

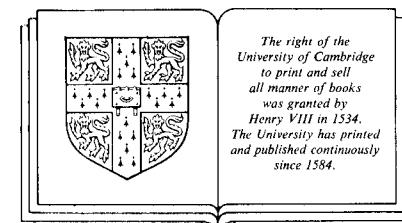
Warlords and Muslims in Chinese Central Asia

A political history of Republican Sinkiang 1911–1949

Andrew D. W. Forbes

University of Aberdeen

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All photographs reproduced courtesy of Mr Mike Craig and staff, University of Aberdeen Photographic Section, to whom, as ever, many thanks.

Acknowledgements

In the preparation of the present study my greatest debt of thanks is due to Dr Gavan McCormack, who first introduced me to the study of modern Chinese History at the University of Leeds in 1972, and who has maintained a constant and helpful interest in the progress of my research since taking up his present post at La Trobe University, Bundoora, in the summer of 1977. He is an admirable scholar and has been, and continues to be, a good friend.

No less a debt of thanks is due to Professor David Dilks of the School of History, University of Leeds, who supervised my research between 1977 and 1981, and whose meticulous academic standards and professional guidance in the methodology of research have proved invaluable in the completion of the present study.

Special thanks are due also to Dr Tom Ewing, friend and mentor in Central Asian Studies, as well as to Professor Owen Lattimore, whose writings first awakened my interest in Chinese Central Asia and whose unique personal reminiscences – most notably around the McCormack dinner table – have helped to bring Republican Sinkiang to life for me. The late Professor Joe Fletcher of Harvard generously provided a detailed and valuable commentary on the original typescript, whilst Dr Stuart Munro-Hay, friend and former colleague at the University of Khartoum, has proved a painstaking proof-reader and offered much perceptive advice.

Numerous other friends and colleagues have helped in the preparation of this book, amongst whom my very sincere thanks go to Chris Ferrard, Joe Ford (Great Britain–China Centre, London), David Gordon, Walter Graham CBE (formerly HM Consul Urumchi, 1945–7), John Hultvall, Colin Imber, Fritz Kaiser, Mark Lavery, Lars-Erik Nyman, Toshiyuki Tanaka, and M. E. Yapp.

Thanks are also due to a number of libraries and other academic institutions, most particularly to the long-suffering staff of the Inter-Library Loans sections of the Universities of Leeds and of Aberdeen – especially Barbara Ross and Ann Spry in the latter institution – to the Milli Kütüphane (National Library) at Ankara, and to the Flag Institute at Chester and its Director, Mr W. G. Crampton.

I am grateful to my parents – to whom this book is dedicated – for both moral and financial support during the lengthy period of research leading to the completion of this study (and, most particularly, to my father for many hours of accurate and uncomplaining proof-reading). Finally, I am grateful to my wife, Fawzia, without whose help and support in innumerable ways (and across three continents) the present study might never have been completed.

A.D.W.F.

*King's College
University of Aberdeen*

Abbreviations used in text

AA	Auswärtiges Amt (Bonn)
Ar.	Arabic
CAJ	<i>Central Asiatic Journal</i> (Wiesbaden)
CAR	<i>Central Asian Review</i> (London)
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
Ch.	Chinese
CNR	Committee for National Revolution (Khotan)
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
ETR	East Turkestan Republic (Kulja)
FEER	<i>Far Eastern Economic Review</i> (Hong Kong)
FES	<i>Far Eastern Survey</i> (New York)
FO	Foreign Office (Great Britain)
FPD	Foreign and Political Department (India)
GJ	<i>Geographical Journal</i> (London)
GOI	Government of India
GPU	State Political Administration (Russian abbreviation for the Soviet security service from 1922 to 34, subsequently NKVD)
HMCGK	His Majesty's (British) Consul-General, Kashgar
HMCU	His Majesty's (British) Consul, Urumchi
HMVCGK	His Majesty's (British) Vice Consul-General, Kashgar
HRAF	<i>Human Relations Area Files</i> (New Jersey)
INA	Ili National Army
IO	India Office (Great Britain)
IOR	India Office Records (London)
Ir.	Iranian
JAH	<i>Journal of Asian History</i> (Wiesbaden)
JPRS	<i>Joint Publications Research Service</i> (New York)
JRCAS	<i>Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society</i> (London)
KMT	Kuomintang (Chinese Nationalist Party)
M.	Manchu
MEJ	<i>Middle East Journal</i> (Washington DC)
MPR	Mongolian People's Republic
MW	<i>Moslem World</i> (now <i>The Muslim World</i> , Hartford, Conn.)

NKVD	People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (Russian abbreviation for Soviet security service from 1934 to 43, subsequently NKGB)
NYT	<i>New York Times</i>
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PRC	People's Republic of China
PRO	Public Record Office (London)
REI	<i>Revue des études islamiques</i> (Paris)
RMM	<i>Revue du monde musulman</i> (Paris)
RSFSR	Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic
STPNLC	Sinkiang Turkic People's National Liberation Committee
TIRET	Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan (Kashgar)
Tk.	Turkic
SSR	Soviet Socialist Republic
YKP	Young Kashgar Party

Introduction

The central theme of the present study is the development and nature of Warlord government and Muslim dissidence in China's westernmost province of Sinkiang during the chaotic years between the fall of the Ch'ing Dynasty in 1911 and the establishment of the Chinese People's Republic in 1949. An ancillary but closely related theme is the consistent and largely successful Soviet effort to influence events in Sinkiang during the three decades following the Bolshevik victory in the Russian Civil War, the regional and national Chinese response to this challenge, and the impact which continuing Soviet influence in Sinkiang was to have upon the indigenous Muslim population of the region during this period.

Where detailed studies of Republican Sinkiang exist – and there are few in any language – there has been a perhaps inevitable tendency to concentrate on great power politics in the region, on the supposedly pivotal role played by Sinkiang in relations between China and the Soviet Union, or between the Soviet Union and Japan, just as studies of Central Asian history during the nineteenth century tend to interpret the politics of Chinese Turkestan (by which name Sinkiang was then widely known) in terms of the 'Great Game' played out between the British Empire and Imperial Russia across the Himalayas and the Hindu Kush. Thus, previous analyses of the history of Republican Sinkiang have tended to interpret political developments within the province against a background of Chinese, Soviet, British, Japanese and even American interests, whilst the local and regional Islamic element has been almost completely ignored.

Perhaps the best examples of this perfectly legitimate approach are to be found in Owen Lattimore's *Pivot of Asia: Sinkiang and the Inner Asian Frontiers of China* (1950), Allen S. Whiting's *Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?* (1958), and Lars-Erik Nyman's *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests in Sinkiang, 1918–1934* (1977), all of which concentrate primarily on the strategic significance of Sinkiang in international affairs to the exclusion of Islamic political developments within Sinkiang and of that region's position in relation to the wider Muslim world. Thus, whilst between 1931 and 1949 Sinkiang was racked by four major and numerous minor Muslim rebellions, as well as by two distinct but related Muslim

invasions from neighbouring Kansu, in previous studies of the period these events have either been passed over completely or at best have received the most cursory of examinations.

