible for him to judge either my qualifications or the merits of such an education. He simply believed in me. Perhaps his deep feelings about religion were part of it. But above all, he was an unusually energetic man, interested in all sorts of questions, and he had managed to acquire a considerable all-round education. This fact must have contributed to his great interest in my studies.

As preparation for graduate studies, I decided to spend a term during the spring and summer of 1928 at the Orientalisches Seminar in Berlin, at that time the best-known center in Europe for oriental studies. I arrived there at the end of April and was well received by Professor Willy Bang, the authority at that time in general Turkic philology and linguistics. His lectures dealt with *Taránchi* texts. *Taránchi* is the form of East Turkic which was spoken in the northern part of Sinkiang, especially in the Ili region or Kuldja. Nowadays this language is the principal component of New Uighur.

Professor Bang's academic career was rather unusual. Originally he had been professor of English at the University of Louvain in Belgium. During that time he also pursued Oriental studies, writing papers on the problems of cuneiform writing, on Byzantine, and later on Turkic subject matter. The latter became his life work. He was a polemical person, and his lectures were strongly

critical of the Russian Turkologist Radloff, who had become famous as a result of his recording of Turkic dialects. Professor Bang was an intellectual, a thoroughly systematized theoretician. Radloff had done his research in the field, and experienced the Turkic peoples on the spot. He had recorded words and linguistic constructions which did not always agree with the grammar known at that time, and which were not to be found in reference literature. For this reason, Professor Bang considered the value of these recordings doubtful. Dr. Raquette, at home in Lund, had a similar attitude—that is, he belittled the language spoken by the people, and upheld the literary language as the norm. Bang's and Raquette's attitude made me curious about the spoken language. I felt that it, rather than the other, should be studied. I also believed that this should be done very soon, before differences in dialect had a chance to become effaced as a result of improved communication means in Central Asia. Thus, it was in Berlin that my interest in field work began, and this interest would later dominate all of my research.

However, this beginning interest very nearly led me in another direction. One day I read in *Berliner Tageblatt* that Sven Hedin was in Berlin. It was May 1928, he had come to the city in order to, as he wrote in his books, scrape together more money for his great Central Asian expedition, and he had come there directly from "field work." I wondered, for a while, whether I should dare pay him a visit to ask if I could join him and participate in his expedition as a linguist. He was planning to visit just those linguistic regions that I was now interested in. I would be able to work directly among Turkic peoples whose dialects were completely unknown. But my more reasonable self won. I was, at that time, simply not well enough prepared for such an assignment. I had youthful enthusiasm, but that was all. Toward the end of the 1930s, when I was working on the nomenclature for Sven Hedin's maps of Central Asia, I told him, during a social occasion, about the plans I had had in May 1928. He said that he would have

accepted me immediately. But maybe his reaction then was based on the level of learning I had acquired by the end of the 1930s: I had a Ph.D. and my specialty was Central Asian Turkic languages.

The group of students around Professor Bang was quite international. All of them from that spring and summer became well-known Turkologists. There were: Annemarie Gabain, who became one of the foremost specialists in Old Uighur and other old Turkic languages; Karl Menges, who, after some time at the University of Ankara, became professor at Columbia in New York; there were Rahmeti Arat, professor at the University of Istanbul, and Saadet Çagatay, professor at the University of Ankara. The latter two were originally Tatars from Russia. They were very respected in international Turkology circles. Together with Menges, I also frequented lectures in Turkish diplomacy given by Franz Babinger, as well as lectures in Tibetan by Hermann Francke, who originally had been missionary in Ladakh, and who had been hired by the University of Berlin in the same way as Dr. Raquette had been hired by the University of Lund.

I broadened my general Turkological education during January and February 1929 by taking a concentration course in Turkish diplomacy from Lajós Fekete in Budapest, and there I also became acquainted with Gyula Németh who, already at that time, was a leading personage in his field of Turkish-Oriental research. I kept close contact with him until his death a few years ago. Fekete had learned Turkish during his long years as a First World War prisoner in Russia where, as a Hungarian, he had been billeted together with Turkish prisoners of war, and had made use of time by getting a thorough education, both practically and theoretically, in modern Turkish. Later on he became the leading specialist in Turkish diplomacy.

My studies in Berlin and Budapest had consumed much of my scanty resources even though my standard of living had been so economical that present-day students would have found it impossible and unacceptable. In Berlin, after two adventures with bedbug-

infested rental rooms near Alexander Platz, I landed in a modest, cheap, but clean hotel called the Windsor. It was near Stettiner Bahnhof, next to Hotel Nordland, the meeting place for all Swedes. From my window on the top floor of the Windsor, I could look down upon Hotel Nordland's sidewalk café, where busy waiters carried food on large silver-covered platters to well-to-do guests. Living on no more than a subsistence level did hurt at times, but it definitely contributed to my general development. In Budapest I was able to rent a room from a Hungarian family up in Buda, not far from Krisztina tér. It was very cold in January and February, and heating was minimal. I often did my studying bundled up in bed.

When I returned to Lund I had to replenish my finances by means of borrowing from the banks and writing newspaper articles. The local Scanian press mostly welcomed the services of a university student. Remuneration was low, but good will toward freelance people was plentiful. Then, one day in March, a change came for the better—very suddenly and unexpectedly.

I had attended an evening lecture in Slavic languages by Knut Knutsson, who later became head of the Stockholm Public Library. It was customary to spend some time after the lecture discussing its subject matter together with the teacher. This could be done on a walk or while having a cup of coffee at Håkansson's Café. In those days, professors had time for such "postseminars." There were not as many students, and present-day administrative duties had not been invented. We were walking down Klostergatan, when Knutsson suddenly asked me: "What is the young man planning to go into?" I answered truthfully that I had not as yet thought about it. "I think that the young man should try to get into the university library," he continued. "They always need people who are proficient in Slavic and Oriental languages." I asked how one was to go about "getting into" the library. I was informed that you had to start by working on probation for a month or so without salary, and if you proved qualified, you were employed for

seventy-five crowns a month to work three and one-half hours a day. I asked cautiously when I could start on this probation. Knutsson suggested that I could begin the following day. And so, quickly and amusingly, my financial problems came to an end.

The next morning I had an appointment with the scholarly head librarian Evald Ljunggren. He interviewed me about my degree and studies and possible other qualifications for a library job. Then he took me to the third floor, the department of Oriental literature, which he thought adequate for me to start with. My eyes fastened on a Tibetan book, which I took down to look through. I found that it was erroneously catalogued. With the book under his arm, the head librarian went downstairs to find the culprit, I suppose, and I was left to my fate among the book treasures. During the following week I practiced shelving books, and locating them in different departments for borrowers. I learned all the secrets of cataloguing and sorting according to carefully devised rules. In the category of "small animals" I found that there was a subsection called "poultry" that included rabbits. I don't know whether it was that discovery or the erroneously shelved Tibetan book which was responsible for my getting the job as Temporary Assistant Librarian. At any rate, I felt that my future was secure.

Late in the spring of 1929 I began to discuss my master's dissertation with Raquette. It was especially important to find subject matter that could later be expanded to a doctor's dissertation. Dr. Raquette had two alternatives. Either I could concentrate on modern Turkish, and spend a period of time in Istanbul, or I could seriously consider taking up the Turkic languages. In regard to the first choice, he pointed out the importance of living in the real Istanbul, and not up in Pera with its large element of Levantine-European population. In other words, I would have to live like a Turk, among Turks. If I chose the other alternative, I would have to take off for East Turkistan, to Kashgar and Yarkend.

After a period of consideration and economic calculations, I decided that the alternatives were equally costly. Traveling expenses to Kashgar were greater, but the cost of living there was less. I decided to choose Kashgar.

Raquette was pleased with my choice. He understood very well that my journey had to be as inexpensive as possible, and he promised to arrange an opportunity for me to join a small group of missionaries on their way to Kashgar some time in the beginning of fall. Such an arrangement would lessen expenses considerably, especially for the part on horseback across the Pamir Mountains. He also promised to arrange inexpensive living accommodations in Kashgar, in care of the missionaries. He was enthusiastic in planning my trip and most likely re-experienced vicariously all of his own journeys to and from East Turkistan that he had conducted in very primitive circumstances. "Make things as simple as possible. Don't take unnecessary things with you. A heavy blanket is all you need. You can use the saddle as a pillow. It is very comfortable to sleep on," Raquette told me. That was some of the advice I got. In addition, it was important for me to acquire a pair of absolutely water-proof boots, because we would have to cross many rivers in the mountains. I also received much good advice concerning health care, and no one was more of an expert in that realm than the former medical missionary Raquette. He ordered me to get vaccinated against all the diseases he could think of. In addition, you just had to trust your lucky stars and be in good spirits. The latter was easy for me.

I had read most of what there was to read about Kashgar, especially missionary descriptions of the city and the country in the big book *Along Unbeaten Tracks (På Obanade Stigar)*, and of course Sven Hedin's accounts. On the subject of Kashgar, there was one thing that filled me with some anxiety, or even fear. It was the high walls that enclosed the city, with gates that were closed every day immediately after sunset. It gave me an unpleasant feeling of confinement. At that time I didn't understand the rea-

son for those walls, and that not only a city, but even every farm in the Turkestan countryside, was surrounded by high walls. I didn't understand then what I realized later, that the purpose of the walls was not to confine, but to protect the population. I reacted to the confinement; I didn't need the protection since I wasn't aware of the need for it.

Other than Dr. Raquette, Johannes Sköld gave me much good advice. He had just returned from a linguistic research journey in the Soviet part of the Pamir, where he, under primitive circumstances involving considerable physical exertion, had discovered different Iranian languages and dialects. Sköld had many good contacts—both academic and political—in Leningrad, Moscow, and Tashkent, and he shared these riches generously with me. In practical matters he had prepared his expedition to the Pamir very thoroughly, and had, in Berlin, acquired the most modern equipment possible at that time. He lent me two absolutely water-tight metal trunks designed to fit exactly to the sides of a caravan horse. Mikhail Khandamirov was full of good advice for my safety and warned me especially about the wild customs of Central Asia, about which he seemed to know a great deal. He told me a number of very obscure older Russian travelers' tales about the Central Asian system of male prostitution—one has to be careful, he said, and shook his head with misgivings.

The only thing left for me to do was to get a leave of absence from my job at the library. It was granted without any difficulty, on the condition that I return with valuable manuscripts for the library's collections.

To Kashgar on Horseback

On 12 August 1929 I became acquainted with my traveling companions-to-be, at the office of the Swedish Mission Society in Stockholm. There was Georg Roberntz, who already had spent a long time in East Turkistan, and who was now going to resume his work, and there were three new people who were on their way to Central Asia for the first time: Petrus and Ingrid Kängström, and Ester Johansson. It was going to take us a whole month to get to Kashgar—enough time to get very well acquainted and to become lifelong friends. Roberntz was in charge, of course, because of his previous experience of the journey, the country and the peoples.

We went by way of Helsinki to Leningrad. It was my first encounter with the Soviet Union, and I met that enormous country with a mixture of fear and curiosity. As a result of diligent newspaper reading, I was well fed with sensational reports about the Bolshevik dictatorship that had come about in 1917–18. Only ten years had passed since the waves of the revolution had washed over the old Russia. I was young and inexperienced, had no historical perspective regarding the developments, but was full of curiosity about what I could learn from them. In Leningrad we stayed at the old, well-known Hotel Europa. We had a day between trains,

which gave us time for sightseeing. Mostly I remember Nevski Prospect, which has been rechristened Twenty-fifth of October Prospect, and where I walked, filled with the awe that much reading of Russian literature had given me. Otherwise, I visited the antireligious museum, which was a somewhat disturbing experience. I bought a German edition of the official Soviet travel guide, published in 1928 by the Soviet Association for Cultural Contacts with the Soviet Union. It became my guide during the whole journey across the country, and is still today unsurpassed in its wealth of detail, its many maps, city plans, and information about notable sights. It has followed me through the years and has been an excellent source of knowledge.

Kazan Station in Moscow was my introduction to Asia. From there, the Tashkent Express took us to the heart of Russian Central Asia in five days. The multitude at Kazan Station was made up of all the nationalities of Central Asia. There were: Uzbeks, Kirghiz, Kazaks, Tajiks, Jews. The Tashkent Express went twice a week, by way of Samara, Orenburg and Tashkent all the way to the capital of Turkmenistan, Ashkhabad on the Persian border, and part of it also went to Krasnovodsk on the Caspian Sea. The names alone of all these places impressed me with their mysteriousness—the other passengers as well.

We left Moscow in the evening, and the next morning the Central Russian countryside lay before us—billowing plains, villages made up of low grey houses with thatched roofs, on both sides of long village streets. At the stations there were always lots of people who had come to see the train—bearded peasants reminiscent of Tolstoy characters, and women in checkered or red aprons. At each stop the same scene was re-enacted: passengers rushed off the train and ran to a little shed where they could get *kipyatók*, boiling water for tea. There was a clatter of teapots, water buckets; everyone wanted to be first. We crossed the Volga in the evening by romantic moonlight, in a Stenka Razin atmosphere complete with barges, although the time of the Volga boatmen was definitely

over. The next day we rode across the steppes toward Orenburg and the land of the Turkic Bashkirs. Hour after hour, the train rolled across an endless, desolate steppe landscape. The monotony was interrupted from time to time by long rows of telephone poles which got smaller and smaller and then disappeared in the distance where there apparently was a village which in this way had contact with the rest of the world.

In his book *Tashkent, the City of Bread,* which came out in Swedish translation in 1949, Alexander Neverov has described how, during the famine years which followed the Russian Revolution, people came to Tashkent and Central Asia where food was more plentiful. With great feeling, he wrote about the adventures of an orphan boy on his way to Tashkent. He was one of the *besprizorniki,* children without a home, who had been left on their own during the dramatic years of the revolution. There was a whole group of them on our train, free passengers on their way to the city of bread. They hid in different places and disappeared at the stops where the militia was on guard, then sneaked back again onto the train without being seen. They spent the nights on the carriage roofs where we could hear them sliding around. The conductor told us to always keep the skylights closed, because sometimes a dirty little hand with long, sharp nails found its way in to take possession of something belonging to a sleeping passenger.

At one of the stations a soldier decided to examine the coal bin under the diner. He pulled out four 12- to 13-year-old *besprizorniki.* Three of them disappeared quickly, but the fourth got caught. The boy screamed, bit, scratched, and kicked and was taken away to an unknown destiny. The other three were back again when the train started, got into the coal bin, and even treated themselves to a friendly greeting to the station master when they passed him. I'll never forget one of them. His hair was white, one of his eyes was almost completely covered with dirt, and his face was pockmarked. But out of it, his bright blue eyes shone merrily. He jumped out of his coal bin at every stop, and ran along the carriages to beg. Still

"Besprizorniki," the homeless children, stowaways on the Tashkent Express. "I will never forget one of them. His hair was white, one of his eyes was almost completely covered with dirt, and his face was pockmarked. But out of it, his bright blue eyes shone merrily." 1 August 1929.

today, I can hear his "*Dai khleb!*" "give me a piece of bread!" until he'd had enough, and then he asked for money. He rode in his coal bin all the way to Tashkent. There he disappeared in the crowd.

We got further and further into Central Asia. The landscape changed in character. The steppe turned into a desert with high sand dunes. The train wound around them in countless curves. On the uphill slopes when it slowed to a crawl, the boys jumped out of their coal bins to run along the tracks begging for bread. We saw the first of the caravans. You could hear the camels' bells through the puffing noise of the locomotive. Then we saw the Aral Sea on the horizon, and the Tashkent Express stopped at a station called Aralskoe Morye, "The Aral Sea," in the middle of the bone-dry desert. You could see a few sailboats and a little steamer. It was a strange meeting place for railway, caravans, and sea.

The desert ended on the afternoon of the last day. The tamarisk and thorny desert brush were gradually replaced by tall, very straight poplars. Numerous small waterways crossed the sands. By moonlight we glimpsed green fields. At the stations you could buy fragrant peaches and melons. We reached Tashkent, the city of bread, at midnight. I remember that the first thing we did was to ride around for a few hours in a couple of horse-drawn carriages through the empty, moonlit streets, looking for a hotel. All the streets were lined with tall and straight poplars. They were and are the Central Asian tree par excellence, and their beauty is evoked in many folk songs. But they are mostly used for material purposes, for fuel and for building. All of the hotels were overcrowded. We were already on our way to the old city, the Uzbek section, in order to find an old-fashioned caravansary, when we were told of a place where we could get rooms. It was a newly built hotel, and not at all bad. The paint on the walls was hardly dry, the rooms were very nice and clean. But the common toilets were beyond description. It was my first confrontation with the *nichego* mentality about sanitation, which even today has not entirely disappeared from Soviet society.

A few days later we were in Osh, in the Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic. We had spent a tiring night between Tashkent and Andijan on a train with only a third "hard" class, enormously crowded with people and all sorts of baggage. There were wooden quadruple decker sleeping bunks. The top ones were the best, and only the agile could climb up to them. In Andijan, which even at that time was an important Uzbek textile industrial center, we had to wait a few days for our checked luggage. It was hot and dusty everywhere. We ate our meals at the most proletarian eateries, where they served cabbage soup with greasy pieces of mutton. After that, the city of Osh at an altitude of 1,200 meters was very refreshing. It has a cool climate all through the year, and clean fresh mountain air. We stayed at a caravansary in the old section of the city. From this time on, we were going to follow the old caravan route over the Pamir Mountains all the way to Kashgar.

We spent three days in Osh in order to organize our caravan. I had gotten a room in a *balakhana* (attic), from which I could see the street below. I saw caravans that had reached their destination after their laborious trip through the mountains. I could hear the caravan bells—those with a deep dull ring were the camels', the cheerfully tinkling ones came from horse and mule caravans. And the pigeons cooed on a little ledge outside my window, all day long. All these sights and sounds were stimulating and inspiring. This was exactly the way I had imagined Central Asia.

Organizing our caravan was somewhat problematic. The usual procedure was to engage a driver who was contracted to take the caravan all the way to Kashgar, a two week journey. But Soviet-Chinese relations were not of the best in the fall of 1929. There had been trouble and fighting in Manchuria, and this affected even the Soviet-Chinese border in Central Asia. The frontier up in the Pamir Mountains had been closed by the Chinese, and no caravans were permitted to cross and go on directly to Kashgar. Up at the border station of Irkeshtam, at an altitude of 3,000 meters, we would have to transfer to another caravan—however

The caravan master Mamma—an incongruous name for a little tough Turk. He is loading a pack horse, while a couple of Kirghiz men are looking on. 1929.

that was to be accomplished. The area was uninhabited except for the fort at the station. How one was to go about getting a caravan with horses and a driver there was a mystery. In addition, we had already heard rumors, in Andijan and later in Osh, that the area was dangerous. They had mentioned *basmachi,* highwaymen who raided caravans. These highwaymen were remnants from Central Asian Turkic resistance forces who during the first half of the 1920s had fought the Soviet troops and the establishment of the Soviet Central Asian Republics. They had been defeated by the stronger Communist forces, but there were still some left in the remote Pamir Mountains. We heard very imaginative rumors in Osh that all the caravans crossing the Terek Pass were plundered. We found out later that these rumors were exaggerated and served mostly as psychological warfare.

We managed to reach an agreement with a caravan master who was willing to take us to the Chinese border at Irkeshtam with three men and fifteen horses. The price for this, converted to Swedish money, was forty crowns a horse, which was rather expensive because of the closed border and the constant rumors about highwaymen and plundering. According to the contract, we were to reach the border in six to seven days. The driver's name was Mamma, an unlikely name for a tough little Turk, most likely a Kirghiz, with dark brown skin, a wispy beard and prominent cheekbones. Straddling a little mule, he rode last in the caravan, to make sure that no one was left behind. He was always in his place and saw to it that the horses were loaded evenly, that they were fed and watered adequately, and that they were given a chance to calm down and relax after the day's exertions.

When I look through my notes from that time, I see that we were usually in the saddle for eight or nine and sometimes even for eleven or twelve hours a day. We had to start early in the mornings if we were to reach Kashgar in the planned two weeks.

The climb toward the range where the Pamirs meet the Tien-shan Range began immediately outside of Osh. In the beginning,

nature was pleasantly bucolic. There were wide mountain meadows —pasture land for Kirghiz sheep and goats. But the landscape changed quickly. The road became a winding path around the mountains. Below, there was a roaring river with crystal clear water. Since there were no bridges, we had to ride across the rushing streams, and the horses stumbled over the rocks on the river beds. It was important never to look down into the water but to fix one's eyes onto something on the other side, Mamma told me, in order to avoid getting dizzy and falling off the horse. The horse would always manage.

On the seventh day, we reached the highest pass, the notorious Terek-davan, "The Pass of Poplars," at an altitude of 3,700 meters. The way up was over rugged terrain, on narrow paths with precipices beneath. The most unnerving thing was that the horses walked on the very edge of the paths. It was a habit they had acquired. They were used both for riding and as packhorses, mostly the latter. As packhorses they were loaded on both sides, and in order to avoid bumping into the mountain side, they walked as much on the edge of the paths as possible. The fact that a rider was not that sort of load was beyond their comprehension. The result was that one had to get used to keeping one's composure when seeing the rapids deep down, because the slightest stumble could mean death.

There were many skeletons of dead horses near the pass. They were well-cleaned. Birds of prey kept nature clean. Every caravan had along a few horses who were worn out, having served their time. If they could manage one more trip, it was all well and good, if not they were left to their destiny. Terek-davan was the touchstone. The steep climb and the thin air broke down the weakest.

Terek-davan is notorious for causing *tutak*, altitude sickness, which affects both human beings and animals. The air, being too thin, causes breathing difficulties, headaches and loss of consciousness. The horses stop in their tracks and refuse to budge despite punches and blows. When we went over the pass in deep snow on

my way home at the end of March 1930, we were more affected than the first time. We had started at three in the morning in order to reach the top before the warm March sunshine would begin to melt the snow and make the trail too slippery. Both the caravan men and the horses were affected. I found out then what was done to horses in order to alleviate their *tutak* symptoms. The caravan master went from horse to horse, and with his knife, he quickly incised their muzzles. They bled, were relieved, and the caravan resumed its climb along the trail where the snow now turned red from the horses' blood. The rest of us, who also suffered, got the same treatment automatically: our noses started to bleed.

Our way to Kashgar was the old Silk Route along which caravans had transported goods to Central Asia, and from there to the Mediterranean, for thousands of years. All of them had passed Terek-davan, the shortest way from Kashgar to Osh and Ferghana, from where routes radiated in different directions. "The Pass of Poplars" had been the "beaten track" for many hundreds of thousands of caravans through time. The pass had meant suffering and hardship for people and animals, but those circumstances never showed on the silks worn by beautiful Mediterranean odalisques.

We reached the Pamir border between China and the Soviet Union on the fifth of September. From a somewhat lower pass, we looked over a wide valley with the river Qizil-su, "The Red Water," at the bottom. Down there we could see low houses and a little fortress, over which waved the Russian hammer and sickle. That was Irkeshtam, the last outpost of the Soviet Union in northern Pamir. On the other side was China.

We crossed the river without getting our feet wet, despite the fact that the water level was unusually high for the time of year. A mule caravan in front of us had trouble managing the reddish-brown rapids. Our horses did better.

The reception at the border station was friendly, even cordial. It was obvious that they enjoyed visits which interrupted the monotony of living on this desolate outpost. There was a garrison of

The female part of the garrison at the Soviet border station Irkeshtam. 6 September 1929.

about fifty men, mostly Ukrainians and Cossacks from Orenburg. In addition, there were a few customs officials and some employees of the Soviet transportation company Sovtorgflot, which administered caravans between China and the Soviet Union. Mostly they transported cotton by horse and mule caravans from Kashgar. There were also two women, wives of the customs officials, and their children.

Passport and customs formalities were easily completed. Then came the problem of finding a new caravan. Mamma and his men were not allowed to go further, and we had to get horses from the other side as well. Several large caravans of about fifty horses each were already waiting for an opportunity to cross over to the Chinese side with their goods. It took us four days to make arrangements. There were no accommodations available, and we had to rig up a makeshift tent in the courtyard of the customs building. Our walls were made of bales of cotton, and the roof of sailcloth.

On the very first evening, we were invited for tea by the chief customs officer, comrade Steblin. After a short while, about twenty of Irkeshtam's inhabitants had arrived. Steblin made excuses for not having any vodka, which, I imagine came as a relief for the missionaries, my traveling companions. But the atmosphere was by no means dull for that reason. The regiment veterinarian who was addressed as "doctor" provided the entertainment. He took out his guitar and began to sing the wild songs of his homeland. In our honor he also sang a song about Czar Peter's victory over Karl XII at Poltava. We had brought along a portable phonograph and some records which had been repacked and sealed at the Finnish-Russian border to prevent our playing them during our journey through Russia. Now, although we hadn't crossed this border yet, we were permitted to break the seal, and we went through the whole of our record repertoire. The first selection was a military march from Södermanland, which was very well liked. Our Russian friends were more uncertain about the next military selection,

which was "Stars and Stripes Forever." They considered it capitalistic and imperialistic. The most popular of the records was the Swedish hit of that time: "Ge mig en blick ur dina vackra ögon, som aldrig ler mot mig" (Look at me with those beautiful eyes, that never smile at me). They called it a Swedish folk song and it was the record most often played during the four days at Irkeshtam.

Right away we began negotiating for a new caravan with the Chinese on the other side. By the third day, talks had progressed so far that a *beg*, an interpreter for Chinese mandarins, came to see us. We offered him tea in our makeshift tent, and he was full of goodwill. We got our permit a day later. A few men from the Chinese side came with their horses to pack our possessions. Toward afternoon we were ready to say a reluctant thank you and good-bye to our Russian friends.

The Chinese station was at a distance of about ten kilometers from the Russian, and in between there was a no-man's-land, a neutral area used nights by people from both sides for clandestine affairs, especially, I suppose, currency smuggling—Russian rubles and Chinese silver. There even was traffic with human beings, not for the purpose of helping them escape from one system to another, but commerce with itinerant workers on their way to the cotton fields of Soviet Central Asia; they considered the border controls an unnecessary hindrance. When the season was over, they traveled the long, difficult road back over the mountains to Kashgar, on foot, with a little money saved in their pockets.

The Chinese border fortress was called Sim-Khana, which means "wire house," that is, telegraph and telephone station. A row of telephone poles went from there all the way to Kashgar. The word *Sim*, a Persian loan word meaning "wire," had an almost magical significance for Turks of that time. The translation for "to send a telegram" was *sim qaqmaq*, "to strike the wires," and implied something that, as far as superstitious East Turks were concerned, was connected with the devil.

My first encounter with the Soviet Union had been filled with a

mixture of curiosity and anxiety. My several weeks' exposure to that society had markedly reduced the anxiety part. Now, I faced my meeting with a China which seemed to me closed, forbidding, and almost mysterious. The feeling was not lessened by entering the country by one of its most remote regions. My reaction would most likely have been very different had I come to China by way of Canton or Shanghai, or riding in a comfortable railway carriage, a branch of the Trans-Siberian Railroad.

The caravan trail to Sim-Khana went across a wide, high plateau. You could see the buildings and their vaulted roofs in the distance. You could tell that there was a new culture there, a different way of thinking and living. The fort had been built as protection against a supposed hostile environment. It had been necessary to counterbalance the fort at Irkeshtam. But the Chinese fort was not impressive. The walls were built of mud and perhaps gave protection against rifle fire, but hardly against anything else. There was, however, another sort of protection. In front of the entrance to the commander's house there was the obligatory "spirits wall." The entrance to Chinese houses was always barred by a protective wall in front to keep evil spirits and devils from coming in. According to popular belief, these spirits were unable to go around corners, they could only move straight ahead. These walls have not disappeared entirely from today's China, even though evil spirits and devils of the classic sort are no longer in use.

We were well-received on the Chinese side as well. The highest ranking official paid us a visit. We had tea and polite conversation, but no singing like on the Russian side. The difference in mentality was evident.

We spent the night in Sim-Khana. We had new drivers, two Turks from Kashgar whose names were Ibrahim and Yussuf. It would take us five days to get to Kashgar. Five long days. On the next day, the tenth of September, we reached the first little Chinese town. Its name was Ulugh Chat, "Big River Junction," apparently because a river forked there into two streams. Ulugh Chat

was a fortified garrison town, and this was the first time we met Chinese military forces on their way to Kashgar. It would be an exaggeration to say that we were impressed by their discipline. Some of the soldiers hung around the caravansary where we were staying, and over the whole town hung an unmistakable odor of opium. That was true of the whole province of Sinkiang in those days. Much has been written about the use of opium in China from the time of the great Opium War in the 1840s to modern times about a hundred years later. Those who visited Sinkiang in the twenties and thirties were very much aware of the destructive effect of the addiction, especially among the Chinese. There was less use among the Muslim Turks.

The road to Kashgar was not very difficult. There were no high passes, but many more streams to cross. The drama of the Soviet part of the Pamir was supplanted by monotony. It was trying to sit in the saddle ten to twelve hours at a time, with only a short stop in the middle of the day to have tea and buns, which had to be soaked in the tea because, having been baked once upon a time in Osh, they were now hard as stone. I remember that in my impatience I constantly asked Ibrahim and Yussuf how much longer we would have to ride that day, and I always got the same answer: "*Az qaldi,* not much longer." Usually that was not true. But it was their standard answer to what was, as far as they were concerned, an unnecessary question. It was a helpful answer, a little white lie that helped a tired traveller to keep going.

We spent the last night of our trip in a terrible caravansary in Ming-yol. We had about a ten-hour ride left and we were yearning for rest, a warm bath, cooked food. The inn in Ming-yol, which means "The Thousand Roads," consisted of a number of rooms without windows, in four rows, arranged around an open courtyard, where horses and mules were kept in the best of harmony and surrounded by their droppings. As in all caravansaries, the odor

was strong, to say the least. The mud floor was hard to sleep on, but it didn't matter, because after all, the end was in sight. The next day we started out at 4:30 A.M., before sunrise, and at 2:00 P.M. we reached Kashgar, our destination.

Medieval Kashgar

There is a remarkable connection between Kashgar and Sweden, which is attributed to the Venetian traveler Marco Polo. In 1772 the French orientalist and historian Pétis de la Croix published his work about Chinggis Khan the Great. Mentioning the city of Kashgar, he stated: "It is from that city that Swedes originate." In the 1820s, an English general whose name was Tod, published a magnificent and elaborate volume on the Indian province of Rajasthan. He followed up the information about Kashgar and the origin of Swedes, and drew diverse conclusions about connections between Scandinavia and Rajasthan. Henry Yule, the conscientious publisher of works of Marco Polo, indignantly dismissed this information about the origin of Swedes with a blunt "this nonsense."

Reading Pétis de la Croix carefully, one finds that he doesn't, like Tod and Yule, make Marco Polo the author of this sensational information. A footnote tells us that the author is our well-known Swedish scholar and traveler Johan Gabriel Sparwenfeld. Pétis de la Croix met Sparwenfeld in Paris in 1691. It was the latter who assured the future writer of the Chinggis Khan history that he had read about the Swedish Kashgar origins in old Swedish annals.

Somewhere else, Sparwenfeld had developed ideas about a Central Asian people called *Geths*, which was the same as Goths, and that the capital city of these *Geths* had been Kashgar, also called *Khasgard*, which was the same as *Asgard* whence Oden had come to the countries of the North. Sparwenfeld and other writers of that time considered this idea to be corroborated by information found in the Icelandic Saga Hervarar and in Snorre Sturlasson, about Oden's having come from "Turkland," here synonymous with ancient Troy. His followers were Turks. They were also called Asia-men, which was the same as *Asar* (Asgarders). These Icelandic reports were frequently referred to in scholarly literature of the eighteenth century. In 1764 Sven Lagerbring, professor at Lund University, published his *Bref till Cancellie Rådet och Riddaren Herr Joh. Ihre om swenska och turkiska språkens likhet* (Letter to the Chancellor and Knight Mr. Joh. Ihre on the affinity of the Swedish and Turkish languages). In it he described Oden as "förman för en stor swarm af folk, bestående af Tirkiar och Asieman" (leader for a large swarm of peoples consisting of Turks and Asia-men). On 17 April 1745 Pehr Lovén presented a dissertation at the University of Lund entitled *Om Göinge* (About Göinge). In it he stated the fact that the kinship of the Sveo-gothic peoples with the Turks was well evidenced in the Icelandic sources, and that they had immigrated from Asia. He continues, "Therefore, it is likely that some of the Turks did settle in Göinge. This circumstance is not entirely forgotten even today, for a large region around [the towns of] Torup, Matteröd, and nearby areas is called *Lilla Tyrkiet* or *Lilla Tyrkiriet* (Little Turkey). One could suppose the lack of culture among the inhabitants has given rise to this name, but there is nothing barbarian about them, and therefore the former assumption is more likely to be correct, that is, that the name is derived from [the name of] ancient settlers, and during the course of time it has been supplanted by the more familiar name Goths or Göingers."

When I came to Kashgar for the first time I was not acquainted

with the apocryphal tale about Kashgar being the place of origin for Swedes. It is a result of later research, and I am very surprised that Sven Hedin did not discover this information. With his predilection for the romantic and the magnificent, he could doubtlessly have made much of it.

Coming to Kashgar in 1929 was like coming from the present to the Middle Ages, like coming to a setting for *A Thousand and One Nights*. There were no cars, no motorcycles, not even a bicycle. No electric lights illuminated the dark, narrow passages in the bazaar districts. There were no newspapers, no printed books —scribes sat crosslegged and copied manuscripts in neat Arabic characters. The water carrier walked around with his heavy load of water contained in a sheep or goat skin. Dyers hung their skeins of yarn on rods on top of the flat roofed mud houses. Their section of the bazaars was painted blue, yellow, red, and mauve, and those cheerful colors were repeated in the clothes they wore. People of all nationalities teemed inside the narrow alleys. There were Turks, Tajiks, Tungans, Chinese. The rich and the aristocrats rode through the throng on stately horses with beautifully embroidered saddle blankets. Those who were less well off rode on mules, and the poor people, who were the majority, walked.

In the beginning I was fascinated by the mules. They are the most patient animals in the world. In the Kashgar bazaars, one could see them heavily loaded with full sacks on both sides and with their owner sitting on top holding one or two of his children. There was no necessity for a bridle, the owner sat there, and with a stick in his hand, directed his mule through the throng. To make the mule go to the left or to the right, he tapped it lightly on the ears. To increase speed, the mule received a thorough lashing on its hindquarters. Mules have an amazing capacity to sneak through gaps in the traffic, and they are just as famous for their sudden stops from which no power in the world can make them budge. According to tradition, this is the result of what happened to mules when they, together with all the other animals, were to

Patient Turkistan women riding tough and enduring mules outside of Kashgar's city walls. 1929.

board Noah's Ark. The devil, who was not allowed to board, jumped up and hid under the tail of the mule. The mule became aware of this. Therefore, when its turn came to board, it refused, since it was an honest animal. Noah tried to hurry the mule, but it didn't budge. Noah took a hold of the mule's ears and pulled. It didn't help. The ears just became longer and longer—that's why they have such long ears, Kashgar bazaar people believed. Finally, Noah understood that something was not right. He walked around the mule, picked up its tail, and took away the well-hidden devil. Freed from its ungodly and uncomfortable burden, the mule walked on board proudly with its newly acquired long ears. Apparently this experience with the devil and his cunning is still today the reason that mules sometimes stop short and refuse to budge.

In those days the city of Kashgar was surrounded by a massive wall about ten meters high and built of sun-dried brick with mud filling in the spaces between. On top it was wide enough for a two-wheeled cart. Communication with the outside world was

through four great gates which were closed at dusk and reopened at sunrise. Inside the walls were bazaars, the large mosques, and dwellings for both rich and poor. The Chinese authorities were outside the walls, as were the British and Russian consulates, and the Swedish mission with its hospital and other welfare establishments. Outside there was green nature, sunshine and light; inside it was always half dark.