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

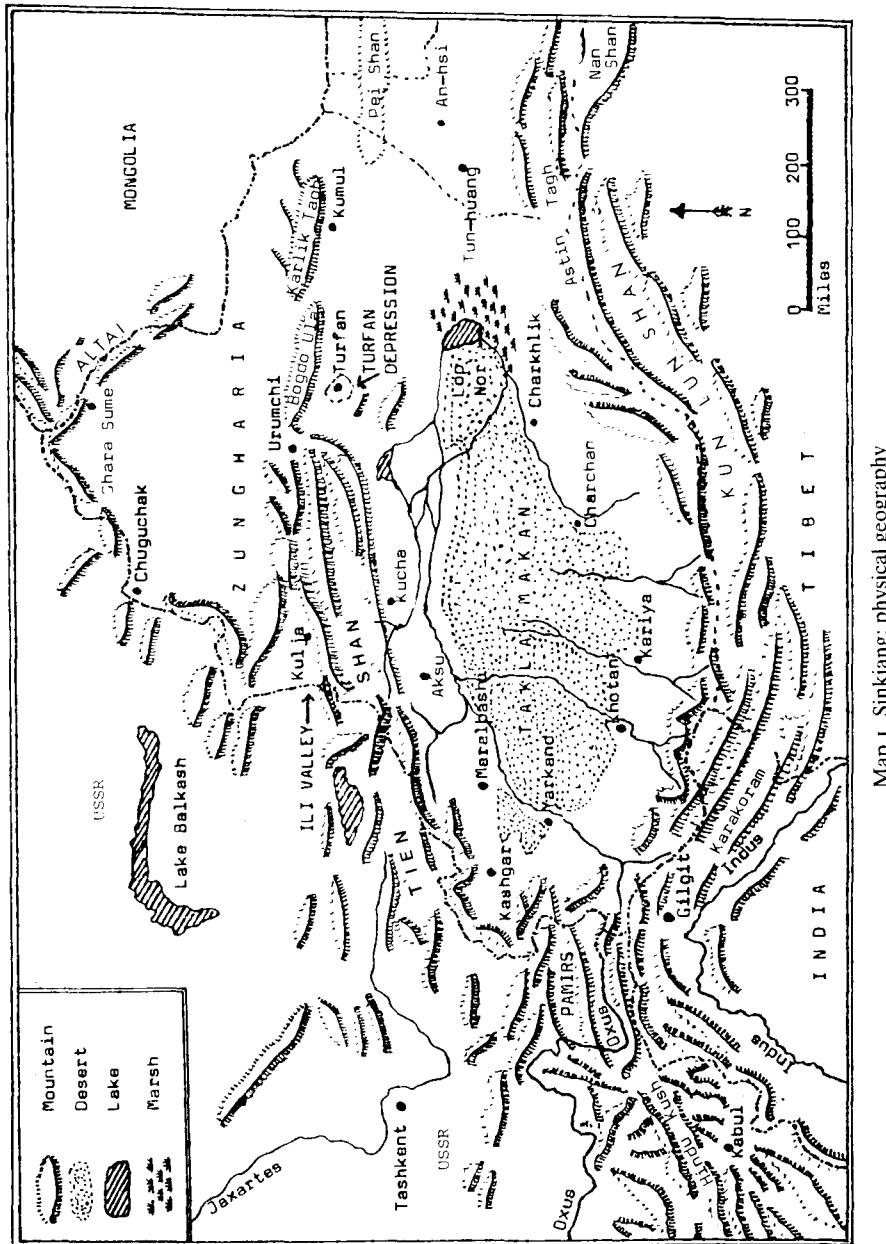
Geographical and ethnic background

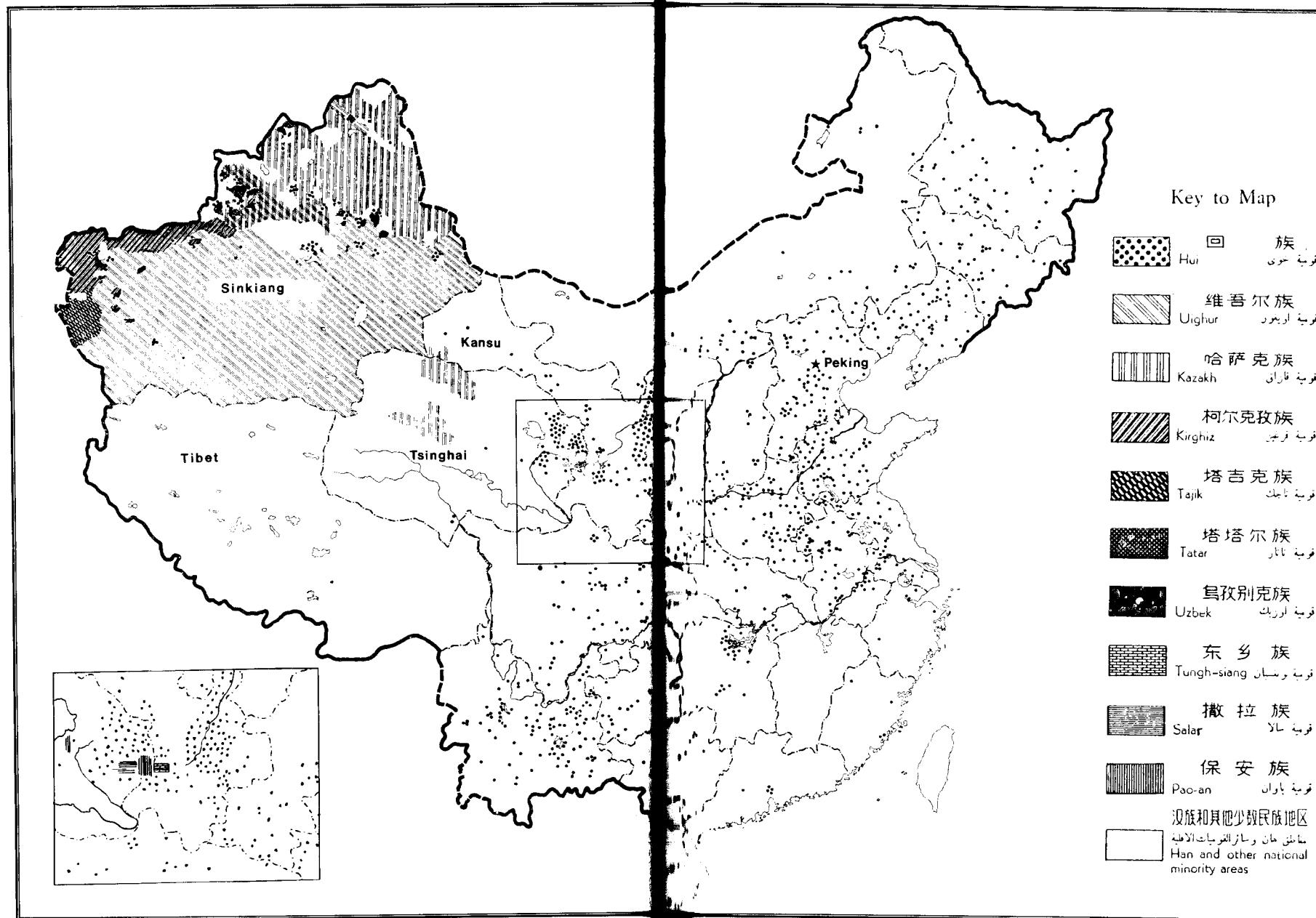
Sinkiang, the Chinese province which provides the setting for the major part of the present study, is a peripheral land. In a political sense it is a part of China, as it has been at times of Chinese strength and prestige since the Han Dynasty first conquered this region of Central Asia more than two thousand years ago. In a cultural sense, however, Sinkiang belongs primarily to the Muslim world, as it has done since the Islamicisation of the Turkic- and Iranian-speaking peoples of Central Asia displaced the Indo-Buddhist civilisation which had dominated the area until the eleventh and twelfth centuries AD.

In a geographical sense Sinkiang can also be defined as a peripheral land. Isolated from Western Asia by the massed ranks of the Hindu Kush, the Pamirs and the T'ien Shan, from the Indian Subcontinent by the Karakoram, Kunlun and Himalaya ranges, and from China by the Gobi Desert, Sinkiang – and most particularly its southern section, the Tarim Basin – is Central Asian in the broadest geographical sense of the word, belonging neither fully to the East nor to the West.

The province of Sinkiang, the largest and most sparsely populated in China, can properly be divided into two main regions, the Tarim Basin and Zungharia, and two lesser but economically significant regions, the Ili Valley and the Turfan Depression. The T'ien Shan range, running approximately eastwards from the Pamir Massif, forms a formidable wall between Zungharia and the Tarim Basin, making direct communication between the two areas difficult, especially in winter. The Ili Valley, cut off from Zungharia by a northern spur of the T'ien Shan, is physically isolated from the rest of the province and is easily accessible only from the west – an area which fell under Russian domination during the mid-nineteenth century, and which today constitutes a part of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic.

It should be emphasised that, since the establishment of the Chinese People's Republic in 1949, there has been a great change in both the size and the ethnic composition of the population of Sinkiang, a transforma-





Map 2. Distribution of Muslim nationalities in China

tion chiefly occasioned by a massive, CCP-inspired influx of Han migrants. During the Republican Period, however, Han Chinese officials and settlers represented a small minority amongst a sea of diverse, predominantly Muslim national groups. Thus, according to the 'best available' population statistics for Sinkiang during the 1940s,¹ the seven Muslim nationalities of the province numbered collectively some 3,439,000 out of an estimated total population of 3,730,000. A further 200,000 of the inhabitants of the province were Han Chinese settlers, soldiers and officials, whilst the remaining 75,000 to 100,000 people were made up of Mongols, Russians, Tunguzic peoples (Sibo, Solon and Manchu), and a few Tibetans, Afghans, and Indian Hindu money-lenders.

The Muslim peoples

Of the various indigenous Muslim nationalities of Sinkiang, the most numerous and the most politically significant are the Uighurs, a Turkic-speaking, primarily sedentary agricultural people inhabiting the oases of the Tarim Basin, Turfan and Kumul, and the cultivated lowlands of the Ili Valley. In the late 1940s the Uighur population of Sinkiang was estimated at 2,941,000. The second largest Muslim national group in Sinkiang is the Kazakh, numbering an estimated 319,000 in the late Republican Period, whilst the third most numerous is the Kirghiz, numbering an estimated 65,000 at the same time. Both the Kazakhs and the Kirghiz of Sinkiang are Turkic-speaking nomadic peoples, with the former predominating in the highland regions of Zungharia and the Ili Valley, whilst the Kirghiz inhabit the upland pasture regions of the T'ien Shan and the Pamirs.

Other Muslim peoples permanently settled in Sinkiang include a small group of Iranian-speaking 'Mountain' Tajiks inhabiting the upland Sarikol region in the far south-west and numbering an estimated 9,000 in the mid-1940s; a group of primarily urban-based Uzbeks inhabiting the larger oasis towns and cities of the Tarim Basin and numbering an estimated 8,000 in the mid-1940s; and a still smaller group of Tatars, settled chiefly at Urumchi and in the townships along the Sinkiang-Soviet frontier, numbering an estimated 5,000 during the same period. Finally, mention should be made of the Hui, a group of Chinese-speaking Muslims settled throughout China, but especially in Zungharia and Kumul within Sinkiang and in the neighbouring north-western provinces of Kansu, Tsinghai and Ninghsia. The Hui – known by the Turkic name 'Tungan' in Sinkiang – numbered an estimated 92,000 in that province during the mid-1940s, and wielded considerable political and military power throughout the Republican Period.

With the exception of the Ismā'ili Tajiks of Sarikol, the Muslim peoples

of Sinkiang, whether Turkic- or Chinese-speaking, are uniformly *Sunnī* followers of the orthodox Hanafi *madhab*.

The non-Muslim peoples:

With the exception of the Sinkiang Mongols, who numbered approximately 63,000 in the late Republican Period and who inhabit a narrow strip of land along the north-eastern frontier between Sinkiang and the Mongolian People's Republic as well as parts of the central T'ien Shan, Ili Valley and the Chuguchak district, the various non-Muslim peoples of Sinkiang – like the Hui Muslims – are all relative newcomers whose arrival in the province dates from the Ch'ien Lung Emperor's great mid-eighteenth century conquest of the region.² Thus, although the Han Chinese now (in 1983) form a substantial part of the population of Sinkiang and may shortly come to outnumber the indigenous inhabitants taken collectively, for the period with which the present study is concerned, the Han Chinese, although rulers of the province, formed only a very small proportion of the population.

According to statistics dating from the mid-1940s, during the late Republican Period the Han of Sinkiang numbered an estimated 202,239 persons, or between 3 per cent and 4 per cent of the population. Although

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

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

Sources: Nagel, *Encyclopedia Guide China* (Geneva, 1968), pp. 62–4 (based on figures published in the *Hsin-Hua tzu-tien*, 1957); M. A. Czaplicka, *The Turks of Central Asia* (London, 1918); R. B. Shaw, 'On the Hill Canton of Salar', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, x, London, 1878; R. B. Ekwall, *Cultural Relations on the Kansu-Tibetan Cultural Frontier*, Chicago, 1939; J. T. Dreyer, *China's Forty Millions*, Cambridge, Mass., 1976.

* Chinese communist sources from the early 1950s usually estimate the total Muslim population of China at 10,000,000. Since 1953 the overall population of China has increased by an estimated 2.5 per cent annually. If this were applied to the Muslim population, the total number of Muslim inhabitants of the People's Republic of China would now exceed 16,000,000.

Table 2 Muslim national minorities of China: distribution

Nationality	Territorial base	Kansu	Ningsia	Tsinghai	Throughout China Elsewhere
Uighur	*	*	*	*	95,000 in Kazakh and Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republics 3,581,000 in Soviet Kazakhstan; minorities in Mongolian People's Republic and Turkish Anatolia.
Kazakh	*	*	*	*	
Tung-hsiang Kirghiz	*	*	*	*	970,000 in Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic; c. 30,000 in Afghan Pamirs
Salar Tajik	*	*	*	*	1,397,000 in Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic; small minorities in Afghanistan and Pakistan [†]
Uzbek	*	*	*	*	6,000,400 in Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic; c. 820,000 in Afghanistan
Pao-an Tatar Hui	*	*	*	*	4,969,000 throughout USSR 21,000 in Kazakh and Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republics

Sources: *Chinese Moslems in Progress* (Peking, 1957), pp. vi-ix (unmarked); *Hsin-Hua i-tien* (Peking, 1971), pp. 590-3; G. Wheeler, *Racial Problems in Soviet Muslim Asia* (London, 1967), pp. 65-6; G. Wheeler, *The Peoples of Soviet Central Asia* (London, 1966), pp. 117-18; A. Bennington and C. Lemercier-Quelquejay, *Islam in the Soviet Union* (London, 1967), maps 1 and 3; D. N. Wilber (ed.), *Afghanistan* (New Haven, 1956), pp. 37-71; US Government Area Handbooks for: *Afghanistan* (Washington, 1976); *People's Republic of China* (Washington, 1974); *Pakistan* (Washington, 1975); *Soviet Union* (Washington, 1974).

[†] The small 'Mountain Tajik' population of Wakhan and Badakshan should not be confused with the much larger plain-dwelling Tajiks of Afghanistan who form an estimated 30 per cent of the total population. The 'Mountain Tajiks' are *Shī'a* Muslims like the Tajiks of Sinkiang and Pakistan. The plains Tajiks are *Sunnī* Muslims. The same distinction applies in Soviet Tajikistan.

Introduction

sizeable communities of Han Chinese existed in the main administrative areas, there were no significant territorial enclaves in which the Han predominated. The Han population of Republican Sinkiang was essentially made up of five main groups: the descendants of Han political and criminal offenders exiled to the Ili region during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; Hunanese settlers drawn from the ranks of Tso Tsung-t'ang's victorious army which reconquered Sinkiang for the Ch'ing in 1876-7; Tientsin merchants who supplied Tso's army and who subsequently chose to settle in Sinkiang; Shansi caravaneers who had traded with and settled in Sinkiang for many decades; and finally Kansu colonists, the poorest and most recent Han arrivals in Sinkiang, many of whom entered the province during the 1920s and 1930s under the administration of Chin Shu-jen. Besides these main regional groups, three smaller but distinct provincial groups of Han were to play significant roles in Sinkiang during the Republican Period; these were the Yunnanese, who rose to positions of prominence under Yang Tseng-hsin; the north-easterners, who entered the province in force at the time of Sheng Shih-ts'ai; and finally the Honanese, who were brought in as settlers by the KMT authorities during 1944-5.

Finally, mention should be made of the 'Tunguzic Peoples' and of the Russian presence in Sinkiang. The Tunguzic-speaking Sibo, Solon and Manchu inhabitants were settled in the Ili region as military colonists by the Ch'ien Lung Emperor in the mid-eighteenth century; taken collectively, in the mid-1940s they numbered 12,182 (9,023 Sibos, 2,489 Solons and 670 Manchus). The Russian inhabitants of Sinkiang also tended to live in the Ili region, though smaller Russian communities were established in Chuguchak and in the capital at Urumchi. During the Republican Period they numbered an estimated 13,400, the great majority of whom were 'White Russian' anti-Bolshevik refugees.

Historical background

Although Han Chinese involvement in the area of Central Asia which is today approximately conterminous with Sinkiang dates back to the conquests of Wu Ti, the fifth Emperor of the Western Han, at the beginning of the first century AD, Chinese control over the region as a whole was to remain sporadic and tenuous until the mid-eighteenth century AD. Thus, although the Kumul-Turfan region of 'Uighuristan' had remained in a loose vassal relationship with the Ming Dynasty, it was not until the nineteenth year of the reign of the Ch'ing Ch'ien Lung Emperor (1755) that Zungharia and the Ili Valley were brought fully under Chinese control, whilst the Tarim Basin region of 'Altishahr' fell to the Ch'ing with the capture of Kashgar in 1758.

Over the next half century Ch'ing power in Central Asia gradually declined, so that by 1820 Jahāngir, the exiled Aqtaghlik pretender to the throne of Altishahr, felt strong enough to leave his base in Khokand and to launch the first of a series of Aqtaghlik rebellions against Ch'ing rule in Eastern Turkestan. Jahāngir enjoyed some success and in 1826 succeeded in capturing Kashgar; in 1828, however, he was defeated by Ch'ing forces, taken to Peking and executed. Over the next four decades the Tarim Basin was to be shaken by four major and numerous minor Muslim revolts, culminating in the great mid-nineteenth-century rebellion of Muḥammad Ya'qūb Beg who proclaimed himself Khan of Eastern Turkestan in 1867, and succeeded in winning some degree of British and Turkish recognition of his position as an independent ruler during 1873–4. By 1877, however, Ya'qūb was dead and his Amīrate was reincorporated within the Ch'ing Empire. Seven years later, in 1884, the three regions of 'Uighuristan', 'Altishahr' and Zungharia (together with the Ili Valley) were declared, for the first time, a province of China with the name Sinkiang (Ch. *Hsin-chiang*, or 'New Territory'). From this time until the collapse of the Ch'ing Dynasty in 1911, Sinkiang was to remain peaceful under the rule of a succession of generally able Han bureaucrats. Yet this apparent stability was to prove deceptive. Sinkiang remained very much a part of the Muslim world despite the defeat of the Aqtaghlik *Khojas* and Ya'qūb Beg, and the entire province – appropriately characterised by Fletcher as 'the most rebellious territory in the Ch'ing Empire'³ during the nineteenth century, was to prove no less turbulent during the first half of the twentieth.

1 *Sinkiang, 1911–28: the administration of Yang Tseng-hsin*

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

Panegyric penned by Yang Tseng-hsin in 1926, after fifteen years of his rule over Sinkiang.¹

Yang Tseng-hsin's rise to power

Yang Tseng-hsin, the first Republican Governor of Sinkiang, was born in Meng-tzu in south-eastern Yunnan in 1867. He received a classical Chinese education, passing his *chin-shih* degree in 1899 and entering the Imperial Civil Service in the same year.²

Over the next eighteen years Yang served the Ch'ing government as a District Magistrate, and later as a Circuit Commissioner, in the north-western provinces of Kansu and Ningsia. During these years he acquired a reputation for his ability to 'manage' the local Tungan Muslim population.³ In 1908 Yang was transferred to Sinkiang, where he was appointed *Tao-t'ai* (Circuit Commissioner) at Aksu. As a result of his years of experience in the Tungan areas of Kansu, Yang's career prospered under Yüan Ta-hua, the last Ch'ing governor of Sinkiang. He rose rapidly to become *Tao-t'ai* and Commissioner for Judicial Affairs at Urumchi, the provincial capital, a post which he held at the outbreak of the Chinese Revolution of 1911.⁴

The 1911 Revolution had immediate repercussions in distant Sinkiang. In December, uprisings against the Ch'ing broke out in Ili and Urumchi under the leadership of disaffected Han officers belonging to the *Ko-lao-hui*.⁵ In Urumchi the rising was quickly suppressed. The ringleaders were beheaded or tortured to death, and many of their followers were sent to join garrisons in southern Sinkiang – an area which, as a result, became a hotbed of *Ko-lao-hui* activities.⁶ In Ili, however, the rebels succeeded in seizing power and in setting up a rival administration under the leadership of Yang Tsuan-hsü.

The Ch'ing governor Yüan Ta-hua was in a difficult position. He had successfully put down the rebellion in Urumchi, and had the support of his Commissioner for Judicial Affairs, Yang Tseng-hsin, who commanded 2,000 Tungan troops from Kansu, the most potent military force in the province. It soon became apparent, however, that the wider revolu-

tion elsewhere in China was succeeding. Events moved rapidly. On 1 January 1912, Sun Yat-sen was inaugurated as Provisional President of the Republic of China at Nanking; on 12 February the Empress Dowager Lung Yü signed an abdication edict in the name of the child Emperor Hsüan-t'ung, bringing to an end 268 years of Ch'ing rule; and on 10 March, after an agreement had been reached with Sun Yat-sen, Yüan Shih-k'ai was formally installed as President of the newly established Chinese Republic.

Time was clearly not on the side of Yüan Ta-hua and, after transferring his authority to Yang Tseng-hsin, he fled Urumchi.⁷ Yang immediately declared his allegiance to the Chinese Republic, and in May was duly rewarded by receiving Yüan Shih-k'ai's confirmation of his *de facto* position as Civil and Military Governor of Sinkiang, with the concurrent post of Military Governor of the Ili Region, an area still under the control of Yang Tsuan-hsü.⁸ For the next three years Yang Tseng-hsin was to be kept fully occupied with efforts to consolidate his internal position, threatened both by the Ili group and by the *Ko-lao-hui*, and in repelling an external threat to the north-east of the province posed by Mongol raiders.