Nowhere in the world can one today find such a well-developed Islamic medieval society as Kashgar was in those days. For a long time there were some in Afghanistan, but even there they have had to give way to the assault of modern times. Unfortunately, there exists no satisfactory description of the old Kashgar. There are no descriptions of the bazaars and of the organization of life around them. I am very sorry now that I did not devote more time while there to their mysteries. My excuse is that my studies of the Turkic languages took all my time. But I do still have some notes from its atmosphere of *A Thousand and One Nights*.

The bazaar was completely covered. The alleys had roofs made of poplar trunks covered with branches, twigs and grass. The sun could not get through and it was comfortably cool during the hottest part of summer when the temperature rose to forty degrees centigrade in the shade. I can see an alley in my mind. It was half dark, but here and there the sun came through a gap in the roof. In this slanting ray you could see bluish smoke—smoke from the fireplaces of food markets, of artisans' workshops, from tobacco and hashish pipes. This smoke was mixed with all sorts of olfactory sensations, combining into a fragrance that I would recognize immediately were I to meet it again anywhere in the world. It is quite interesting, by the way, to realize how much the memory of a scent can help in making identifications. The smoke and scent from a fire of poplar logs makes me think of Kashgar still today.

There were shops on both sides of the bazaar alley. The proprietors sat crosslegged on carpets on the floor and waited for customers to come. They made no effort to solicit, which was the preroga-

tive of the itinerant street vendors and beneath the shop proprietors' station. There were no fixed prices. A look at the customer and a certain amount of psychological cunning as to his economic resources and his general gullibility determined the size of the first bid. This was followed by a period of bargaining, an increasingly animated form of art for both parties.

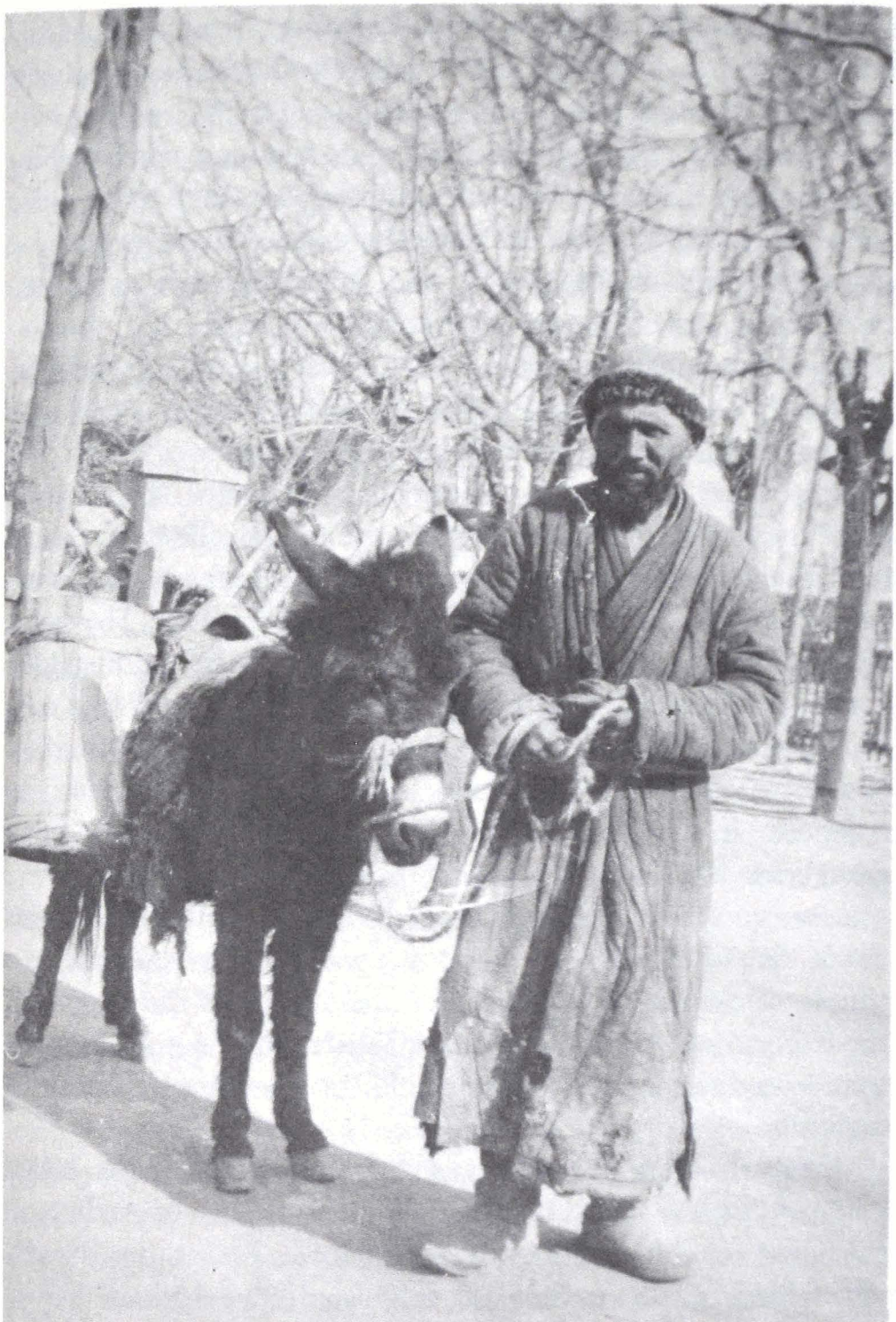
Every craft and every trade had its own area in the bazaar. Inside the fabrics and carpets bazaar, there reigned a hushed quiet, very much in contrast with the noise at the coppersmith's. White turbaned Turks in loose coats moved about with dignified calm. From time to time you could glimpse a black-veiled woman. Women were not allowed to go outside without this veil. Observance of orthodox Islamic religious laws was strict. The fabric and carpet bazaars were areas of calm and comfort, not at all places for quick deals. At that time you could still find examples of ancient East Turkistan textile products—embroidered fabrics or carpets from Khotan, Yarkend, or Kashgar. However, the imported textiles from Tashkent and other Soviet textile centers were already taking over. Those new fabrics had flowery patterns and glaring colors. Today they dominate the market and are no longer imported from the Soviet Union, but manufactured in Kashgar's own textile plants.

In those days one could make real finds of older rugs that had not been spoiled by the use of modern aniline dyes. The pastel lustre of their colors was that of the old plant dyes. You could never complete the purchase of a rug during the course of one day. It took a long time—a few weeks, or preferably a whole month. You went from shop to shop, sat down and discussed, admired the quality or showed your disapproval, you had tea, ate melon. Within the bazaars there was a special section, the so-called Khotan seraglio, where they sold rugs mostly made in Khotan, a city further east in Sinkiang, on the southern Silk Route. The Khotan rugs were then, as now, famous for their quality and for their patterns. There was the well-known pomegranate pattern, in deep blues

and clear reds. You could also find rugs influenced by Chinese design, both for their patterns and their dyes. Sometimes you could find very rare Kirghiz rugs. They were woven up in the mountains by Kirghiz nomads and were characterized by symmetrical patterns and strong red and blue dyes.

The food bazaars were in a special section, and they were a collection of simple restaurants and open kitchens where you could buy ready-to-eat food. Master cooks offered all sorts of tempting dishes, meat grilled on a spit, or cut up in cubes, cooked rice and fragrant pilaf, delicious pastries. There was everything the Uighur kitchen could offer and all of the accomplishments of Chinese cooking art. The poor and the beggars sneaked through the fragrant fumes and watched their fellow human beings fill their stomachs. However, almsgiving is a part of Islamic ideology, and I believe that this precept was followed more generously in the food bazaars than in other places.

The meat bazaars were of course close to the food bazaars. They were the butchers' bazaars, and everything smelled of mutton and tallow, a raw and rank odor. Pork was strictly forbidden in this Islamic environment. Only the Chinese were ungodly enough to eat pork. The word for pig, *tonguz,* was here in the bazaar and everywhere else a strong and often used invective. The butchers' bazaars with their odor of dead animal bodies must have—without my realizing it—impressed me very much. Still today, I have nightmares from time to time influenced by Kashgar's meat bazaars. I dream that I am walking through a long bazaar alley. There are bunches of grapes hanging from the ceiling (this often was the case, so it is not my imagination). In the beginning, rays of light come in through the poplar branch ceiling, but then it gets darker and darker. Suddenly I am in the butchers' bazaar. The shops on both sides are filled with bloody pieces of meat, whole bodies of sheep. The alley dirt floor is slippery; I try to get away from this sight and from the acrid odor of dead meat. I turn to the right into another alley, which becomes more and more narrow, and I get to



A member of the very low-paid class of men in the Kashgar of the 1920s: a water vendor, dressed in the traditional long coat called *chapan*.

the coppersmiths' section with its deafening noise, try to get out from there and come into another narrow alley, which gradually gets even more narrow. Then I walk through new sections with new goods and new alleys which get more and more narrow all the time, so that there is hardly enough room for me to move—and then suddenly I find myself in front of a wall. I have no recourse except to go all the way back, and faced with that unpleasant prospect I choose to let the dream end.

Going to the bazaars toward evening was a strange experience. Especially if it was during the fasting month of Ramazan. As soon as it got dark, the orthodox practitioners were allowed to eat, thus ending their long day of abstinence. Oil lamps spread their flickering unsure light over all that moved in the alleys. You could hear music coming from the houses—perhaps the brittle sound from a two-stringed dutar, often accompanied by song. They were Uighur folk songs, sung in a high, shrill voice and with sudden stops, hardly attractive to European ears. They were always connected with the sound of dutars and the atmosphere of Ramazan. You got used to this music after a while, and even learned to appreciate it. The men sat cross-legged in the tea houses, drank their brick tea, and discussed the happenings of the day. There were no women to be seen. They had their own place, and it was not in the public arena. At 9:00 P.M., you heard the boom from a couple of cannon shots. That was the signal for the closing of the city gates. Those who lived outside but had not made it out were forced to spend the night inside Kashgar's massive protecting walls.

One part of the old town was different. It was the so-called Andijan district. It had been named after the city of Andijan in the Soviet republic of Uzbekistan, which was at that time the city where Soviet export to Sinkiang originated. The Andijan district had no bazaars. There were no covered alleys. The merchants had built brick houses in Russian style, often with two stories. You could buy all sorts of European wares there, most of it of Russian

origin, but often also Indian things. This was a sign that a new age was on its way and that Kashgar would soon be modernized. But for the time being, it was no more than an indication. In general, people were completely unacquainted with the benefits of modern culture. All incomprehensible technical things were called *shaitan*, something that was connected with the devil. A Chinese man had taken a bicycle to Kashgar once. The people had called it *shaitan arbasi*, "the devil's cart." When the itinerant book and antique salesman Roze akhon for the first time listened to my phonograph, he called it *shaitan naghmasi*, "devil music." More freely translated, one could say "the devil's voice." In the Andijan district you could buy Russian matches. But in 1929 most of the people used a sort of homemade sulphur-match. One end of a poplar shaving was dipped in sulphur. They were mostly used for the purpose of "borrowing" fire from a neighbor, or from some other kindly person. The Kirghiz up in the mountains still used the age-old system of striking fire with a flint stone. The tinder was often kept in beautifully decorated leather pouches, the bottom of which was made of the steelband needed for the striking. The Andijan district was Kashgar's modern section. It pointed toward a future which was at the door, but it was a door which would not open before Mao's transformation of China. One day, I had an experience there which can illustrate the relationship between the Chinese and the Turki populations of the time. The Chinese were in the minority and one did not see much of them in daily life. However, they were the rulers of Sinkiang. They ruled with firmness, but one very seldom heard of usurpatory actions—at least in those days. What I saw and experienced can perhaps illustrate the slowly germinating hate toward the Chinese, who, a few years later, were to occasion a revolution in Sinkiang.

On that particular day the narrow streets of the district were very crowded and it was hard to get around. Suddenly, the crowd moved to one side as though obeying a magic wand. A Chinese soldier came riding at a full gallop, shouting at the people to make

room. After him came an elegant Chinese carriage, drawn by four horses and surrounded by attending officers on horseback. The party stopped in front of one of the larger shops on the street, steps were lowered from the carriage, and a red carpet was rolled out. Then, two elegant Chinese ladies descended, with coral red lips and pink cheeks. The officers saluted, and the ladies walked into the shop. In the meantime, the people on the street had moved closer to the carriage in order to look at the two apparitions. One poor soul had been pushed so far to the front of the multitude that he was very close to the carriage. Immediately, a skinny little Chinese appeared with a whip. The mistreatment inflicted on the poor Uighur is hard to describe. Then, the little Chinese crowned the whole incident by pulling a couple of other Uighurs out of the surrounding throng and subjecting them to the same treatment. All of this was accompanied by loud cheering from the other officers. The Uighurs let it all happen without offering resistance. They knew that it was useless.

The People of Kashgar

In those days there weren't many foreigners in Kashgar to associate with. By foreigners, I mean first of all Europeans. You could almost count them on the fingers of one hand. There were also some Hindus who were easily recognizable in the teeming bazaars, some Afghans, and a few Armenians. The Europeans were the Russians, the Englishmen, and the Swedes. The Russians stayed around their consulate. You hardly saw them and they rarely participated in the modest social activities of the other Europeans, who made no great effort to communicate with them. There was an unspoken repudiation: they were Communists, or, in the term used in those days: Bolsheviks. The October Revolution and the following years of upheaval were still so near that one was reluctant to associate with people who had occasioned so much disruption in the old, calm, pre–World War I world. Bolsheviks were a people who had a reputation of violence and murder, all of which was described in detail in the press and literature of the time. They were "personae non gratae" in remote and isolated Kashgar. They were greeted with strained smiles, and there was never any real contact.

A few persons at the British Consulate made up the English

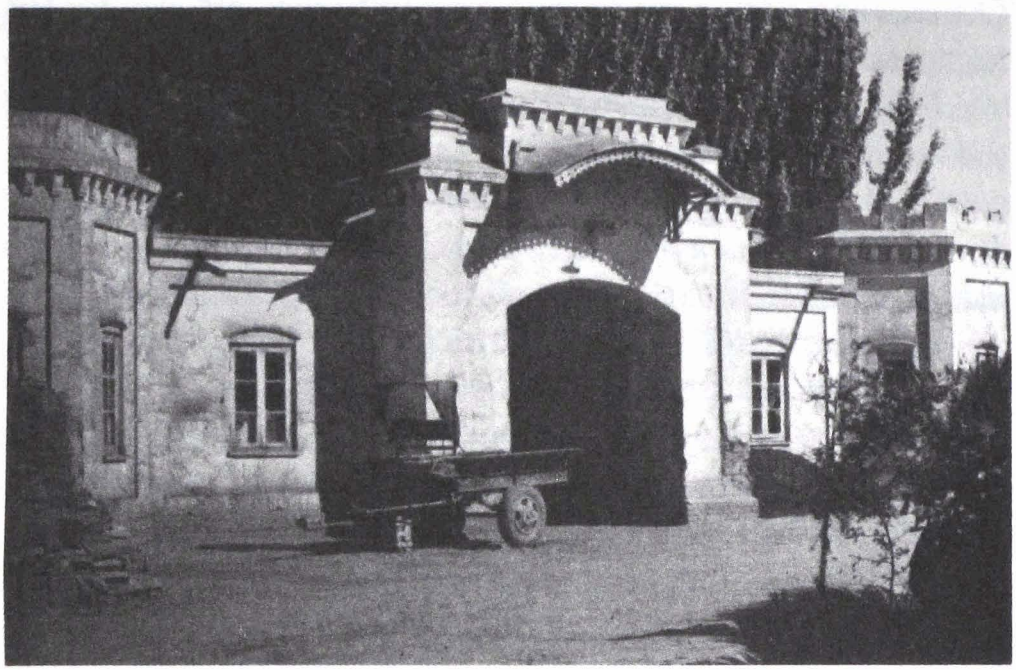
population. There were Consul F. Williamson, who was an expert on Central Asia, and Vice-Consul George Sherriff, a young captain with military experience from the disturbed regions of Northern India. I became good friends with them, especially with Sherriff, who was closer to my age. At the consulate I met a few more traveling Englishmen. I remember best a man whose name was Frank Ludlow. He was a natural scientist, and his special interest was botany. He spent the winter of 1929–30 in Kashgar because the climate made botanical discovery excursions in the Pamir and Tien-shan ranges impossible at that time of the year. Sherriff and Ludlow had already become good friends and they had begun to work together, Sherriff being the photographer and Ludlow the botanist. This collaboration was to lead to a life-long search for new species of flowers, bushes, and flowering trees in the interior of Asia, its mountains and deserts. Their common effort has been described by Harold A. Fletcher in a book entitled *A Quest of Flowers* (1975), in which Sherriff's photographic skill is well-documented. Since his death in 1969, his large collection of photographs and ethnographic descriptions of the land and peoples of Sinkiang is to be found at the British Museum in London. Sherriff was a fresh air enthusiast who boldly challenged all of natures obstacles. It is hard for me to imagine anyone less suited for the desk work of a vice-consul, but the work load at the British Consulate General in Kashgar was most likely not very heavy.

It was in Kashgar that I for the first time came in contact with diplomats and their rules of social conduct. My earlier experiences in that realm had been limited to meeting the Turkish and Czechoslovakian Honorary Consuls in Malmö. Although very impressed with them at that time, I don't think now that they were very well versed in diplomatic matters. Anyway, I got my basic training in diplomatic protocol in Kashgar. A few days after my arrival, I paid a courtesy visit to the Chinese governor. I had with me a large red calling card with my name drawn in beautiful

Chinese characters. I had to sit in a waiting room and wait for His Highness to feel that I had been adequately tried by waiting—which is, as I learned later, an often-used diplomatic trick. I sat and let my eyes wander around the simple furnishings and decorations in the room. They came to a cushion that had an embroidered inscription in a language I never had expected to find in the waiting room of *yamen*, the governor's residence in Kashgar. It said, in Swedish: "Sleep tight in the name of Jesus." After I had presented my red calling card, answered a few polite questions about the weather and was on my way out, I asked the secretary, who spoke English, whether he knew where the cushion had come from. He told me that it had been bought at an auction at the Swedish Mission in Kashgar. "We thought that it would be interesting to have a cushion with an inscription in a foreign language," the secretary said, with a friendly smile. The moral of the story is: never buy decorations with Chinese inscriptions without first finding out what they mean.

Some time in January 1930 I was invited for dinner by the English Consul General, Mr. Williamson. He explained that this dinner was of special significance and that I should therefore feel adequately impressed. It was a dinner given for his colleague, the Soviet Consul General, their first meeting since England had severed diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in May 1927. Now that they were resumed, the fact was to be, if not celebrated, at least given recognition by this dinner. The break in relations had been caused by the so-called Arcos Affair. Arcos had been a Soviet business firm in London. Having been suspected of illegal intelligence activities, they had been subjected to a thorough investigation by the police. This had led to evidence for the above, which in turn had led to the break in diplomatic relations. Even in Kashgar, the British and Soviet Consulates had had to follow the rules of the game and observe the icy cool which is prescribed in such situations.

I don't remember much of the dinner, except that one of the



The entrance to the former British consulate general in Kashgar, the creation of the Swedish missionary L. A. Högberg. "In those days Indian sepoys in colorful turbans did the honors for arriving guests." 1978.

guests arrived on horseback, and others came sitting crosslegged on the floor of a two-wheeled, horse-drawn Chinese cart called *mapa*. I remember that they served Scotch Whisky which had made the long trip over the Karakoram Pass and had therefore been well shaken up. The general atmosphere at the dinner was "thawed," but one could hardly describe it as cordial. The British-Soviet relations in the Kashgar of the 1920s and 1930s were always marked by a strong element of suspicion as to each other's plans in Central Asia.

However, the "thawed" or relaxed relations between the two great powers became strained again very soon. Dr. Shcherbakoff, the medical officer at the Russian Consulate General, decided to defect. Together with his wife, he appeared before the Chinese officials and asked for asylum, or at least protection against possible Soviet attempts to force him to return. After that, he carried

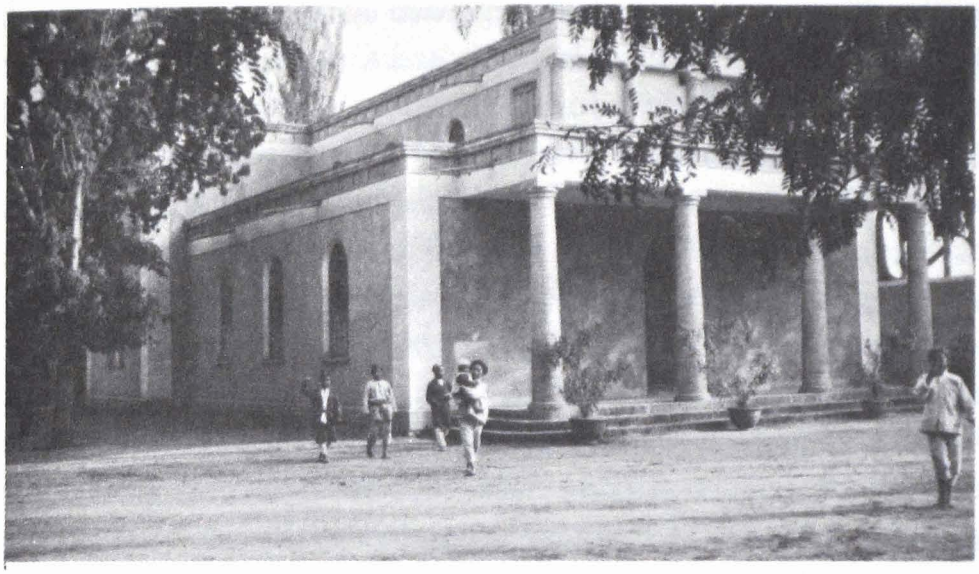
on negotiations with the English Consulate General for permission to settle in India. Rumors regarding the reasons for his defection flourished and grew. Nobody, with a few exceptions, knew where he was staying during the time he was waiting. I met him a few times at the house of an Armenian family whom I knew well and who trusted my discretion. After some time had elapsed and with the help of the English, Dr. and Mrs. Shcherbakoff started out for India—in the middle of the Central Asian winter, having to cross mountain passes in the Pamir and Karakoram ranges. Mrs. Shcherbakoff looked very much too delicate to be able to manage six weeks on horseback in that sort of terrain. Nevertheless, she did manage. I met the couple one more time, in Kashmir, in 1935. At that time, he was working as a prosperous specialist on snake venom at an English medical institute somewhere in India. Again, he told me how he had suffered, both psychologically in Kashgar, and physically during that trip on horseback across the Himalayas. We had met at the house of another Russian physician, who likewise, somewhat later, had defected from the Soviet Consulate General in Kashgar, and had settled in Srinagar, in Kashmir. His name was Yalovenko; he was Ukrainian, a Taras Bulba character who had settled in Srinagar after spending a long time in Kulu, in the southern Himalayas, together with the Russian painter, ethnographer and writer Nikolai Roerich. In Srinagar he was a bee-keeper, and in his spare time he managed a little clinic for Turki caravan men from Sinkiang who needed help. He proved to be expert at flavoring Shcherbakoff's stories with spicy details.

Then there were the missionaries. Up in the north, in Urumchi, there was the English China Inland Mission, about which one heard very little down in Kashgar. Its best known and most famous representative was George Hunter, whose life and work have been described by the travelers Mildred Cable and Francesca French in a book that came out in 1948. They called him "The Apostle of Turkistan." Hunter devoted himself to translating the Bible to New Uighur. However, his translations were not too well respected

among the Swedish Bible translators in Kashgar, who most likely were more judicious in their translations of the word of God into the Uighur language. Raquette told me that Hunter had once approached him to ask for suggestions about the parts of the Bible that were suitable for receiving priority in the translation. He had suggested that Hunter take up the part about the Prophet Habakkuk, which he had felt was the section in which translation mistakes did the least harm. Raquette was often a great joker.

There was an English woman, Rachel Wingate, who worked together with the Swedish missionaries in Kashgar. She was more or less connected to the Church of England and was the sister of the World War II hero Orde Wingate, known especially for his activities in Burma and Ethiopia. Later, she became the secretary of the Royal Central Asian Society in London. I had contact with her often until her death in 1953. A very unusual person in the missionary profession was Captain Mann, an Englishman, who worked in Kashgar. He came from an aristocratic family and had, if I remember correctly, some sort of an experience during World War I which had made him religious, and that is why he was doing missionary work in Turkistan. He asked me to give him lessons in Eastern Turki, which was not easy since he had a tendency to pronounce all Turki words according to English phonetic rules. This implied that, for example, the number *bir,* "one," sounded more like the Swedish *bö.* In that respect, Mann was outdone only by a student of mine in Turkic at Lund. He was from southern Scania, and pronounced that same word so that it sounded more like the south Swedish and Danish word "beer." But maybe that was intentional.

Mann was an unusual missionary. But he was not the only example of originality in Kashgar's missionary history. The best known of these is the Dutch Catholic missionary Pater Hendricks who has been mentioned and described by all of the European travelers to Kashgar and Sinkiang during the first decades of this century. Sven Hedin describes Pater Hendricks in great detail. He



The Swedish Mission in Kashgar, toward the end of the 1920s.

died in 1906 after many years of missionary work which consisted of his reading his masses all by himself, since he had no congregation. He made his own wine in an environment where strict Islamic law prohibited all wine. From time to time he visited the Russian and English consulates, and sometimes his Swedish colleagues in the soul-saving field. What was it that had driven this Dutch Pater to Kashgar? Most likely, that will never be known.

The history of the Swedish Mission Society's mission in East Turkistan dates back to the year 1892, when the first Swedish missionary, whose name was N. F. Höijer, arrived in Kashgar. Höijer was a man with great visions. The Mission Society had, for several years, had missions in Russia, in the Caucasus, as well as the province of Hupeh in China. Höijer's vision was a chain of missionary stations which would join the two areas. The connecting link would be in Sinkiang, and Kashgar was chosen as a starting place. At the same time, the Society closed its mission in Persia. This was motivated by the fact that English and American missionary societies were active there, and that there was no reason to compete with them. Inside Asia the field was open. Höijer's

journey to Kashgar could be regarded as a highly adventurous journey of reconnaissance. He returned to Sweden very soon, but left behind in Kashgar a Turki Armenian Mohammedan, named Johannes Avetaranian, whom he had converted to Christianity. This man's assignment was to hold the fort until reinforcements could be sent from Sweden. A small group of Swedes arrived in July 1894, they were both men and women, and their leader was the missionary Lars Erik Högberg who had had many years of experience of missionary work in Russia, the Caucasus, and Persia. Högberg became legendary as the real founder of the Swedish mission in East Turkistan, as it was called at that time. After some time, the activities in Kashgar expanded to the two cities to the east, Yengi Hissar and Yarkend. For a while there were plans as well to start a mission in Khotan, the city famous for its rugs, which was still further to the east on the Southern Silk Route, but those plans were never carried out. It was a difficult region the Swedish missionaries had chosen for their work. In a booklet given out by the Swedish Mission Society in December 1910 dealing with missionary work in different regions of Africa and Asia, it says about East Turkistan: "East Turkestan is a difficult region. The converted are very few. The most successful activity is care of the sick, which is increasing every year." The Kashgar mission reached its heights in the 1920s and the 1930s. Its efforts were mostly in the fields of health care and teaching. This does not mean that conversion activities were secondary in importance, but the results in that area can hardly be considered spectacular. Missionary work among followers of Islam, which itself is very much a proselytizing religion, has always been difficult and quite ineffective when it comes to conversion. East Turkistan was certainly one of the most conservative and fanatical Islamic regions. The Swedish Mission was, therefore, for tactical and practical reasons and with or without the missionaries' good will, forced to concentrate on humanitarian activities and on something that today would be called technical assistance to a developing country. Their

contributions in both of these areas were praiseworthy and admirable. This does not mean that their religious activities should be slighted.

Lars Erik Högberg was something of a jack of all trades. At the hospital he performed operations. On Sundays he preached in New Uighur at the Missionary Church. If the mission needed a new building, it was Högberg who did the job. The greatest honor to his credit was to be given the assignment to build a new English Consulate General in Kashgar. For this purpose he had to take a leave of absence from his work as a missionary. The board of directors at the Society in Stockholm approved the leave of absence with the following justification: "In gratitude for the many services to our Mission in East-Turkestan that the English Consulate has performed repeatedly." The drawings for the buildings, altogether twenty-two houses, had been made by Högberg himself in consultation with the British Consul General. The work was begun in June 1912 and was completed in October 1913, actually seven months before the contract time was up. Högberg personally supervised the construction, which was executed by East Turki construction workers who, to a large extent, had received their training at the Swedish Mission. Some of the more sophisticated construction material, such as mountings and locks for doors, were brought from Sweden. That was most likely the first commercial transaction between Kashgar and Sweden, if one excluded the import of Swedish goods for the missionaries' personal needs. The English Consul General at that time was George Macartney; he was the first English representative in Kashgar and he stuck it out in that isolated post for twenty-eight years. When the new Consulate General was inaugurated in the presence of all of Kashgar's notabilities, Sir George paid special tribute to Högberg for a well-done job. There is no doubt that the building of the consulate added to Högberg's personal prestige, and also to that of the Swedish Mission. When I visited Kashgar in 1978 I was very much aware of the fact that it was well known that a Swedish

missionary had built the British Consulate General. But they had forgotten his name, which was not surprising after so many years. In 1929 they used to tell the story that Sir George Macartney used to joke with Högberg about his popularity. "You have become so popular that the muezzin sends greetings to you from the minaret by calling: Hello Högberg!" Sir George said. The muezzin, of course, said "*allah akbar,* God is great," which the English Consul General, with linguistic imagination, changed to "ullo ögber," leaving out the initial H, as a typical Englishman would.

The British Consulate General in Kashgar was discontinued in connection with the independence of India and Pakistan. The consulate in Kashgar had been subordinate to the colonial government in New Delhi. Some of Högberg's buildings are still standing today, but most of them have been torn down. Now the old Consulate building is, like the Russian Consulate building, used as a hotel. *Mihmankhanä,* "guest house," is the New Uighur word for inn. I visited there one hot September day in 1978. In front of the entrance with its high gate there was a truck trailer which, with great difficulty, was moved from its parking place so that we could get in. In the old days the gate had been guarded by two Indian sepoys wearing colorful turbans, and they had saluted guests on their arrival. The Indian soldiers had had their quarters on both sides of the gate, but those areas were now desolate. Inside, in the garden, there were two hotel guests sitting at a table. That was all.

The Swedish missionary station had many Högberg design features in its architecture, even though the building was less pretentious than the English Consulate General. When I came to Kashgar in 1929, I was able to rent a room on its top floor, and the Uighur personnel immediately christened me *ögözadaki balasahib,* "the child gentleman who lives on the roof," a completely correct description when compared to others around me, who had all reached a ripe age. (Sahib was what all Europeans were called at that time.) I had my twenty-second birthday a couple of months

after my arrival in Kashgar. The fact that I was able to live at the missionary station saved my life—I shall tell that story in a later chapter. My stay there gave me insights into the activities of a mission available to few non-missionaries. I became acquainted with a religiousness that was liberal and sincere and which, I believe, is characteristic of the Swedish Mission Society. I myself had been born and brought up in an atmosphere that adhered strictly to religious practices. My parents belonged to the Friends of the Bible (*Bibeltrogna Vänner*), which together with the Foundation of Evangelical Native Sons (*Evangeliska Fosterlandsstiftelse*) dominated religious life in Kullabygden in Scania, without, for that reason, being opposed to the State Church. That was a very much stricter form of Christianity than what I was subjected to in Kashgar by the missionaries of the Mission Society. I don't remember whether we discussed their proselytizing activities; we never got that close, since I didn't belong to their denomination. I knew that the mission had had difficulties during its thirty years in Kashgar, that the missionaries had been accused of being "religion thieves," and that family tragedies had occurred when Turkis had been converted to Christianity, and that forceful attempts had been made to get them to leave the area. Those who left Islam to go over to the "Nazarene faith" usually came from the lower classes where religion was more loosely adhered to, so that the reactions were not significant. But when someone from the upper, aristocratic, and wealthy strata of society or from the Islamic religious leaders began to become interested in the Swedish Kashgar Christianity, the situation was quite different. Their part of society was by no means indifferent as far as their religion was concerned.

Hospital work and teaching, therefore, had to pave the way for missionary work. Daily I saw the sick and the lame crowding at the hospital entrance. It is mostly as a result of Raquette's work during the first decades of the century that the hospital in Kashgar was developed. Care was available for both the wealthy and the poor. No one was turned down. Help was free for the poor; those

who were able had to pay. The Swedish hospital in Kashgar was known far and wide. Many a Turki from Kashgar told me about the help they had gotten when, in 1935, I did ethnological field work among caravan men in Srinagar, where the end station for the route from Sinkiang over the Karakoram range and Hunza was situated.

I remember an evening in November 1935, in a little village in northern Afghanistan called Chardarra, "the Four Valleys." I was on my way to Kunduz as a passenger on an Afghan truck, together with about twenty Afghans and Uzbeks. We had to spend the night in Chardarra. The one caravansary in the village was new, so new that the mud walls had hardly had time to dry. The owner, a bright little white-haired old man, came out to meet us. We had tea and we talked and I, as the strange man who had traveled around the Afghan countryside, was asked lots of questions. The owner of the caravansary began to talk about his own travels. It turned out that he had been to Kashgar, that he had become sick there and had gone to the *shafákhana-ye-Svedén,* the Swedish Mission Hospital, where he was cured. He hadn't thought that a Swede would ever find his way to be a guest at his house. His goodwill toward me knew no bounds, all because Swedes in Kashgar had helped him once upon a time.

I remember an evening in Srinagar, when Yalovenko, the Russian doctor, talked about John Anderson and all he had done for the wounded during the revolution in the beginning of the 1930s. John Anderson was head of the Kashgar hospital at that time. There had been a big battle at Maralbashi, north of Kashgar, between the Chinese and the Turkis. John Anderson had been there and had saved all the lives that could be saved under very primitive circumstances. It was obvious that Yalovenko, who had been there, had been very impressed by the fearless good Samaritan from Gothenburg. I had kept close contact with John Anderson since my time in Kashgar. When, at the end of the 1930s, the mission had to be discontinued in Kashgar, it moved to India.