The authority given to Yang by Peking – and by his 2,000 Tungan troops – proved sufficient to bring the Ili group to the conference table. An agreement was reached in June 1912 and a treaty was signed at Chuguchak by which the rebel group recognised Yang Tseng-hsin as Governor of Sinkiang and the Ili Region was fully incorporated within the province. Brigadier Yang Tsuan-hsü, the titular head of the Ili group, was correctly recognised by Yang Tseng-hsin as a figurehead; consequently he was transferred to Kashgar where he was appointed to the post of *T'i-t'ai* (Military Commander). Two of Yang Tsuan-hsü's fellow-revolutionaries whom Yang Tseng-hsin considered especially dangerous were given official positions in the provincial administration; shortly after their arrival in Urumchi, however, they were arrested by Yang and sentenced to death for treason.⁹

Yang next turned his attention to the *Ko-lao-hui*, especially in the south where the provincial administration was in complete disarray. During the last days of Yüan Ta-hua's authority *Ko-lao-hui* adherents had murdered the Ch'ing Commissioner at Kashgar together with his wife,¹⁰ as well as the Magistrates of Kashgar, Kucha and Kara Kash.¹¹ Yang, whose political stature had been considerably increased by his bloodless victory over the Ili group, adopted an ostensibly conciliatory approach, pardoning and transferring to other districts the most prominent of the *Ko-lao-hui* leadership. Faced with the alternatives of confronting Yang's Tungan soldiery – 'undisciplined, ignorant and ferocious'¹² but undeniably effective – or agreeing to their transfers, the *Ko-lao-hui*

leaders submitted. All were later secretly executed on Yang's orders.¹³ After the *Ko-lao-hui* leaders had disappeared from the scene, Yang further strengthened his authority south of the T'ien Shan by rewarding Ma Shao-wu, a trusted Lieutenant and a Hui Muslim from Yang's native province of Yunnan, with the post of Military Commander at Kucha.¹⁴

Having consolidated his position in the south of the province, Yang turned his attention to the north-eastern frontier, where Mongol troops professing allegiance to the Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu, or 'Holy Emperor' (*Bogd Khaan*) of the newly independent Outer Mongolian state,¹⁵ were threatening to advance into the Altai district. In August 1912, these troops had stormed the town of Khovd, until this time under Chinese jurisdiction. The victorious Mongols looted the Chinese shops, and in a grisly ceremony the living hearts of the Chinese prisoners were torn out, the blood being used to anoint the war banners of the victors.¹⁶ Yang responded by reinforcing his garrisons at a string of north-eastern bases from Kumul to Chuguchak. He also took the opportunity to strengthen his military control over other strategic centres in the Ili Valley and to the south of the T'ien Shan; as a result, the whole of Sinkiang was brought under his direct control.¹⁷

Yang had no desire for a prolonged military struggle with the Mongols, not least because he mistrusted the political loyalties of the Mongol population within Sinkiang. He was therefore content to reach an interim agreement with their forces (through the offices of the Russian Consul in Urumchi) pending a solution to the Mongolian question at international level. The crisis on the north-eastern front was eventually defused by the official Sino-Russian Declaration of 5 November 1913, by which the Chinese Republic effectively recognised Outer Mongolia's autonomous status.¹⁸ In March of 1914, both Sinkiang and Mongolia withdrew their troops from the Altai front. At about the same time, after three years of effort, Yang Tseng-hsin finally succeeded in eliminating the last vestiges of *Ko-lao-hui* influence in Sinkiang.

Yang's maintenance of power

Yang was now the undisputed master of China's largest province, and could devote himself more fully to 'making an earthly paradise in a remote region'. He made few changes to the basic Ch'ing administrative system; however, all former ties with Kansu were abolished, and the districts of Ili and Altai were absorbed, adding two circuits to the four original circuits of Urumchi, Aksu, Kashgar and Chuguchak. Similarly, the number of *hsien* in the province was increased from 40 to 47. Below *hsien* level, the Ch'ing system of native *Begs* was retained.¹⁹

Throughout his long rule, Yang was greatly troubled by fear of revolt.

He mistrusted his subordinates,²⁰ and he mistrusted his predominantly Muslim subjects.²¹ In an attempt to allay these fears, Yang surrounded himself with a coterie of his relatives and fellow-provincials from Yunnan;²² he also introduced a series of increasingly Draconian laws designed to isolate, divide, and maintain in enforced ignorance the peoples of Sinkiang. He ruled as a complete autocrat, with all power gathered in his own hands. Sven Hedin, who travelled extensively in Sinkiang at various times during Yang's rule, said that nowhere on earth did there exist a more absolute ruler.²³ Claremont P. Skrine, the British Consul-General at Kashgar from July 1922 to September 1944, informed his superiors in New Delhi that Yang had consolidated his personal power by the following means:

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

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

Yang was quite merciless when he discovered – or even suspected – disloyalty. When, during January 1916, some of Yang's fellow Yunnanese domiciled in Sinkiang sought to persuade him to join the movement against Yüan Shih-k'ai which had broken out in their native province,²⁶ Yang would have none of it. Some days later Yang learned secretly that several of the Yunnanese were still conspiring to bring Sinkiang into the struggle on the side of Yüan's opponents. Yang immediately had his informant executed 'to allay the fears of the plotters and to let them know that he trusted them'.²⁷ The subsequent fate of the plotters, as related to Wu Ai-chen by an eyewitness,²⁸ bears quotation in full; it casts interesting light on Yang Tseng-hsin's relationship with his subordinates, and is representative of descriptions of several similar events which have come down to us:

It was the Mid-January Festival. The Governor invited his officials to dine with him. The Inspector of Education from Peking was to be the guest of honour and the Sinkiang Minister of Finance . . . an elderly gentleman close upon eighty . . . was also there. The affair had every appearance of a formal function, and there was not the least suspicion in the mind of any guest that more was intended.

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

The knife flashed, and Hsia Ting fell dead, his blood spouting on the robes of those who sat at table with him. All cowered in horror, none daring to move; but in calm tones the Governor reassured them: 'This has nothing to do with you. Come, more wine for my guests!' When the cups were refilled the Governor again left the chamber, but almost immediately returned, a second soldier at his side. Proceeding around the table they halted at the chair of one Li Yin, and once again the astounded guests heard the dread command . . . The table was in confusion, blood was everywhere. The Inspector from Peking looked on, speechless with horror, the old Finance Minister . . . lay half-fainting in his chair. As for the Yunnanese officials, they sat petrified with fear, expecting at any moment that they too would meet an awful end. Hsia Ting and Li Yin had been two of the most trusted officers in the Governor's service, his own personal friends. Who then was safe if these were slain? But there was no more bloodshed. Calmly the Governor resumed his seat at the table, called for more wine, and proceeded without the least trace of emotion to give judicial reasons for what he had done. Then, having spoken, he applied himself to the dishes which were set before him, and to the astonishment of the company he made a hearty meal, finishing his two bowls of rice as usual.²⁹

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

Yang's policy towards the various minority peoples of Sinkiang, who constituted in excess of 90 per cent of the population, rested on the twin principles of accentuating regional and national differences, and excluding external – particularly Russian – influences. Thus, in a deliberate reversal of Ch'ing policy (formulated by Yang in response to the emergence of an independent Mongolian state), the Kazakhs of Zungharia were favoured over the Mongols of the region.³¹ Similarly, Yang did his best to divide the oasis-dwelling Uighurs of southern Sinkiang from the pastoral nomads of Zungharia and the T'ien Shan.³² This well-tried technique, which had served Yang's Ch'ing predecessors so well, proved satisfactory when applied to localised disturbances such as that faced at Kumul during the first year of Yang's rule,³³ or at Kucha in

1918.³⁴ More disturbing to the predominantly Han administration of Sinkiang, however, was a growing awareness of Islamic religious and cultural identity amongst the Turkic-speaking peoples of the province – a development paralleled elsewhere in contemporaneous Central Asia, and perhaps best exemplified by a generalised sympathy amongst Muslim peoples for the Ottoman cause during the First World War, and for the anti-Soviet Basmachi guerillas during the 1920s.

Throughout his rule, Yang Tseng-hsin considered that the chief external threat to the survival of his regime lay across the western frontier, in Tsarist Russian (and later Soviet) Central Asia.³⁵ During the nineteenth century the Muslim peoples of Sinkiang looked to the Central Asian Khanates of Bukhara and Khokand for religious – and often political – inspiration, a factor which certainly prompted Tso Tsung-tang's order for the execution of all Khokandi Muslims apprehended by his troops in southern Sinkiang after the collapse of Ya'qūb Beg's Khanate.³⁶ The Russian conquest of Western Turkestan during the latter half of the nineteenth century temporarily relieved the authorities in Sinkiang from the pressures of Khokandi political influence,³⁷ for the Tsarist authorities did all that lay within their power to ensure the quiescence of their new Central Asian subjects. In a policy which might have been formulated by Yang Tseng-hsin himself:

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

Yet despite assiduous Russian efforts to exclude pan-Turanianism and other 'dangerous thoughts' from their Central Asian Empire, the spread of such concepts was merely delayed and not halted. Indeed, the victorious Russians planted the seeds of modern 'Turkic' nationalism when they first entered the oases and deserts of Inner Asia. The presence of these Christian 'infidels' helped to unite the Muslim inhabitants of the various conquered Khanates; in Western Turkestan the presence of Russian settlers and political exiles contributed to the growth of Uzbek, Tajik and Turkmen national consciousness, and in the Kazakh steppe a deliberate Tsarist attempt to wean the superficially Islamicised Kazakhs and Kirghiz from their more orthodox sedentary brethren to the south actively encouraged the spread of 'Western' concepts of nationalism and egalitarianism.³⁹ During the last decades of the nineteenth century the Muslims of Russian Central Asia were increasingly influenced by reformist groups such as the *Jadid* movement.⁴⁰ Under the leadership of the

Tatar intellectual Ismā'il Bay Gasprinskiy, a series of religious, cultural and educational reforms were introduced with the aim of 'reinterpreting' Islamic law in response to contemporary conditions (Ar. *ijtihād*) and, ultimately, of uniting the various Turkic-speaking Muslims of Central Asia in response to Russian domination.⁴¹

By the beginning of the twentieth century, as a result of these developments within the Russian Empire, concepts of Islamic religious reform and of a common 'pan-Turanian' political destiny had begun to emanate outwards, to the neighbouring Turkic-speaking areas of Ottoman Turkey, Qajar Iran, Muḥammadzay Afghanistan and even Ch'ing China. In 1904 the Tatar *Islah* movement, from which the first authentic 'Muslim communists' were to spring, was founded.⁴² In 1909 a secret revolutionary organisation which went by the name of 'Young Bukharans', drawing much of its political inspiration from the successes of the 'Young Turks' of 1908, was formed in Western Turkestan,⁴³ whilst in 1912 the *Alash Orda* nationalist movement was founded by dissident intellectuals in the Kazakh steppe.⁴⁴ During this period the *Jadid* movement continued to grow – so that by 1916 there were in excess of 5,000 *Jadid*-ist schools scattered throughout the Russian Empire⁴⁵ – and to move leftwards. By the time of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 the *Jadid* movement, which dominated the Turkic-speaking nationalist movement in Russian Central Asia, 'represented a revolutionary element in the truest sense, being opposed to both the Russian presence and to the reactionary Muslim clergy'.⁴⁶

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

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

How justified were Yang's fears of the spread of Russian, and later Soviet, political influence amongst the Muslims of Sinkiang? As early as 1909 Sir George Macartney, the British Consul-General at Kashgar, had warned that the Chinese would have to 'take into account' pan-Islamic influences which were awakening amongst the Turkic-speaking Muslims of the province.⁵⁰ Macartney's warning was certainly based in part on his personal acquaintance with one Husayn Bay Bachcha, a 'widely read' millionaire merchant of Artush who had travelled extensively in Europe. Husayn Bay was an influential advocate of stronger links between the Muslims of Sinkiang and their co-religionists in the Middle East. He endowed a charitable institution (*Ar. waqf*) in Artush to build schools and libraries for the education of Muslim children of both sexes, and he personally paid for certain promising young Turkic-speaking students to study abroad.⁵¹ The outbreak of the First World War and Turkey's part therein undoubtedly provided an impetus for similarly minded activists in Sinkiang, thus in 1915 an Ottoman subject, by name Ahmad Kamāl, started a school at Kashgar where the local Muslim children were encouraged to look to the Turkish Caliph as their spiritual father. Yang Tseng-hsin initially responded by closing the school and imprisoning all those associated with it; later it was permitted to reopen on the condition that all symbols of allegiance to Turkey were removed, and that Chinese language instruction and military drill were added to the curriculum.⁵² With the defeat of Ottoman Turkey in the First World War and the establishment of the revolutionary Soviet regime in the Russian Empire, however, the perceived threat from Turkey faded away,⁵³ to be replaced by a mounting concern over the rapid and continuing growth of Soviet influence in Sinkiang.⁵⁴

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

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

Yang could not tolerate this and, even at the risk of antagonising his powerful Soviet neighbours, the library was closed down. He also

attempted to limit the numbers of his subjects visiting the Soviet Union. In this he was not very successful, especially in the north-west of the province where Soviet influence continued to expand. Even in remote Kashgar, as R. O. Wingate, a British consular official who visited southern Sinkiang during the mid-1920s, noted:

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

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

The growth of Soviet influence in – and around⁵⁷ – Sinkiang was as worrying to the British as it was to Yang Tseng-hsin. C. P. Skrine, the British Consul-General at Kashgar in the mid-1920s, reported back to New Delhi that,

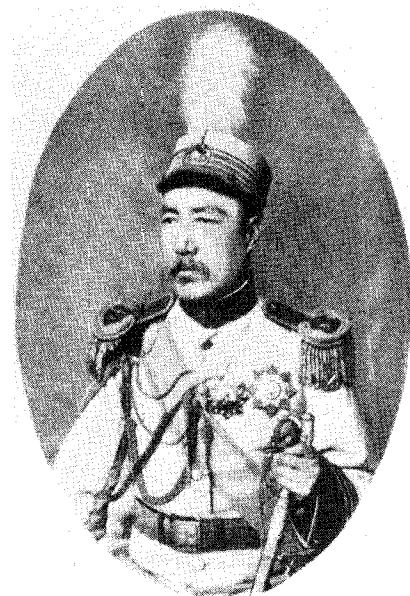
Not only in Ili, but also to a less extent in the south, the Soviet Government is doing what it can by means of an insidious propaganda to awaken the race- and class-consciousness of the Muhammadan population. Chinese policy is directed towards the prevention of this awakening.⁵⁸

Yang redoubled his system of internal surveillance. All publications in Turkic languages were banned,⁵⁹ and restaurants throughout the province were posted with the sign 'no political discussions allowed'.⁶⁰ Skrine was somewhat troubled by these policies, but clearly felt that, on balance, they were necessary and even desirable:

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



1. The subjects: two Uighur mullahs



2. The Rulers: Yang Tseng-hsin in the mid-1920s



3. The Rulers: Chin Shu-jen c. 1928

However, Nicholas Roerich, who travelled through Sinkiang with the ‘Roerich Expedition’ in 1925–6, described the peace of the province as ‘the peace of death’.⁶²

The situation in southern Sinkiang

During the early Republican Era the most powerful representative of the provincial government in the area to the south of the T’ien Shan – and generally speaking the second most powerful figure in the province – was the *T’i-t’ai* (Military Commander) of Kashgar. Isolated from Urumchi by difficult terrain and poor communications, this official enjoyed considerable autonomy, and was effectively able to make south-western Sinkiang into a private fief. We have seen that Yang Tseng-hsin took initial steps to establish his writ in southern Sinkiang (known to the Chinese simply as *Nan-lu*)⁶³ during his campaign against the *Ko-lao-hui* in 1912–14. In January 1913, Brigadier Yang Tsuan-hsü, the nominal leader of the Ili revolutionaries whom Yang Tseng-hsin had transferred to Kashgar, arrived in the city with four hundred ‘New Style’ troops to take up the office of *T’i-t’ai*.⁶⁴ Within a very short time Yang Tsuan-hsü had usurped the authority of the *Tao-t’ai* (Circuit Intendant),⁶⁵ and had become the most powerful official in Kashgar. As a result of his successes against the *Ko-lao-hui* in the south, Yang Tseng-hsin was able to appoint Ma Shao-wu, a Hui Muslim from Yang’s native Yunnan, to the post of Commanding Officer at Kucha.⁶⁶ This move considerably strengthened the former’s grip on the south, but Kashgar, the chief oasis of *Nan-lu*, as well as the more distant oases of Yarkand and Khotan, retained considerable independence. Yang Tseng-hsin clearly did not regard Yang Tsuan-hsü as a potential ally; his association with the Ili revolutionaries made him suspect, and he had been appointed *T’i-t’ai* of Kashgar only as a device to isolate him from his supporters in the former region. Consequently, Yang Tseng-hsin took no steps to support Yang Tsuan-hsü’s position in Kashgar and, when in August 1914 the *T’i-t’ai* was forced to resign by restive elements amongst his own troops, Yang Tseng-hsin seized the opportunity to appoint another Yunnanese Muslim, Ma Fu-hsing, to the post of Military Commander at Kashgar.⁶⁷

Ma Fu-hsing’s background is obscure. It is not clear when he first came to Sinkiang; it may have been as one of Yang Tseng-hsin’s Hui troops, although most of these were Tungans from Kansu, and not Yunnanese Muslims. In 1911, at the time of the Republican Revolution, Ma Fu-hsing was appointed head of the Tungan levies that were raised by the Ch’ing authorities in Urumchi under the command of Yang Tseng-hsin. From 1911 to 1915 he had remained in the Urumchi area ‘shooting down Chinese sedition-mongers and riffraff’.⁶⁸ It is difficult to say whether

Yang Tseng-hsin sent him to Kashgar because he trusted him, or simply to keep him at a convenient distance. In either case, Ma Fu-hsing's appointment was to prove a disaster for the peoples of southern Sinkiang, whether Muslim or Han Chinese.

Ma Fu-hsing – or Ma *T'i-t'ai*, as he is generally referred to in contemporary sources – arrived in Kashgar, accompanied by 300 Tungan levies, in December 1915. He made his headquarters in Kashgar New City, about two and a half miles to the south of the much older Muslim town.⁶⁹ The new *T'i-t'ai* was sixty-four years old and quite illiterate,⁷⁰ but he had a forceful character and was determined to establish his authority over the *Tao-yin* as swiftly as possible. The pattern of Ma's eight-and-a-half year authoritarian rule over southern Sinkiang was set on his first full day in Kashgar when, against the wishes of the *Tao-yin*, he ordered the arrest and execution of three men who, according to Skrine, 'appeared to be innocent of any possible crime'.⁷¹ On 8 March 1916, the *Tao-yin*, who had been completely outflanked by the wily Ma Fu-hsing, was dismissed by the provincial authorities in Urumchi, and a replacement was sent. In mid-September the new *Tao-yin* arrived in Kashgar; he proved to be an emaciated opium addict, none other than the brother of Yang Tseng-hsin. The new *Tao-yin* was never to be seen in public before 2 p.m., and he delegated most of his authority to the Kashgar District Magistrate, a man named Ma who was yet another of Yang Tseng-hsin's Tungans.⁷² The appointment of Yang's enfeebled brother as *Tao-yin* served further to strengthen Ma *T'i-t'ai*'s position and, by mid-June 1916, Macartney was able to report to London that 'at present the Governor [Yang Tseng-hsin] and *T'i-t'ai* wield extraordinary powers . . . and anyone, be his political creed what it may, who attempts to disturb them, they will seize and summarily shoot down'. Macartney continued with prophetic accuracy: 'I doubt if any Chinese authority, not even that from Peking, can remove them, barring the one derived from the knife of the assassin.'⁷³

In Macartney's opinion, Ma Fu-hsing realised that he had risen to as high a rank as he could ever expect to attain; he now intended to maintain this position whilst lining his own pockets.⁷⁴ Having secured his position at Kashgar, he immediately set about exploiting the human and mineral resources of his new domain. C. P. Skrine, a successor of Macartney who was British Consul-General at Kashgar during the height of Ma Fu-hsing's absolutist power,⁷⁵ has left an illuminating account of an official dinner party with the *T'i-t'ai* who, although nominally Muslim, was an incorrigible drunkard.⁷⁶ Skrine's description of his meeting with the *T'i-t'ai* at the Kashgar New City *yamen* captures the half-comic, half-homicidal character of Ma Fu-hsing very well:

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

But, as Skrine clearly indicates, there was nothing comic about Ma Fu-hsing in the eyes of his subjects. 'He made everybody call him *Padishāh* [Ir. 'King'] on pain of death, and assembled a harem of the prettiest Turkic Muslim woman in Kashgar; meanwhile his agents roamed the country-side "looking for new cows to milk" as the Titai facetiously put it.'⁷⁸ Ma was not content with the forced 'loans', 'subscriptions' and 'presents' usually extorted by corrupt officials in Kashgar, but turned to trade and the exploitation by primitive methods of the mineral resources of *Nan-lu*. He claimed all the mineral wealth of the country as the perquisite of the military authorities, and exploited them for his own benefit. Thus he worked oil-wells at Aksu and at Kanjigan about thirty miles west of Kashgar, copper mines at Kanjigan, jade mines at Tung on the upper Yarkand river, and coal mines at various places throughout the region. As he employed forced labour and was also able by force both to retain a monopoly of production and to prevent competition in the local bazaars, he derived large profits from these concerns.⁷⁹ In the local manufacturing sector he took over the carpet factories and established jade workshops; according to one authority he conscripted craftsmen for these concerns, and forced them to 'live like slaves on the premises'.⁸⁰ The *T'i-t'ai* made further profits by drawing large sums from the Kashgar treasury for the upkeep of his Tungan troops:

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

The fear inspired by Ma Fu-hsing was very real. Descriptions of his brutalities abound, and at least one picture of his victims has come down to us. He had a large hay-chopping machine with which he used to