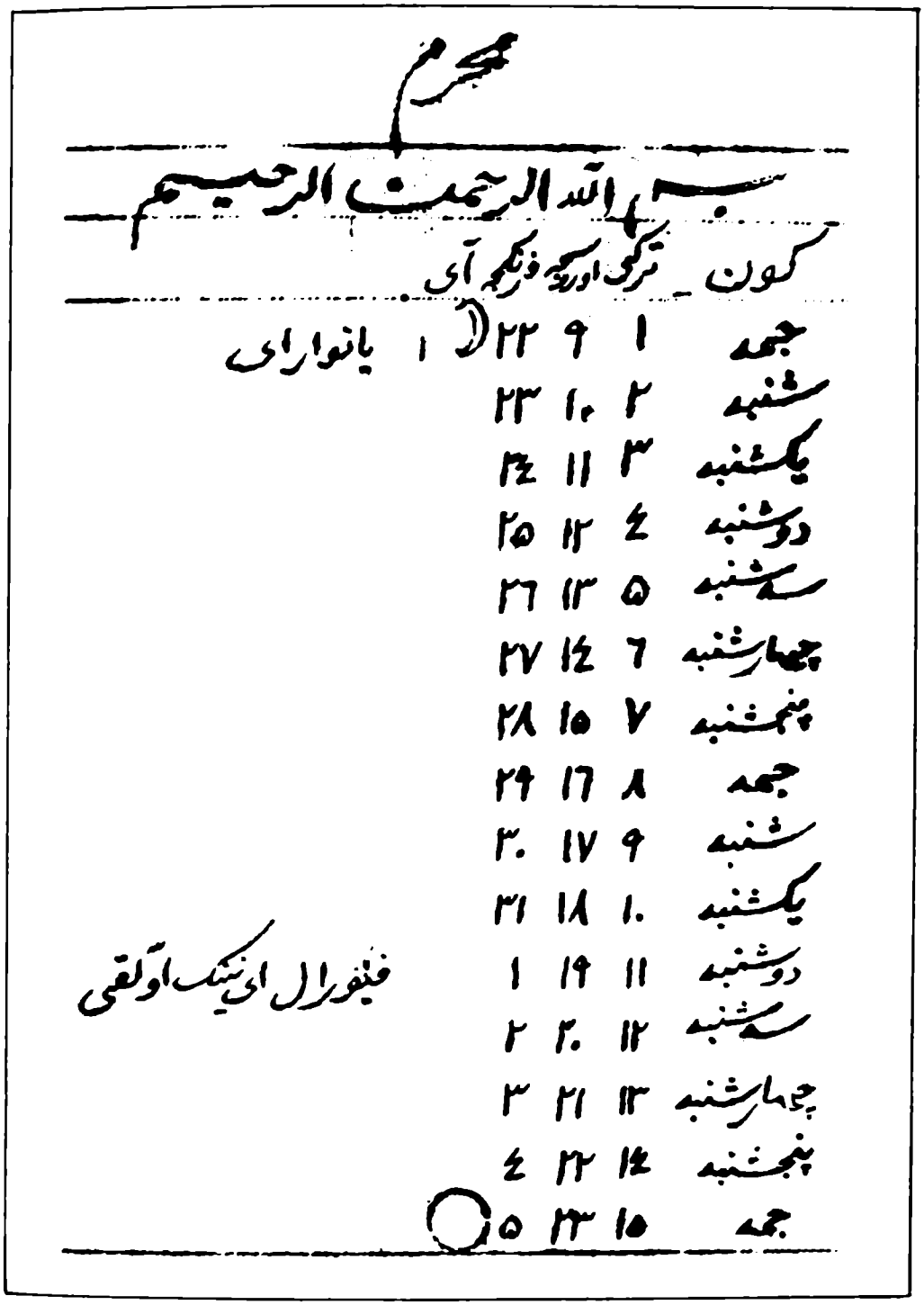
John Anderson continued his work there in a different environment. But when Turkis from Kashgar came to India as refugees, or on their way through as pilgrims to Mecca, they always looked him up in Bombay. He was never forgotten. We often met during my years in India. At that time, John was also responsible for the care of merchant seamen. We continued to correspond through the years. John spoke Eastern Turkic fluently and often helped me during the years when I published my four volumes of East Turki folklore and ethnological texts. I will never forget how I got the news about his death. One evening, in August 1972—it was during the time I was a mediator in the Near East—I had just come home to our house in Viken, where I often stopped on my way to and from New York. A few minutes after my arrival, the telephone rang. It was a call from London, from John Anderson's son Bengt, who was a reporter there for a Gothenburg newspaper. He called to let me know that his father had been killed in a traffic accident on the island of Lidingö, outside of Stockholm. It was unreal and incomprehensible, and difficult for me to get over.

The mission in Kashgar had its own printing press, the only printing press in the whole of southern Sinkiang at that time. You had to go all the way to Urumchi, the province capital, to find another. A journey there took nearly two months, on horseback or by means of a Chinese horse-drawn cart. There was no other transportation. The printing press in Kashgar did not only print books, it was also used for training typographers for the future. They were needed very soon. During the years of the revolution, the Swedish mission printing press printed political pamphlets as well as the newspaper *Yengi hayat*, "The New Life," for rebelling Uighurs. The mission even printed the very makeshift paper money the government issued at that time. They also printed instructions for vocational training, given out by the more progressive new government, including, for example, a booklet on the breeding of silkworms. From the beginning, the press at the mission had counted on printing material other than religious literature and

Bible translations. As early as 1909 Raquette managed to produce East Turkistan's first calendar. This calendar later developed into a yearly "tear off" calendar, which was much in demand by the Kashgar storekeepers. A considerable part of the production of the press was made up of school books for the mission schools. They printed books for natural sciences, mathematics, spelling, and one book on the history of Central Asia, all of them excellent teaching materials written in the Eastern Turki language. There were translations of selections of "Ben Hur" and a story from "The Legends of Christ" by Selma Lagerlöf. A little travelogue written by the English Consul in Kashgar, H. I. Harding, was also printed. This latter work, as well as the rest of the products from that press, are today bibliographic rarities.

Behind these literary and pedagogical activities in Central Asia, there are many Swedish names that should be mentioned and remembered. Raquette was the man who laid the foundation for Swedish research in Eastern Turkic in his grammar, his two basic lexicons, and other linguistic investigations. Magnus Bäcklund worked with the Eastern Turkic language at the same time as Raquette, but he died of typhus fever in 1903, thereby cutting short a very promising linguistic career. Gustaf Ahlbert (1884–1943) and Sigfrid Moen (1897–) are both known for their thorough knowledge of the Eastern Turkic language, and the literature and folklore of Eastern Turkistan. Oscar Hermansson (1889–1951) was the great translator of the Bible; Georg Roberntz (1897–) was responsible for the printing press during its most active and at the same time most problematic period. The list could be much longer since just about all of the Swedish missionaries worked actively with the country's language and literature during their time in Sinkiang. One result of their interest is the collections of Oriental manuscripts at the university libraries at Uppsala and Lund, which, although unknown for the majority of people, are of lasting value for international Oriental research purposes.

When in 1975 I published an English annoted version of unpub-


محرم

بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم

کون ـ ترکی اورسیه فرنگچه آی

جمعه	۱	۹	۲۲	۱ یانوارای
شنبه	۲	۱۰	۲۳	
یکشنبه	۳	۱۱	۲۴	
دوشنبه	٤	۱۲	۲۵	
سه‌شنبه	۵	۱۳	۲۶	
چهارشنبه	٦	۱٤	۲۷	
پنجشنبه	۷	۱۵	۲۸	
جمعه	۸	۱۶	۲۹	
شنبه	۹	۱۷	۳۰	
یکشنبه	۱۰	۱۸	۳۱	
دوشنبه	۱۱	۱۹	۱	فیفورال ای نیک اوتقی
سه‌شنبه	۱۲	۲۰	۲	
چهارشنبه	۱۳	۲۱	۳	
پنجشنبه	۱٤	۲۲	٤	
جمعه	۱۵	۲۳	۵	

A page from Eastern Turkistan's first calendar, printed with cyclostyle in press at the Swedish Mission in Yarkend, 1908. The dates are in Eastern Turkic, Russian, and Western European languages.

lished work by Raquette, I was struck by his liberal attitude toward Islam. He had given his work the long title *Kasim akhon's letters to his friend Kamil effendi in Stambul, on the way of life, customs and usage in Eastern Turkestan.* It is a description of how, in the beginning of the twentieth century, Kasim akhon, a young Kashgar Turki of good and well-to-do family background, was sent for studies to Istanbul, at that time known as Constantinople. There, he came in contact with Christian circles, he studied at the American mission school, and later at the American University in Beirut. When this became known in Kashgar, he was told to return home immediately. The family did not want their son converted to Christianity. In their eyes, it would be a deadly sin. Raquette described how Kasim akhon returned to his native environment. One would have expected Raquette, the missionary, to depict Kasim akhon as a young man who had been strongly influenced by Christian ideas and thoughts. But despite his contacts with Christian schools and universities, and although very positive toward the Swedish mission in Kashgar, Kasim akhon remained a faithful follower of his native Islam, albeit with certain critical and reformistic opinions. I have not been able to find out why Raquette did not, during his lifetime, publish this work which is so valuable from an ethnological and religious historical point of view. My theory is that he wrote it at a time—most likely 1914 or 1915—when such liberal attitudes about Islam could simply not be published. Lars Erik Högberg and other missionary pioneers in East Turkistan had been hard in their attitude toward the peoples there, who were regarded as lost souls, superstitious and full of false beliefs. Raquette, who had not previously shown much tolerance for the moral flaws of the Eastern Turki peoples, had written a work full of understanding for their customs and for the importance of Islam in their society. I think that the Swedish Mission Society of that time did not consider the work to be suitable missionary literature. Today there would, most likely, be no problem.

Little by little, Swedish missionaries had to adjust to the demands of the times and the environment. I am convinced that they never gave up their strong religious feelings or their desire to convert, or their dream that Kashgar, Yarkend and Yengi Hissar would become centers of Christianity in Central Asia. But they were forced to reconsider, to find new ways to reach their goal. It was important for the Mission to have good relations with the important people and the leaders of Turkistan society. It was simply a question of continued existence, which was most important for the poor who would otherwise have to get their illnesses treated by the bazaar quack using sorcery instead of medicine. There was no problem for the rich. If they couldn't get their cataract operation performed at the Swedish Mission Hospital they could afford to go to India for treatment. But, of course, it was more convenient to have the Mission Hospital available right there.

Early one morning in February 1930, I stood at a crossing outside of Yengi Hissar. I had spent a few days at Ester and Sigfrid Moen's, and was on my way back to Kashgar. The Moens were with me, as well as some of the pupils of their school. It was customary to accompany the guest a bit on his way, and the more people there were, the greater the honor for the departing guest. The schoolchildren sang the Swedish song "Härlig är jorden" (The World is Beautiful) in the Eastern Turkic language, and the old well-known melody could be heard far and wide among the poplars and the mud houses. Many of the Swedish religious songs and hymns had been translated to the Eastern Turkic language by the Swedish missionaries. This had been done as well in other regions and into other languages, but the melodies and contents of the songs were always the Swedish original. This sort of translation has been criticized by many people—wouldn't it be better to make use of the country's own resources? Shouldn't religious services be made to fit in with the already existing religious observances? Now, that question is theoretical for me, but in those days I was somewhat critical. The song "The World is Beautiful"

just didn't fit into the Eastern Turkistan countryside. Today I look at this from an historical point of view. In the eighth century, the faith of the Manicheans and the Nestorians spread across Central Asia, and their hymns and songs were translated into Uighur. That is a parallel to what happened in Kashgar in the 1920s and 1930s. The Manichean and Nestorian missionaries were as anxious to affect the environment by means of their songs as were their more modern followers. I have asked myself from time to time, whether the Eastern Turki folksong from Khotan, which sounds like an old litany, is an echo from a Nestorian translation:

> From the thorny branch of the wild apricot
> From the old of womankind
> Good Lord, deliver us!*

As I have already shown, missionaries could not avoid occasioning opposition and even tragedies when families and surroundings reacted to someone's conversion. The history of humanity is full of similar examples. The religions don't even have to be entirely new—new shades in existing faiths suffice. The whole history of humanity is a history of proselytizing—religious, political, ideological—at times easily accepted and praised, at others cursed. Some of this the Swedish missionaries in Kashgar experienced. Their history has not as yet been recorded.

*English translation by Gunnar Jarring.

Roze akhon, the Book Dealer

A dream, an assignment, a promise I made in Lund, was that I would return with a representative collection of Eastern Turkic manuscripts. Now, so much later, it occurs to me that the university library, which had shown so much interest in my assignment, never gave me any funds to carry it through. I had to manage without, in some way. Perhaps the reason for not providing me with an adequate advance was exaggerated caution: they doubted the trustworthiness of a young assistant librarian who perhaps would use the funds otherwise and never return.

A few days after arriving in Kashgar I went to the bazaar, that is, to the section where they sell books and manuscripts. Books were lithographed editions of Central Asian classics, a lot of Islamic theology and ethics, and otherwise tedious, dry literary material produced in Tashkent, Bukhara, and Samarkand. No manuscripts were to be seen. Venerable white-turbaned mollahs sat in their shops. They were not interested in selling their books to a foreign non-believer, and they evidenced this by being generally inhospitable. I understood soon that I had to find another way to buy books or manuscripts. Then the bearded, white-turbaned itinerant vendor Roze akhon came and solved my problem.

The book dealer Roze akhon. 1929.

He simply came one day to pay me a visit in my room on the roof. He said "*Salam,* peace!" sat down on the floor and began to take all he had to sell out of his bag. He started by offering me a beautifully decorated brass jug from Khotan, a pair of silver earrings from Kashgar—which I fell for immediately—tea cups from somewhere inside China, lacquer-work, embroideries, and lots of other things. After a good deal of bargaining I took the brass jug in addition to the earrings, and the rest was returned to the bag. That was the beginning of our business connection, and of our acquaintance, which little by little turned into friendship. Roze akhon asked me whether I had any special desires. I told him that I was interested in books and manuscripts. He promised to return.

It didn't take him many days to return with a selection of writings. The first thing he pulled out of his bag was a handwritten manuscript of the Koran, with the beginning of the first sura painted in beautiful colors, especially blue and red. It had been written in Kashmir. Then followed a *Qissas ul-anbiya,* "The History of the Prophets," which, although it had no beginning or end, contained the most important parts, especially the Prophet Isa, that is to say, the story of Jesus, Roze akhon told me shrewdly. There was a book with Eastern Turkic poetry. He recited a couple of the poems, the ones he knew by heart. Roze akhon was a mollah, versed in the Scriptures; he knew how to read and write and was quite well acquainted with the known Eastern Turkistan Islamic literature. But he was not a very great mollah. The really well educated mollahs called themselves "da mollah," with the Chinese prefix "da" which means "great." Roze akhon belonged to the lower class of common mollahs. He realized very quickly what I was interested in, and little by little my collection of manuscripts grew with all kinds of treasures.

One day I told him that I was interested in the art of bringing about rain. He looked at me and narrowed his eyes and told me that it was just about impossible to get a hold of a book like that. The rainmakers, *yadachi,* were very careful to keep their art a

secret, and never gave away their *risále,* their instructions in that art. I suggested to him that he arrange getting a copy of one. He said that it was impossible. However, he started to come with other *risále,* for example, the butchers', the coppersmiths', the tailors', and the bakers', complete with the names of the saints for the different occupations. They were small, neat, pocket-size manuscripts, obviously meant to be worn inside the wide sash which held together the *chapan,* "the long coat," worn by every adult Uighur. Then, one fine day, Roze akhon arrived with the rain makers' *risále*—true, it was only part of one, but in good enough condition to give the main points of the magic a rain maker invoked to bring about rain, and, of course, of equal importance, to make it stop. It was the description dealing with the *yada*-stones which were to be put into water, and of the formulae to be read over them to make rain, snow, or hail start falling. Fifty years ago you could still find rain makers in Kashgar. During my recent visit I asked about them—the answer I received was an embarrassed smile—such things did not exist anymore —Kashgar was a modern city.

The art of bringing about rain has a long history in Central Asia. War lords like Chinggis Khan and Timurleng took yadachis along on their campaigns, and the chronicles that have been found describe how before a battle the rain makers were requested to cause storms of snow and hail to drive with great force into the enemy's camp and thereby cause confusion.

I don't remember now how much Roze akhon wanted for the rain makers' book. But no doubt the price was high for those days. That time he most likely had along a *dallal,* a "mediator," who was a skinny little unctuous-looking old man. I noticed, after a while, that he came along every time Roze akhon asked for an unusually high price for something, or when he thought that he might have a hard time selling a manuscript. The dallal was soft-spoken and full of new convincing arguments. My abilities in New Uighur increased constantly during these long drawn-out discussions.

Roze akhon was well aware of the value of his manuscripts. One day, he arrived with a manuscript that he especially wanted to bring to my attention. It had an addition which increased its value considerably. Inside the cover there was a note about a set of Siamese twins that had been born in 1902 in the Yengi Hissar district. When the boys were two weeks old, their parents took them to Kashgar, where they were shown to the Chinese governor, the mayor and other dignitaries. Even the British and Russian Consuls were allowed to look at the miracle. After all of the dignitaries had seen them, they were shown to "little people and big people" of the city's inhabitants. The note also said that the parents received presents of much silver and money for having shown their Siamese twins. Roze akhon watched my face while I was reading the note. Then he told me his price. It was high. But the manuscript is part of my collection which is now to be found in the library at the University of Lund.

During my illness—which I will come to later—Roze akhon was strictly forbidden to visit me. One day, when I was finally getting better, my door was opened cautiously and there was Roze akhon's good-natured face with its straggly beard and narrow eyes. "*Sahib, kitáb bar, Sahib*, I have books!" he whispered. I had to let him come in, and so we started again to discuss manuscripts, their excellence and financial value. As a result of my general weakness I wasn't able to bargain as much as I should have, and as much as Roze akhon had expected me to. For a few weeks he earned a lot. Doubtless they were the best few weeks of our business relationship.

My collection of manuscripts increased together with the return of my health. Unfortunately, my funds decreased at the same time, and the date for my journey home was approaching. Roze akhon, who found out about my impending departure and was therefore aware of the fact that he would soon lose one of his best clients, started little by little to raise his prices, and to increase his offers. He came almost every day with new and interesting things that I felt I couldn't afford to keep from buying.

One day he arrived with a book bound primitively in leather. The covers were filthy and greasy. He presented the book to me with both his hands—which was a sign of reverence for the book, its contents, and for me—and he said in a hoarse voice: "*Ichida tola jinn bar,* it contains many evil spirits." It was a book of a shaman, containing all of the rites and formulae which *dua-akhon,* "the prayer man," that is to say, the Islamic shaman of the past, had made use of in his performances. There were instructions for everything—from curing simple ailments like toothaches to returning stolen goods or counteracting the effect of the evil eye upon innocent people. I was very much interested in the book, but Roze akhon's holding it with both his hands gave me misgivings that the price would be sky high compared to what I could afford. We began our customary bargaining ritual, but without result. Roze akhon left. The next day he was back with the price virtually unchanged. The situation looked dismal. But then Roze akhon had an idea. On a shelf in my room he had noticed piles of Swedish newspapers which had collected during the course of the months. I called attention to the paper's great value, both for its contents of news and culture, but that was uninteresting for Roze akhon. When I unfolded one copy to its full size—our Swedish newspapers covered a lot of space in those days—he succumbed. I got the shaman book, and he one kilogram of old South-Swedish News, plus a few *sar* in cash. We were both satisfied.

After a while I found out why Roze akhon had been so interested in the Swedish newspapers. He turned them over to Kashgar's tailor. During the winter, the inhabitants of the city dressed in ankle-long, thick quilted kaftans, called chapan. When completely unfolded, one copy of the South-Swedish News fit exactly in the back of a chapan, and when thus sewn between the quilting and the woolen cloth, the strongest desert winds could not penetrate.

When I left Kashgar, Roze akhon was one of the people who accompanied me a long distance outside the high city walls. I have never seen him again and don't know what happened to him the

rest of his life. All I know is through the letters from my friend Gustaf Ahlbert that Roze akhon inquired about me constantly, and asked when I would return to Kashgar. When I finally did return, there was no longer any Roze akhon, nor were there any manuscripts, only printed books sold by smiling salesgirls behind the counters in modern bookstores.

A Pilgrimage to the Desert

Outside of Kashgar, far out among the Takla-makan desert dunes, there is a large area with tombs of holy men, memories from the time when an advancing Islam had fought the Buddhists who ruled Kashgar at the time. The largest and most important of the tombs bears the name Ordam-padishah, which is also the name of the whole region. During the prescribed time for pilgrimage, Kashgar's religious population, tens of thousands of men, women and children, went out to the desert to visit the tombs. They walked in long processions, carrying flags and banners and rags attached to long poles of poplar. They shouted and sang and praised and honored the holy men. They were Kashgar's most fanatical believers in pilgrimage, a meritorious act, which if repeated often enough was equal to a pilgrimage to the far distant and less accessible Mecca. They were so fanatical that non-believers had to keep out of the way. It happened that a foreign Consul who wanted to visit the tombs was provided with an escort of Chinese soldiers, even though it was not pilgrimage time. The Chinese governor in Kashgar did not want to run any risks.

On 23 September 1929 I started out on a pilgrimage to Ordam-padishah together with John Törnquist, the grand old man among

the Swedish missionaries in Kashgar. We left Hancheng, the Chinese section, at daybreak, with three Chinese *mapa*, rickety carts on two big wheels, covered with blue cloth, and pulled by a horse. There was one for each of us, and one for our baggage. John Törnquist was head of the Chinese mission in Hancheng and had several decades of Sinkiang experience. He spoke Chinese fluently; his New Uighur was not quite as elegant but it was adequate. He had literary talents, was artistic, and was also a master photographer—I wonder now what has happened to all of his excellent photographs of Southern Sinkiang. He has also written several good travelogues. He was a man with very definite ideas which, however, were not always in agreement with conventional missionary thinking. He was the right sort of a traveling companion, tireless, cheerful and humorous.

Day was breaking when we drove out through the gates of the Hancheng section with its arched roofs. People on the roads were on their way toward the city, their mules laden with vegetables and fruit. Our road crossed fertile fields where corn and durra grew to a man's height. On both sides of the road were embankments planted with willows for the purpose of binding the soil. Every irrigation unit was surrounded by embankments. The road was covered by a deep layer of white dust and crisscrossed by an infinite number of irrigation canals, a great nuisance for our carts which had great difficulty crossing them. Then came marshy ground and a little lake with stagnant water, called *qarasu,* meaning "black water." As we approached, flocks of wild ducks flew up from its surface. By noon we had arrived at an idyllic little place called Yayliq, which means "pasture." The houses were built on the very edge of the banks of a river which flowed leisurely through a lush green woods. Later in the afternoon, we arrived at a place called Dushanba, a name which means that there is a market there every Monday. Soon after that we had a sandstorm over us. In the direction of Kashgar, the sky had turned violet-blue, and after a while it changed to yellowish-red. Whirlwinds sucked up

the dust in spirals which looked white against the violet-blue background. People there believed that *jinn*, "evil spirits," live in these spirals. When we were in the middle of the storm it was as though they had been released. The air was so full of dust that we could hardly see a few meters ahead. The wind roared and the trees creaked. By the time we got inside the protecting mud walls of the caravansary, the storm had abated and the air became transparent and clear.

At the caravansary we got a room that smelled of wet mud but was otherwise clean. We walked through the bazaar and aroused a lot of curiosity. No one there could remember ever before having seen *ferangis*, "Europeans." A large crowd followed us back to the caravansary and settled down in the courtyard in order to watch us and our activities. One Turk dressed in a fez came to our room and sat down cross-legged on the mud floor. He said he was from Istanbul and wanted to know where we had come from, were we Russians or were we Englishmen? When he found out that we were neither, he seemed reassured. He began talking nostalgically about Istanbul, about his father and his mother and his brothers who were still there. We asked him why he didn't return, since he wanted to so much. He answered: "*Pul yoq*, I have no money." Then we found out that he was the one "doctor" in Dushanba, and that he had thought we had come to compete with him. The next morning two Chinese men came to see us. They informed us emphatically that they were Christian. The appearance of one of them was unforgettable. He was tall, lanky, skinny, one-eyed and even deaf (but maybe that was feigned). They were both pawnbrokers. In the next place where we spent the night, we found out that this man was called *padishah*, "the king," because of the wealth he had collected over the years.

The next day, we rode through a boundless salt steppe. The salt crust that covered it was thick, hard, and white, and very few parched desert plants stuck up. From time to time, the monotony was broken by a stand of tamarisk with beautiful red flowers. Our

wheels creaked and squeaked on the hard crust of salt and sounded like a sleigh sliding over frozen snow. There was no road. We followed half-submerged tracks made by other wheels. The landscape was sterile and monotonous. I wondered whether one could have grown things there if there had been water, and whether the area had ever been cultivated and then deserted because of the salt.

After some time, the salt steppe turned into cultivated soil, and toward evening we arrived at a little town called Achiq, "the bitter, salt place." As in Dushanba, the whole population collected in the courtyard of the caravansary to look at us. We asked them whether they had ever seen Europeans. One man answered: "Yes, I saw a ferangi once when I was little." As a result of my reading, I have decided that this might have been the English archaeologist Aurel Stein who had passed through that region about twenty-five years previously. Törnquist asked whether there were any Chinese living in Achiq. Yes, there was one, only one. And what did he do? Törnquist wanted to know. He was a pawnbroker. This led to a discussion about moneylending and interest. The Islamic commandment, or rather prohibition, about moneylending for interest was strictly adhered to. However, since people very often needed to borrow money, they turned to non-Islamic pawnbrokers, who could be found everywhere, and who were mostly Chinese or Hindus, and had no scruples about earning interest. We said that we thought it strange that they, as Moslems, could not help each other when in need. A brave man in the crowd raised his voice and said, "Our Chinese (pawnbroker) says that a Moslem won't give another Moslem as much as an inch of a tail of a Yak!" We asked how much interest they had to pay. "He gives eight *tanga* [about one crown in Swedish money] for a coat, and we have to pay twelve *pul* [about three *öre*] interest a week. If, after six months, we haven't redeemed the coat, he sells it." It isn't surprising, I thought, that the one-eyed, lanky man in Dushanba was called "padishah." Then they wanted to know

whether we had any medicines with us, whether we had any medical skills. They showed us a three- or four-year-old girl who had scurvy and looked terrible. Törnquist explained that we had no medicine, but if they would take her to the mission hospital in Kashgar, she could be cured. More people came, with other illnesses. They all received the same information: come to Kashgar, to the hospital, and the missionaries there will do all they can to help you.

The next morning it was difficult to wake our three drivers. They had spent the night shooting craps and had found many people willing to gamble with them. Törnquist and I had had a hard time falling asleep as a result of all the commotion in the caravansary. Every time the dice were cast we heard the hollow sound of their hands hitting their chests—it was part of the dice game. The dice were made of sheep bones with special signs on them.

The sun was already high in the sky before we got on our way. In the bazaar we had bought a supply of watermelons and bread which was to last for the next two or three days in the Takla-makan desert. Within a couple of hours we were to be out among the desert dunes on our way to Ordam-padishah.

Before we left Hancheng, the leading driver had assured us that he knew the way. In Achiq he began to seem a little more unsure and found himself a young shoemaker apprentice who said that he studied Islamic theology, and he promised to show us the way for a few tanga.

When we had driven for a few hours across the squeaking salt steppe, the sand desert began. Far in the distance one could see a collection of tall poles with flags and rags attached to them. They were the first tombs of holy men in the large system of holy tombs called Dost-bulaqim-mazar, which means "the holy men's tombs of the friendly spring." The holy spring was a large dam. According to tradition it had come into existence when one of the followers of Ordam-padishah had cast a knife into the ground.

This had made water burst through the surface, and the friendly well had become a reality. A monument, a mausoleum, had been built on top of the tombs, and this was the only attempt toward architectural decoration in the whole large system. The domed mausoleum was situated on the top of a little hill where most likely there had once been a Buddhist shrine. Next to the mausoleum stood the typical upside-down, broom-like structure, that is, a bunch of high poles with fluttering flags attached to them. At the tomb, there was a *sheikh*, a caretaker, a venerable white-bearded old man who, for a small sum, invited us for tea and told us legends concerning Ordam-padishah. He said that he knew the mausoleum had been built during the time of Yakub Beg, that is, in the 1860s or 1870s. That period had been a time of renaissance for Islam in Eastern Turkistan, and it had, among other things, been characterized by much building of religious monuments.

The legends about Ordam-padishah all originate from the time of Islam's incursion into Eastern Turkistan. They are all about the first ruler who ceased worshipping Buddhist idols and was converted to Islam. His name was Satuq Bughra Khan. He was born in 944 and was twelve years old when he converted to Islam. The legends concerning him are many and very wonderful. The day he was born a miracle took place: the earth shook, springs surged forth from the center of the earth and watered the ground, and the trees budded and flowers started to grow even though it was winter. His conversion happened in the following way: Young Satuq Bughra Khan, who was already the ruler of the land since his father had died six years earlier, was on a hunting expedition somewhere outside Kashgar. A hare jumped out before him from a thorny bush. Satuq Bughra Khan left his forty companions and took off alone after the hare. Just when he was about to shoot it, the hare stopped and turned into a man, who told him to approach and listen. "Why do you continue worshipping idols? Why don't you follow the way of the prophet?" the man wanted to know. A long conversation ensued between them, and finally the man said: "Oh,

my son! Blessed boy! I do not wish to see your young body in hell. Just thinking about it makes me suffer!" Satuq Bughra Khan, who had never heard about hell, asked cautiously, "Oh, venerable wise man! What sort of place is this hell?" And the wise man answered: "My child! Hell is a place where a constant fire burns, it is full of scorpions, a place to which all sinners and all unfaithful are banished, and where they are tortured in every possible way." Satuq Bughra Khan, scared, asked what he should do in order to avoid going to that place, and the wise man answered that he should say after him the declaration of the Islamic faith. Satuq Bughra Khan did so, and thereby became the first Mohammedan ruler of East Turkistan. However, before repeating the wise man's words, he had asked him about the meaning of this declaration, and had received the following answer: "My son, by means of making this declaration you will become a Mohammedan, and that means that you will go to paradise, where there are beautiful women, young men, and wine. If you don't repeat my words, you will go to hell and experience all of the horrors of that place." Naturally, the choice was not difficult for Satuq Bughra Khan.

The legend continues with Satuq Bughra Khan's daughter Ala-Nur Khanim. She gave birth to a son whose father was the archangel Gabriel—a parallel to the immaculate conception and the Virgin Mary. According to another legend, she conceived when she met a lion one day. The son to whom she gave birth was therefore called Sayyid Ali Arslan Khan. The word *arslan* means lion. This son then took up the battle against the unfaithful Buddhist idol-worshippers. There ensued a big battle near Kashgar and the unfaithful fled but were pursued by Arslan Khan and his warriors. However, during the chase, Arslan Khan was killed. His brother, Hassan Bughra Khan, read a prayer over his dead body. A sandstorm, a *qara buran* came and covered all of the dead true believers with salt. It was a sign from heaven. It is hard to decide which of the two had a more preservative effect—was it the sand or was it the salt?

The holy tombs were clustered on the borders of the Taklamakan desert. We left Dost-bulaqim-mazar and rode on to the next tomb, which was called Qizil-jayim, "my red place," where a lot of blood was shed once upon a time. Obviously the sheikh there was unfavorably disposed towards us. He wasn't interested in talking with us, or in telling us the history of the holy tomb. Straight to the south one could glimpse the tall, upside-down broom with its flags which was Ordam-padishah. It stuck up over the dunes. It was to be our next destination, and the sheikh consented to give us directions, which was fortunate, since our guide from Achiq knew as little as we did.

The road we were told to follow went due east. Ordam-padishah lay to the south. In the beginning there was actually something that could be called a road. However, after we had driven for a few hours we began to wonder whether we were not on the wrong road, but were reassured by reminding ourselves that desert roads usually wound around the dunes in incongruous ways. Then, suddenly, the road ended. It was simply cut off by a high ridge of sand. We worked ourselves to its top through constantly sliding sand, and were compensated by a view over a sea of sand, dune after dune. Ordam-padishah with its upside-down broom was still there, just as distant as before. We had no recourse but to return the way we had come. The horses were tired, the drivers grumbled, the sun blazed from a cloudless blue sky, our guide had made himself invisible inside one of the carts. After about an hour, we found the right road, a miserable little side road which we had missed. The further we drove, the more it became buried under the sand. We realized soon that one was not supposed to reach Ordam-padishah by cart, no matter how big the wheels. The correct way was on foot or possibly by camel. The horses were not strong enough to pull the heavy carts, which sometimes sank into the sand all the way to the hubs of the wheels. But we had no choice. We drove short distances at a time and had long periods of rest during the stops. The first to get out to rest in the warm sand

was always our guide, who hadn't known the way. Thank God, we had along a good supply of watermelons from Achiq. Their juicy red pulp took the place of water, and the horses enjoyed the green rinds. We continued through the dunes, which rose higher and higher. Finally, all of us had to get out and help in order to get horses and carts over the tops. Going down was easy—horses, carts, people and sand tumbled down all together. After some time we reached two springs, and they were holy, just like everything else in this god-forsaken desolation. However, the prosaic had taken over. They were covered with sheet metal from old oil barrels—whose Russian origin was fully readable in Cyrillic script. The water was salty and undrinkable.

It was almost dark when we reached Ordam-padishah. We installed ourselves at the best pilgrim caravansary. It was almost empty, since it wasn't the season for great pilgrimages. We went directly to the famous tomb—it wasn't far—and found that it consisted of a collection of poles with banners and rags. It must have been ten meters high. We asked how people went about adding new poles and rags, and were told that they brought with them the tallest possible poplar trunks they could find, and carried them through the desert from far away places. Then, the most agile of the pilgrims would climb as high up on the broom as possible and tie the new tree trunks to the old. That was the way in which the upside-down broom grew taller and taller.

There was life at the big broom. A mollah and three women were expressing their devotion to Ordam-padishah. The mollah alternated sobbing and singing and recited long prayers. The women sobbed, cried and shouted without stopping. This they continued until the sun had definitely gone down and darkness had fallen over Ordam-padishah.

Late that night I took a walk through the deserted village. The cold light of a full moon shone on the dunes and on the mud houses of the couple of hundred souls who made their living by catering to the pilgrims. Some of the houses were half-buried under

The holy tomb Dost-Bulaqim, "The Friend's Well," with the typical upside-down broom with rags attached, flapping in the wind. At the bottom right, our Chinese cart, or *mapa*.

the sand which was in constant motion because of the wind. The only sign of life was the incessantly barking dogs. A soporific scent of hashish emanated from the caravansary. And our drivers were shooting dice once more. The rhythmical thumping of their hands against their chests was combined with salty Eastern Turki cursing when they lost.

The next morning, the owner of the caravansary and our drivers insisted we look at something completely unique. It was called *altun dash,* "golden pot," and turned out to be an enormous cast-

iron kettle that had a diameter of almost two meters. It was used for cooking food for the pilgrims and was located inside of one of the mud houses, where the stench was horrible. Apparently the facility was used for butchering as well, so that the meat could very easily be transferred from the bodies to the pot. The place was apparently never cleaned.

It was the last day of our pilgrimage, and we calculated that we could reach Yengi-Hissar before evening. We had acquired a new guide, a *sopi*, a professional Islamic beggar, who knew the way well from innumerable wanderings between inhabited areas and holy graves. He did know the way, but could do nothing about its difficulties. We had to struggle over the same high dunes as the previous day, a strange landscape of sand interrupted only by the numerous collections of poplar brooms with their attached rags, which signified that someone more or less holy was buried there. We passed the grave of a man who had donated fruit to Ordam-padishah, so it was called "the fruit grave." We climbed over a high ridge called Dua-karak, "the ridge of prayers," because on top of it Ordam-padishah had recited prayers for the success of his forces. On this ridge there was a holy tomb called Nishánim-mazar, "my flag's tomb." Our guide had a theory that a flag was not buried there at all, but that some warrior had only stood on the ridge brandishing it. From there we were able to see the end of the dunes. Far in the distance, we could make out a dark green countryside and smoke coming out of chimneys here and there. They were cultivated regions, but before reaching them we had to pass more holy tombs with poles and rags—we had not as yet left the realm of the holy.

At noon we arrived at the last large tomb, called Hazrati-begim, in memory of one of Ordam-padishah's warriors. We planned to spend a few hours there in order to let our horses rest after their ordeal through the sand. The mollah and the three women we had seen the previous evening at Ordam-padishah stood also at this tomb, and were going through their routine of misery and woe.

They had apparently traveled during the night by the light of the moon. There was a caravansary in the little town, where people, as usual, congregated to look at us. We looked at them as well, and could see that they were very much afflicted with syphilis, with open sores that were impossible to hide. Syphilis was widespread in East Turkistan at that time; it was one of the diseases the missionaries often had to treat. In Eastern Turki the disease was called *yel*, "wind," or *sowaq yel*, "cold wind"—perhaps because they believed that it spread with the wind.