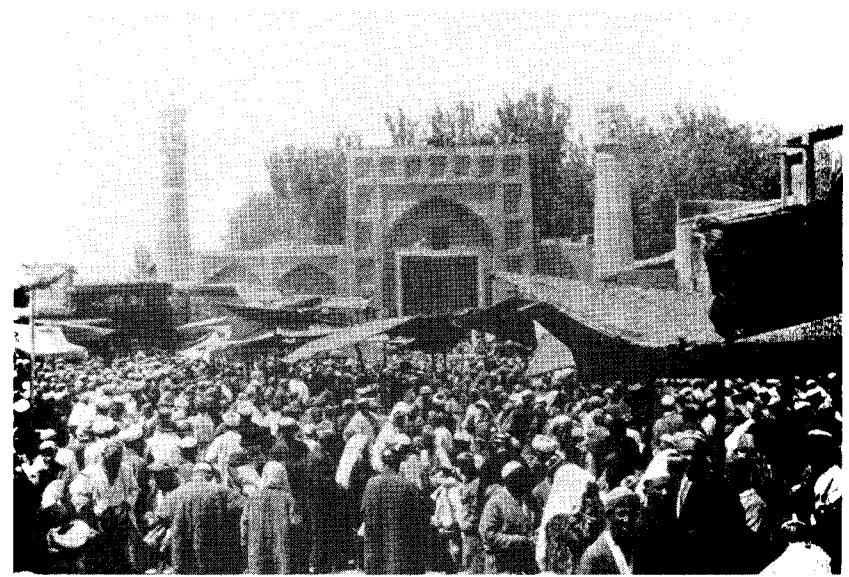
amputate the limbs of his victims, starting at the extremities and proceeding joint by joint.⁸² P. S. Nazaroff, a White Russian refugee who spent some time in Kashgar during Ma Fu-hsing's rule, records how the *T'i-t'ai* crucified, maimed and murdered all those who opposed his will – or even crossed his path when he was drunk. During the four years Nazaroff lived at Kashgar he frequently saw 'bundles of men's amputated arms or feet nailed to the city gates, with notices stating whose members they were and why they were cut off. Sometimes the lawful owner of the arms or legs would be chained to the wall with them.'⁸³ Ma *T'i-t'ai* used some of his ill-gotten wealth to build a large (and leaky) palace at Bakalyk, about sixteen miles from Kashgar;⁸⁴ however, most of the gold, diamonds and other moneys amassed were transferred to Ma's superior, Yang Tseng-hsin, in Urumchi.⁸⁵

Eventually, Ma *T'i-t'ai*'s behaviour became too outrageous, and Yang Tseng-hsin – who was in constant fear of revolution or assassination – decided it would be better to remove him. In the autumn of 1923 the *T'i-t'ai* conceived the idea of forcing the citizens of Kashgar to buy a fixed quantity of paraffin wax (a largely unsaleable by-product of Ma Fu-hsing's oil refinery at Kanjigan) every month. Cobblers, who used paraffin wax in their trade, were obliged to buy double quantities. When the head of the cobblers' guild complained to the *T'i-t'ai*, he was beaten to death and his wife was fined so heavily that she was forced to sell her home and was driven into penury.⁸⁶ Apparently, the paraffin-wax episode (which earned the *T'i-t'ai* the nickname 'bald wax seller' in the bazaars of *Nan-lu*) was the last straw as far as Ma Fu-hsing's fellow officials were concerned. A petition was sent to Urumchi, and Yang Tseng-hsin, who realised that the *T'i-t'ai*'s depredations had gone too far, dismissed Ma Fu-hsing and abolished the post of *T'i-t'ai* altogether. Ma Fu-hsing responded by refusing to acknowledge dismissal, and attempted to appease his subjects by arresting his own paraffin-wax agents, mutilating four of them with his hay chopper, and exposing one at each of the four main gates of Kashgar Old City with their limbs nailed to the walls behind them.⁸⁷

This time, however, Ma Fu-hsing's luck had run out. Yang Tseng-hsin sent orders from Urumchi to the *Tao-yin* of Aksu, who in turn despatched an armed force of 600 men under the command of Ma Shao-wu, the Yunnanese Hui whom Yang Tseng-hsin had appointed Commander of the garrison at Kucha in 1914 and who had since risen to the post of *Ambar* at Uch Turfan.⁸⁸ A larger body of troops was sent to Maralbashi to mislead the *T'i-t'ai*, and Ma Shao-wu's force was thus able to approach Kashgar from the north without detection. On 31 May 1924, Ma Shao-wu and a small band of picked men made their way into Kashgar New City where the *T'i-t'ai*, 'over-confident as usual, and imagining that his



4. Kashgar Old City: high walls and double defensive gateway



5. Kashgar Old City: Id-Gah Mosque and central market place



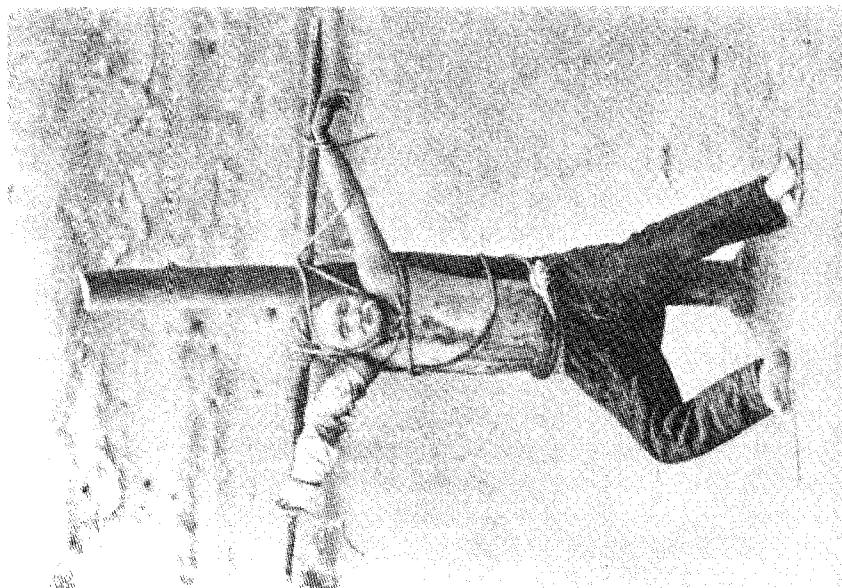
6. Ma Fu-hsing with Turkic wife and son, c. 1922



7. Some of Ma Fu-hsing's victims. The Chinese reads: 'a photograph of people who had their hands and feet cut off by Ma Fu-hsing'



9. Ma Shao-wu (after attempted assassination of October 1934)



8. Ma Fu-hsing – nemesis

enemies were still several marches from Kashgar, had omitted to take the most elementary precautions'.⁸⁹ Ma Fu-hsing was asleep in his elaborate new Kashgar palace (a building quite distinct from the leaky palace at Bakalyk), and his troops were unprepared and for the most part under the influence of opium. After a short skirmish the *T'i-t'ai* was captured, alive but wounded in the arm, and his troops surrendered. An exchange of telegrams between Ma Shao-wu and Yang Tseng-hsin in Urumchi sealed the ex-*T'i-t'ai*'s fate, and on the next day he was put up against the south gate of the New City and shot. His body was later tied to a crucifix and left for the people of Kashgar to insult and defile.⁹⁰ Ma Shao-wu was promoted to the office of *Tao-yin* of Khotan as a reward for his loyalty to Yang Tseng-hsin, and, the post of *T'i-t'ai* having been abolished, the incumbent *Tao-yin* became the most influential official in Kashgar almost by default. On the death of the latter in 1927, Ma Shao-wu was transferred from Khotan to Kashgar, thus attaining the second most powerful position in the province.⁹¹

The economy of Sinkiang under Yang Tseng-hsin

Before 1911 Sinkiang had been heavily subsidised (to between two and three million taels annually)⁹² by the Ch'ing Imperial Treasury. With the overthrow of the Ch'ing Dynasty and the subsequent political fragmentation of the Chinese Republic, this subsidy was ended and Sinkiang, under its new Governor Yang Tseng-hsin, was left to fend for itself. To make matters worse, the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 seriously dislocated economic relations with the Russian Empire, traditionally (and by geographic necessity) Sinkiang's major trading partner.⁹³ Before 1914 Sinkiang had acted as a supplier of raw materials (chiefly cotton) to the Tsarist Empire, and had relied heavily on the importation of Russian manufactured goods.⁹⁴ In 1913, the second year of Yang's rule in Sinkiang, the value of Russian exports to Sinkiang stood at 8,424,000 roubles, whilst imports in the reverse direction reached 9,846,000 roubles;⁹⁵ Sinkiang was thus running a healthy trade surplus of 1,422,000 roubles with the Russian Empire, and to some extent this helped to offset the loss of the Imperial subsidy. Between 1914 and 1917, however, trade declined disastrously, as did the value of the Russian rouble; when the rouble fell, it dragged the Sinkiang tael with it.⁹⁶ By 1919, when the civil war was at its height, trade between Sinkiang and Russia was almost non-existent.⁹⁷ The decline of the Russian trade had disastrous effects for Sinkiang, especially in the agricultural south where the area under cotton cultivation (which in 1913 had provided just over 25 per cent of all Sinkiang exports to the Russian Empire)⁹⁸ was cut back by 50 per cent,

resulting in widespread hardship amongst the Uighur farmers of *Nan-lu*.⁹⁹

It may fairly be said that, from an economic point of view, Yang Tseng-hsin took over the administration of Sinkiang at a singularly inopportune time. Yet Yang had certain advantages working for him; he had inherited a well-established provincial administration from his Ch'ing predecessors, and his province was rich in potentially exploitable mineral resources.¹⁰⁰ Some authorities have portrayed Yang as something of an economic reformer. Thus Lattimore credits Yang with attempting (unsuccessfully) to abolish the system of forced labour employed by the Manchus (*M. ula*); with limiting official rates of interest to 10 per cent; and with preventing officials from loaning public money to private money-lenders who then reloaned it at steeply increased rates of interest.¹⁰¹ Similarly, Rossabi claims that Yang 'maintained an effective system of controls over his government, imposing harsh sanctions on those who illegally alienated the local peoples. His economic policies were also designed to reduce the tax burden on the Uighurs, Kazakhs and others and to win their support'.¹⁰²

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

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

With the fall of the Ch'ing Empire in 1911, China's unified fiduciary system disappeared. Securely isolated from the warring factions of the new Republic by the wastes of the Gobi Desert, Yang Tseng-hsin was able – indeed he was almost obliged – to issue his own currency. In fact he was to issue four regional paper currencies, the Urumchi, Ili, Kashgar and Aksu taels, each exchanging at a different rate against the other.¹⁰³ Except in south-western Sinkiang, where some silver and gold specie was in circulation,¹⁰⁴ the province relied exclusively on paper and copper

currency, quite unbacked by official reserves. Yang introduced this complicated system as a safeguard against revolution – ‘for no insurrection could come to a head unless it were financed, and with several currencies in use unusually large transfers of money can be detected. Furthermore, the value of paper would at once fall in any region in rebellion against the Governor, leaving the rebels without funds.’¹⁰⁵ The various local currencies were adequate for local and intra-provincial trade, but for trade with Russia or the rest of China a system of controlled barter was necessary, with merchants roughly balancing the value of their imports to, and exports from, Sinkiang. In this way locally resident Chinese merchants were prevented from exporting profits to China without importing in return; the same criteria applied to Turkic-speaking Muslims trading with Western Turkestan. As a result of this policy it became extremely difficult for the indigenous inhabitants of Sinkiang to invest their profits other than in further trading activities, or in property within the province. Naturally this problem was not faced by Han Chinese officials temporarily resident in Sinkiang and planning to return to their native province at the end of their period of service; they were able simply to export merchandise, to sell it in China (or Russia), and to bank the proceeds against their retirement. Other locally based merchants wishing to export profits in China, or companies based outside China and wishing to export their profits from trade with the province, were only able to do so through a semi-official system of speculation controlled and exploited by Yang himself.