We had a hard time getting our drivers to leave at the stipulated time. They seemed more tired than the horses.

Typhoid Fever

On 12 October, when I went downstairs from my room on the roof, I realized that I didn't feel well. It was my birthday, and Ruth and Gustaf Ahlbert, who lived on the bottom floor, had invited me for a birthday breakfast. I had a backache, I couldn't sit, and I couldn't stand up. I thought that the reason was that I'd been lying uncomfortably on my narrow cot. Since it didn't get any better, I went upstairs again to lie down. That evening I had a high fever. A few days later my condition was diagnosed: I had typhoid fever, and a very virulent form of it. I was so gravely ill that I was nearly unconcious for about a month. When I came to life again, it was the middle of November. My only memory of that day is that the air outside my window was yellow with dust. A sandstorm was sweeping through Kashgar. But my temperature went up once more, I suffered a relapse, and for a time I hovered between life and death. I had lost my sense of hearing and could hardly speak. John Anderson and Ruth Ahlbert cared for me and saved my life. I still have in my possession the tattered notebook they used for writing instructions to me, since I couldn't hear. One night, when my temperature had fallen suddenly, I woke and saw John Anderson, Ruth Ahlbert, and the mission's Swedish

physician Christian Hermanrud standing at my bedside. They were talking about me and my illness and Hermanrud was saying, "He'll never make it." I remember only that I was too tired and weak to react to that death sentence. However, I survived. When I was better, I told Hermanrud that I had heard him that night. He confessed that he had said it when he thought I couldn't hear. Perhaps the sudden fall in my temperature was responsible for the return of my hearing. Medical science will have to deal with that question.

As a result of the fever, I had constant hallucinations. Most of them had to do with Lund. I remember some of them. I saw Lund's cathedral standing on a table beside my bed. I could see both towers distinctly. The explanation for this vision was that there were two bottles standing on my bedside table. One contained boiled water, the other golden Russian port wine. A mixture of water and port wine was the only drink I was able to tolerate for a long time. Solid food was impossible, and I suffered from constant intestinal bleeding. When the worst part of the illness was over, I was so emaciated that I looked like a skeleton. I was unable to stand upright. I had another incessantly recurring hallucination—or dream or vision or whatever it is to be called. I was at a party given by my student association in Lund. We were all standing in a row dressed in tuxedos, which was obligatory in those days. In came the venerable Professor Lauritz Weibull. He went from student to student, and greeted each kindly. When he got to me, he reached out his hand, but I couldn't take it. I collapsed on the floor in front of him. And that was the end of the vision. At that point I had managed to crawl out of my bed and waked to find myself lying on the floor like a heap of rags. Trying to get out of bed was apparently part of the disease, and it didn't help me get better.

One consequence of the disease was that the language I spoke, that is, when I could speak at all, was affected. Normally, I spoke a cultivated version of the Scanian dialect. At that time I returned

to the dialect spoken in my home town, with all its diphthongs and special expressions. I know that the two missionary friends who cared for me were, despite all of the misery, often amused by my attempts to speak. Now, many years later, I find that the effect of illness on language has been illustrated in literature. I am referring to Sven Delblanc's book *Grottmannen* (The caveman), from which I cite the following: "That fall, when I was in my second year in high school, pappa Puccio became depressed and finally ill. The first sign was that he forgot the Swedish language, and spoke only Italian. All at once his old language was as though reborn." For me, the genuine Kullabygd Scanian dialect was reborn, and my acquired Lund dialect was completely forgotten. However, it returned, just as my hearing did. In addition, I must mention that as a result of my illness I lost all my hair, including my eyebrows. But little by little it all returned. On my arrival in Lund, in April, my head was covered with short, downy fuzz; it was impressive and made me very interesting in some people's eyes.

Looking through the weekly *Missionförbunded* (Mission Society) some time ago, in connection with my work on a bibliography for the literary production of the printing press at the mission in Kashgar, I found that my friend John Törnquist had written about my illness in a 1930 article. I was not the only one to have had bad luck. Two of my traveling companions, Roberntz and Kängström were both ill at the same time. Roberntz had malaria, and Kängström had to undergo a complicated gallbladder operation. John Törnquist had never told me that he had written about my illness. When I finally read about it, sitting there in my research nook at the Royal Library in Stockholm so many years later, I was shocked. The following is what Törnquist wrote:

> . . . upstairs in the same house. It is there in a little room in the gable that real sadness overtakes us. The fact that we missionaries from time to time are afflicted by illness is natural.

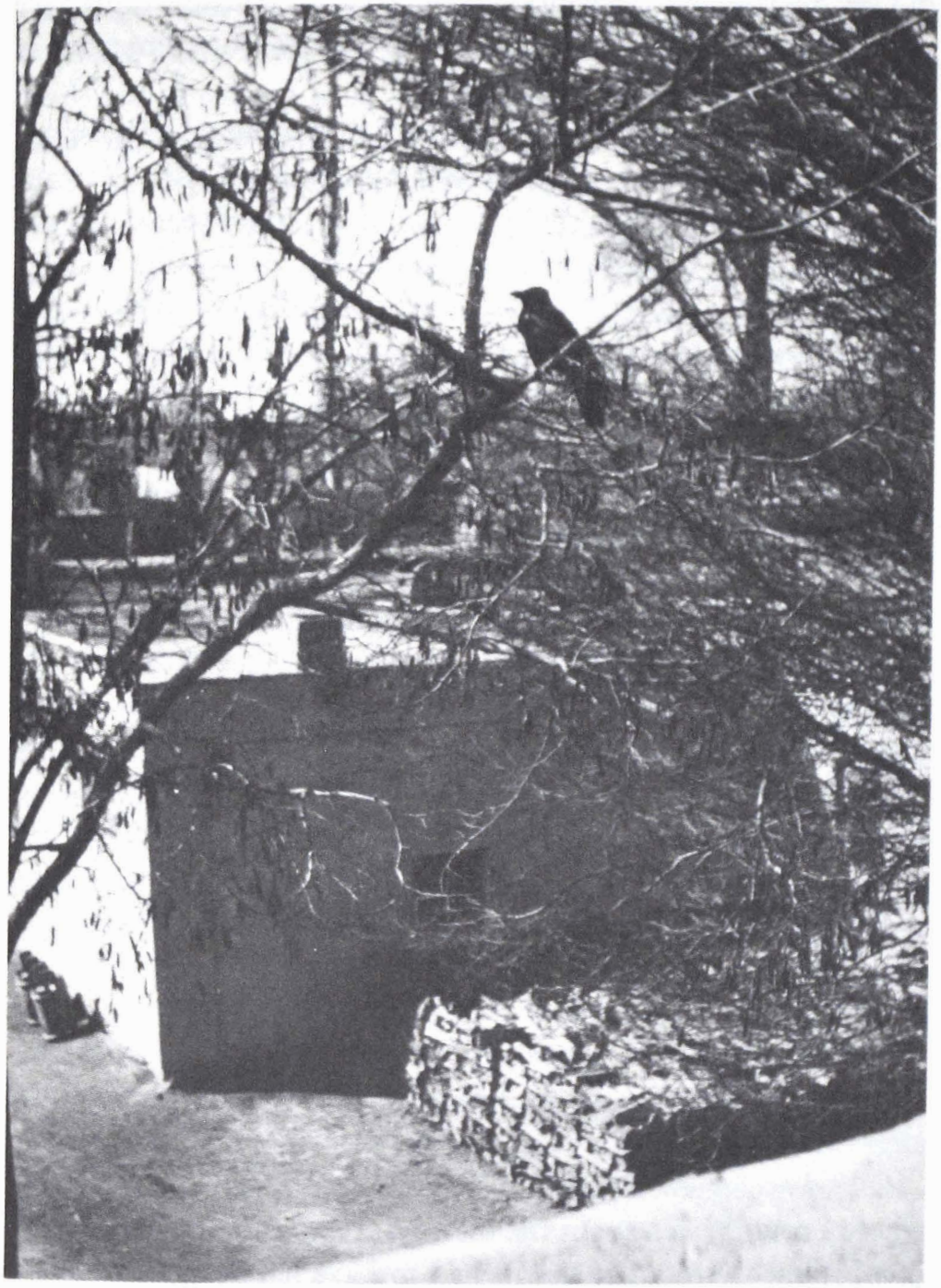
We are made aware of such eventualities before traveling to Asia. There is actually never any sadness connected to the illness of a missionary. Of course, it is annoying to be taken away from one's duties for shorter or longer periods of time, and even missionaries are subject to pain and discomfort. But somehow, it seems as though one can hear the song of angels in their sickrooms.

However, the man on this army cot is not a missionary. Those features, almost unrecognizable because of emaciation, belong to Gunnar Jönsson from the University of Lund. A little more than two months ago he arrived here together with the missionaries in order to study the Eastern Turki language, and then to return home to take a masters and subsequently a Ph.D. in Asian languages. We are amazed at the enormous change that has occurred in the patient's condition during the two weeks that have gone by since we saw him. Two weeks ago we were able to converse. Now it is impossible to do so. He can neither hear nor speak. A pus-like fluid emanates from his eyes, mouth and ears. I look at the doctor who has come with us. He understands my question. "Yes," he says, "unfortunately it is usual and also very dangerous that an attack of this serious form of typhoid is often followed by a relapse. That is what has happened here. For a while, I was ready for the worst. Now, however, he is much better than he was two days ago." We let ourselves be impressed with this last statement, bend down towards the sick man and say, as loudly as we dare: You seem to be much better today. The staring eyes reflect no understanding. We have to take our leave. I look at the cot once more. Can this be the young man who, bursting with health, had together with me challenged the dunes of our desert trip a few weeks ago! Watching his spunk in dealing with all sorts of uncomfortable situations, I had told him that he was as though made for Asia. In one way, he had already become more capable than I: he was able

> to tolerate the very questionable native food from the stinking bazaars. And now, what has become of him! I can only pray. A few miles outside Hälsingborg there is a father and a mother who surely pray for their son incessantly. Because of that there will surely be a happy ending.

I don't think that the letter to my parents that Ahlbert wrote without my knowledge can have reached them before the worst was over, what with that time's postal service between Central Asia and Europe. And the information about my return to health must have taken just as long. It must have meant a lot of suffering for my parents. They were possibly somewhat reassured by the knowledge that I could not anywhere get better care than at the Swedish Mission Hospital in Kashgar. And, surely, without the care that I received there I would not be writing these lines today.

Recuperating tried my patience. But at the same time, it was the best period of my life—I was returning to a life that I had just about lost. I was apparently extremely anxious to find out what had happened in the world. This is evidenced by the notebook that was used to communicate with me during the time I couldn't hear. In John Anderson's writing it says: "We have saved all of your newspapers. We will give them to you when you get well. You must understand that it isn't good for you to read them when you have a fever, but I will ask the doctor." Those last few words showed that the good John Anderson understood my needs. However, the "doctor"—that was Hermanrud—had no understanding for such extravagances. I had to be patient and stay in bed while the fever slowly petered out and life returned to my body. It is interesting how certain things stick in your memory from such periods of inactivity. There was, for example, the black Kashgar crow who sat in the tree outside my window at almost exactly eight o'clock every morning. She would sit there a while, croak hoarsely, look around, croak again, and fly away until the following morning. She was my morning company. If she really



The black Kashgar crow, who came to see me when I was sick, every morning at 8:00.

did see me through the window lying there in bed, she must have missed me when I finally got better and left my room. I noticed, at any rate, that she did stop her visits.

My notes show that I must have started writing down phonetic observations at an early stage in my recuperation. I can tell by my handwriting, which is as shaky as that of an eighty-year-old. I had a "servant," a man from a village south of Kashgar called Tashmaliq, "the Stone City." His name was Khoshur akhon, and he was there to help me. He would come early in the morning, light a fire in the fireplace, bring me some food from the kitchen, sweep and straighten the room, and talk with me. He was illiterate and spoke an archaic Eastern Turkic, unaffected by modernizations. I listened and made notes shakily. A good many of Khoshur akhon's speech peculiarities are contained in what later became my Ph.D. dissertation, "Studien zu einer Osttürkischen Lautlehre," a study of Eastern Turkic phonetics, a dissertation that was destined to be completely sold out and still is in great demand, even today.

Getting better also meant that I was very hungry. My emaciated body simply needed food. But Ruth Ahlbert and John Anderson, who had taken care of me so well, were careful. My notebook records that every single day I ate gruel, soup, milk, broth, mashed potatoes and gravy. I apparently objected quite early to that monotonous diet, for in John Anderson's characteristic handwriting I find, "When you get home to Scania, you will have to see to it that we get a Scanian cook out here to make pork and beans and such for us." My hunger was so enormous that I literally licked my plate after each frugal meal.

One day, somewhat later, Törnquist and I tried to figure out where I could have caught the disease. According to the period of incubation, we thought that it had to have happened during the latter part of our Takla-makan journey. We decided that it had apparently been in the caravansary in Sayghan. In the darkness that night, we had had to thread over and around groups of sleeping Turkis. There had been a strong odor of excrement. In the

morning, when we left the caravansary, we saw that many people were still lying there along the walls, after the others had left. They had obviously been sick in some way, but we didn't think about the matter very much. Talking about it then, we remembered that we had been so tired the night we arrived that we had only taken off our boots—with which we had walked over the excrement-covered courtyard of the caravansary. That was obviously the way our hands had become contaminated. Törnquist had, during his many decades in Sinkiang, been subjected to a daily dose of all sorts of germs and therefore was no longer susceptible to the majority of diseases. But I had been an easy victim.

Before I left Lund, Professor John Forssman, who was well-known and respected even outside medical circles, had vaccinated me against all the diseases I could possibly come in contact with. After my return, I met him one day in town. He was very interested in my illness, and I described briefly what had happened —perhaps implying a certain amount of criticism for the protective effect of his vaccine—or, maybe, he just took it that way. He countered the short account of my suffering very briefly: "If I had not vaccinated you, you would now be dead," said the popular Lund professor, and continued on his walk.

One More Pilgrimage

I had actually planned to spend January and February in Khotan, a city further to the east on the Southern Silk Road. But that would have meant a tiring ten-day journey on horseback or by cart, which I realized I could not manage so soon after my illness. Besides, the voyage home was approaching, and that implied two strenuous weeks on horseback across the Pamir range, for which I had to save my strength. So I had to forego Khotan. It was unfortunate because the dialect spoken there was just about unknown at that time. I had to wait until 1935 when I came in contact with it among caravan men from that city who were staying in the so-called Yarkend caravansary at the Seventh Bridge in Srinagar, Kashmir.

Of all the pseudo-historical Eastern Turkic manuscripts that I read in Kashgar, all of which I had acquired from my friend the bookseller Roze akhon, I was most fascinated by *Tazkire-yi-Satuq Bughra Khan*, that is, "The Life of Satuq Bughra Khan." It contained all of those fantastic legends connected with this first Islamic ruler of Eastern Turkistan that I had heard about during our pilgrimage to Ordam-padishah. Satuq Bughra Khan lay buried in the little town of Artush, about fifty kilometers north of Kashgar by way of a nearly non-existent road.

On a dark morning in the beginning of February, I started out for Artush, in order to see with my own eyes what Satuq Bughra Khan's monument was like, and what sort of a town Artush was. As usual, I rode in a *mapa*, and my driver, whose name was Roze akhon, just like my friend the bookseller's, had agreed to function also as servant and cook. In those days, Europeans did not travel in Eastern Turkistan without taking along a servant. It would have meant losing face and prestige.

We drove through Kashgar's narrow streets at about 5:30 in the morning. It was Ramazan, the fasting period, and lamps were burning in all the houses. People were preparing the first meal of the day, which had to be eaten before it got so light that one could see the difference between a white and a black thread. After that, they had to fast until sundown. Despite the fact that days were shorter, fasting during the winter when it was cold was more trying than it was during the summer. Once outside the city our road went through rugged terrain, salt flats, and hilly areas; we crossed rivers in which the melting snow had raised the water level—a sign that spring was approaching—and we drove through *patiq*, which were places where, as a result of the thaw, the road turned into a quagmire. At about four o'clock in the afternoon, we drove into Artush's long bazaar street with shops on both sides, and after a great deal of searching finally found the best caravansary in town, which does not mean that it offered any exaggerated amount of comfort. My presence had already been discovered while in the bazaar section, and a number of half-grown children ran around and announced: "Urus keldi," which means, "a Russian has arrived." The courtyard of the caravansary was soon filled with the usual throng of inquisitive people who wanted to look at the Russian.

I have never experienced any people so full of curiosity as the people of Artush. They looked at me through the cracks in the door of my caravansary room. They crawled on the roof and tried to get a look at me through the skylight. All of this attention was

very irritating, and I asked Roze akhon for help, but he was unsuccessful. He had lit a fire in my room and was boiling water for tea in a *chogon*, a copper kettle. At that their curiosity became even greater. The newly arrived Russian even broke the fast. Later that day, when I went to the outhouse which was at the top of a flight of rickety stairs in a tall annex to the caravansary, I found that I was being examined both from below and from the sides. The curiosity of the Artush people outclassed every other experience of that sort during my time in Kashgar and surroundings. Interest in foreigners was still enormous when, in September 1978, I visited a department store in Urumchi, and it was the same in a book store in Kashgar. I wonder why. The easiest answer is of course the fact that the area is so isolated from the rest of the world. But is that enough? One warm day, I think it was in July 1937, I was walking in downtown Lund, when I suddenly heard and then saw a bunch of noisy youths. When I got closer I could make out that they were screaming: "Chinese, Chinese, dirty knees . . ." In the middle of the heap, there was a scared Chinese tourist who was being subjected to the same sort of aggressive curiosity that I had experienced in Artush. As a matter of fact, the Artush brand had been more considerate, since I was subjected only to looking and not to abusive language. I remember that I shouted a few harsh words at the screaming mob—in those days it wasn't against the law—and they disappeared. My Chinese brother thanked me and then resumed his studies of the sights of Lund.

The news of my arrival in Artush had spread quickly. Soon a beg, who is a Turki interpreter and all-around right-hand man for the Chinese, paid me a visit in order to find out, as discreetly as possible, who I was. He too was convinced that I was Russian. I assured him that I was not, but that I was a ferangi, a European. That simplified matters in this region, where suspiciousness about traveling foreigners was very great. But could I prove it? The beg wanted to see my passport. Unfortunately, I had left it in Kashgar. It hadn't occurred to me that I might have to use it for identification

during a short visit to Artush. I didn't even have my big red Chinese calling card with me. We said goodbye with mutual expressions of politeness, and I thought that the matter was taken care of.

The inquisitive crowd had not moved from the courtyard. When, after a while, I looked out through the door, I saw that they suddenly dispersed as though by magic. Those who could not get out through the gate fast enough jumped over the wall. Others disappeared inside the caravansary. Simultaneously, the top Chinese functionary made his entrance, in the form of the *amban* of the town, the "mayor," together with a retinue of soldiers and officials, who could more closely be described as scribes. The mayor was a young man who entered my room with a cigarette dangling out of a corner of his mouth. Since I had no furniture at all, I had to offer them the floor to sit on. The Turki beg was there as well, and functioned as interpreter from Chinese to Eastern Turki and vice versa.

The purpose of the mayor's visit was to ascertain my nationality. He accepted my statement that I was not Russian. But could I prove it? The answer was obviously no, since I didn't have my passport. And therefore he had no recourse than to ask me to return to Kashgar immediately, since that was where I apparently belonged. He expressed his demand very politely, but nevertheless with much firmness. With great diplomacy, he added that he could not possibly allow me to return unaccompanied. When such a great personage as I visited his town, good tone demanded that he should have protection, both while in town and on his way back, against all the dangers and difficulties that could befall him. Therefore, he had decided to equip me with a military escort for my return trip, which, he repeated, I was to embark upon immediately. I suggested that my lowly person did not need such an escort, that it was entirely too great an honor for as insignificant an individual as I was. And, as far as the immediate return trip was concerned, I stated that it was a physical impossibility. The

horse was tired and needed to rest. I promised to start out at dawn the next day. Besides, I had come all the way from Kashgar in order to see the tomb of Satuq Bughra Khan. The only possibility would be to go there immediately now, before it got dark. The mayor gave in to that, and told the beg to accompany me and to show me the great monument that had made Artush famous. But he insisted that I embark upon my return trip tonight, and ordered the beg to arrange all the details. Then the mayor, who all the time had treated me with the greatest of courtesy, returned to his office.

A little while later, I was on my way to the tomb, accompanied by the beg and an ever-increasing multitude, which must have ended up by encompassing half the population of the town. There were old men who lifted up their grandchildren so that they could look at the stranger, there were people who limped and people who were lame. When we arrived at the tomb, which was surrounded by a low mud wall, the sheik, some mollahs of the place, and other religious people were waiting for us. With a high shrill voice, the sheik lectured about all of Satuq Bughra Khan's good deeds and he described his life, according to the biography, *tazkira*, which I had looked into previously. However, this great monument over the first Islamic ruler of Eastern Turkistan had been destroyed to a great extent by an earthquake. The only part that remained was a small dome. Once upon a time it must have been an impressive monument, something like the mausoleum over Hazrati Afaq. I discovered this later when I saw a photograph of the monument taken in 1874 by the English Captain E. F. Chapman, a member of Sir T. D. Forsyth's embassy to the Emir of Yarkend and Kashgar in 1873. The photograph had been reproduced in the embassy's comprehensive report which was published in Calcutta in 1874. In my notes I wrote the following about the visit: "The whole large building which existed once upon a time is scattered in the form of small rocks all over the ground." We also visited the *madrasa*, the Mohammedan university there, and met some of the young students who were studying Islamic theology.

On our way back to the caravansary, the beg broached the subject of my return trip once more. He advised me to start out immediately, as the mayor had said. I promised that I would leave that evening, since the main object of my visit had been accomplished. That is, it depended upon what my driver, Roze akhon, would say. I myself very much wanted to fulfill the mayor's demands.

When we arrived at the caravansary, I tried to get the beg to talk to Roze akhon. But there was no way. Roze akhon absolutely refused to leave that night. "No," he said. "The horse can't make it. And the climbs are too difficult in some places, and there is *patiq*, which the horse can't see in the dark. And the mapa can tip over, since we can't see the road." The beg couldn't think of an answer to all those objections. It was obvious that they couldn't get us to leave as planned. So, resigned, the beg said: "At any rate, the mayor said that he won't let you leave without an escort. When we have guests, we must show them courtesy. There is no other way."

He left. Roze akhon began to cook an excellent pilaf in a none-too-clean iron pot that he had brought along from Kashgar. Soon the pleasant smell of cooked mutton, onions, and steaming rice filled our room. The inquisitive people had all gone home, driven away by their hunger after the day-long fast. After eating, I took a walk through the now desolate streets of Artush. There was not a soul around. From the houses came the dim light of the linseed oil lamps and the sound of cheerful voices. All were gathered around their steaming pots.

The next morning we were up before dawn in order to return to Kashgar. I sent the owner of the caravansary to the mayor with my calling card. It was an unconscious, spontaneous act of courtesy. Later, during my life as a diplomat, I would write the letters p.p.c. —*pour prendre Congé*—on the card. But I did not, at that time, know much about diplomatic customs, and surely the mayor was not acquainted with them either. My card had to suffice, as it was.

We drove to the mayor's house. Our escort was waiting. He was a mounted corporal from the Chinese garrison at Artush. He rode silently behind our cart and saw to it that we took the right road. When we approached Kashgar and the road got crowded, he rode in front of us in order to clear the way for us. Our return was thus more respectable than our departure had been. Roze akhon made use of our military escort, drove fast and heedlessly through the streets of Kashgar. Many mules were roughly shoved out of the way by the hard wheels of our cart.

Back at the mission, I gave the Chinese corporal my large Chinese red calling card for the mayor of Artush as evidence that he had escorted me to the correct destination. In addition, I asked him to convey my apologies once more for having forgotten to take along my passport. As remuneration I gave him *chai puli*, "tea money," as much as eight tanga, which at that time was equivalent to about one Swedish crown. We were both happy and satisfied.

When, upon my return to Kashgar in 1978, I was asked what I would like to visit, I suggested that I would like to see Artush, and the tomb of Bughra Khan once more. Since it was only fifty kilometers away, I thought that there would be no problem going there by car. I immediately became aware that this was not a popular wish. The reaction was first silence and apparent consideration, and then the answer came: "It's not that easy. Artush is now the capital of the Kirghiz Autonomous Region, and therefore we need special permission to go there." I wondered whether it was not possible to secure such special permission, and since the reaction again was expressions of regret, I gave up the idea—especially since Satuq Bughra Khan was not of such importance to me. However, I did reflect about the fact that both in 1978 and 1930, Artush was a place difficult to visit.

PART THREE

1978

Back in Kashgar

It was Friday, 8 September 1978. I was met at Kashgar Airport by Imenow Hamit, chairman of that district's revolutionary committee. He was an Uighur, and despite the passage of time and the existence of a new ideology, he immediately reminded me of the refined and discreet sort of people that I had met in Kashgar previously. He was fifty-three years old and dressed in the Kashgar fashion, which, however, was modifed to look like a Chinese uniform. On his head he wore a *dopa*, the round, embroidered Central Asian cap. He accompanied me on the eight-kilometer ride from the airport to the center of the city. "There has been a gravel road here since 1953," he told me, "but a few years ago it was thoroughly modernized." Imenow Hamit spoke both New Uighur and Chinese. His New Uighur was clear and cultivated, and immediately awakened my dormant conversational New Uighur to a different and better life than when I talked with Abdullah, who, although born in Kashgar, spoke with the northern dialect of Urumchi, the so-called Ili-Uighur, or *Tarânchi*.

The Kashgar I came to was very different from the one I remembered from 1929 and 1930. But the countryside corresponded as a whole to the pictures in my memory: the tall, straight *suveda-*

poplars along the canals, the irrigated squares of fields which were still called *etiz*, people working among the corn that was as tall as they were, or on the melon plantations where the melons were accumulated layer upon layer into large piles. As before, the women wore their colorful costumes. Inside the city, we drove through a section that completely corresponded to my recollections. Artisans lined both sides of the street: shoemakers, tailors, the old specialists who repaired cracked or broken china, tea houses, bakers sitting cross-legged among piles of *girda* and *hamak nan*, which were two of the most common sorts of bread, a blacksmith who had hung up a horse in an ingenious wooden frame which keeps the horse calm and immobile during the few minutes needed to provide him with new shoes. But that old-fashioned section was little more than an illusion—most of the characteristics of the old Kashgar had disappeared—there were no mollahs with voluminous white turbans, the size of which had been an indication of the bearer's age, scholarship, and rank. I heard no more the *posh, posh*, "make way!" from the mule and camel drivers. Instead, one was subjected to the ear-splitting blare of honking cars—it was called *signal bermak*, "give a signal," or *tat-tat qilmaq*, "to honk" in New Uighur—unknown expressions fifty years ago. There were no more camels such as those that had solemnly walked to the most remote corners of the bazaar in order to get down on their knees and be delivered from their burdens. The camels had been degraded to draft animals and were harnessed to large wagons with rubber wheels from junked trucks. They were used for short-distance transportation of heavy goods. Motorized trucks were used for transports to destinations further away. There were still mules. Their number had actually increased, but they were now used to pull all sorts of vehicles. The most popular means of transportation was a little cart on two bicycle wheels, called *araba resinka*, "cart with rubber wheels." It was used for transportation of people and lighter goods, and in both cases the same rule applied: they were loaded to the limit of their capacity. Sometimes

five or six people were piled on one of these carts that was meant for two. In addition to the confusion of these vehicles, cars, trucks, and motorcycles, there were the innumerable bicycles. The streets were animated, to say the least, and the noise was ear-splitting. There were police and traffic lights at every crossing. During the busy hours there were extra voluntary traffic police who were not in uniform but wore a red band around one arm, signifying authority. Movie theaters advertised the movie for the day on large posters. There were loudspeakers everywhere, emitting music for different occasions and making it possible for city officials to reach the people with important announcements. They were called *karnay*, which is a good Persian word meaning "trumpet" or "flute." Music was trumpeted out early in the morning as a reveille. At about the same time, Kashgar's mules began to bray, loudly and desperately. It was an infernal music from ancient times. I wonder whether they brayed because they wanted to be harnessed to their rubber-wheeled carts, or whether their cries were in protest at the very thought of it. The fact is, nobody knew the answer.

But the circumstance that made finding my way difficult was not only the wide streets, the new houses, the monumental buildings and the giant statue of Mao. What made me most disoriented was that the old city wall, the massive structure that had protected the whole inner city, was gone. We passed the square in front of Häytka, the great mosque—it was unrecognizable. I knew that the wall should have been visible there. I knew that near a city gate called *Qum darvaza*, "the Sand Gate," there had been the old Swedish mission and the hospital. It was all gone. It must have been just as difficult to haul away the masses of brick and mud as it had been to build the wall once upon a time, and I couldn't refrain from thinking of Strindberg's statement about tearing down walls for light and air. The wall had been a memory from my youth. It had always filled me with the feeling of being confined, a feeling I had had long before my time in Kashgar by seeing pictures in the book *Along Unbeaten Tracks* by Sven Hedin. But,

The main square in today's Kashgar, with Häytka, the large mosque. "Where previously camels walked with measured steps . . ." 1978.

Imenow Hamit told me, the names of the great gates were still in existence. They had simply become the names of the different parts of the city.

A river called Tuman-darya runs through Kashgar. That name is difficult to etymologize. *Tuman* can mean 10,000, but it can also signify bundles of twigs that are used to dam up the water in a stream. Tuman-darya was as it had been. It contained little water since it was fall, and the snow melt had stopped flowing down from the mountains. In the puddles that still remained, women were now, as before, doing their washing.

In the southern outskirts of the city stood a very new guest house, or rather three new guest houses, and in one of them I was to stay. The way there followed a newly dug *östang*, a wider canal with rapidly running water, which came from the other Kashgar river, which was called Qizil-darya, "the Red River." The road

The very modern guest house in Kashgar, surrounded by a lush garden full of flowers. An official car, made in China, is waiting outside. 1978.

was covered with a several-inch layer of fine, flourlike white dust that flew up in a cloud at the slightest touch and penetrated all nooks and crannies. We arrived in a cloud of dust. It was familiar and felt good.

The guest house was a positive surprise. It was only a year or so old. Before its existence, the former Russian and British consulates had been used to house prominent visitors. Both were now used as regular hotels. I was assigned two excellent rooms on the bottom floor—a bedroom with a private bath, and a livingroom, all very simple but tastefully furnished and with a profusion of Kashgar rugs. The garden outside was lush with many-colored flowers. There were also fruit trees and vegetables—everything was as Kashgar-like as one could wish. Modern times were represented by, among other things, the bathroom with hot and cold running water, a shower and a toilet, and the trademark "Victory," which apparently was a common Chinese

trademark or import, used in both Urumchi and Peking as well.

We ate a quick lunch, and then discussed the program for my week in Kashgar. It was easy to come to an agreement. We were to rest first of all. That was most important. There had been so much talk about rest previously as well that I finally understood that the reason was my advanced age, in their eyes. In China all those over sixty are treated with great consideration. I protested that I had not traveled 6,000 kilometers as the crow flies in order to rest. But it didn't help. They had decided that I was to rest. There were to be periods of rest every day, and I made use of them by thoroughly reviewing what I had experienced and learned.

Official Facts about Kashgar

It was my first evening in Kashgar after almost fifty years. Imenow Hamit came at dusk to pick me up in order to take me to dinner, which, however, had been delayed for some reason. While waiting, we talked about ourselves for a while, about my time in Kashgar and what Kashgar had been like, as well as about him and what he had done in his life. He was talkative and open in a very pleasant way.

He told me that he had taken part in a long voyage in the sixties, together with an official Chinese delegation. They had visited Egypt and Sudan, they had been as far as West Africa in Guinea, and seen and experienced a lot that had been new for them. He had realized how helpless he was by not knowing a single word in any foreign language, and this had made him decide that he had to learn to speak English. Then came the Cultural Revolution, and studying foreign languages was not popular. He had now begun again with the help of lessons via radio. It wasn't easy at the age of fifty-three, what with English pronunciation being so difficult and no opportunity for daily practice. But that it was important to be able to speak a foreign language and converse with other peoples, that he understood. Now that the Gang of Four was gone, one

should strive to reach such a goal, he continued. We decided to speak a little English every day.

Imenow Hamit disappeared in the half-darkness in order to speed up the dinner preparations. I sat alone for a while and listened to the sounds that came from outside, the honking of cars in the distance, voices, and singing. Then I suddenly heard the Mayak station identification signal loudly and clearly. Someone nearby was listening to the Soviet Mayak program—I never found out who it was, but it was not especially important.

Imenow Hamit returned to take me to dinner, which was also attended by four members of the Kashgar Revolutionary Committee. They talked about the importance of progress in all aspects of society, about the sabotage by the Gang of Four, about the fact that Sinkiang was the most underdeveloped province in the whole of China. I tried to make them feel better by telling them that I thought they had already made great progress. My comparisons were "vertical"—downwards in terms of time, as opposed to "horizontal"—with other provinces and other countries. This "vertical" way of comparing was the more correct and also the more inspiring verdict.

I slept like a rock that night and woke only when the neighborhood dogs began to bark. They barked intensively for a long time. Barking dogs was something you had to get used to. It was the constant nighttime music. During the day, the dogs lay lazily and slept somewhere in the shade of a tree. It was their time of rest. A pale dawn in pastel colors came at about 6:00 A.M., together with the braying of the mules. A little while later began the morning music from the loudspeakers. It was instrumental music which alternated with song from time to time. Kashgar had awakened.

In the afternoon we had a big meeting at the guest house, together with members of the Revolutionary Committee, and teachers from Kashgar's pedagogical institute. Imenow Hamit had promised me a lecture about Kashgar today. He read from a manuscript written in Chinese. I suppose it was important for me to hear the

official version. Looking at his manuscript I noticed that here and there in the margins there were notes written in Arabic script —perhaps additions from his Uighur point of view. He lectured in Chinese, and Mrs. Wang Jui-chih translated into Swedish. The lecture was interrupted from time to time by explanations of words and terminology to and from New Uighur. The lecture was lengthy; however, I shall reproduce it here virtually in its entirety, since information about modern Kashgar and the surrounding area is just about nonexistent. I understood that this was official information. I shall not comment on the value judgments scattered here and there throughout the lecture.

Imenow Hamit began: "The Kashgar region comprises 160,000 square kilometers. It is divided into eleven jurisdictional districts called *nahiye*, and one city, that is, the city of Kashgar. There are fourteen state-owned farms, and the heads of these have equal rank with the chairman of the district's Revolutionary Committee. Within the region there are 100 people's communes, and every commune consists of thirty units of farming, forestry, and pasture land. There are 2,000 production brigades and 10,000 production teams. The total population of the region is 2.1 million. The city of Kashgar has 120,000 inhabitants. They are made up of Uighurs, Kirghiz, Tatars, Uzbeks, Tajiks, Hui, and Han-Chinese. The Uighurs comprise 90 percent of the population. In addition to the above, there are a few minor minorities. The climate is mild, there is constant sunshine, water originating from the snows in the mountains is plentiful, the soil is fertile. Once upon a time, the southern part of the Silk Route connected with the northern part in Kashgar. Before the Liberation, the majority of the people did not live much better than cattle, because of oppression and exploitation at the hands of the ruling reactionary classes. Of these, 5 percent were chiefs, *beg*, and wealthy men, that is to say *bay*. They owned 70 percent of all agricultural land, and all pasture land. There was no opportunity for modern development or industrialization. The begs and the bays were uninterested in mak-

ing changes and employed old-fashioned agricultural tools. After the Liberation, agricultural reforms took place in 1949 and 1951, and in 1955 the socialist reform was carried through, all under the leadership of the party and chairman Mao. In 1958 the people's communes were inaugurated, and with them the collective system. The masses of impoverished farmers began to concentrate their efforts on farming, thereby extending the existing cultivated area. In 1949 this area measured 4.4 million *mou* (1 *mou* = 0.0666 hectares, 1 hectare = 2-1/2 acres). This year (1978) this area measures 6.8 million *mou*, which means an increase of 60 percent since 1949. We have, of course, invested a great deal in water control."

Imenow Hamit continued: "Before the Liberation, there existed only two water reservoirs; one was called Anar-Köl, 'Pomegranate Lake,' and the other was called Sheker-köl, which means 'Sugar Lake.' We now have ninety reservoirs, and the irrigated acreage has increased tenfold. We have also concentrated on a thorough improvement in agriculture. Before the Liberation, agricultural yields were very uneven. After the Liberation, the farmers learned from the model farms. They began to improve their methods and to increase irrigation. They learned to make use of forestry, and this has resulted in larger agricultural units. The arable acreage now usually measures 300 to 500 *mou*, when before it measured 1 to 2 *mou*. We have planted forests in considerable amounts, and we have constructed long stretches of irrigation canals, called *östang*. We have developed technically, introduced mechanization and scientific methods. We now have 2,000 tractors and 3,000 motorized agricultural machines. Thirty percent of the acreage is now cultivated with machine equipment. And what do we grow? We grow wheat, barley, oats, millet, corn, rice, oil-yielding plants, and cotton. We also grow a lot of fruit: peaches, no fewer than seventeen different sorts of apricots, pears, apples, figs, walnuts, many different sorts of melons, and grapes. We have constructed more than 100 industrial and mining companies, 20 of which are

administered by the Kashgar district. For example, we manufacture different sorts of textiles; we have mills and power plants. Every jurisdictional district has its own power plant and its own machine shop for the repair of agricultural equipment. Compared with 1949, our total production has increased seventeenfold. During the first six months of this year, our total industrial production had increased 7 percent compared with the same time last year. Our transportation system has expanded and improved. Before the Liberation we only had horses, mules, camels, and wooden carts, no automobiles. Before the Liberation, there were no more than 1,000 kilometers of roads, and those roads were hardly fit to be called so. We have repaired them and built new ones. We now have a network of 5,000 kilometers. We have regular bus and telephone service between the different districts and people's communes. Before the Liberation, there was not a single movie theater in the district, not a single dance or singing group. We now have six movie theaters, and four special song and dance groups in Kashgar. We have built movie houses and theaters and arranged for the distribution of movies. The people's cultural life has become rich. We show movies of different kinds in every people's commune and in every factory. Before the Liberation, there were only 213 primary schools and 50,000 pupils. Today we have 1,950 primary schools with 310,000 pupils, and 176 intermediate schools with 80,000 pupils. We have 5 vocational schools with 3,000 pupils and 1 university with 850 students. Ninety-five percent of all school-age children go to school. We have 80,000 teachers of different nationalities, which is a ninefold increase compared to 1949. Before the Liberation, education was underdeveloped; after the Liberation, the Party gave much attention to education, and this is even more true since the abolishment of the Gang of Four. We receive relatively large subsidies for education from the central government in Peking. In the year 1957 we received 7 million yüan; in 1977 we received 22 million, and in 1978 we expect to receive 23.2 million yüan."

Imenow Hamit went on to talk about the destructive influence the Gang of Four had on education, and this was corroborated and described in greater detail when I visited the teachers' school, which I will report on later. Education had been undermined by them and, under their influence, many pupils had destroyed school furniture and equipment. I was able to see this when I visited the teachers' school. In the classrooms, we were invited to sit at the desks and could see that they were terribly marked with carved inscriptions in both Uighur and Chinese, which showed that the culprits had had lots of time to perform their cultural deeds; whether it was during classes or later will have to remain undecided.

"After Chairman Mao's victory over the Gang of Four," Imenow Hamit continued, "education improved very much. We have re-established good order. But we must admit that the level of education is still lower than we wish it to be."

Imenow Hamit began then to speak about medical care. "In 1949 there existed only two clinics with altogether forty to fifty employees. Modern Western medical practices were rare. Nowadays the central government makes yearly grants for public health and medical care. Each district has its own hospital and its own clinics. In the whole of the Kashgar region, there are now more than 200 hospitals with 6,000 beds, and the trained hospital personnel is 5,000. We have educated more than 4,000 barefoot doctors, *yalanghach doktur*, who, at the same time, work in the fields. We have 800 trained midwives. Furthermore, since the overthrow of the Gang of Four, we have tried to develop the old Uighur art of healing. While they were in power, it was forbidden to make use of minority medical practices. Now, under Hua Kuo-feng, it is different. The Uighur art of healing has made great advances, especially in the treatment of a skin disease called vitiligo, which in Europe and the United States is considered incurable. The progress we have made in health care and in the field of medicine must be ascribed to the Central Committee and to Chairman Mao. It is a triumph for the minority politics of the party.

"Mao was always very interested in the minorities and in the more remote areas of the country, and he paid much attention to their needs. For example, he wrote letters twice to the people's communes of Semen and Pakhtekli. This was very encouraging, and we remember it as though it had happened yesterday. Chou En-lai made a personal visit to Sinkiang to give instructions to its Revolutionary Committee, and this also was very encouraging for the people. On 26 April 1978, Hua Kuo-feng made his well-known appeal to the people of China: 'People of China, unite and strive to build up your country to become a powerful socialist nation.' And, as a result of Mao's nationality politics, the province of Sinkiang has received financial help. Every year, the central government gives subsidies to Sinkiang, and these funds are used for the expansion and improvement of communication and education. In 1977 the central government granted 5 percent of its budget to Sinkiang as an extra subsidy, which the provincial government is free to use according to its own desires. Also, taxation is much lower here than in the rest of China. According to Mao's instructions, we have, since the Liberation, educated a large number of minority cadres, since without communist cadres originating from national minority families, it is impossible to solve problems of nationality thoroughly and to isolate reactionary elements. We now have 24,700 minority cadres, and that is 60 percent of the whole corps. We have 9 leading cadres among the regional administrators, 154 among the precinct administrators, and 1,200 in the people's communes. The Han-Chinese cadres try to learn New Uighur, and the Uighurs try to learn Chinese. They respect each other's customs, mores and dress, and make combined efforts to build up this border region. We have favorable natural conditions, and since the Liberation our opportunities have been considerable. With Mao's help we have made much progress in the socialist work of reconstruction. We should have been able to do even more in this respect, but the Gang of Four caused a number of serious problems. Our industry has developed

too slowly, agriculture has not improved at the rate we had hoped and planned for, and our standard of living is still low. We have a saying in China which goes, 'When difficult problems arise, it is good to aim high.' And that is what we are doing. Under the leadership of the party and with Hua Kuo-feng at its head, we make contributions to the Four Modernizations. We shall develop agriculture and cattle-raising in our region, we shall increase production in our textile and coal mining industries, we shall construct canning factories in order to take advantage of the surplus from the agricultural sector." That was the end of Imenow Hamit's speech.

Education in Kashgar

Dar-ul-muallimin, "the teachers' house," is the school or seminary for training primary and intermediate school teachers. The school started in modest circumstances in 1935 and did not move to its present location, nor acquire its present education capacities, until 1964. Now it was situated in the western outskirts of the city, on the road to Ming-yol, the old caravan road leading to the Soviet border. We were welcomed in the schoolyard by the vice-principal, a red-cheeked, prosperous-looking Uighur whose name was Abdul Kerim, who wore an embroidered dopa. He suggested that we begin by listening to the teaching in some of the classrooms. Afterward he would give a report on the school's work.

We went up to the second floor of the long brick building and began in a classroom that was full of girl students. They all got up when we came in. The vice-principal told them who I was and why I had come to Kashgar. They were having a class in history of literature. All of the students, as well as the teacher, were pure Uighur. He lectured energetically and with great feeling about Mao's general idea of literature. In the next classroom, there was a lesson in Chinese for Uighurs. We were introduced in the same manner here, as well as in all of the other classrooms we visited.

The teacher in this classroom stood in front of a blackboard covered with Chinese characters. He would point to one of the characters and the class would answer in unison, that is, they shouted the Chinese name of the character. By the loudness of their shouting one could tell how many knew the answer. Sometimes there were only a couple of voices to be heard. In the next classroom there was a lesson in New Uighur for Chinese. The system was the same, with one exception: there was no in unison answering. The teacher would point to an Uighur word, and the students would take turns in answering. One girl could not read what it said on the blackboard. She had forgotten her glasses, she said. She was allowed to read from her book instead. It did not correspond exactly with what it said on the blackboard, but the teacher accepted what she said. In the next classroom there was a lesson in mathematics. They were learning about sine and cosine and problem solving. In the following classroom there was a lesson in drawing. The class was divided into two groups, drawing different objects under different conditions of lighting. Finally, we came to a class in singing. The teacher was Uighur; she was short and delicate, but extremely energetic. It was a mixed class of girls and boys of very different age groups. Along the walls there were different Uighur instruments, mostly *ravap*, which is something like a mandolin. On the blackboard there were notes, that is, figures according to the Chinese system, instead of the notes. The whole class sang, and the teacher pointed to the figures. I couldn't understand the text, but the word Mao was mentioned again and again. After all of these classroom visits we went down to the schoolyard, where we saw a lesson in calisthenics and training in some sort of ball game. All of this was part of the education provided at the teachers' seminary.

We were then taken to the principal's office in order to listen to a lecture on the school and its work. The office was a large room with benches, tables and chairs along the walls. The tables were laden with a profusion of fruit—different sorts of melons, grapes,

figs, which are supposed to be best in September. More fruit was brought in after we had sat down at the table, as well as different sorts of bread and tea. Abdul Kerim began then by introducing all of the teachers who were sitting along the walls. Then he told about the work they were assigned. He said that before the Cultural Revolution, teachers were mostly trained for primary school education only. They were now trained for intermediate schools as well. After the Cultural Revolution, courses had been started in special subjects such as New Uighur, mathematics, gymnastics, and drawing. This indicated to me that New Uighur was not taught during the Cultural Revolution. This year they were also planning to begin teaching courses in English for the first time in the history of the school. These special courses were all intended for future intermediate school teachers.

At present, the school had 670 students, 80 percent of whom were made up of the following nationalities: Uighurs, Tajiks, Hui (Tungans), and Kirghiz. The remaining 20 percent were Han-Chinese. In 1978, 277 students took their final examinations, and they were now employed. Information about the social background of the students showed that 90 percent came from working class or peasant families. What characterized them all was that they enjoyed their teacher training and that they all did their best. "But we too do all we can in order to give them a good education," Abdul Kerim said. "We have laboratories and libraries, and we are trying to acquire more equipment. We have 131 male and 25 female teachers. All of them have university or vocational school education. In addition, we have a number of older teachers who have been at the school for a long time." I imagine that this meant that their education was not as good as that of the majority. "Most of the teachers come from the minorities, but since we teach Chinese to the minorities, that is, mostly to the Uighurs, and New Uighur to the Chinese, we have brought the two groups much closer to each other. At present, I would say, half of the teachers from minority groups understand and speak Chinese."

He went on to mention political matters and explained that fifty employees were members of the party. There also was a Revolutionary Committee. The members of the party were organized into one division with three subsections: one dealt with teaching, another was described as a committee for criticism, and the third served administrative purposes.

Before speaking about the Gang of Four, he gave a short report dealing with the history of the school. Since the Liberation, they had concentrated on doing away with the old school system from the time of the Kuomintang. That system had never been interested in educating the people. But Mao had taken great pains, and as a result of his positive attitude, they had been able to train 8,000 teachers in Southern Sinkiang during the past twenty-eight years. "But our work was subject to a lot of interference by the Gang of Four," Abdul Kerim continued. "They stigmatized many of our teachers and debased them, which resulted in their not wanting to teach, and the students not wanting to learn. It was the Gang of Four's mode of sabotage. We are happy now to be rid of them. We have begun to see improvement in our work, and the relations between students and teachers have become very good. We have made a lot of progress, but as yet have not reached our goals. We still have many shortcomings, but we shall work hard under the leadership of Hua Kuo-feng to remedy them and to raise the level of education. We shall give extensive freedom to the development of all positive ideas."

With that declaration the vice-principal ended his lecture and wondered whether I had any questions.

I began with a question about Uighur schoolbooks. Were they written in New Uighur and printed in Sinkiang? The answer was that they were translated from Chinese and mostly printed in Peking. Since I sat next to the vice-principal, I had noticed that during his lecture he had referred to notes written in the old Arabic script. Therefore, it seemed natural for me to ask about how things were with the new Latin alphabet, and was informed

that it was in use. The young had no problem. But the others did have some difficulty, it seemed to me. They apparently continued using the Arabic alphabet. In answer to another of my questions, I also found out that all of the students lived at the school and that room and board was free.

Agriculture

In his lecture, Imenow Hamit talked about the first two of the Four Modernizations which were to change China into a highly developed modern industrial nation. The other two, defense and technical scientific reorganization, were not regarded as relevant for Sinkiang, and I was not expected to be surprised that they were left out. Agriculture and industry, however, were concepts of basic importance.

During the discussion about the program for my visit to Kashgar, I had stated that I was especially interested in visiting a farm. My reasons were several. I was born and brought up on a farm in Scania and therefore feel strong ties to that sector, and in addition I had investigated agricultural technique in pre-liberation Sinkiang in great detail in one of my linguistic-ethnological research papers. I was very interested, therefore, in seeing the new developments. Finally, I was curious about the Kashgar countryside. I experienced the city every day.

It was decided that we would visit the people's commune called Pakhtekli, which was situated south of Kashgar. This commune was, of course, well-known since Jan Myrdal had visited and described it, but I expected that we would see and experience it in

a different way. The right name for the commune was actually Pakhteklik, which meant "wood-pigeon place." Pakhtekli was strange for me to hear, and the etymology of the word did not become more clear when I heard it pronounced Pakhtekla by the local inhabitants. The commune is situated within a large area that has been cultivated for a long time, and is called Toquz-aq, which is an abbreviation for Toquz-aq-bazar, which means "the nine white markets."

We drove out through Kashgar's suburbs on a Sunday morning. Sundays were market days. We passed crowd after crowd of market-happy Kashgar inhabitants. In the old days they had had a system around the Kashgar countryside whereby market days were distributed over the different days of the week—each place had a special day—it was sort of a circumambulatory system in which the names of the days actually became the place names. For example, since today was Sunday, the name of a place would be Yakshanba-bazar, meaning "Sunday market." Imenow Hamit explained that the old system had been discontinued. There was now only one market day for the whole Kashgar region, and that was Sunday.

The markets we passed were full of colorful activity. They sold bright fabrics, embroidered hats, rugs and tapestries, and enormous amounts of fruit. I asked whether the salesmen were private concerns and was informed that there was no such thing as private business, that all private ownership had been abolished as early as the 1950s. All work was on a collective basis. I asked about all of the cyclists around town, did they own their bicycles? and was told that they did. "And that man there, working in that little field, does he own it?" "Yes, he does." It seemed that the soil surrounding the villages was the villagers' private property. And they were allowed to sell their produce freely at the markets. But a shoemaker sitting in his little cubbyhole on a Kashgar street worked for a collective. Apparently they had been forced to treat private initiative and enterprise more liberally in the countryside.

We drove across Qizil-darya, "the red river," which really was quite red. It is a well-known fact that in Southern Sinkiang there is no goiter where red water is used for drinking water. The water in Kashgar is red. Yarkend has white water and the city is known for its large number of goiter-afflicted people. Obviously, the red water contains iodine that counteracts the condition. Imenow Hamit was well aware of this fact.

We left the wide asphalt road to Toquz-aq and found ourselves on a dirt road covered with the usual deep layer of white dust and lined with high poplars on both sides. It was the main road to Pakhtekli. The deep ruts showed that it was much in use, and I couldn't keep from wondering what it was like during the thaw when the roads were transformed to what in New Uighur is called *patiq*, a muddy, spongy mass on which it is impossible to drive.

The leaders of the Pakhtekli Revolutionary Committee were waiting for us in front of the main building, and we were taken to a large reception room where the tables had already been set with tea and fruit. One of the leaders delivered a welcome speech and declared that the friendship between China and Sweden had once more brought a visit to Pakhtekli from that remote country, and this they were happy about. He could not have expressed himself more diplomatically and at the same time with such genuine honesty. Then followed a report full of facts about the beginnings and present activities of the commune.

> The Pakhtekli people's commune is situated southwest of Kashgar, between the rivers Qizil-darya and Taluchuk-darya. The area is a large plain of which 24,000 *mou* are cultivated. Before the Liberation, the whole area was a grassy marshland. It was inhabited by a few impoverished peasants whose standard of living was very low. People were forced to move to other places in order to survive. In addition, the peasants there were exploited by the landowners. Eighty percent of the land was owned by rich farmers and most of the poor

peasants worked for them on a day-to-day basis. When the Liberation came in 1949, they became the owners of the land. The land reform was carried through in 1952 under Mao's leadership. The domination of the feudal landowners was at an end, and the peasants took over. On 24 March 1952 the peasants of Pakhtekli wrote a long letter to Mao in the form of a long poem. On 30 August of the same year Mao answered. [This letter was framed and hung behind glass on one of the walls, with the New Uighur translation, also framed, next to it.] In his letter, Mao had written that he hoped the peasants of Pakhtekli would increase their production, improve their material standard of living and their welfare. Twenty-six years have passed since Mao wrote that letter. The peasants have worked according to his directions. The marshland has been transformed into a beautiful region of fields and woods. The collective production has grown year after year, and the standard of living has improved step by step. The people's commune is now made up of three production brigades and forty-three production teams. It comprises 2,400 households and the population is 9,200 persons. Of the 24,000 *mou* of cultivated land, 20,000 are devoted to rice and other grains. More than 55 percent of the area produces rice. We have fourteen large- and middle-size tractors, two trucks, and sixteen so-called manually driven tractors. Thirty percent of the members of the commune have their own bicycles and 20 percent their own sewing machines. Eighty percent of their daily diet is made up of the more refined sorts of rice and flour from their own production, our host continued. Before the Liberation there was only one primary school here; now we have seven primary schools and one intermediate school. During the past two years, twenty-five young people from here have been admitted to universities in Urumchi, Peking, and Shanghai. As far as medical care is concerned, there was, in the old days, not a single clinic, not a single doctor in the

whole region. We now have a hospital with forty beds; every production brigade has its own clinic and barefoot doctor. Population has increased by 42 percent since the Liberation. We have seventy cadres, and only three of them are Han-Chinese. The rest are Uighurs. Han-Chinese and Uighurs respect each other, learn from each other, and work toward a common goal. However, our agricultural production suffered a great deal from sabotage at the hands of followers of the Gang of Four, and there was a time when our production was at a standstill. Under the leadership of Hua, we now contribute to the Four Modernizations and our production has increased considerably recently. In 1975 our production of cereals was 5.4 million *tsin* (1 *tsin* = 0.6 kilograms), in 1977 it was 6.9 million *tsin*. Today we cultivate 70 percent of the area with the help of machines and plan to have effected the mechanization of the remaining 30 percent before 1980.

There followed a long list of detailed information about the yield of different grains, which I shall not report on here. I was informed about how lucrative the cultivation of melons was. They had planted 10,000 *mou* with different sorts of melon and this had yielded 1,000 kilograms per *mou*. You could provide melons for the whole Kashgar region from that one farm.

We went out to look at the fields. The whole area was divided into squares and rectangles. These units generally measured eight kilometers square. On one side the roads were lined with the usual tall, straight poplars and irrigation canals. On the other side were rows of *sögat*, the same sort of willow that in the old days could be found in the Scanian countryside and that here, just as there, were plundered for firewood. The road we followed was about four or five kilometers long. On both sides there were plantations of different sorts. Here and there, there were small villages or groups of houses built in the traditional Kashgar style: low, flat-roofed mud houses. First we stopped at a melon field. The harvest was just

Melons as far as the eye can see at the Pakhtekli people's commune. Second from the left is my interpreter, Wang Jui-chi, and next to her Imenow Hamit. 1978.

about over; we jumped over dry irrigation ditches to an *etiz* which was almost completely covered with harvested melons. There was a *satma* on this field, a sort of leafy shed where the workers could rest during the hottest hours of the day, and from where they could guard the field, ward off intruders and see to it that the water was released into the ditches at the right times. They cut open some melons, and we had to taste the different kinds and express our opinions. I mentioned the fact that the cut-off round root of the melon was called *shaitan*, "satan," and received an immediate smile of recognition. According to Uighur belief, the devil uses the cut-off melon root as a wheel with which he can travel from place to place. In order to avoid his making use of it, the root used to be cut up into small pieces. They no longer did

this in the Pakhtekli melon fields. They were modern people and considered melons pragmatically for their value as nourishment and as a means of enjoyment. During the winter they could be kept for four to five months, I was told, at a temperature between five and eight degrees centigrade. They were kept in holes in the ground, according to many hundreds, maybe thousands, of years of experience. The Kashgar region has a history of gardening that is unique. Marco Polo wrote about Kashgar's beautiful gardens and the fruit that grew there. He did not, however, mention melons.

Many people had congregated on the roads while we were having our melon orgy out in the field. They were mostly children, most of them quite dirty and with unpleasant rashes on their faces, but they looked well-nourished and healthy. They were reminiscent of the old Kashgar. Efforts to improve hygiene and health care had apparently not succeeded everywhere.

I asked how large a part of the area lay fallow during the season, and was given information about it. Then I was taken to an area that lay fallow just then, *aq yer*, "white earth," as it is called in New Uighur. Since lying fallow means that the soil gets a rest, I imagine that *aq*, "white," has an additional significance in the farmers' language. The fallow land was covered with small, conical mounds of fertilizer for soil improvement.

We stopped at a rice field where harvest was in progress. This field, just as every other field in Pakhtekli, was bordered with giant sunflowers. The sunflower seeds were mostly used for making oil. The rice was being harvested by teams of Uighur boys and girls advancing in rows and cutting the rice with sickles, as in ancient times. The harvest was entirely unmechanized, but I was informed that the planting was done with the help of machines. Rice hay, called *pakhal*, was used as fodder for the camels, though it was too tough for the other animals. Mules ate only *saman*, which is hay from other grains. Domestic animals were very particular about their food.

After a few hours in the fields, it was time for refreshments. In

the middle of the people's commune of Pakhtekli stood a building that could be described as a club. At the entrance, which was decorated with large red Chinese inscriptions, a team of youths was waiting, wearing colorful Uighur costumes. They were to entertain us with dancing and singing. We were taken to a long room called *Baráng*. The walls and roof of this room were made of grapevines, and ripening bunches of grapes hung from the roof. The ground was covered with Khotan and Kashgar rugs, most of them with old patterns that were not used anymore. It was the pomegranate pattern in reds and sky blues—an unsurpassed combination of colors and stylized nature. We sat down on the rugs, and they brought in tea and fruit, enormous amounts of grapes and melons—I wondered how much my poor stomach could take of this—and then the show began. It was mostly a tribute to Mao. By means of song, music and dance, they expressed their promise to follow his advice and directives, to do their duty, to increase production and to improve their standard of living. The first half of the show ended with a severe upbraiding of the Gang of Four and of their sabotage. The second part of the show dealt with the exploiting landowners and all of their misdeeds. A young Uighur was dressed up as an old-fashioned *aqsaqal* (which literally means "white beard"). In the old days, that was the name for the oldest person in the village, who was a man with power and authority. A young Uighur woman played his wife. They alternated singing a story about the hell that life had been during the landowners' time, and how Mao had come and introduced a new era. I found out that the members of this dance and song group were amateurs and that they usually worked in the fields. They were described as a voluntary propaganda and entertainment group, who performed whenever prominent guests arrived or whenever some other occasion in the commune called for entertainment. Usually a show of this sort ended with the prominent guest's participating in the dance. I asked to be excused because of my age, and since the wishes of old people are always

honored, I was spared from having to take part in the exercise.

On the way back to Kashgar, we stopped at the Kashgar Stadium. Imenow Hamit told me that the city's soccer team was very famous. A young man from Kashgar had even been goalkeeper with China's best team and he had played in Peking and other big cities. The Uighur word for goalkeeper was *vorotér* and had been completely unknown during my previous time in Kashgar, since there were no sports and athletics at that time. However, the word seemed familiar somehow, and after thinking for a while I realized why: it was a loan word from the Russian *vratár*, and since in Uighur the consonant combination *vr* is impossible, it had been changed to *varatár*, which had then become *vorotér*. The significance of this for me was that the game of soccer had come to Kashgar from the West.

When we returned to Kashgar, something happened that made me realize that I had committed a blunder, *une gaffe*, as it is called in diplomatic terminology. In Sinkiang a local newspaper is published in New Uighur, called *Xinjiang geziti*. I had asked to see an issue of the paper in Urumchi, but nothing had happened. I didn't worry too much about it, thinking that I would get hold of one later. At the Kashgar guest house I met a journalist from that newspaper. I asked him where I could buy an issue. His answer was an embarrassed smile. A young English-speaking Chinese was standing next to him, and so I repeated my question to him, thinking that the Uighur journalist had not understood my question. He looked just as embarrassed. I now understood that something was wrong. I got my explanation later. There are only three newspapers in China that foreigners are allowed to buy. One of them is *The People's Daily*. Provincial newspapers may under no circumstance be sold to foreigners. Without meaning to, I had made them lose face by voicing a wish they could not fill. Later, when I visited a communal reading hall, I could not avoid seeing an issue of *Xinjiang geziti* displayed for people to read, but to this day its contents have remained unknown to me.

Industry

Fifty years ago there was no industry in Kashgar. That was the case for the whole of southern Sinkiang, for that matter. Industrial products, mostly in the form of consumer goods, were imported from the Soviet Union and India, and to some extent from Central China via Urumchi. Everything came by caravan. Kashgar was a city of artisans. All of this has changed. Although not as yet a significant industrial center, Kashgar is at the beginning of such a development. I visited a textile plant and a rug-weaving mill. I was supposed to visit a silk spinning mill as well, but didn't have enough time.

"Kashgar's cotton and textile factories," as they are called officially, are situated in the southern outskirts of the city. They consist of a large number of buildings scattered over a wide, parklike area planted with poplars and other trees. We were immediately taken to the administration building where in the ground floor hall we were greeted by a large painting representing Mao saying to Hua Kuo-feng, "With you at the helm I feel safe and secure." On the second floor there was a large reception room with benches and chairs along the walls and tables in front of them laden with the usual orgy of fruit. Fine old Kashgar and Khotan

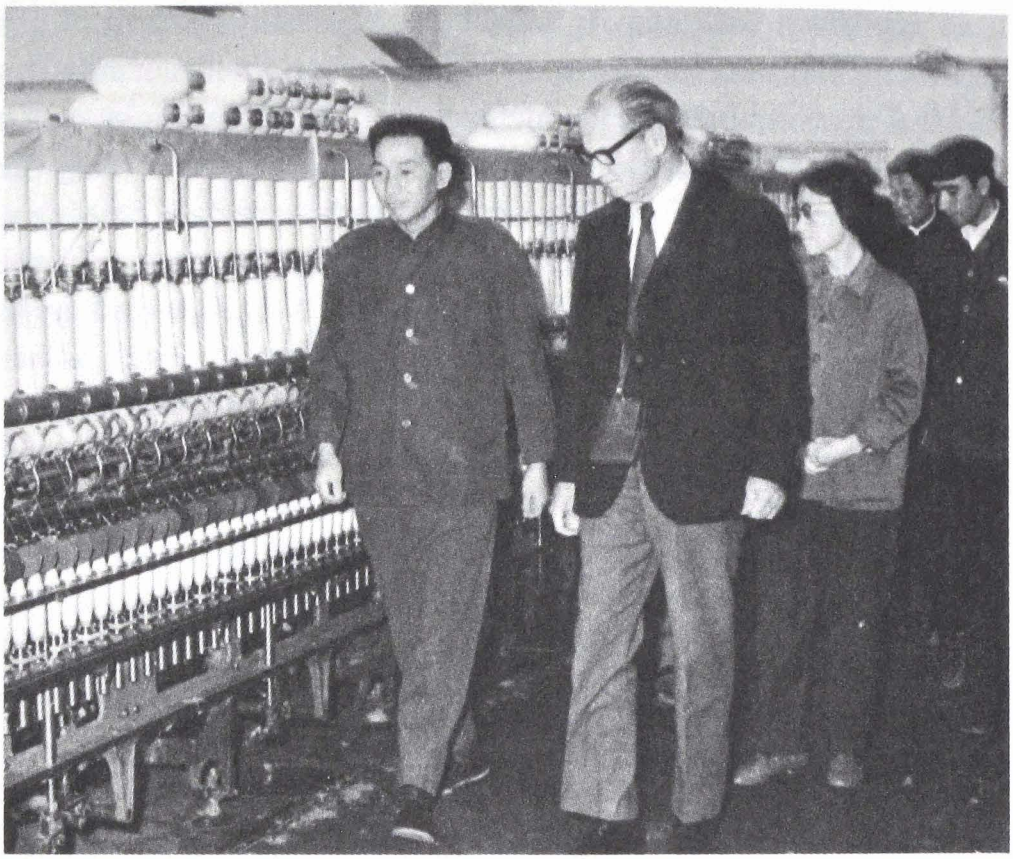
rugs covered the floor. Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin, the four great ones, looked down on us from the walls. The vice-chairman, who was a Han-Chinese, started to speak, and welcomed me as the rare guest from a faraway land that I was. Pointing to the laden tables, he explained that they had not much to offer, but that he hoped I would partake of what there was. The only thing I could answer to such an understatement was that in my home country such a profusion of fruit would cost a fortune.

After these introductory expressions of courtesy, we went on to facts about the textile plant. Construction was begun in 1958, production in 1960; four years later a dye works was built, and production there was begun in 1966. "When we began to build the plant in 1958, we followed Chairman Mao's instructions—that is, to put all our energy into it and to aim high in order to reach greater, better, more economical and quicker results in our work of socialist reconstruction," the vice-chairman said. The year 1958 was characterized by a great upswing in China. At the present there was a new upswing. The vice-chairman stated that the plant had 1,260 weaving looms, that it produced 20 million meters of cloth per year, and that for this production they needed 30,000 bales of cotton. The factory could be described as moderate in size. They manufactured only cotton cloth; they were not interested in synthetics. The cloth was mostly colorful and flowery and was much in demand in Southern Sinkiang, especially among the women. In the countryside they wanted large flower designs, whereas the people in the cities preferred a more discreet sort. It was noticeable that the speaker approved more of the city taste. A small part of the production was exported to Pakistan. I wondered why, since Pakistan had a considerable textile industry itself. How were they able to compete? The explanation I received was that it was border trade. The export to Pakistan was by way of the new Karakorum road to the border regions of northern-most Pakistan, and apparently supplied the Kirghiz nomads and the small number of people living in valleys that are harder to reach from Paki-

stan than from Sinkiang. It wasn't any significant export. They also manufactured cloth for uniforms, the vice-chairman added.

All of the machinery at the factory was of Chinese origin, and it was electrified. At this time they were working on improving the quality of the equipment. They admitted that there were problems. Mostly it was the noise level that was entirely too high, and the work environment was not the best. There were 3,030 workers at the factory, and half of them were women. Their mean age was 39.5 years, and their mean salary was sixty-eight *yüan* a month, which was considered low. The workers represented all of the minorities of Southern Sinkiang—Uighurs, Tungans, Chinese, Uzbeks, Mongols, Sibos, and Manchus. In the beginning, when the plant was new, they had been sent to textile plants in Shanghai and other cities in order to learn the trade. They constituted the first generation of textile workers in Southern Sinkiang. The speaker emphasized again and again that these workers were now working very hard to carry out the great achievements that were expected.

We made a tour of the whole plant, beginning in the production section, which was situated in the southern part of the area. We ended in the northern part, the site of all the service buildings and the homes. All was very neat and clean, and this observation applied everywhere—the neatness was simply an attempt to keep things as pleasant as possible. However, the noise in the weaving mill was earsplitting, and the air was full of fine cotton dust that hovered in the place like a white fog. Most of the workers wore masks. The most advanced and complicated sort of work was apparently entrusted to Chinese. Almost all of the workers in the spinning mill were girls, half Uighurs and half Chinese. We visited the technical section where they engraved the designs onto the metal reels with which they were then printed onto the cloth. There we met a young Uighur woman, who was a model worker, that is, a model for the other workers. As a reward she had been given a trip to Peking, where she had been allowed to shake hands



Kashgar's cotton and textile plants provide fabrics for the female part of the population, with brightly colored large flower designs. On tour through the spinning mill with the manager. 1978.

with Mao. She had a pleasant, open, intelligent face. We had a picture taken of the two of us side by side. We continued on to the drawing section, where four Chinese were drawing new designs. Three of them were women. From what I could see, it was mostly a question of copying or possibly developing existing Chinese designs, especially with flowers. I saw no design that was genuinely Uighur.

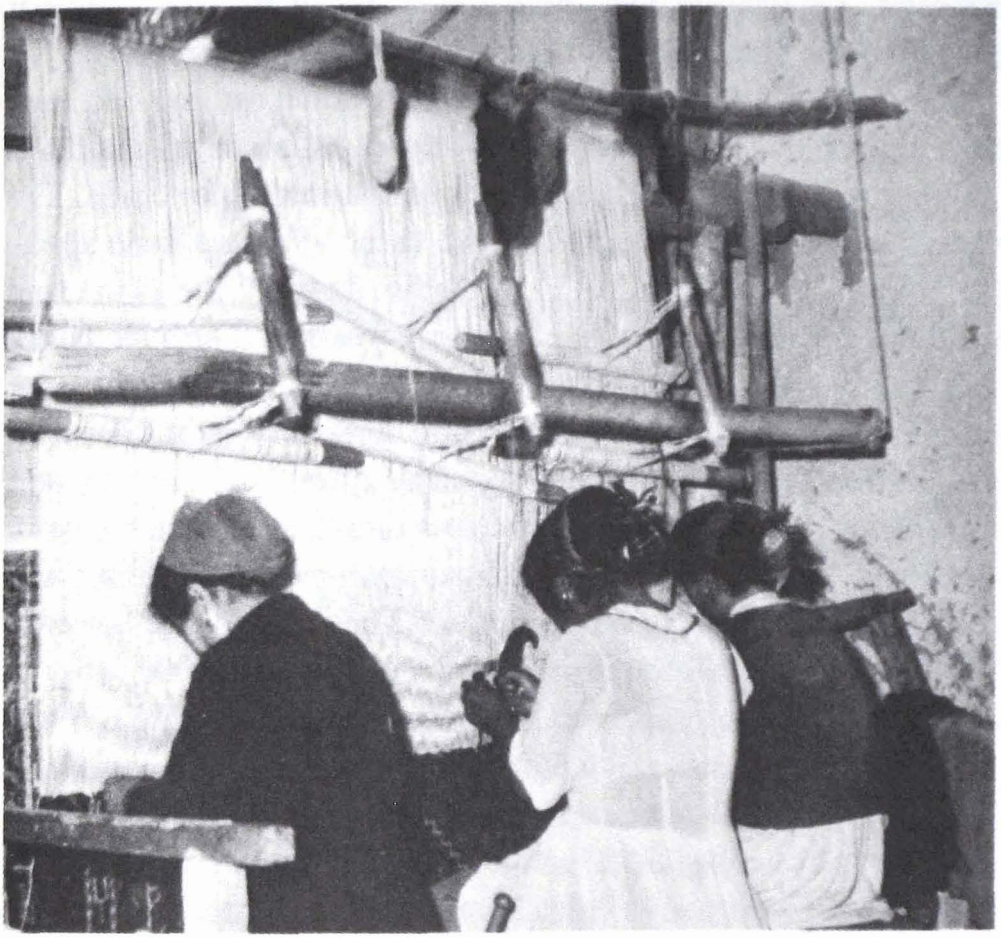
In the northern part of the grounds, we began with the hospital, which had forty beds, four in each room. It was all very plain but nice and clean. We looked into the vaccination department and the department for children's diseases, where there were no patients

just then. The beds were empty. We continued on to another house, a children's daycare center, where we were met by earsplitting singing. Two circles of small Chinese children were engaged in lively dancing and singing. I asked what they were singing about, and was told that the song was called "Let's Get Rid of the Gang of Four!" I didn't see a single Uighur child. These were all Chinese. I imagine that this can be explained by the fact that most of the Uighur workers lived near the factory, where their relatives could take care of the children. The Chinese workers lived further away. The song castigating the Gang of Four was so loud and shrill that I had to leave the room in order to give my ears a rest. We walked through a long hallway with classrooms and resting rooms on both sides. Classes were in progress in some of them. We got further and further away from the song about the Gang of Four. I was asked whether I wanted to see the infants' section on the second floor and I declined as politely as I could. On our way back we visited the small children, who had now stopped singing, and so were more receptive to being spoken to by means of sign language primarily, but I noticed that their teacher was anxious to continue singing, and therefore I quickly took my leave, and we went out to the sunshine where, surrounded by the factory's luxuriant flower beds, we said a warm and heartfelt goodbye. And so we drove back to Kashgar. The road was crowded with mule-drawn carts and with heavier camel-drawn wagons. In one place, there was some road work going on. Uighur women were working with spades and shovels carrying soil and mud on stretchers made of braided willow osiers. The new age had given them equality, at least as far as manual labor was concerned.