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

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

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

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

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

The value of exports exceeds that of imports *including specie* [emphasis added] by no less than Taels 366,825, or 75.2 per cent. The explanation of this is that when merchants from Inner China bring specie to Chinese Turkestan to pay for goods exported from the south of the province, they are obliged by order of the Governor to deposit their money in the Government Treasury at Urumchi, and are issued cheques on treasuries in Southern Sinkiang in exchange. These cheques are cashed by the officials in Yarkand, Kashgar, etc., for local paper currency, with which the goods are bought.¹⁰⁹

In other words Yang Tseng-hsin’s economic policy, in both its mercantile and fiscal aspects, was bleeding Sinkiang to death. Moreover, there is every indication that Yang realised this, that he actively encouraged it in the interests of personal profit, and that he was planning a swift personal departure before the inevitable débâcle. Certainly Yang showed no desire to re-establish commercial links with the Russians after the Red victory in the civil war; he feared Soviet economic penetration of Sinkiang, and between 1919 (when trade with Russia was almost nil) and 1925 (by which time Russia, in its new Soviet guise, was once again firmly established as Sinkiang’s chief trading partner) every improvement in commercial relations between Sinkiang and the Soviet Union was forced on Yang by Moscow.¹¹⁰ According to some sources, Yang was also loath

to permit the establishment of a modern industrial base within Sinkiang. In a move aimed at excluding the Soviet ideological penetration of the province (had Yang been reading some of the Soviet propaganda material he confiscated?), 'factories and large commercial enterprises were strictly forbidden, for they necessitated the employment of large bodies of workmen, who might form the nucleus of a workers' class in Sinkiang, and thus endanger the social structure of the province'.¹¹¹

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

Yang's attitude towards the economy of Sinkiang was followed, to a greater or lesser degree, by the entire administration. Whereas under the Ch'ing many Han officials attained office through success in the Imperial examinations, under Yang the passport to an official appointment became money. Administrative salaries were quite inadequate, and it was understood that an incumbent official, having bought his way to office, was free to make as much as he could from bribes and 'taxes', leaving his subordinates to fend for themselves and thereby extending corruption to the lowest levels of the system. 'The only upper limit for taxation existed in open rebellion or complaints directly to the governor, who himself constituted the last step to this pyramid of spoils'.¹¹⁵ In the words of the Swiss traveller, Walter Bosshard, who accompanied the Trinkler Asian Expedition to Sinkiang during the last years of Yang's reign:

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

The assassination of Yang Tseng-hsin

During his sixteen years of absolute power, Yang Tseng-hsin established himself as a singularly competent autocrat, a mandarin of the old school, accurately described by Lattimore as the most able of the feudal bureaucrats to administer Sinkiang.¹¹⁷ Despite his policy of long-term economic exploitation, the inevitable result of which was the impoverishment and exhaustion of the province, Yang realised that there was a limit to the official rapacity which the indigenous population were prepared to endure. His solution, as we have seen, was to tolerate corruption in his administration provided it remained within acceptable limits – that is, providing it did not spark off a Muslim rising. Yang also realised that the most prominent members of the Turkic-speaking Muslim population must be permitted a share of the takings. By retaining the Ch'ing administrative structure which employed local Muslims as junior officials, he was thus able to kill two birds with one stone. On the one hand, the Chinese administrative officials were insulated from the great mass of the indigenous Muslim peoples by a layer of junior Muslim officials who would bear the first brunt of any popular anger; on the other, the Muslim officials maintained a vested interest in protecting the system which provided them with a degree of power and affluence. Similarly Yang realised 'the great men of the oases must be allowed to accumulate land, and the great men of the nomads to accumulate herds'.¹¹⁸ By such methods, as well as by the extensive use of censorship, informers and secret police, Yang was able to minimise the chances of a Muslim (or Mongol) rebellion whilst, if unrest did occur, it was possible to isolate and cauterise the source.

As a result of Yang's judicious policies, Muslim opposition to his rule remained limited and ineffectual. Little is known of Turkic-speaking or Tajik Muslim political organisation in Sinkiang during this period. According to R. C. F. Schomberg, a British political officer who made investigative tours of the province in 1927–9 and 1930–1, the Turkic-speaking Muslims (or at least the settled Uighur population) were still divided into the rival Aqtaghlik and Qarataghlik factions found as early as the seventeenth century,¹¹⁹ although the original political distinctions seem to have disappeared or to have become blurred. At the time of Schomberg's tours, the Aqtaghlik, or 'White Mountain' faction, remained the party of Turkic nationalism, with its power base in Kucha. Known as *sayyid-parast*, or 'sayyid-followers',¹²⁰ its supporters were strongly anti-Chinese. In marked contrast the Qarataghlik, or 'Black Mountain' faction, was content to allow Sinkiang to remain under Ch'inese rule. With a power base at Artush, its followers were generally referred to by the Uighurs of southern Sinkiang as the *Khitai-parast*, or

'followers of China'. According to Schomberg, followers of the two groups did not intermarry. A further traditional distinction was that adherents of the Aqtaghlik faction always cut the top off a melon and said *bismillāh* before slicing it; by contrast, the less pious Qarataghliks would slice up the melon at once, without invoking the name of God.¹²¹ Whilst it is interesting to note the continuation of these petty Uighur differences well into the twentieth century, it is clear that they posed no serious threat to Governor Yang in Urumchi. Nevertheless, discontent was growing amongst the indigenous peoples of the province. The Chinese authorities were unable to stem the annual flow of workers from southern Sinkiang to Soviet Central Asia, largely because of the higher wages paid in the USSR.¹²² 'After such a sojourn, many a Kasgharian saw his country in a new light. According to Swedish missionaries [based in Khotan and Yarkand], much indoctrination with Soviet propaganda did occur on these stays, intended to have future use in the 1930s.'¹²³ Nor was Yang's system of censorship entirely successful in stopping the spread of Soviet influence within the frontiers of his domain. The Sinkiang political grape-vine, known to the local Turkic-speaking Muslims as the 'long-eared telegraph',¹²⁴ was very effective.¹²⁵ As a result of this age-old method of disseminating news, Soviet land reform was to have a considerable impact on the Uighur peasantry of Sinkiang; thus one contemporary French source comments:

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

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

There are indications that, after the bloody dinner party which ended the attempt to bring Sinkiang into the Ts'ai O affair, the mistrustful Yang deliberately surrounded himself with opium addicts on the grounds that 'the inveterate opium smoker thinks more of his own comfort and convenience than of stirring up unrest among his subordinates'.¹²⁷ Nevertheless, during the last years of his rule the ageing autocrat was seriously to alienate certain of his senior officials. Perhaps Yang was becoming over-

confident – it was in 1926 that he penned his rather self-indulgent claim to have 'created an earthly paradise in a remote region'. In the same year he turned against his Tungan subordinates; many were accused of conspiring with Ma Ch'i, the Tungan warlord of Hsi-ning in Tsinghai, and were driven from Urumchi.¹²⁸ Deprived of his formerly loyal Tungans, Yang seems to have become increasingly isolated. When the Roerich Expedition visited Urumchi during 1926, G. N. Roerich noted that:

The Governor's residence consisted of several well-isolated buildings and enclosed courtyards. The gates were carefully guarded by patrols of heavily armed men . . . The Governor's *yamen* seemed to us to be in a very dilapidated condition. The glass in many of the windows on the ground floor was broken and dirty papers and rags had been pasted on the window frames. Numerous retainers roamed about the courtyards and villainous bodyguards, armed with mauser pistols, were on duty at the entrance to the *yamen*.¹²⁹

It seems probable that Yang had already decided to leave Sinkiang, and was actively making preparations to do so. He had amassed a considerable personal fortune,¹³⁰ and by several accounts his immediate family and much of this wealth had been sent out of the province, either to China proper,¹³¹ or to Manila in the United States-administered Philippines, where Yang is reported to have maintained a personal bank account.¹³² The most convincing evidence of Yang's preparations to abandon power is provided by Mildred Cable and Francesca French, two members of the China Inland Mission, who report that 'Wise old Governor Yang . . . as early as 1926 . . . quietly arranged a way of escape for his family and for the transference of his wealth to the security of the British Concession in Tientsin.' Later in the same year, accompanied by several 'luggage cases of valuables', Yang's eldest son was sent out of Sinkiang, travelling incognito, in the company of these missionaries.¹³³ At about this time, possibly as a grandiose gesture of his leave-taking, Yang erected a statue of himself in the public gardens at Urumchi. According to Nicholas Roerich, this memorial was paid for with forced contributions 'from the grateful population'; by all accounts the statue was in execrable taste.¹³⁴ Finally, after the successful completion of the second stage of the Northern Expedition and the entry of the Nationalist forces into Peking during June 1928, Yang ordered that the Kuomintang flag should be raised in Sinkiang, thereby acknowledging the *de jure* authority of the Nationalist Government of Chiang Kai-shek at Nanking over the province.¹³⁵ This last uncharacteristic gesture, taken together with Yang's advancing years and the other factors already indicated, must have convinced many of Yang's subordinates that his departure was imminent. The most determined of these subordinates, a Han Chinese called Fan Yao-nan, decided to act.