The rug factory was northeast of Kashgar, very near the airport. The road there went by Kashgar's biggest hospital, a large group of yellow brick buildings. It was the main road from Urumchi, and the traffic was very heavy and consisted of mostly overloaded, unwieldy trucks. We arrived at the factory at 6:00 P.M. Peking time, which means 4:00 P.M. in Kashgar, and time for the after-

noon shift to come to work. We were, as usual, first taken to the adminstrative office for our fruit and tea and statistical information. The head of the factory gave his report containing the customary criticism of the Gang of Four, which this time was so strong that they had to discuss the advisability of translating it for me in detail. I imagine that the version I got was somewhat doctored, but I still understood that the Gang had been hauled over the coals. The factory was rather new. It was started in May 1973 with 2 weaving looms and 6 workers. After five years of hard work, they now had 120 weaving looms and 302 workers, of which 25 were Han-Chinese, 2 Tungans, 2 Tajiks, 1 Uzbek, and 272 Uighurs. They were mostly young women. The head of the factory went on to say that the workers learned from each other, which was in accordance with Mao's directives, that they helped each other and did all they could to improve rug weaving techniques. They had formed groups and competed with each other. Things went well now; blue- and white-collar workers cooperated—and then it came again—they were working on exposing the sabotage of the Gang of Four. Production in 1973 had been 200 square meters of rugs; in 1974 they had aimed at 600, but had produced 900 square meters. The increase was steady. In 1977 their aim had been 2,600 square meters, and had manufactured 3,000 square meters. For 1978 the goal was 2,700 square meters, but they were already at 2,425 square meters, which pointed to an end result of about 3,200 square meters. I must admit that in view of the above it was hard for me to discover the damage done by the Gang of Four.

The head of the factory then talked about technique in the manufacture of rugs. He pointed to the fact that their rugs had minority traits in their designs. Up until 1976 they had followed traditional patterns, but then they had decided to create new patterns, and had produced ten so far. More were in the making. As for the dyes, in the old days they had been obtained from roots and rinds of plants and fruit. They had used grapes, apricots,



Young Uighur women at work in the rug factory in Kashgar, an industry still pleasantly close to the old handicraft. 1978.

pomegranates, walnuts, and an oil-producing plant called *qizil gul*, "the red flower"—I was not able to ascertain its identity. Now all had been modernized, and they used synthetic dyes which were much better. This statement gave rise to a lively discussion. I suggested that plant dyes were better and that experts always looked for genuine natural plant dyes. As an illustration I mentioned that the use of artificial dyes has for a long time been prohibited in Afghanistan. The Kashgar people, however, did not change their opinion. Synthetic dyes were best, and the proof was that Sinkiang rugs were in great demand in countries such as

England. I suggested that the demand would be even greater if they used the old plant dyes. Agreement was not possible.

Out in the factory, the young Uighur women sat and tied their rugs in the old, time-honored way—the question in my mind was whether we were visiting a factory or an institution for crafts. The equipment was rather primitive and there was very little space. But fresh air was plentiful, especially since all the doors and windows were still open to the warm fall weather. The girls looked very young—I would guess that they were about fourteen to sixteen years old. They insisted that child labor no longer existed. It had existed before the Liberation. The quality of the rugs was surely good, but the designs and colors didn't agree with my taste. I yearned for the fine, old Kashgar *anar-gul* rugs, those with pomegranate designs in red and blue. They did admit, however, that Khotan was still the rug center in Sinkiang, and that they in Kashgar had a long way to go before they could compete.

Medical Care in Present-day Kashgar

At the research institute of the Academy for Research on Minorities in Peking, I had received a sizable volume dealing with Uighur medicine. It was written in New Uighur by an Uighur expert in the field, whose name was Turdi Muhammat akhon. The title of the 955-page book was *Uygur Tababatchiligi kullanmisi*, which meant "handbook for Uighur medicine." It had been published by the State Publishing House in Sinkiang. I found that medical research in Kashgar was especially concerned with old Uighur medicine and its application in modern society. As a result of my studies of older Uighur literature, I knew that as far back as the eighth century the old Uighurs were much concerned with medicine and medical theory, and the manuscripts found along Sinkiang's Silk Route contained medical treatises that had only partially been worked up. I admit that I was very anxious to come in contact with present day practitioners of that age-old art of medicine.

Wednesday, the thirteenth of September, was one of those rare days in Kashgar when the air is free from the grey haze of fine dust that always lightly veils and weakens the sunshine. The air was transparent, there was not a cloud in the sky, the morning was

The 75-year-old Uighur physician Abdur Rahman Karim (right) and his colleague Abdul Qadir Mehmet. 1978.

cool, and to the south you could see the snow-covered tops of the Kunlun and Karakorum ranges, but Muz Tagh Ata, the "glacier father," was invisible. We were to visit the hospital for Uighur medicine. It was situated somewhere toward the west, on the way to the road to Ming-yol, "the Thousand Roads," which leads to the Soviet border. It was a large group of buildings, several of them of considerable size. We were welcomed by Abdur Rahman Karim, a seventy-five-year-old physician who was one of the three Uighur doctors who had spent their lives studying and developing Uighur medicine. One of the other two, a seventy-eight-year-old, was not able to attend, and the third had recently died. Abdur Rahman Karim was a handsome and typical Kashgar man with a wavy white beard. He was modest and quiet in his ways, but his eyes were wide awake and observant, and they became especially lively when he found out that I had been in Kashgar in his and my common youth, and that we could exchange ideas and conver-

sation in New Uighur. Together with him, there was Abdul Qadir Mehmet, the assistant director of the hospital, an Uighur in his fifties, pock-marked and dressed in a white lab coat. He chaired the meeting. There were no portraits on the reception room walls; instead there was a printed Lenin citation in New Uighur about the importance of studying, and from the window one could look across a blooming garden toward a large yellow two-story hospital building. The table was set with the usual overabundance of different fruits, with a giant melon in the middle, a decoration, I hoped. It reminded me of the melon that the Pakhtekli people's commune had given to me to take home to Sweden. It weighed about sixteen pounds and followed me all the way to Peking, where I left it in the care of one of my friends at the Academy. In this medical environment I dared refuse partaking of any more melon, since my stomach was very much affected by now. My new friends reacted with sympathy and understanding—being experts in Uighur medicine they were only too well aware of the laxative powers of melons.

Abdul Qadir began his lecture in very rapid New Uighur, which was translated into Chinese for the non-Uighur Chinese who were present, and Wang Jui-chih then translated into Swedish. In this way I had two opportunities to understand Abdul Qadir's New Uighur. Imenow Hamit, who listened with great interest, interpreted from time to time in order to improve or correct the translation into Chinese. The speaker began by stating that Uighur medicine was 2,500 years old—which is possible, but one would have to consult Chinese sources for such information, I thought to myself. There had been no development possibilities for Uighur medicine before the Liberation, Abdul Qadir continued. There had been no hospitals where it could be practiced. But since then, things had changed. The party was interested in Uighur medicine, and in 1956 a medical cooperative center was formed in Kashgar, with six old doctors who knew Uighur medicine. Only two of them were still alive, and one of them was Abdur Rahman Karim. In

1957 the center was expanded—six apprentices were added, one of whom was Abdul Qadir, who was now lecturing to us. In 1959 this cooperative medical center became a public hospital run by the state. "At that time we had 20 beds," Abdul Qadir said. "In 1961 we had 40 beds and 36 doctors and nurses. Up until 1976 the hospital was administrated by the city of Kashgar; now it is run by the district. We have 100 beds, and the medical and nursing personnel has been increased to 103." A large new building was being constructed and would further increase the capacity of the hospital. "Before 1976 we had no modern equipment. All medication had to be prepared manually. But we followed Mao's directives, which were to combine Uighur and modern Western medicine because it would give the best results. Now we have such equipment. We can take electrocardiograms, for example. And last year we began to use ultraviolet rays for certain kinds of treatment," he continued.

Medication by injection, of course, had been an unknown concept in old Uighur medicine. But since 1973 they have made use of that method of medication even in Uighur medicine, and it has been very successful.

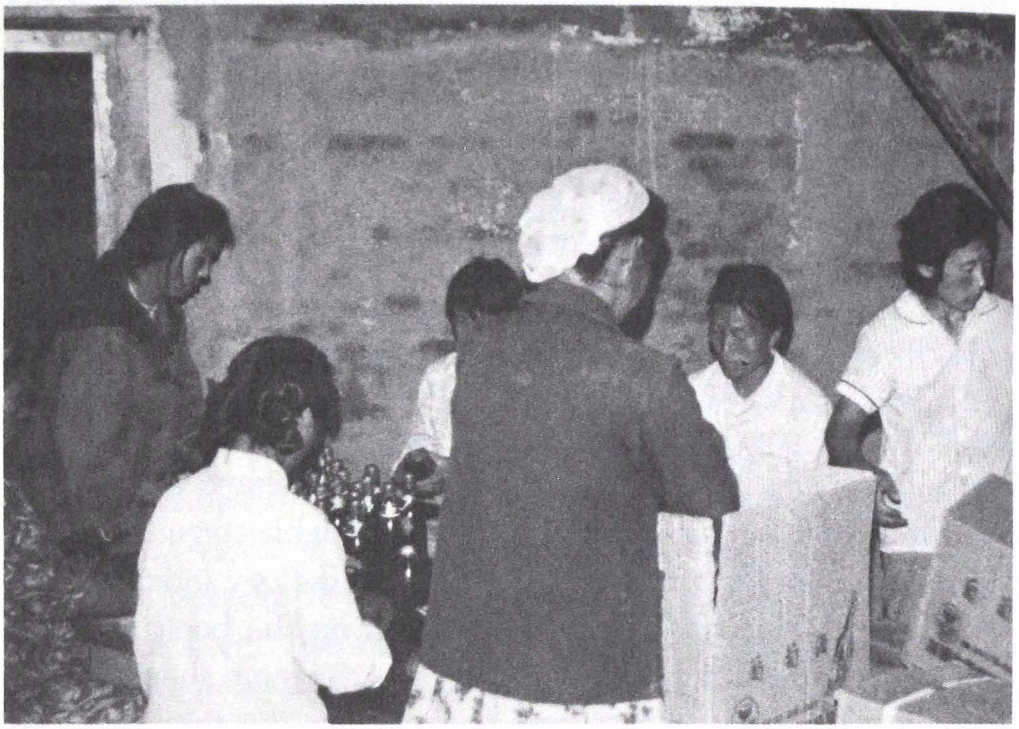
Then Abdul Qadir began to speak about an ailment that they have paid special attention to. It is the skin disease called vitiligo or *aq kessal* in New Uighur, meaning "the white sickness." They had begun special research in 1961. By now, the results of their treatment were that of all the afflicted they had treated, 8.4 percent had been cured completely and 55 percent had improved markedly. "The white sickness" had previously been regarded as incurable. The patients had looked terrible and had therefore been ostracized, which had, of course, been depressing for them. According to an old belief, "the white sickness" could be cured only during the time of the year when the sun was strong. "In the beginning," Abdul Qadir said, "we experimented with treatment between the months of May and October. But after we came upon older information in the history of our medicine, we understood

that one could treat the disease even during the remainder of the year."

One of the original six Uighur doctors who in 1956 had started to revive old Uighur medicine had recorded its history in 1975. His name was Üssüp Hadji Kashgari, "Joseph the Mecca pilgrim from Kashgar." He was seventy-seven years old when he finished his book. He died a few years later, but his son was among those at the conference table now. He gave me a copy of the book, the title of which is *Qanuncha*, meaning "according to instructions." The book has 290 pages and was published by the Sinkiang Government Publishing House. Like the book I mentioned earlier, it is written in Arabic script, which is understandable considering the age of its author. It contains a medical terminology index. Abdul Qadir said that Üssüp Hadji had worked on the book for sixty years. His example had inspired others to write more about Uighur medicine. They hoped that new books about the subject would appear little by little.

The building that housed our conference room was called *ambulatoriya*, a term most likely taken over from the Russian. I looked into a room that contained the hospital's X-ray equipment. Another room was for electrocardiography. We walked to the large main building through a garden that was a sea of flowers. The flowers were all medicinal plants used by the hospital.

To our left a large new building was under construction. This building was to increase the capacity of the hospital by 100 beds. We went up to the second floor in the main building. We passed room after room with eight to ten patients each. It would be an exaggeration to say that the standard was high. It looked as though the patients had their own clothes, and obviously the old custom was followed: the family stayed with the patient. We looked into a room that was reserved for vitiligo patients. These were shown to us with great pride, since they were all getting better. There was a cheerful boy who had a big area near one ear where his skin had flaked off, but that was all that was left of what had previously



Uighur women provide the bottles with labels and capsules. 1978.

completely disfigured his face, and they believed that he would be completely cured. Most of the patients in this section were Chinese. Otherwise there seemed to be no Chinese in the hospital; both patients and staff were Uighurs. Perhaps it is really true that Uighurs are specialists in the treatment of vitiligo, which would explain the presence of the Chinese patients. It was obvious that the vitiligo department was the pride of the hospital. We were told again and again that they had come further than Europe and the U.S. We were photographed together with the patients. The director of the hospital, who had been unable to come earlier, joined us at that point. He was Uighur as well, a cheerful and pleasant man.

We looked into the "pharmacy," which was managed by a young Uighur woman in a snowy-white, newly-pressed lab coat. Long rows of enameled containers lining the shelves contained decoctions of different medicinal plants. The woman lifted the cover of one and an aroma so pleasant spread through the room that I

almost wanted to taste the medicine, the mere smell of which must be beneficial. The herbal medicines were made in a long, low house at a little distance from the others. In one room something that looked like common hay was cooking. It was a plant that had been picked in the mountains around Kashgar. In another room was a machine for making pills, which had been invented and manufactured somewhere in Central China. With great rapidity it spit out pills made from some sort of herb extract. I was told about how they had organized the collection of medicinal plants, especially in the mountains where they apparently grew in large amounts. All of the different herbs lay in neat packages and bags in a special storage room, waiting for decoction. As evidence of their great interest in herbal medicine, I would like to mention that a large volume dealing with medicinal plants was published in 1973 in the Uighur language in Sinkiang. It contains 677 pages and 293 colored illustrations of the different plants with their names in New Uighur, Chinese, and Latin. Every plant is described as to its characteristics, the way in which it grows, the way in which it should be collected, how it should be used, and its medicinal effect. I open the book at random and find the word *badam*, which means almond, and see that it is an antipyretic, that it gives strength, and that it can be used as a cough medicine in a way that is described in great detail in the text.

Islam in Kashgar

Alte Shahar, "the six cities," in Southern Sinkiang were until the 1930s the stronghold of Islam in Asia. The people there were strictly religious and followed all of Islam's rules and commandments. It is not at all surprising, therefore, that the Swedish mission and the English China Inland Mission in the north were so unsuccessful in winning converts during the decades they spent there. The people were strongly rooted in Islam.

The language was very much influenced by the language of Islamic literature. Most important was Arabic, but Persian, which had become enriched with Arabic when the country became Islamic, was an important influence as well. One day in Urumchi, we happened to talk about Arabic influences in New Uighur. Abdullah said that the old greeting "*Salám aléykum!* peace be with you!" was not in use any more. Only old people used it nowadays. Modern Uighurs greeted each other with "*Yakhshi mu siz?* how are you?" or, more exactly translated: "Do you feel good?" It was quite obvious that, compared with fifty years ago, the language had changed very much. The languages of journalism and, for that matter, literature were so full of Chinese that a political article in a newspaper or other publication could be very

difficult to understand without a dictionary. However, the Arabic and Persian influences were still present, although the religious aspects of these languages had diminished. I did see that *Salám aléykum* had disappeared among the young people in Kashgar. But the older people continued to use it, although in the abbreviated form, which had also been used previously: "*Salám*, peace!" Strangely, the word for "thank you," *ishqallah*, was still in use, despite the fact that it means "God's love" and should logically have given way to the more secularized "*Rahmat*, thank you!" The white turbans had disappeared from the streets. But the large mosque Häytka still stood on the big market square and there were other signs as well evidencing that the power and influence of Islam were still strong.

South of Kashgar, there is a *mazar*, a "holy tomb" which continues to be popular. I had visited it in February 1930, and shall later report on that visit. It is a monument over Afaq Khoja, or rather Khoja Hidayetullah, which is his real name. Afaq Khoja is the most important name in the period of the six cities' history called the Khoja period and which encompasses the whole seventeenth century.

The name Afaq Khoja can more or less be translated "ruler of the world," a title he received when, at the height of his power, he was both administrative and religious ruler over the six cities of Kashgar, Yarkend, Khotan, Aq-su, Kucha and Turfan. In addition, he had many followers in Central China, India, and Russia, and he received yearly tithes from followers in Kashmir and Badakhshan and from the Tungans in China, who have since that time considered the mausoleum in Kashgar as their special shrine.

The English physician Dr. H. W. Bellew, who was part of the British embassy in Yarkend in 1873, has published the greater part of what is known about the statesman-saint Afaq Khoja. According to Bellew, he was considered a prophet, second only to Muhammed. He had the power to cure the sick and to wake the dead, and was, in that respect, considered equal to the prophet

Isa, the Jesus of the Bible. His spiritual presence alone had magical powers over the people. When he showed himself people wept or sang with happiness, danced and jumped with joy or spun around in circles, and some lost consciousness and fell to the ground. Everyone was bewitched. The miracles he performed were uncountable and known over the whole country. However, he also suffered calumny and slander like so many other holy men.

There is a story about a ruler of Yarkend who saw the rising popularity of Hideyatullah with ever-increasing dislike. He had appointed one of his co-workers and followers to be *qazi*, judge of Yarkend. This judge made use of every opportunity in his office to accuse Afaq Khoja of being a hypocrite who took money from the gullible population. He accused him of dressing his slaves in gold brocade and his countless concubines in clothes of the finest silk. Afaq Khoja was of course informed, but to everyone's surprise he took it very calmly and said that God would sooner or later give the judge his well-earned punishment. This came about at a large banquet that both attended. A bone fastened in the judge's throat and he was thus confronted with an agonizing death by suffocation. No one was able to help. His followers pleaded with Afaq Khoja and promised him all their possessions if he helped the sinner. When the end was near, Afaq Khoja acted. He told the man sitting next to the judge to hit him across the neck. The bone being thereby dislodged, the judge was saved, and in gratitude he immediately gave up his judgeship in Yarkend and moved to the remote Aq-su where he lived the remainder of his life in obscurity.

Afaq Khoja had other enemies in Yarkend, who abused him and made fun of his holiness in many ways. One of these was known for leading a sinful life, and especially for his use of opium. He cast doubt upon Afaq Khoja's holiness. If Afaq Khoja were holy, he would cure him of his sins. Also, his brother made fun of the many miracles Afaq Khoja performed. Both were punished. The opium addict died of an overdose, and the brother of colic while out on a hunting expedition where he couldn't get help in

time. The people of Kashgar interpreted these events to mean that it had been Afaq Khoja who had, in this way, punished them.

Another miracle which served to secure further Afaq Khoja's position as an equal to the prophet Jesus was told far and wide. The ruler of Yarkend was out waging a war against Aq-su, became ill and was carried back on a *jirgal*, a stretcher carried between two horses. But he never did get home. He died on the way. His friends took the dead body to Afaq Khoja. The ruler's mother pleaded with him to bring her son back to life. She promised him a large reward in cash if he succeeded. Afaq Khoja was having breakfast at the time. He took a spoonful of gruel from his plate and with it anointed the mouth of the dead man, who began to perspire, wake up, then walk. On the third day he was seen riding on horseback in the streets of Yarkend as if nothing had happened.

Afaq Khoja died suddenly in 1693 on a day when he was engaged in a theological discussion with his disciples. A short time before, his son had informed him that the family tomb in Kashgar had been repaired after having been ravaged by the Kirghiz and the Kazaks and was once more in worthy condition. He had asked his father to come to Kashgar in order to inaugurate the new monument. Afaq Khoja promised to come. But he arrived as a dead man. This was interpreted as his last miracle: the fact that he attended his own funeral.

Afaq Khoja's tomb is Kashgar's main attraction. In its magnificence it is reminiscent of buildings in Samarkand and Isfahan, even though it can't compete with the architectural and artistic elegance of the buildings in those two cities. After a period of decay, it has now been restored to its original beauty.

One early morning when I visited the mausoleum, Hassan Ömer, the guardian, was sitting in his little office next to the tomb, giving a lecture dealing with the history of Afaq Khoja and his dynasty. Hassan Ömer was a young Kashgar Uighur of about thirty-five years. Afaq Khoja's dynasty comprised five generations, he said, and under and around the mausoleum, seventy-two of its

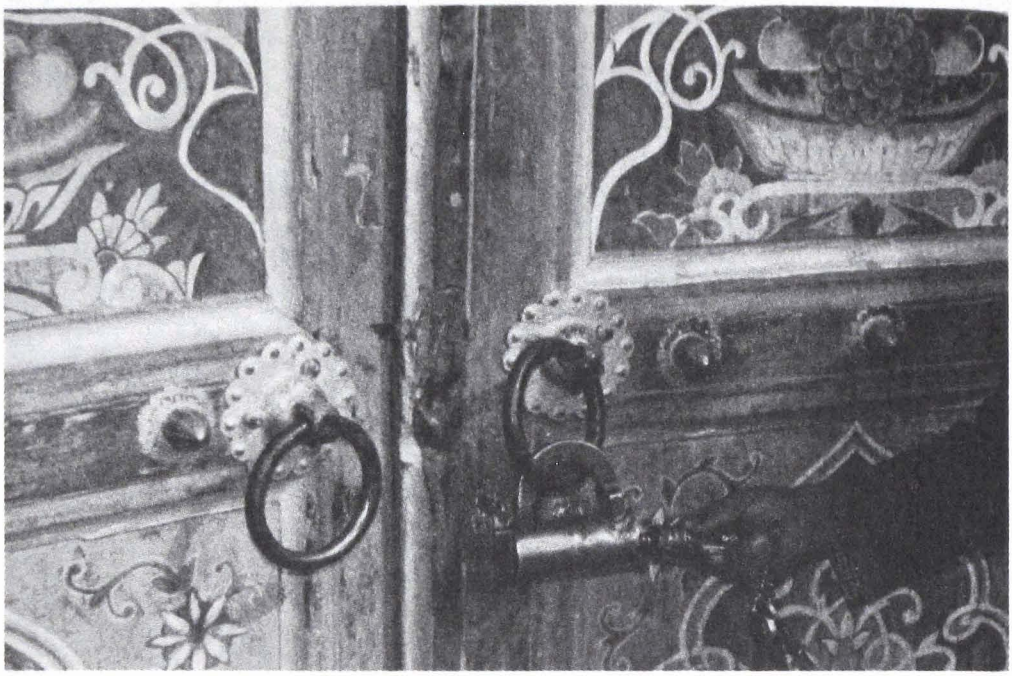
members lay buried. During his lifetime, Afaq Khoja had borne the proud title of *dini arbáp*, "lord of religion," because of his zealous devotion. What was special about him was that he had had such good relations with Peking. It was during the days of the Ch'ing dynasty, and Afaq Khoja had traveled to Peking himself in 1663. As a gift for the emperor, he had taken along a young *jigda* tree (oleaster, *Eleagnus angustifolia*), which had edible fruit, and in return he had received a large bowl to be used for *qara chai*, "black tea," a sort of brick tea. In this way, Afaq Khoja initiated the practice of cultural exchange between Kashgar and Peking, Hassan Ömer stated, emphasizing thereby Kashgar's present good relationships with Peking. Mao's political measures dealing with minority nationalities meant that the mausoleum could now be maintained. In 1947 it had been seriously damaged by an earthquake, and the large dome had collapsed. That had been during the time of the Kuomingtang government, which had not offered any assistance to help with repairs. After the Liberation, however, it had been different. With Mao's help, the mausoleum had been restored to its previous condition in 1956, and at present the government helped and gave support whenever necessary.

Obviously, the reason for this support was Afaq Khoja's wisdom about China's politics. But indirectly, it also meant the glorification of Afaq Khoja as an Islamic holy man. I believe that those who still visited the mausoleum for religious reasons understood the governmental generosity in this way. And, since Islam has not as yet completely lost its hold over the people, this is, no doubt, a wise political measure.

Many people had congregated outside the mausoleum. Many were curious to see a *ferangi*. It was very peaceful under the tall poplars and plane trees which made the whole area into a beautiful park. We walked along an avenue that had been newly swept. But it had been watered in the Kashgar way in order to bind the ever-present white dust, and this had made the underlying mud slippery as soap. We had to walk carefully, stepping on the few

The Afaq Khoja monument. "In front of the mausoleum, the yellowish grey tombs with their low roofs lay very close to each other." 1930.

remaining dry spots. In front of the mausoleum the yellowish-grey tombs with their low roofs lay very close to each other. In older times, rich people had bought the right to be buried near Afaq Khoja and it had surely not been small amounts that they had paid to the religious establishment of the time, which was called *vaqf*. The Afaq Khoja mausoleum was one of the richest establishments in the whole of Southern Sinkiang. The blue-green faience decorations of the main building gleamed in the morning sunshine. All that had disintegrated in the past had been completely restored. It had obviously cost much money and labor. The age-old massive iron lock was opened and we entered the half dark of the mausoleum. We were not asked to remove our shoes, as had previously been the practice for those visiting Islamic holy places. Here lay buried Afaq Khoja, his family and dynasty. The tombs were covered by large, ornamental saddle cloths in different colors; Afaq Khoja's was deep red with a black border. A couple of



The massive iron lock on the beautifully decorated portal to Afaq Khoja. September 1978.

electrical lamps hung from the dome—they must have been a modern addition, put there at the time of the restoration.

The Afaq Khoja monument consists not only of a mausoleum for a holy man and his dynasty. Mosques, schools, Islamic educational institutions have been built around the area in the course of years. They are still in existence and are as well cared for as the mausoleum itself. We went over to the mosque, the *namazgah*, "the praying place," which was completely deserted that day. I asked Hassan Ömer, who was with me, whether many people came to the prescribed hours of prayer. He answered that many came to the Friday services—Friday being the Islamic day of rest—and that there were always lots of people for *namaz bamdad*, the early morning prayer, before people had to go to work. And on religious holidays there was always much going on. I asked him what had happened to all of the old mollahs. They were still in existence, he told me, but you didn't see them much. There were

still mollahs, da-mollahs, "over-mollahs," and *ishans*, who were preachers, but they were not as important as before.

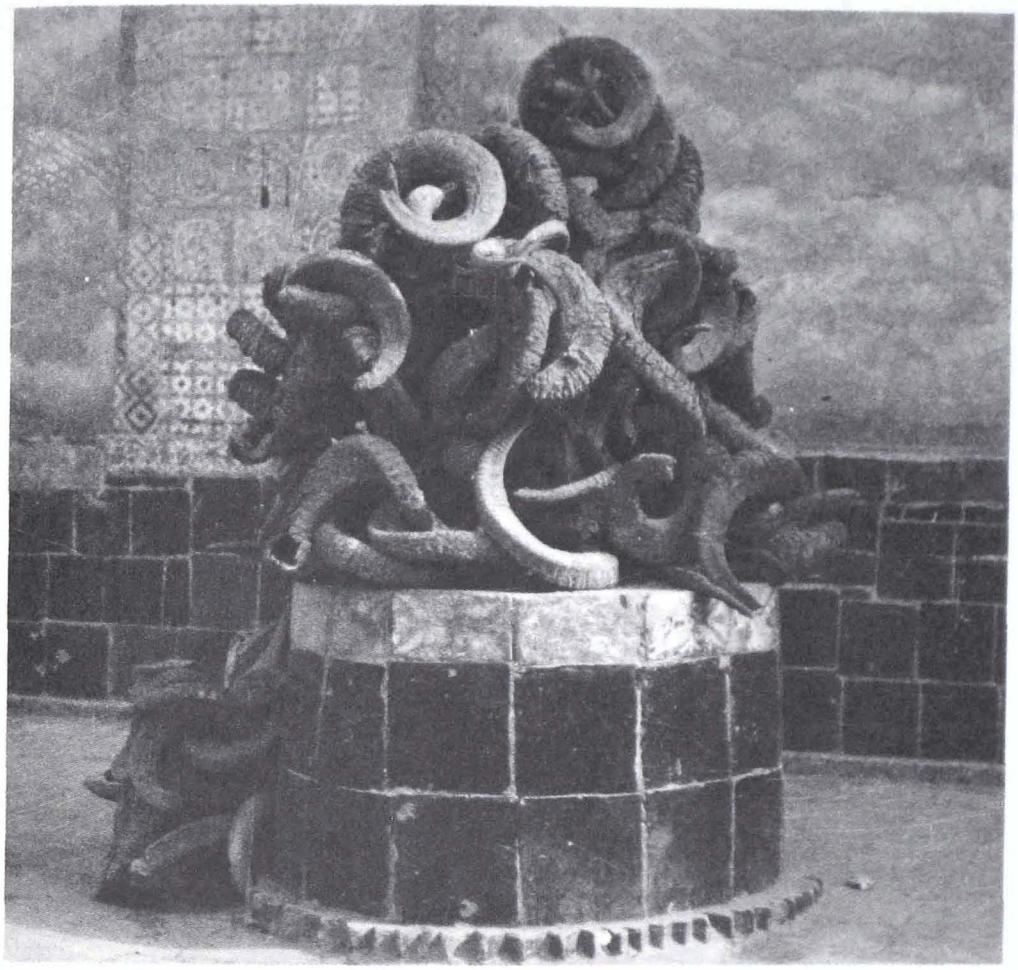
The large praying room, the namazgah, was an open hall with a flat roof supported by a number of wooden poles decorated at the top with carved ornaments in blue and green. The place was completely empty, but the grass rugs on the floor showed signs of use.

I asked myself what impressed me most in this Islamic sanctuary and place for religious worship in today's Kashgar. It occurred to me that there were no beggars. In the old days they teemed around such places. And there were no beggars on the streets of Kashgar. The new society had apparently taken care of them, found productive work for them. However, when we walked back through the poplar-lined lane we did see one, one beggar, all alone, sitting under a tree next to the canal. But he was quiet and unaggressive, not at all like the old-time vociferous sort, and he looked at the ground as we passed. I decided that he was a symbolic beggar. Islam prescribes the giving of alms, and therefore, recipients are necessary. Some of them must remain, for the sake of the religion.

What was the Afaq Khoja monument like before? I had visited the holy place on 17 February 1930, and I still have the notes I made then. They are not very detailed, but they can give an idea of the changes that have occurred since that time.

February is a grey month in Kashgar. The beginning of spring means that there is thawing during the day and that the roads and streets are muddy. I went to Afaq Khoja riding in the traditional two-wheeled *mapa*. We drove through Kashgar's narrow, dirty streets accompanied by the driver's constant shout of "*posh! posh!* make way!" The closer we got to the Afaq Khoja monument, the more beggars there were. First there were two children who ran along the road shouting "*amin, amin,*" which means "amen," or, in the original meaning of the word, "so be it!" But it was not to be so out there on the road. I knew that there would be extraordi-

17 February 1930, at the entrance of Afaq Khoja. In the background, my *mapa* with the driver in the long *chapan*.



In 1930, outside the portal to Afaq Khoja, there was a table with walls of faience tiles, which looked like an altar and was covered with horns of steenbok and Marco Polo sheep. It is no longer there.

nary possibilities for giving alms at the sanctuary. I rode on down the poplar lane and looked at all the tombs surrounding the sanctuary. An obliging mollah took me around and showed me all that was worth seeing. The mauseoleum was in very bad repair. The faience decorations had fallen down from many places. For an extra fee, I was allowed to enter the mausoleum and to look at all of the cloth-covered tombs. There were long rows of flags and standards with inscriptions in Chinese—they had been brought by the Tungans who considered Afaq Khoja as their special

sanctuary. In one place under the dome there was a large crack in the wall, apparently the result of an earthquake.

Outside the gate was a sort of table, its sides faced with faience, which looked like an altar. It was covered with piles of steenbok horns, and with enormous curved antlers from *Ovis ammon polii*, Marco Polo's famous sheep from the Pamir and Karakorum ranges, whose head ornaments were very much coveted at the time. These things were no longer there in 1978. Apparently they had been offerings. One saw them often in the mountains or in the desert hung over solitary graves. What had their purpose been? Is there an ancient belief that buck horns protected the dead by driving away evil spirits? When Dr. Bellew visited the monument in 1873 he found that there were long rows of antlers and horns from steenboks, stags, Marco Polo sheep and gazelles lined up along the walls inside the sanctuary, some of them unusually large. One stag antler of enormous proportions was greatly admired by the British diplomat. The mausoleum's director sent it to him later as a present—surely he had felt himself compelled to do so for diplomatic reasons. The Englishman's admiration and praise could only have meant that he wanted to have the antlers. The English traveler and missionary Henry Lansdell, who visited Kashgar and the Afaq Khoja monument in 1888, also mentioned the collection of *Ovis ammon polii* horns. In the account of his travels he wrote that he had never seen anything like them, and that they would make the heart of any English collector happy.

Loud voices could be heard from the nearby *mekteb*, the Islamic school. The teacher was standing in front of the pupils, who repeated in chorus every sentence of erudition he recited. Under the poplars the countless aggressive beggars clamored for alms. Our guide pulled out a thin, pale young man and said that he was supposedly a direct descendant of Afaq Khoja himself. He did not condescend to talk to me, but seemed very interested in an empty film roll tube that I happened to have in my hand. He wanted to have it, so I gave it to him. Before we left Afaq Khoja, the guide

came over to tell me that it wouldn't be a bad idea to give the great Khoja's descendant a little money. I gave him some and he left. Perhaps he had expected the film tube to be valuable, and with closer inspection had realized that he had made a mistake. However, a very unimportant incident during my 1978 visit now makes me believe that this was not the case. The tube had been of value to him after all. What happened this time was that having used up a series of flashes, I asked Hassan Ömer to throw them away somewhere. He took them, weighed them in his hand, and said, "They'll make nice toys for the children." Kashgar was still not a surplus society. For them, the things we throw away are valuable.

The guide took me to the tomb of Yakub Beg. Yakub Beg had been a dictator-ruler of Kashgar and "the six cities" from 1866 to 1877. It was he who had had the honor to receive a special English embassy. The short period of his rule was stormy, and he suffered a violent and sudden death. However, he managed to acquire two titles of distinction: *Bedövlet*, meaning "the happy rich man," and *Ataliq ghazi*, which means "the guardian of the faith." His is an important part of Central Asian history. His tomb near the Afaq Khoja mausoleum was modest, like all the others. I took a picture of it, as I was expected to. That is, if that really was his tomb. This time no one was quite sure. When Lansdell had visited Kashgar and Afaq Khoja, he was also shown Yakub Beg's tomb, and he had taken a picture of something that was little more than a collection of junk among all the other tomb stones. Lansdell reported that after Yakub Beg's fall, the Chinese, who were back in power, had dug up his body and burned it. The ashes had been sent to Peking, and the Chinese officials had prohibited the setting up of a memorial or marking the place where he had been buried in any way. This is not at all incredible.

I paid the guide four tanga and he promised to say many long prayers for me. One of the beggars, who were constantly screaming about damnation for nonbelievers, approached me and said: "*Pul lazam*, I need money." I don't know what got into me, but

The rather insignificant-looking tomb in the middle of the picture was supposed to be Yakub Beg's resting place. 1930.

I said: *"Ishning bashi pul emas ishning bashi bismilláhi,"* which was a sentence I had learned from the manuscripts I had bought from Roze akhon, and which means, "The way to your good deeds is not money, that is to say, in the name of God." He looked at me, and then he said, "You are right." He did not ask me for anything more. The others continued their screaming.

We returned to Kashgar, the driver and I. In the distance we could see the curved roofs of Hancheng, Kashgar's Chinatown. Smoke from brick ovens rose on both sides of the road. That is what it says in my notes from that time.

There was more life around Afaq Khoja's tomb fifty years ago. Today there is peace and quiet, the atmosphere is more refined, but not nearly as exciting. The character of Islam in Kashgar has changed.

The same is true of the large mosque in Kashgar. It is called Häytka, an Arabic-Persian word meaning simply "place for religious ceremony." Today, as in the past, it is the center for religious services. In the old days, the street vendor stands thronged the entire route to the entrance of the mosque, and Kashgar's large covered bazaar was next to it. It is gone now, replaced by a wide

street. We went to Häytka directly from the Afaq Khoja monument. Apparently my arrival had been expected, for we were met at the entrance by three old mollahs dressed in the ankle-length caftans but without the formerly obligatory white turban. All three of them had long white beards. They were venerable and their movements were slow, and they greeted me with "*Salám aléykum!* peace be with you!" The oldest of the three, who said he was seventy-seven years old, took charge and we went into the mosque area which I had never previously entered. Inside I was surprised to find a large, beautiful garden. Not even here in Häytka, a living and functioning mosque, did one have to take off one's shoes. We walked through the mosque and it was not especially interesting. There was a beautiful doorway with colorful faience decorations, and the obligatory, beautifully decorated preacher's chair, called *minbar*. The floor was covered with more or less worn rugs. It wasn't different from any other mosque. There was no exchange of thoughts between the venerable old men and myself. It was simply a courtesy visit. They followed me to the exit, stroked their beards and said: "*Khosh!* farewell!" Outside, the square was full of gaping Kashgar inhabitants, Uighurs and Chinese in a motley multitude. When I turned around, the three mollahs were still standing there and we bowed one more time to each other. They were just as dignified as in the old days. The new era had not affected them. I wonder whether the modern society actually had wanted to. I don't believe so. Dignity is something that very much characterizes the new rulers of Kashgar and Sinkiang, dignity in dress, behavior and speech.

The old practice of stroking and caressing one's beard is an age-old Islamic sign of courtesy that is part of good etiquette. Etiquette has not been forgotten. An old man's beard is an ornament and a status symbol. In Afghanistan one pays respect to another person by saying "My beard is in your hands!"

Culture and Literature

There was a good deal of literature in Kashgar, and for that matter in the whole of Sinkiang, fifty years ago. Printed books were, of course, exceptional and were mostly lithographed works imported from Tashkent, Samarkand, and Bukhara. Most of the books were handwritten and they were less expensive than the lithographed imports. Books were copied by hand according to need and demand. There were always mollahs working as scribes who, for pay, were willing to make copies. There were people who knew the owners of rare works and who undertook to bargain for the rights. This literature was mostly made up of Islamic religious and morality works. The best known, most read, and most copied of these was *Qissas ul-anbiyá*, "The History of the Prophets," which in its original form went back to the fourteenth century. Its origin was Persian-Arabic, but it had during the course of the centuries been enriched with Central Asian Turkic additions of beliefs and legends. Without a doubt, the scribes' contributions added vitality and interest to the original text.

"The History of the Prophets" contains much that is familiar to someone who has read the Bible, since a lot of the Islamic history of prophets is based upon the Bible. Noah and the flood, Joseph

in Egypt, Jesus and his mother Mary, all these are dealt with in detail. The story about the giant Aj, who helped Noah build the Ark, and had no trouble surviving the Flood since the water reached only to his knees, is, to say the least, juicy and full of artfully scabrous details. The boundaries between folk tale and Islamic tradition are often difficult to ascertain. In 1935 I wrote down a short legend which had originated in Guma near Khotan and must have come from the "History of the Prophets," although it is not mentioned in it. It had to do with Adam and Eve. They had been separated for seven years, and when they finally did meet again they were on top of a glacier. Adam could no longer control his passion and lay Eve down on the ice and made love to her there. Since that day, the legend goes, all women have cold behinds, and all men have cold knees.

The storyteller has apparently moved Adam and Eve from the dry, sandy, hot, glacierless Near East to Central Asian surroundings. It seems that Adam was a rich merchant from Kashgar who had been away on a business trip in India for seven long years, and his wife Eve had rushed to welcome him and they had met somewhere up among Karakorum's glaciers. The medical description of the sensitivity to cold of certain parts of the body is the finishing touch to this cold story about the meeting between our pining ancestors.

However, these literary manuscripts were not only religious or morality works. There was a large number of romantic tales about the sorrows of love, about the grim persecution of lovers because their love did not follow the marriage designs of their parents, or about erring young men separated from their beloveds for many long years, during which they kept their love burning with poetry and song. This romantic genre of literature was mostly modeled on Persian precedents. Seldom direct translations, the poems were often re-interpreted, rewritten. There were also heroic novels, with fantastically heroic deeds performed in the different parts of the world known to the writer. Here and there one came upon a

munazara, a versified competition between, for example, wine and opium, horse and camel, between different fruits, endeavoring to outdo each other in describing their own virtues and denigrating the other.

This literature was available to those who could read and write—a minority of the population; it was thus the literature of the educated and the wealthy. But it was also available to the illiterate by means of readings, and these were common.

However, the Uighur people shared a rich folk literature, which has lived through the centuries in the form of recollections by spontaneous training in mnemonics among the old and the young. Folk tales, folk songs, proverbs, riddles, and expressions make up this literature; it has ancient origins but has not received much attention up to now, mostly perhaps because it is so hard to find. Literary field work is an absolute necessity.

The folk songs consist very often of rhymed quatrains. There are thousands of them; new ones are written constantly and the old ones are rewritten, altered to fit into present conditions, the writer's frame of mind, to fill new needs, new feelings. Most of them have to do with love in all its forms, in language romantic, erotic, or close to pornographic. For example, the subject may be the jilted lover, as in the following quatrain:

> The nightingale who sang at dawn
> has now stopped her song.
> The girl who always smiled at me
> no longer looks at me at all.

Or it is the loneliness and desperation about the injustices of life, which are expressed in the following lamentation:

> These mountains are high mountains
> They close the road for the poor.
> Who will cry when a poor man dies?
> When a poor man dies only the poor will cry.

The proverbs express simple, practical folk philosophy, such as, "If you want to buy a horse, think it over for one month; if you want to take a wife, think it over for a year." Or, "Stick the knife into yourself. If it doesn't hurt, then you can stick it into someone else." Or, "It is easy to kill, but difficult to bring someone back to life."

The above Islam-influenced literature is little more than a memory for the young people of present-day Kashgar. The new generation is hardly aware that it existed once upon a time. Folk literature, however, is not dead, even though it also is in danger of disappearing, here as everywhere else in the world, as a result of the fact that the art of recollecting is no longer needed because of the printed word, the telling of tales is no longer as necessary as it was when most people were illiterate. In addition, the old, handwritten romantic tales had been put on ice during the Cultural Revolution. People had remembered that they existed, but referring to them had been very unpopular. Perhaps they will come back now, someone told me. The contrast was great between the attention paid to the same romantic tales in the Soviet Central Asian republics, where they are arranged for very popular theatrical performances, and the veil that has been lowered over these literary products in Sinkiang.

A literary magazine called *Kashgar adibiyat-saniti* (Kashgar literature and art) is published by the Kashgar Association for Culture, and it is printed by the local newspaper, the *Kashgar geziti*. It contains mostly lyrics, but from time to time there are short stories, as well as editorials dealing with literary and cultural subject matter. The contents of the first (1978) issue are the following: Two editorial articles, one short story, one essay, and twenty-six poems. The short story, which is called *hikaya*, "narrative," was written by Tursun Mirza and is entitled "The Falcon." The following is the first paragraph: "Spring was early this year. The ice and the snow thawed in good time, the grass in the mountain meadows grew plentifully and the mountain flowers that were blooming

already glowed like fire in the sunshine. The cattle enjoyed the rich pasture land and the shepherds felt their hearts fill with joy as they moved up to the summer pasture land a whole month ahead of time." However, this description of nature soon goes over to political subject matter in which the Central Chinese influence is predominant. This is true for the poems as well. They are all markedly politicized, influenced by Central Chinese politics and language use. The poems have titles like "Chairman Mao—Eternal Life" or "We Remember Chairman Mao" or "The Tractor Girl." The meter and the general lyrical constructions vary. But sometimes, the old quatrain reappears. The following, for example, is a poem written by a common worker whose name is Hebibilla Kari. The poem is called "Chairman Mao's Book," or, as commonly called, "Mao's Little Red Book." Like the folk songs, the second and fourth lines rhyme. The following is a literal translation without regard to rhyme and meter.

Mao's Little Red Book
by Hebibilla Kari (worker)

Mao's Little Red Book
Has made my heart strong
When I picked up the pen
My wrist was strengthened too.

I am a struggling man
I work in the mines
No matter how much I write, it does not suffice
To describe my Spring so full of light.

I work down in the mines
With the lamp attached to my head
Inseparable from me day and night
There is a tool beside me (Mao's Little Red Book).

This tool is five pearls
Which are represented in my heart

This book is a torch
Which lights my way

Situated near the large, open square which in New Uighur is called *Khalq maydani*, meaning "the people's market place," with its colossal statue of Mao, is *Khalq bahchesi*, "the people's garden," which is both a garden and a park. Previously it had been a graveyard where no one dared go after dark because it was supposedly populated by evil spirits, but in 1953 they began to plant what is now Kashgar's large park, the city's ornament and pride and an oasis for the inhabitants of a modern big city. It was to be a place where all of Kashgar's minorities could meet and freely develop their cultural lives. First they planted the whole area full of trees, mostly fruit trees, such as peach, apricot, and also grape vines, but also all kinds of other trees—it became a kind of arboretum. Then they built a house of culture for recreation of all sorts, for playing games and for other entertainment, and then a teahouse where they served many kinds of food. The park became a very popular excursion place for holidays. A little later they started a little zoo, which had been a completely unknown concept in Kashgar. The whole park measured 350 *mou*, and there was still at this time room for new activities. There were plans to enlarge the zoo, to construct a swimming pool, and to install new and better benches along the paths. There usually was a small entrance fee—five *fen*—which the previous year had brought in a total of 19,000 *yüan*. Altogether, there had been half a million visitors. On big holidays, such as the first day of May and special children's days, there was no entrance fee.

Cultural life in Kashgar consists predominantly of song, music, and dance. After walking around the park, along shady paths and running water in the irrigation canals, we were taken through a long alley covered with grapevines, from which grapes hung in large bunches, to a square on which four such vine-covered alleys opened. A large group of men and women was awaiting us there.

They were part of Kashgar's song, music, and dance ensemble. Their leaders were a tall Kashgarian, who looked as though he had Tatar blood, and two ladies, one of them quite corpulent with thick blackened eyebrows—who, it later turned out, had a magnificent voice—and a dancing teacher whom I had met before at the teachers' seminary, a slender Kashgarian woman. In the middle of the open square the usual table was set with enormous amounts of melons, figs, and grapes, and they told us proudly that they had twelve different sorts of grapes. We were given a lecture about the park and its creation and about Uighur music. The leader began by saying that it was in connection with Mao's slogan about letting a hundred flowers bloom that they had begun to organize musical life in Kashgar. They had endeavored first of all to bring back to life Uighur traditional music, song and dance. Old Uighur music was based on a system of twelve keys, which were called *moqám*, an Arabic loan word, and in these keys there were 170 melodies. They had now written notes for all of the *moqáms*, and all of the musicians had had to learn to read the notation. While we were listening to the lecture, the ensemble got ready inside one of the vine covered passages, and we went there as well. Their performance of music on Uighur instruments, alternating with song and dance, lasted one and a half hours. The corpulent lady, who was said to be the best singer in all of Southern Sinkiang, sang something about Mao in an ear-splittingly strong voice. My neighbor whispered to me that she was forty-six years old, and wasn't it fantastic that she sang so well despite her age? Two other ladies, likewise of a good size, also sang with strong voices, one of them a Tajik, the other a Kirghiz song. The repertory was rather monotonous, the text always having to do with Mao. The title of the Kirghiz song was "Zalikha listens to Chairman Mao's words." Another song had to do with solidarity between nationalities. Not a single song could be called genuinely Uighur. The dances were performed by four very graceful young Uighur women. I believe that these people have not yet managed

My last night in Kashgar. I am thanking the Uighur dancers after a remarkable performance. 1978.

to free themselves from the prohibitive attitude toward minority cultures from the time of the Revolution. It must be the reason for their connecting all expressions of culture with Mao.

Later in the evening, we sat in the guest house and discussed the program we had seen. I was told that the Cultural Revolution had destroyed all that was genuinely Uighur. Before, they had been able to perform Uighur *dastán*, a sort of musical, and they had sung Uighur folk songs. All that was gone now, but they hoped it would come back. They talked about the Cultural Revolution, and Kashgar's six movie theaters. They had had no new movies to show during all that time. But things were getting better now, they had begun to dig out some movies from the time

before the Revolution and they had even been able to show some foreign movies. When I asked from where, I was told from Hungary, Romania, and Yugoslavia.

Several evenings later, they arranged to show movies at the guest house. Since I was the only foreigner, I was guest of honor, and I think that all available personnel, together with their children and families, had come to help. First we were shown an instructive documentary about automation in a large department store in Shanghai. Then came the main attraction, a patriotic movie from the time before the Cultural Revolution. It was about an episode during the war between China and Japan in the beginning of the 1890s. It was the story of a patriotic admiral who wanted to declare war on Japan but was kept from doing so by intrigues at court, enemies, and foreign advisers. The movie ended with the Japanese torpedoing the admiral's battleship, which went down, men and all.

One evening there was a repeat performance for me by the song and dance ensemble, this time at the guest house. It was as though they had guessed my feelings about too much Mao and too little genuine Uighur folklore. The ensemble, this time, was very much enlarged, and above all, it was younger. The performance was of a very high class. All of the Uighur instruments were represented: the *raváp*, *dutár*, *ney*, *dap*, *chang*, and the *ghajak*. I remember especially a solo on the *raváp* which was extraordinarily good. Afterwards we all stood together, thanked each other, and were photographed. The ensemble would have great possibilities for success if they came to perform in our spoiled part of the world.

Returning to Urumchi

It was the day for our departure. When we left the guest house at dawn, everyone was standing in line to say good-bye and "unfortunately we were not able to do much for you, we haven't got so much to offer." I remember so well this self-belittling attitude. It existed fifty years ago as well, but in a different way. At that time, the departing guest had been honored with a sad *töba*, a word which means "remorse," that is to say "I am remorseful —sorry—that I couldn't do more for you, have mercy on me." Neither revolutions nor liberations can apparently change what is considered good manners in daily life.

We drove out to the airport through a morning-quiet Kashgar. I mentioned to Imenow Hamit that early morning Kashgar seemed to differ from early morning Urumchi in one respect, and that was that I saw no one out getting exercise or jogging. Don't they do this in Kashgar? I asked. Imenow Hamit answered, "Of course they do—but not along the streets and roads. They are down by the river, where they also have loudspeaker music. That's the difference." I accepted his explanation, but do wonder, deep down, whether the people of Kashgar, as well, perform physical exercise on command. Perhaps that is too progressive an idea.

The traffic was heavy on the road to Urumchi. At the airport an IL-14 was waiting for us. It was a Soviet aircraft manufactured toward the end of the thirties, still in adequate condition. We would not fly non-stop to Urumchi. We would land many times, and this suited me very well. We waited in Kashgar airport's VIP room, sat on red plush chairs, sipped our tea, and read the illustrated magazine called *Millätlär*, meaning "nationalities," which was printed in New Uighur.

The plane was filled to capacity with mostly Chinese military personnel—whether they were soldiers or officers was impossible to tell—they all looked the same. I had with me the giant melon that the Pakhtekli people's commune had given me as a present. It was to accompany me all the way to Peking. And so we flew toward Aq-su.

The old IL-14 flew at a very low altitude, giving me the opportunity to see a lot of the countryside. As soon as we had left Kashgar's green plantations behind us, we flew over a landscape that alternated between mountains and deserts. Sometimes you could see the outlines of dry riverbeds meandering through sterile, dry lunar landscapes; sometimes there were small, low mountain ranges turning into sand—they looked like glaciers with sand running down their sides. They greatly contribute to Singkiang's ever-increasing areas of sand and constantly threaten the cultivated regions. One could see the white sand penetrating the green outer edges of cultivated land. There is a constant struggle between water, which produces living greenery, and deadly, dessicating sand. Then there were more deserts, then steppes with nitrate-covered land. For a long time we flew over the Kashgar-Urumchi asphalt highway and could see all of the heavy traffic.

In Aq-su the air was clear, dry and refreshingly cool after the muggy heat of Kashgar. We were welcomed at the airport by the same young Chinese as before. He was a pleasant, open sort of person, easy to converse with. We were taken to the airport guest room, with its tea, grapes and melons. Our host began to talk

about all of the miseries caused by the Gang of Four. There was no area, apparently, that hadn't been affected by their destructive activities. "Neither in Aq-su nor in Kashgar has there been any construction during the past ten years. That is the fault of the Gang of Four," our host said. "But now things will be different," he continued. Through the open door we could see the high mountains that lie between China and the Soviet Union. They are 150 kilometers away, our host informed us. He made no further comment. He simply gave us cold, factual information.

After Aq-su we flew over a landscape in which loessal hills predominated. They were grey and very much eroded. From time to time we saw the straight-as-an-arrow asphalt highway. For long stretches it resembled a black band running through a snowy-white landscape—the everlasting, life-destroying nitrate. We landed in Kucha, on a gravel runway, and the dust flew high. The terminal was apparently new, almost elegant—in any case, better than the Kashgar terminal. It was lunch time. Lunch was served in a restaurant at a few hundred meters from the terminal—it was quite substantial, a bit too much so for me. We were honored to be able to eat in the same room as the crew. They slurped their noodle soup audibly.

We took off again and saw the greyish white houses of Kucha under us. I couldn't keep from thinking about the Swedish missionary Lovisa Engvall, who lived and worked completely alone in Kucha for twenty-two years, caring for the sick. According to Georg Roberntz, who wrote her obituary, she had said about herself that God had been more merciful toward her than she herself had been. And Roberntz continued: "She was one of those human beings who would rather fail than give up her plans. All attempts by others to intervene, to come to her rescue, usually had an opposite effect. It was that character trait which was at the bottom of her many years' life in the city of Kutjar, caring for the sick, isolated from all other Europeans." "And," Roberntz continued, "during that long time of isolation, there was nothing she feared

more than to be buried among Mohammedans." She wasn't. Her end was different. When she finally was to return to Sweden, seriously ill, she got as far as about twelve hours from Moscow. She died on the train between Tashkent and Moscow, and was buried in Moscow. It was on 16 October 1935, two days before her seventieth birthday.

Our next stop was the little town of Korla. The stretch between Kucha and Korla was some of the worst flying I have ever experienced. The mountains, and the very much warmed air, caused the plane to cant and dip and to make small dives. Everyone was sick, and the paper bags were in constant use. Abdullah and I managed to hold out until Korla. The rest capitulated.

We landed on a good concrete runway. The airport was large and well-kept, and from the air Korla seemed larger than Aq-su and Kucha. Our stop was short, and about an hour later we were back in Urumchi, Sinkiang's industrial capital, after our visit to the more down-to-earth city of Kashgar.

Below Sea Level

It is three hours by car to Turfan, which the Chinese, because of their dislike for the letter "r," call Tu-lu-fan. Turfan is one of Asia's—and the world's—deepest depressions, at 130 meters below sea level. The Turfan area is like a great big basin in the middle of the Central Asian mountains, sweltering during the worst of the summer months, and even now in September the temperature in the shade was thirty-five degrees centigrade.

The road to Turfan is, first, the large Urumchi-Kashgar main highway which we had seen from the air. However, down on its black asphalt reality, it is not at all as adequate as it looked from above. There is roadwork everywhere, a constant struggle against the forces of nature. In many places, bridges had been washed away by heavy downpours and we were forced to make difficult and tiring detours through the stony desert.

On our left we could see the Urumchi-Peking railroad, which was once supposed to connect Peking with the Soviet railway system west of Urumchi. But as a result of the negative political developments, the project was never carried out. We drove along the railroad for about half an hour. During that time we saw four trains: two passenger trains and two freight trains pulling long

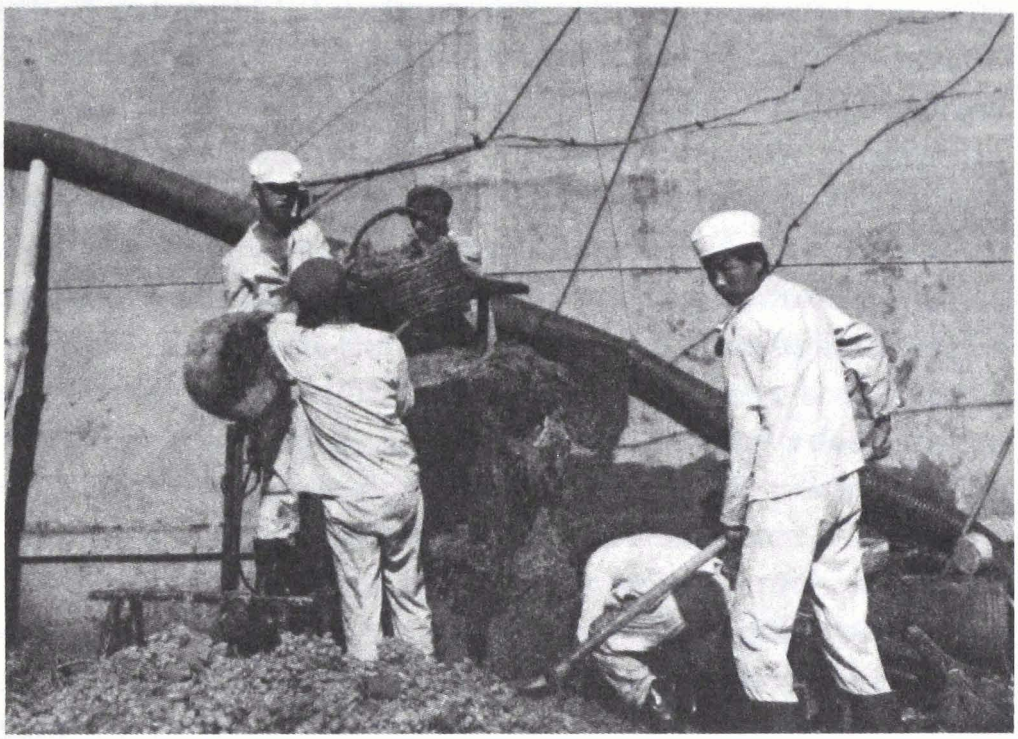
rows of oil tank cars. I supposed that they had come from Karamay, the oil district in Sinkiang's northwestern corner. Obviously, railway traffic was lively. Since the highway and the railway were absolutely parallel, it was easy to ascertain the speed of the trains. They drove at about ninety kilometers per hour, passenger and freight trains alike, and this pointed to the fact that the railway was run effectively. On our right we could see lakes, with white salt deposits along the beaches. We passed a series of lesser industries alongside the road. Then we began climbing toward windy and chilly Daban-ching, which is the pass from where the descent to the Turfan depression begins. We drove through a beautiful valley with much greenery and many streams, and then for an hour through the desolate *say*, a stony desert. Enormous amounts of water must, for thousands of years, have deposited there the rough gravel that covered the ground as far as the eye could see. All of these crushed masses of stone had collected at the bottom of the great Turfan basin.

Then, suddenly, there was the city, a green oasis with wide sunny streets and traffic police at the crossings. We were immediately taken to the guest house, a group of brick buildings in a large garden. First we were allowed to rest in the shade of a *baráng* covered with grapevines. We were offered grapes and melons, first a very sweet sort of watermelon, then the common sort of melon, but also very sweet, and then seedless grapes. Our hosts cautioned us not to drink hot tea or water with these fruits. It wasn't supposed to be good for your stomach. The guest house was old-fashioned but comfortable, the beds were of iron and had sheet-metal bottoms, which was not conducive to pleasant dreams. The toilets were somewhere far in the distance. They were the sort of facilities where one had to squat, and on the doors it said "Man" and "Woman" in English.

Although I had explicitly said that my main interest in Turfan was its antiquities and ancient history, our hosts, headed by the vice-chairman of the Revolutionary Committee, felt that I first of

all had to become acquainted with present-day life in the Turfan region—this time a fruit farm. We drove back the same way we had come, across the gravel steppe, but now with a red-flagged police car in front of us in order to get the rest of the traffic out of our way. Up on the slope of a mountain one could see a collection of dark green trees, a delightful green oasis, surrounded by rows of tall poplars that looked as though they were standing on guard against the desolate stone desert. The whole area was criss-crossed by alleys lined with poplars alongside of which flowed the water in the irrigation ditches. The water came from underground canals called *kariz*—it was a system I was well acquainted with from Iran—in the mountains towards Bogdo-ula. The water was clear and cold and invigorating. We stopped at a vineyard where they grew all the grapes that Turfan is famous for. There were the small, sweet, seedless sort used for drying to become *kishmish*, which are green raisins. There were magnificent grapes that were exported to the rest of China and lately even to Japan by air from Urumchi. Their quality and color were something I had never seen before. I could not refrain from mentioning to the people at the farm that there would be a great market in Europe for them, and if they could export to Japan, it wasn't much more difficult to export to Europe. And they said yes, we do have a surplus of grapes, more than we can export or consume ourselves.

Grapes are part of Uighur folklore in a tradition that dates back to Noah and the ark. At the time of the flood and Noah's embarkation, someone had stolen the grape seeds. Noah asked all of the animals whether they knew who was the culprit, but nobody did. Noah then got hold of the devil who said that he was willing to find the seeds on condition that he would be allowed to sow them and then water them three times. Otherwise, he would keep them. Noah understood that he had to bow to this ultimatum. And so the devil sowed the seeds, watered them first with blood from a fox, then with blood from a tiger, and the third time with blood from a swine. He then made wine out of the grapes and the



The grapes are ground to the mush which is the raw material for fermenting to *musallas,* a refreshing wine with an alcohol content of 11 percent. Turfan, 1978.

result was that when one drinks wine, one first becomes smart as a fox, and makes friends with people one had never seen before. Then one becomes wild as a tiger and fearless. And after that, one becomes like a swine and engages in all sorts of dirty activities. Noah himself watered the seeds twice, and this resulted in the grapes producing two necessary household commodities, that is sweet grape juice and vinegar.

Porcupines are considered to be very smart, according to Central Asian folklore, and should therefore also be mentioned in connection with grapes. They are plentiful in the Turfan oasis, especially in the vineyards. They feed grapes to their young, and collect them in the following rather original manner: they roll around in the piles of grapes that have fallen to the ground, which in this way get stuck on their spines, then they run home so that

the young can eat them off the spines one by one. I was told that story out on the Turfan fruit farm.

After a tour of the vineyards, we were taken to the winery, which was a cannery as well. The winery was situated in the center of the farm. There was a smell of fermentation all around. The wine they produced was called *musallas*, and it was considered to be a soft drink. Its alcohol content is 11 percent. We saw how they mashed the grapes to a pulp by means of very simple machinery; then we were shown the large containers for fermentation which stood on shelves over a floor that was inundated with half-fermented *musallas*. Then we came to the place where the finished product was bottled. This important part of the process was carried out by about twenty Uighur women. The bottles moved on an assembly line to the place where they were automatically filled with the wine, after which the girls capped and labeled them manually. On the second floor, there was a tasting room, where we were served the products of the establishment: the different sorts of fruit preserves and the *musallas* which was definitely both refreshing and good tasting. In my old Kashgar days I had heard about this consuming of wine which was forbidden for all orthodox Mohammedans. Nevertheless, it had been available and was apparently produced clandestinely in small quantities. The manager informed us that the drink was very popular. Production was up to 300 tons, which was equal to 600,000 bottles a year. They were planning to increase production to 3,000 tons. There was an abundance of raw material. The yearly production of preserved fruit was 500,000 cans. They were sold in the whole of China and the proceeds last year had been 200,000 *yüan*. Another important product was raisins. The grapes were spread in thin layers on brick floors. The drying process takes between twenty and forty-five days, depending on whether they are the small, sweet kishmish variety or the large, juicy sort with seeds. During the process they have to be turned and aired constantly. In one place they used a different method for producing kishmish raisins. The grapes hung

in row after row from the floor to the ceiling to dry in the original bunches. I felt that this was a much more hygienic way.

The usual lecture was delivered in a twenty-five-meter long *tal baráng*, which can be described as a sort of corridor with grapevines planted on both sides, their branches woven to form walls and ceiling so dense that very little light came through. Numerous bunches of grapes hung from the ceiling. They were so large in some places that we had to stoop to walk under them. There was the usual table full of fruit, and behind it stood the vice-chairman of the farm to deliver his lecture. Above me hung grapes the color of red currants. These were supposed to have therapeutic effects, were given especially to small children with fever, and could therefore be called medicinal plants.

The fruit farm was situated in the northwestern part of the Turfan district, at thirty-seven kilometers from the city. They had begun to cultivate the land in 1959, starting with grapes almost exclusively. The Gang of Four, the vice-chairman informed us, had done all in their power to sabotage the industry, but now things were improving. "We follow Hua in the New Long March," he emphasized. That was the first time that I had heard the expression "The New Long March" out here in remote Sinkiang.

The fruit farm comprised an area of 6,000 *mou*, of which 3,500 was used for grapes, 450 for peaches, apples, and apricots, and 600 for vegetables and pasture. An area of 1,100 *mou* was planted with poplar and mulberry trees. The farm employed 800 workers and office personnel. Grape production in 1977 was 7 million *tzin*, which is equivalent to 3.5 million kilograms. In 1978 they planned to increase to 8 million *tzin*. Last year they were counting on exporting 260 tons. Last year they had produced 314 tons of raisins, and they planned to produce the same amount this year.

The vice-chairman then went on to talk about the problems they had to contend with. The first was that there was not enough good soil to enlarge the farm since it was surrounded by stony

The vice-chairman then went on to talk about the problems

An *östang* with rapidly running red life-giving melted snow from the mountains in the distance. The tall, straight poplars along the canals lend the Kashgar countryside an unusual, restful character. 1978.

they had to contend with. The first was that there was not enough good soil to enlarge the farm since it was surrounded by stony desert land. "We work to enrich our land by getting soil from the mountains up in the Tien-shan," he told us. "We have acquired large amounts of sheep manure from the cattle ranches up there, and mixed with the desert gravel it makes good soil for grapevines. As a result, our production has increased almost constantly since 1964.

"The second problem is water. We get our water from a river called Qizil Yulghun, 'the red tamarisk,' which runs at 0.5 cubic meters a second. But we have a lot of difficulty making use of the water. For one thing, it evaporates too quickly in the hot sunshine, and for another it runs through sandy marl where a lot of it disappears. Mao has stated that water is of vital importance for agriculture. That is an important truth. Therefore, we have constructed forty kilometers of new irrigation canals, and as a result we now have enough water.

"Our third problem is the strong winds and violent storms that afflict us here in the Turfan depression. They usually occur between 10 March and 10 June. Our worst storm so far was on 31 March 1961. It was a hurricane. It got dark, gravel and stones whirled around and destroyed much of our grape plantation. We practically had to start all over again. But that hurricane taught us something. We began to plant protective vegetation. By now we have forty square kilometers of woods for this purpose.

"Our fourth problem is that we have not been able to make adequate use of our fruit and grape crop. We have let a lot go to waste. But things are better now. We have our own cannery and are beginning to be able to make use of our surplus."

You don't have to be a fruit specialist to realize the importance of taking advantage of the enormous overproduction of fruit and grapes that is characteristic for both the Turfan region and the whole of southern Sinkiang. This remote part of China can definitely contribute significantly to two of China's four Moderniza-

tions, that is, to agriculture and to industry. And by means of further utilizing the water that comes down from the eternal snows in the mountains both in the south and the north of the province, Sinkiang has great possibilities to further develop agriculture and fruit production. Sinkiang can thus be regarded as a region with a future in this respect, as well as in many others.

Antiquities in the Present

Sinkiang has always been an El Dorado for explorers. They have vied with each other to chart the blank areas of a very difficult terrain which involved enormous hardships because of its deserts and its mountains.

The second half of the nineteenth century and the first three decades of the twentieth was the time when most of the exploration activity took place. Sinkiang was quite inaccessible and dramatic in its desolation. This drama and the many difficulties were excellent subject matter for exciting travel descriptions. Discoveries of forgotten cities and cultures along the old silk routes and sensational findings of manuscripts and unknown languages made Sinkiang—or eastern Turkistan, as it was called then—a well-known area in research circles.

The time of exploration is over now—that is, the former sort of exploration. But the time for discoveries is not over. The sand in the Takla-makan deserts and the caves in the loessal hills that surround them contain without a doubt many secrets that, when uncovered, can bring about re-evaluations in historical and philological research.

Exploratory activities in Sinkiang came from outside the country.

Important names were Przhevalskii, the Russian; Stein, the Englishman; Grünwedel and von Le Coq, who were German; Pelliot, a Frenchman; and last but not least the Swede Sven Hedin. The list, if it were complete, could be very long. Some of these explorers had no scientific background, and in some cases the voyages were combined with power politics, strategic interests, and just plain curiosity. Doubtless the Chinese were aware of this, but it was during the decades when the Chinese government was powerless. The Chinese were therefore forced to be passive bystanders. Sven Hedin was the first to allow Chinese researchers to take part in the work.

They were not small, the quantities of archaeological findings that were taken from Sinkiang to the museums of London, Berlin, St. Petersburg, Paris, and Stockholm, to name some of the most important places. Le Coq reported with great exactness that the first German archaeological expedition in the Turfan area, working between November 1902 and March 1903, sent home 46 crates, weighing 37.5 kilograms each, with archaeological material. His second expedition, working in the same area from September 1904 to December 1905, sent home 103 crates weighing 100 to 160 kilograms each. His third expedition between December 1905 and June 1907 yielded 128 crates of 70 to 80 kilograms each; and his last expedition, working from January 1913 and February 1914, resulted in 156 crates of 70 to 80 kilograms each.

In the beginning of February 1915, Aurel Stein sent a heavily laden camel caravan from Turfan to Kashgar for further transport to India. The forty-five camels carried 141 crates that were filled with antiquities, which completed all that had been sent a year earlier. The crates contained not only loose artifacts from Turfan's ruins, but even murals that had been cut out of the walls of the caves in the loessal hills, leaving deep holes, still visible today. Turfan's inhabitants speak of theft, and the Chinese researchers are hardly able to dissimulate their disappointment over the fact that these artifacts are not the property of Chinese museums.

Stein described evocatively the reaction of a Chinese official by the name of Pan-darin who was unacquainted with archaeology and connected disciplines. Pan-darin had asked Stein how old the antiquities were, and what was written in all the documents he had found in the ruins. What sort of script was it? Stein explained as well as he could, despite the fact that he had little information himself at that time since the findings had not as yet been subjected to scientific workup. After thinking about it, Pan-darin said slowly, "But why do you have to carry all of these documents to a far away country in the West?" Stein was unable to find an adequate answer. He was in a dilemma. If he had answered that only in the West there existed enough knowledge to decipher these documents, he would have humiliated Pan-darin and together with him the whole of Chinese culture. Therefore, Stein led the conversation to more practical matters.

There is no doubt that Stein, Le Coq, Grünwedel, Pelliot, Hedin, and certainly the Russian archaeologists considered themselves to be rescuers—preservers of a culture. What they did when they carried away the antiquities was simply a service to culture. The findings were well taken care of in the museums all over Europe, and also easily accessible to experts with ability to work up the material, who burned with the desire to make discoveries about long-forgotten cultures, and who dreamed of achieving something great. They expressed great respect for Chinese research, but it was not modern, not effective from a Western point of view; it was dormant, whereas Western research was full of vitality and self-confidence. According to them, the findings could only be worked up in the West.

It is not difficult to understand that there are people in Turfan who very much resent the fact that the murals have been cut out of the walls in the caves. It is as though a foreigner had come to our country some time around the sixteenth century and cut medieval murals out of an old church and taken them away, well-packaged in crates. Jan Myrdal has presented similar arguments,

more intensely than I, and it would, of course, be completely impossible to remove murals in our modern time here, just as in today's Sinkiang. It took place and could hypothetically have taken place during a time when people did not react, when officials looked the other way, and when far-away rulers carelessly gave permission for excavations without concern about what was really happening. It has all taken place many times before—in Egypt, in Mesopotamia. And everywhere the justification for these deeds was the same: the countries where the findings originated were incapable of taking care of their antiquities, of working them up, and making them accessible to an impatiently waiting international group of researchers. And where would we be today in our knowledge about Central Asian history if the Sinkiang material had not been available? Our knowledge about the silk routes between China and the Mediterranean would be very meager. What we know about the penetration of Hellenic culture into Central Asia, and our knowledge about Manicheism and Nestorianism in their Central Asian versions, would be nonexistent, as would our insights into languages and cultures, now extinct, that once were prevalent along both the northern and the southern silk routes. Someone perhaps wonders whether it would have mattered —and that brings us to a question of principles about the nature of scientific research. Research knows no bounds, tolerates no restrictions, cannot wait—there has always been something called a passion for research, and that is what was behind all of the exploratory voyages to Sinkiang.

All exploration today is carried out by the Chinese. The excavations on or near the old sites have been done by Chinese archaeologists. As yet they have not accomplished very much. Their priorities have been other sites and places in China. There is no hurry. The dry desert sand and Sinkiang's dry climate preserve the undiscovered antiquities perfectly well, perhaps even better than modern curators in our museums would be able to.

The whole of the Turfan region is full of archaeological sites that

have contributed to the illumination of the history of the area. They speak of different peoples who have settled in the Turfan Oasis, peoples who have come and gone, who have established their states, and seen them destroyed by other peoples. There were Indo-Europeans here before the birth of Christ, and in 700 A.D. the Turkic Uighurs established a large and strong empire, the ruins of which we can see today in Yar-ghol and in Iduqut shähri. However, during all of these centuries, China was in partial or complete control of the Turfan region, which they considered an important stop on the northern silk route.

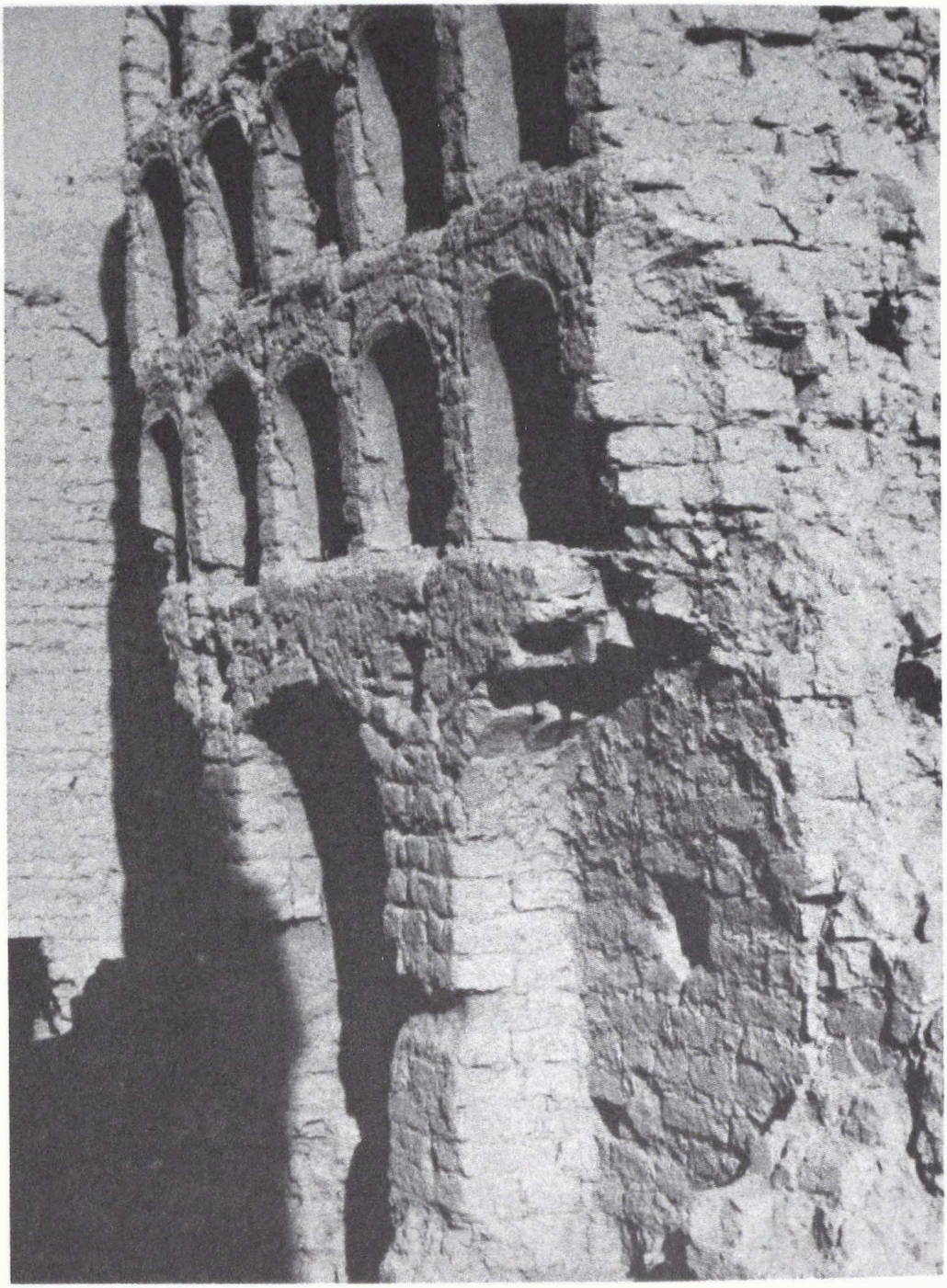
That was the historical background for the archaeological interest in the Turfan oasis. First came the Russians, and they brought great treasures back to St. Petersburg, then the Germans, French, and English, and even the Japanese competed in the zeal to discover. Aurel Stein arrived after the Germans Le Coq and Grünwedel had completed their excavations and taken away tons of murals that were to decorate the Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin—certainly not a safe place. During World War II, these murals were evacuated and mostly saved. Aurel Stein was very distressed about the destruction his German predecessors had been responsible for: "Le Coq's and Grünwedel's assistant, an old sailor who was working for them as a 'technician,' had mercilessly worked both sides of the murals with his pick axe. I could only presume that neither of the scholars—Le Coq or Grünwedel —had supervised the work of this man whose name was Bartus."

Stein decided to save what was left from the double threat—the risk of vandalism and of further excavation by people lacking capacity and knowledge about the treatment of archaeological material. He had full confidence in the capacity of his assistants. Since the work would take several weeks, he left for Urumchi, leaving the excavating to the others. They worked diligently, and a month or so later crates well-filled with archaeological material were sent off to the museums of India and England.

It was late afternoon when we left the fruit farm northwest of

Turfan in order to drive to Yar-ghol, one of the famous ruins. The journey was long and difficult. We drove through a number of small villages with narrow streets, over fields and irrigation ditches, and the road became more and more narrow and impassable. The villages were crowded with people who had come to admire us in our big, elegant Chinese vehicles, preceded by a police car with a red flag. These people were pure Uighurs. Many of the women had traits that resembled those of the ladies-in-waiting on the alfresco paintings that Le Coq and Grünwedel had taken from Turfan and published in their giant work *Chotscho* and in *Die buddhistische Spätantike in Mittel-Asien*. Le Coq had called these faces "*edle Frauengesichter*," meaning nobles faces of women. Without a doubt, the women of Turfan are the most beautiful in all of Sinkiang, which is something the German archaeologist recorded meticulously.

The ruins were surrounded by green fields. Our Chinese car struggled with great difficulty through thick layers of white dust to the main square of Yar-ghol, a ghost town of ruins in very strange shapes, which looked, by the light of the setting sun, like a lunar landscape. The main square was apparently situated in the center of ancient Yar-ghol. There were still massive walls from monumental buildings; there was a bluff with four niches for Buddha pictures, the two bottom ones being empty, the pictures most likely carried away. But actually this was not necessarily so: they could have been destroyed by Islamic iconoclasts obeying the Islamic laws that prohibited depiction of living beings. This was, at any rate, what had happened to the pictures in the top two niches, where only the bottom part of two Buddha pictures remained. However, one must admit that there could also be a much simpler explanation—it can simply have been the wear and tear of time that has eroded the pictures and transformed them into the fine dust that covers all of the ruins. The Buddha pictures had been made out of some sort of stucco mixed with clay which in a climate other than Turfan's bone-dry desert air would never have lasted at all.



Empty niches, once filled with Buddha pictures. 1978.

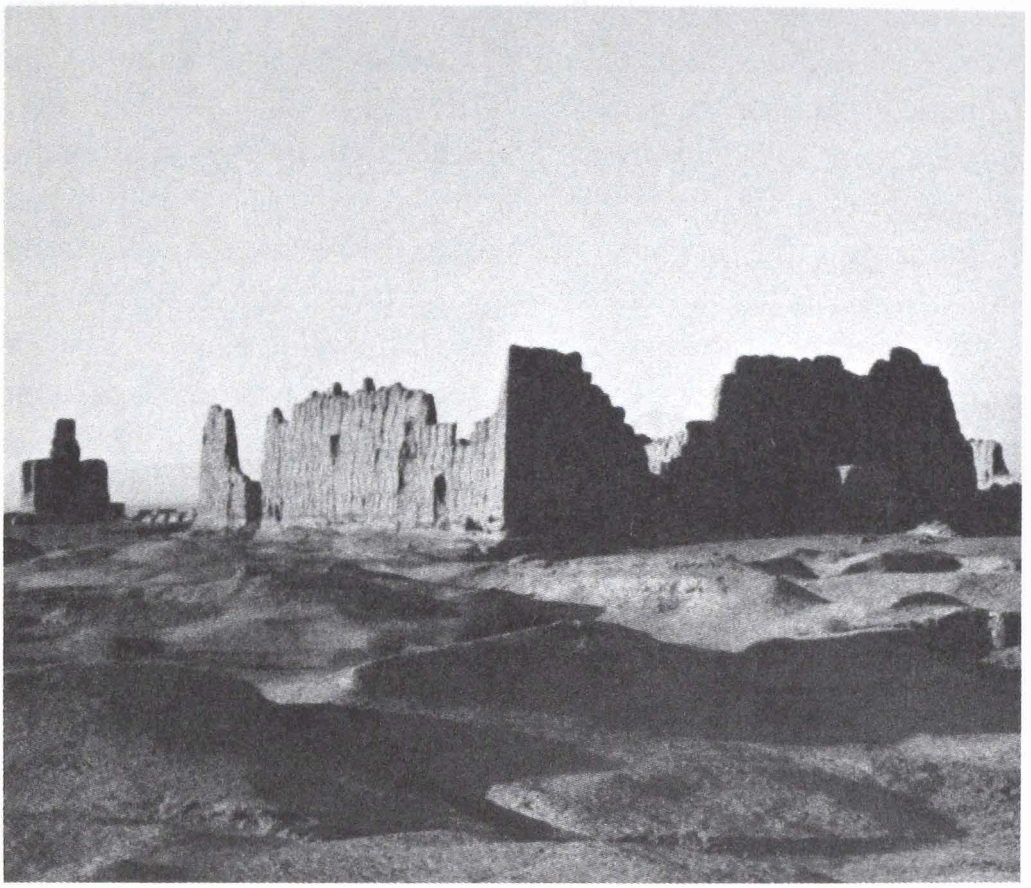
Once upon a time Yar-ghol must have been a magnificent community; then it was destroyed by the Mongolians—if it was the Mongolians. On the main square, a Uighur curator gave us a lecture on the history of the city. He spoke most of all about the Chinese aspects of the city, very little about old Uighur culture. But the ruins told their own story. There was no sign of attempts to care for or to restore anything other than the fact that they had begun to pave the main road leading to the square with sun-dried brick. Was this perhaps for an expected future tourist invasion?

We drove back the same way, through the same villages, saw the same faces—were they descendants of the Uighurs who once upon a time were driven away from their large, fortified city? The faces fascinated me once again, and it occurred to me that they were the faces I had seen in the large illustrated works about the German archaeological expeditions to Turfan.

It was dark when we got to the center of Turfan; people thronged in the well-lit streets where centrally controlled music blared from the strategically placed loudspeakers. I was surprised to learn that the city of Turfan had only 20,000 inhabitants and that there were 140,000 people in the rest of the district. I would have guessed the opposite, judging from the life and activity in the streets. A Turfan-Uighur dinner was waiting for us, with many of the region's delicacies and a large, greasy pilaf of mutton and rice, to be washed down with large quantities of Chinese beer, which is both good and refreshing. After dinner, we were treated to a song and dance performance by local talents dressed in colorful Uighur costumes. They sang a lot about Mao—among others, a song entitled "We Give a Rug to Chairman Mao." One song was a formidable scolding addressed to the Gang of Four.

I slept very badly that night. The iron bedstead was an instrument of torture. By 5:30 A.M. I had had enough. The air was cool at that time, and around 7:00 A.M. daylight came, the beginning of a new day of studies in the history of Turfan.

After breakfast we went to Kaochang, or "The City of the



Remains of the greatness of Kaochang. 1978.

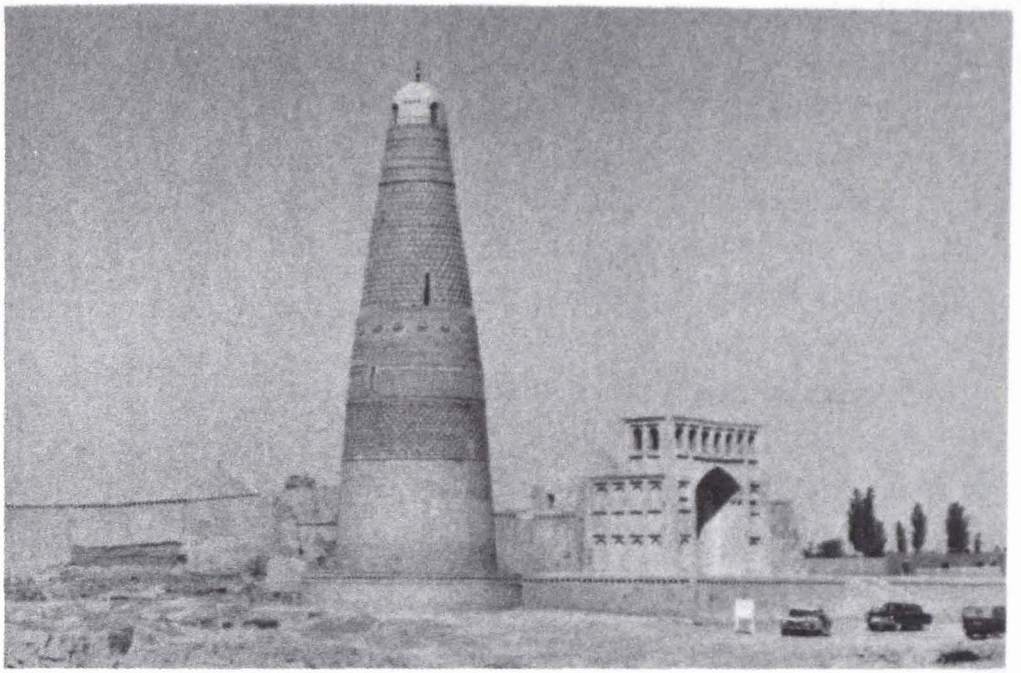
Iduquts" as it was called in old Uighur. It is situated southeast of Turfan, at a distance of a one-hour drive on an excellent asphalt highway. It is the main road leading east to Hami, Lanchow, and on to Central China, a historic road that has seen rulers come and go. On the outskirts of Turfan we passed one of the city's few industries, a concern belonging to the realm of lighter industry, a factory for the manufacture of the mule carts on bicycle wheels that have invaded present-day Sinkiang. The road continued through an interminable stony desert without evidence of plant life. To the left you could see the snow-capped tops of Bogdo-ula, shining in the morning sun. We turned to the right, drove through a few villages with typically Uighur low mud houses, and arrived at Iduqut shähri or Kaochang City, as it was called on a large sign in Chinese and New Uighur. The sign also informed us that Kaochang was founded during the first century B.C., and that it was abandoned in the fourteenth century, and so had a 1,500 year history. During all of those years it had been the political, economic, and cultural center of Sinkiang. During the Han dynasty from 206 B.C. to 220 A.D., Chinese troops had been stationed there. These soldiers had put their monotonous existence of guard duty to use and had tilled the soil intensively. Kaochang had once upon a time been the capital of a feudal separatist Chinese dynasty, called Kaochang dynasty. Toward the middle of the tenth century, Kaochang had become the Turkic Uighur capital and had been given the name Iduqut shähri. Iduqut was the title of the Uighur rulers. Within a city wall which is still partially preserved, there was a palace and buildings for government offices, a temple, a bazaar, streets and squares—all of it ruins at present.

A strong, piercing wind blew over Kaochang, and the air was full of the fine, yellow dust which covered the ruins. We drove through the ruins. It felt almost like an unholy act, a sacrilege. My companions informed me that actually the road into the center of Kaochang was supposed to have been asphalted, but that they had been successful in preventing this. It would have been too much

modernization, a few sensible people had decided. Kaochang has been an official historical monument since 4 March 1961, and the advantages of this have been that the inhabitants of the area can no longer carry on private excavations, and that farmers can no longer use the soil inside Kaochang's city limits.

Despite its desolation, Kaochang was impressive. We climbed up to one of the temples from where we could see the whole old city, which had a circumference of about three miles. Parts of the massive city wall were still there, even though cracked and broken down at the edges by peasants in the area who had needed brick for secular construction. The Buddha niches of the temple were empty. I asked whether there were still any murals, and received a sad "*yoq*, no!" as an answer. We terminated our visit with a rest in the "rest house," as it was called, which had been built outside the old city limits. In Uighur it was called *däm almaq üchün*, "to catch your breath." We talked about Iduqut shähri and about the ancient Uighurs. I asked whether any new excavations had been made, or whether there was any archaeological activity at all around the ruins. The answer was that they had done some work in one corner of the area and they had found a Chinese tomb that was about 1,500 years old. That was all. They had excavated in Astana and had had good results. But more sensational than finding Buddhistic murals or Buddha pictures was that they had found a Russian box of matches perfectly preserved, the matches in working condition. It was from the 1890s and had been forgotten or lost by a member of the Russian expedition that had done archaeological excavations in the Turfan area at that time. The box of matches apparently had aspects of political importance which they did not talk about.

We went on to Astana, where considerable excavations had been carried out in 1972. The road we followed went through Uighur villages with low mud houses that were so genuinely Uighur that I wished I had been young again and been able to spend a few months living in such an environment, which would surely be



Imin Wang Munári, on the outskirts of Turfan, can be seen from great distances away. It is both a mosque and an Islamic theological seminary. 1978.

able to contribute a lot to old Uighur Turkic history and help me learn about the way of life of present-day minorities in China. Outside of Astana, there was an old Chinese graveyard where ancient Chinese dignitaries from Kaochang had been laid to rest. They had dug deep trenches in the ground so that one could reach the subterranean tombs. I was invited to climb down on a rope ladder which swung towards the bottom. I declined, and no doubt forfeited much, especially the murals that decorated the Chinese tombs.

We had arrived there at about noon, and it was getting very hot—I think it was about thirty-five degrees centigrade in the shade—and shade was nonexistent on the Astana graveyard. It was time to continue to our next stop, the mosque and the Islamic university Imin Wang Munári. *Munár* means "minaret," and it was so tall that one could see it from far and wide. We returned by

way of the large highway from Hami, where heavy vehicle traffic had begun, now that it was getting late in the day. After half an hour we turned to the left, leaving the stony desert behind us, drove again through small, idyllic villages, and got to the minaret which is situated on a little hill surrounded by lush, green corn fields, but also by old mud banks and wall remnants which are called *kohnä shähär* in Uighur, meaning "old city"—a designation that always means old settlement.

Imin Wang Munári is, of course, Islamic, but it is undoubtedly built on an old Buddhist cult site. When puritanical, almost irascible Islam invaded Central Asia about 1,000 years ago, they often built their places of worship over the ruins of the temples of idol-worshippers, which was what Buddhists were considered to be. Imin Wang Munári was built as late as 1771–76. It is now protected as a historical monument, which leads me to the conclusion that its founder, Imin Wang must, during his time, have had good relations with the government in Peking. Imin Wang Munári serves both as mosque—house of worship—and madrasa—theological seminary. At the time of our visit, its interior was being repaired. A number of workers were busy plastering the walls with wet mud, while others were smoothing it out with slabs of wood. In the middle of the building, there was a wide square *namazgah*, a "place for prayer," and around it a row of study cells, simple little square rooms for the use of the theological students. It was half dark inside these cells and in the passageways between them. The walls were disfigured by signatures and inscriptions, most of them in Chinese. On the wall near the entrance there was a commemorative plaque with Uighur-Arabic and Chinese inscriptions. It was so dirty that I was unable to read the Uighur text. It was most likely information about the origins of Imin Wang Munári.

The Way Back

The Chinese State Airline, CAAB, flies to Europe twice a week with an American Boeing 707, in full conformity with international standards. The route is Peking–Urumchi–Belgrade–Zurich. I had a passage booked on that plane on 21 September 1978, and my new Chinese Academy friends came to the Peking airport to see me off. The plane, which departed at 6:45 A.M., was filled to capacity almost only with Chinese. I imagine that they were all on their way to Europe, or some of them to the United States, on assignments that had to do with the Four Modernizations.

We had a one-hour stop in Urumchi, where we were served an early and substantial Chinese lunch. After that we took off for Europe. The pilot swept low over Urumchi, and then nosed up to gain the altitude necessary to fly over the high Tien-shan range. Under us lay the industrial areas of Urumchi, black and sooty, and the wide plain with its yellow, green, and grey-black fields. Soon we were up in the geological confusion called Tien-shan, "the heavenly mountains." Here and there was a strongly red-colored mountain range, which looked like a stream of lava in the process of solidifying. Then came mountains that were grey, yellow, purple, blue, in the strangest formations. The highest peaks were covered

with snow, and then we had left the northern part of Sinkiang. We had come out over a hazy plain. In the west we could see the mountains on the Soviet border with their high, snow-covered tops. They looked like one long white mountain crest floating in the air. It took about one and a half hours to fly across the Taklamakan deserts and sand seas. We couldn't see a thing through the haze until suddenly a high mountain top appeared to our right. It had to be Muz-tagh-ata, "the glacier father," as it was so romantically named by the explorers of the past. Since Muz-tagh-ata was to our right, we had apparently left Sinkiang, most likely after Yarkend. Passengers received no information about the route. The only thing we were told was that taking photographs was prohibited. Flying was easy across those high Karakorum Mountains that in past times had meant such difficult, two-month journeys for caravans between India and Kashgar, Yarkend and Khotan, and where the air is so thin that both people and animals suffered from the feared tutäk, the altitude sickness. I had to think about the ninety-four-year-old Hanna Raquette now sitting in her retirement-home room in Lund. I could see her in my mind, small and fragile, her eyes bright and searching. She had ridden across this pass more than once, experienced its hardships and dangers in order to reach the missions in Kashgar and Yarkend, and she had survived better than the majority. Here we sat, comfortable in our Boeing 707 with a well-regulated oxygen supply, and looked down upon the old caravan routes, and upon one of the world's most gigantic mountain massifs, with pointed tops and valleys so deep that I could well understand that the small groups of peoples who live down there have been isolated and without contact with each other for thousands of years. It is therefore easy to understand that they have been able to keep their languages untouched by outside influences. Just seeing the obstacles occasioned by these mountains makes these few peoples' communication difficulties very plain. It was a country of glaciers and mountain streams. Sometimes there was a row of small, emerald-green lakes,

which at that time in the fall, when the snow melt no longer rushed down from the mountains, had no surplus of water. From time to time you could see small areas of cultivation down in the valleys. How do these people live? Do they live according to age-old principles of a subsistence way of life? I had to think about the courageous Irish woman whose name was Dervla Murphy, who had taken herself and her six-year-old daughter up into the mountains we were now flying over, in the same way as my old friend Hanna Raquette, even if she had not reached the pass at 6,000 meters altitude. Her accomplishment is fantastic in our modern era of comfort—even if fifty years ago those hardships were normal for our Swedish missionaries who lived their lives in Kashgar and Yarkend. Dervla Murphy described life in the small villages of the valleys of the Baltistan in her book entitled *Where the Indus is Young*, and she can no doubt answer my numerous questions about how people live and think in the desolation beneath us.

Far off in the west I could see some snow-covered mountain tops. My guess was that they were Nanga Parbat, the dream of every mountaineer. We received no information. I had to rely on guessing and on what I remembered of the map as we glided over this fantastic, dramatic landscape. I turned around to look at my co-passengers. I wanted to see the reaction in their faces, and found that they were all asleep—uninterested in all the wonders that lay beneath us.

Postscript

Seven years have passed since I went back to Kashgar to remember and compare.

What I saw in 1929–30 in Sinkiang, China's western province and one of its most inaccessible parts, could best be described as a return to the Middle Ages. I came back forty-nine years later and found Sinkiang still suffering from the outbursts of the Chinese Cultural Revolution. It was the antithesis of the sleepy Islamic society of the 1930s. It was now transformed into a rather noisy mechanized socialist community. The difference was enormous. And now, seven years later, Mao belongs to the past, although his giant statue in Kashgar is still standing as a reminder that his memory cannot easily be erased.

In this postscript I shall try briefly to describe what I feel is important to remember about events in Sinkiang during the past seven years. It is an arbitrary period of comparison. My first period of comparison dealt with forty-nine years. This new one is one seventh of the original one. And yet, so much has happened.

The far-reaching changes which have taken place in China after Mao's death have naturally affected Sinkiang too, perhaps even more so than China proper, as Sinkiang was always more back-

ward than other parts of the country. Sinkiang is now slowly, but very slowly, being opened up to the outside world. In February 1984 it was officially announced that it would be possible to visit Kashgar—after decades of seclusion. This means that Kashgar will be the only city in Sinkiang south of the Tien-shan which will be open to foreign visitors. The other two cities on the southern Silk Road, Yarkend and Khotan, will remain unapproachable, at least for the time being. Urumchi and Turfan have been open to tourists for rather a long time. But most of Sinkiang or, to use its correct appellation, The Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region, will evidently continue to be *terra incognita*. There are, however, great plans for the future. In Kashgar a 500-bed hotel is going to be built, in Turfan a 300-bed hotel, and in Urumchi a special tourist village.

Sinkiang has always tended to be isolated on account of its proximity to the Soviet Union. An additional reason for its isolation is no doubt to be found in the location of the Chinese atomic research station at Lop-nor. Such a modern facility is bound to invite restrictions and secrecy.

There is no doubt that the Sinkiang province is a rich area. It has enormous potential for extended agriculture and stock-raising, provided that enough water for irrigation can be obtained and reasonably even distribution can be devised, and provided that the deserts can be prevented from swallowing farmland. There are huge untapped mineral resources, although to a great extent these are undefined. According to the latest Chinese figures, 118 of the 150 known minerals are to be found in Sinkiang, in other words 80 percent of the minerals so far discovered in China. However, there is a great need for better communications and infrastructure in general if the wealth of Sinkiang is to be exploited. Recent years have seen many elaborate development plans. But where are the technicians and scientists who will be able to implement them? There will be stiff demands on education, especially for the Uighurs and the minorities who inhabit this autonomous region, if they are

to participate in the development of their country and not be overwhelmed by the technically more advanced Han-Chinese. In fact, there has been a striking immigration of Chinese from Central China into Sinkiang during the last few decades. This is especially true of Sinkiang north of the Tien-shan, where the Chinese today predominate in number. There is no doubt that this invasion of Chinese contains seeds of conflict between a preponderant majority of the ruling Chinese and the minority consisting of the Turkic-speaking peoples of Sinkiang. However, on the other hand, one can note an effort by the present Chinese government to counteract such a development through a positive attitude to the minorities of the vast Chinese republic. And there are many of them—not less than fifty-five minorities totaling 68 million, ranging in numbers from 15 million down to a few hundred people.

After the revolution of 1949, the Communists who came to power paid special attention to the education and cultural life of the minorities. Institutes for studying and educating the minorities were established everywhere in the country. The cultural revolution meant a setback for these activities, as was very clearly illustrated in the evidence from my visit to the University of Urumchi. The removal of the Gang of Four meant a new and positive attitude to the minorities which has become more and more pronounced during the last seven years, if I may use this period of comparison once more. This is especially noticeable in Sinkiang, where one finds an intense interest in the language and literature of the Uighurs. New editions and translations into modern Uighur of the classics of old Turkic literature have seen the light. They have been published in what I would call luxurious editions and have been lavishly fitted out both typographically and artistically. I shall only mention two of these publications: a translation into modern Uighur of Mahmud al-Kashgari's famous dictionary of the languages of the Central Asian Turks, compiled in Kashgar in 1077, and a big volume containing the *Qutadghu bilik*, "the happiness-bringing knowledge," written in 1069–70 in Kashgar

by Yusuf Khas Hajip of Balasaghun. Numerous other books with various contents have been published for educational purposes. But above all, the central government's positive attitude to the cultural life of a distant minority has given rise to a pure literature which is quite amazing in size and in vocabulary. A modern Uighur literature comprising novels and short stories is now beginning to take form. It is particularly worth noting the appearance of several young Uighur poets. It looks as if poetry has a special attraction for the younger generation.

What I have said about Uighur literature also applies to the two other main Turkic languages of Sinkiang, Kazak and Kirghiz. However, the literature of these minorities has developed on a much smaller scale, as these people are nomads living away from the cultural changes taking place in the towns and oases. Nonetheless, it appears that every effort is being made to preserve and promote their literary traditions and to increase their level of education in general.

I have mentioned the Latin script, which was introduced for Uighur and Kazak in 1964 to replace the Arabic alphabet with its Islamic background which had been used for centuries. Here a very interesting development is taking place. Although the new Latin script was officially adopted and introduced, it was never fully accepted by the people. Today, most books are once again printed in the old Arabic script. The Latin script seems to be used mainly in official publications. I would not be surprised if it slowly fades out.

The return of the Arabic alphabet may be connected with the widespread more liberal attitude to Islam as a religion, which has been noticeable during the last few years. An increasing number of people are permitted to make the pilgrimage to Mecca. The mosques are open for worship and the central authorities are generous in supporting the upkeep of the Islamic holy places, for example, the shrine of Hazrat Afaq Khoja and the old Aidkah (Häytka) mosque in Kashgar. There is a general tendency to

protect the relics of the past of the Sinkiang minorities.

Sinkiang is a border province whose next-door neighbor is the Soviet Union. For a long time, the relations between China and its northern and western neighbor have been very tense. The tension began in the 1960s and it had a great influence on Sinkiang, which became more isolated from the Soviet Union than ever before. Formerly there had been a rather lively trade exchange, but with the deteriorating relations between China and the Soviet Union it entirely ceased. When some years ago there were signs of a thaw in the Sino-Soviet relations, its effects were eventually felt in Sinkiang too. In November 1983 the border station at Kargas, some ten kilometers from Yining, the capital of Sinkiang's Ili Kazak Autonomous Prefecture, was opened. Later, a border point in the neighborhood of Kashgar was also opened for traffic. It is now serving the trade between the southern parts of Sinkiang and the Soviet Republic of Kirgizistan.

Much attention is being paid to infrastructure. New roads are under construction. The railway leading to Urumchi from Central China is steadily being extended toward southern Sinkiang. The latest addition is the rail route from Turfan to Korla. The southern cities Kashgar, Yarkend and Khotan are next in line for rail connection with the central Chinese rail system via Turfan and Urumchi.

Last, but not least, I should mention the Karakorum Highway, leading over the highest and most desolate parts of the world from Kashgar in Sinkiang down to Gilgit in Pakistan. It is a masterpiece of engineering science, open the year around for heavy truck traffic. It goes through high plateaus and through steep gorges, through unmapped and uninhabited territories, over land without place-names. It follows the tributaries of the ancient silk road used by the caravans leading down to the Indian subcontinent. It is the road of the first adventurous explorers. Today it has been taken over by the truckdrivers. The place-names noted by the explorers of these vast expanses were of a very peculiar type. I have in

another connection called them "full sentence place-names." It might be a name like *tiva öldi*, "Here the camel died," or *at tüshti*, "Here the horse fell into the precipice." It was the only way for the caravan people to identify and remember places in these desolate regions. I wonder if today's truckdrivers continue this approach to naming. Would they call one of these unidentifiable places "Here the truck broke down"?

Sinkiang is a province of modernization in all respects. Modernization is the keyword of today. But I hope that the tenor of these romantic full sentence place-names will be retained.

Stockholm, May 1985
Gunnar Jarring

Glossary of Central Asian Terms

akhon: Title, meaning "mister."
baráng: Wooden support for grapevines, a pergola of grapevines.
bay: Rich man.
beg: In the 1920s and 1930s a Turki public official appointed by the Chinese local government, whose job, among other things, was to serve as an interpreter between the Chinese officials and the Uighur people. Sometimes this word is translated as "chief," especially when it is the title of the local prince, e.g., Yakub Beg.
chapan: Thick quilted caftan, a robe.
dopa: Little round embroidered skull cap.
etiz: Square plot in the irrigation system.
fen: Chinese coin.
ferangi: European, "Frank."
jinn: Evil spirit.
khoja: Title for religious leaders and rulers during the East Turkistan khoja period (ca. 1500–1750). The khojas claimed to be descendants of Muhammed.
mazar: Islamic holy tomb, a monument.
mou: Chinese unit of surface measure: 1 *mou* equals approx. 2.5 acres.
madrasa: Islamic theological seminary.
mapa: Two-wheeled horse-drawn cart.
patiq: Quagmire resulting from a thaw.
sahib: In the 1920s and 1930s, title for a European.
sheikh: Caretaker, manager of a holy tomb.

Taranchi: Uighur dialect spoken in the northern part of Sinkiang.
tsin: Chinese measure of weight: 1 *tsin* equals 0.6 kilogram.
yüan: Chinese coin.
östang: Irrigation canal.

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