Fan Yao-nan was a 'modernist',¹³⁶ an ambitious official who had been educated in Japan and whom Yang had 'distrusted on sight'. He was appointed to the post of *Tao-yin* of Aksu by the Central Government in Peking – an appointment which Yang could easily have ignored, but it appears that he was (grudgingly) impressed with Fan's abilities.¹³⁷ Fan must have proved useful to Yang, for he rose to the position of *Tao-yin* of Urumchi, and was made Sinkiang Provincial Commissioner for Foreign Affairs.¹³⁸ Nevertheless, it would seem that neither Yang nor Fan respected each other; Yang Tseng-hsin told his Industrial Commissioner Yen Ting-shan, who claims to have warned Yang against Fan on numerous occasions, that he kept Fan 'chained like a tiger',¹³⁹ whilst in March 1926 Fan Yao-nan suggested to the German scientist Filchner that Yang was mad.¹⁴⁰ Together with a small group of like-minded officials, amongst whom were included the engineer at the Urumchi telegraph station and the Dean of the local school of law, Fan determined to assassinate the aged autocrat. Nyman has suggested that Fan may have wished to gain the favour of the Kuomintang, to which party he is reported to have belonged.¹⁴¹ In any event, on 7 July 1928, 6 days after Yang had officially assumed the post of Chairman of the Sinkiang Provincial Government under the Kuomintang, Fan struck.

On the day in question, Yang was invited to a banquet to celebrate a graduation ceremony at the Urumchi law school. Fan had arranged the banquet, and eighteen of his soldiers were present, disguised as waiters 'with red bands round their arms and Browning pistols in their sleeves'.¹⁴² During the course of the meal Fan proposed a toast to the health of Yang Tseng-hsin, at which time

shots rang out simultaneously, all aimed at the Governor. Seven bullets in all were fired, and all reached their mark. Yang, mortally wounded, but superb in death, glared an angry defiance at his foes, 'who dares do this?' he questioned in the loud voice which had commanded instant obedience for so many years. Then he fell slowly forward, his last glance resting upon the face of the trusted Yen, as though to ask forgiveness that he had not listened to the advice so often given to him.¹⁴³

According to Yen Ting-shan, who was himself wounded, Fan Yao-nan later finished Yang Tseng-hsin off with two further shots.¹⁴⁴

Immediately after the assassination, in which some fifteen or sixteen people were killed or wounded, Fan went to Yang's official residence to seize the seals of office. Once inside the building he sent a letter summoning Chin Shu-jen, Commissioner for Civil Affairs in Sinkiang and Yang's second-in-command. Chin called Fan's bluff by refusing to come and sending soldiers of his own to arrest Fan. In the power struggle which followed, Fan, who had seriously miscalculated the strength of his personal support, lost out. After a short gun battle he was arrested by

Chin and subsequently executed, together with a number of his accomplices, on 8 July.¹⁴⁵

The outwardly dignified and austere manner of the dead Yang Tseng-hsin had made a favourable impression on many visitors, both Chinese and Western, to his domain – particularly when set against a backdrop of the chaotic conditions prevailing throughout much of contemporary China. Yet the administration of Yang Tseng-hsin, which has been widely represented as a period of relative calm and prosperity for the peoples of Sinkiang,¹⁴⁶ was in reality little more than an ossified version of the Imperial administration extended for seventeen years into the Republican Era; a time when 'economic rapacity was brought to perfection'¹⁴⁷ and when popular discontent smouldered behind a facade of outward calm. Thus Yang Tseng-hsin, through the application of a judicious and pragmatic authoritarianism, was able to maintain his hold over the province almost without challenge until the time of his assassination, whilst the seeds of popular revolt, sown by Yang between 1912 and 1928, were ultimately to be reaped by his less able successor, Chin Shu-jen, during the early 1930s.

2 Sinkiang, 1928–31: the rebellion at Kumul and the first Tungan invasion

One might say that China is like a bankrupt family, which is so embarrassed financially that it can hardly continue to exist, but whose ancestors, fortunately, have left it an estate in the west. If need be, there is still this vast country to fall back on.

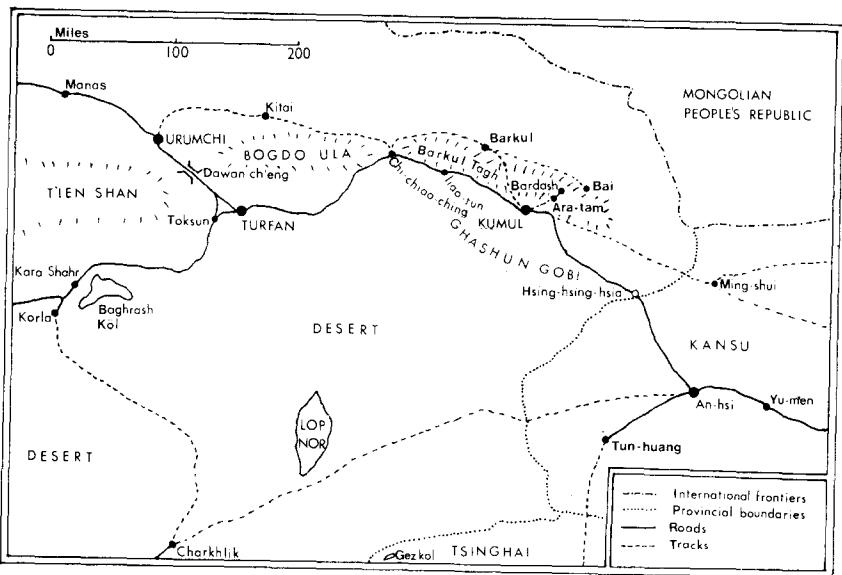
Wu Ai-Chen, KMT representative in Sinkiang, 1932–4.¹

The administration of Chin Shu-jen

Yang Tseng-hsin's successor, Chin Shu-jen (see plate 3), was a Han Chinese of Kansu, born in Tao-ho *hsien*, near Ho-chou (the modern Lin-hsia) c. 1883. After graduating from the Kansu provincial academy, he served for a time as the Principal of a provincial normal school. He then entered the Imperial Civil Service, where he came to the attention of Yang Tseng-hsin, then District Magistrate at Ho-chou. Chin must have made a favourable impression on Yang, for, when the latter was transferred to Sinkiang in 1908, Chin followed him to serve as a *hsien* (district) magistrate.² Following the collapse of the Ch'ing in 1911, Chin rose steadily in rank throughout Yang Tseng-hsin's long period of absolute power (in the light of Yang's known tendency to surround himself with opium addicts³ and sycophants, a sure sign of mediocrity). In 1927, Chin became Provincial Commissioner for Civil Affairs at Urumchi, a post which he held at the time of Yang's assassination in July 1928.⁴

After his elimination of Fan Yao-nan, Chin, who was already in effective control of Sinkiang, sent a telegram to Nanking seeking official KMT recognition of his position. Faced with a *fait accompli*, Nanking had no alternative other than to confirm Chin in office, though under the new KMT terminology he was appointed Provincial Chairman (Ch. *Chu-hsi*) and Commander-in-Chief (Ch. *Tsung-ssu-ling*) in contrast to his predecessor, Yang Tseng-hsin, whose official titles had been Provincial Governor (Ch. *Sheng-ch'ang*) and Military Governor (Ch. *Tu-chün*).

Immediately following his seizure of power, Chin took steps to secure his position. As a first step the secret police force was substantially increased,⁵ salaries for all ranks in both the army and police force were doubled, and new uniforms were issued.⁶ Later the army was expanded, and Chin took steps to acquire new weapons.⁷ The administrative system employed by the late Ch'ing governors and Yang Tseng-hsin was retained almost unchanged,⁸ whilst in the appointment of provincial officials Chin followed the example of his mentor Yang Tseng-hsin by surrounding himself with a coterie of relatives and fellow-provincials. Under the new



Map 3 North-eastern Sinkiang: towns and communications

regime, therefore, Yunnanese followers of Yang (both Han and Hui) were rapidly replaced by Han Chinese from Chin's native Kansu – especially from the Ho-chou region.⁹ Chin's younger brother, Chin Shu-hsin, was appointed Provincial Commissioner for Military Affairs at Urumchi, and another brother, Chin Shu-chih, was given the senior military post at Kashgar.¹⁰ Similarly, Chin's orderly and bodyguard, Ts'ui Chao-chi, was promoted to the position of Brigade Commander at Urumchi.¹¹

Chin maintained and expanded Yang Tseng-hsin's system of internal surveillance and censorship. According to H. French Ridley of the China Inland Mission at Urumchi, people were executed for 'merely making indiscreet remarks in the street during ordinary conversation'.¹² Besides increasing the strength of both the secret and ordinary police forces, Chin introduced a system of internal passports so that any journey performed within Sinkiang needed an official passport validated by the Provincial Chairman's personal seal,¹³ thus tightening internal security and, incidentally, providing a further source of official revenue for the venal provincial administration. Travel outside the province became well-nigh impossible, especially for Han officials and merchants wishing to travel to China proper. Yet despite these precautions, Chin clearly felt insecure in his position as Provincial Chairman; several sources report that he hardly ever left his *yamen*, and when he did so it was only under the tightest security.¹⁴

Under Chin Shu-jen the economy of Sinkiang continued to deteriorate as the new Chairman followed the example set by his predecessor in single-mindedly accumulating a personal fortune, only less discreetly, and at a greatly increased rate.¹⁵ As has been shown, with the collapse of the Ch'ing in 1911, Yang Tseng-hsin introduced a provincial fiduciary system based on the issue of four regional paper currencies. His initial issue of unbacked paper currency had a face value of 10 million taels. Chin Shu-jen took this process several stages further by expanding the issue to 145 million taels, thus fuelling the already considerable inflation within the province.¹⁶ Under Yang Tseng-hsin land tax was already established as the major source of provincial revenue, though Yang took care not to push the Turkic peasantry into open revolt; under Chin, however, caution was thrown to the winds and land revenues were collected to almost double the legal amount.¹⁷ Yang had been prepared to settle for a share – albeit substantial – in the profits made by private enterprise within his domain. Chin, however, emulated Ma Fu-hsing, the barbarous *T'i-t'ai* of Kashgar from 1915 to 1924, in establishing 'government' monopolies on various profitable enterprises, notably the working of gold at Keriya and jade at Khotan. Chin also established a monopoly on the valuable wool and pelt trade of Sinkiang (notably karakul); and with the backing of the expanded police force and army he was able to force the sale of lambskins at a mere 10 per cent of the market value.¹⁸ Officials of Chin's administration also prospered. According to one contemporary Russian source, under Chin's regime only 12 per cent of trade capital held in Urumchi belonged to local merchants, whilst 37 per cent belonged to the 'compradore bourgeoisie' (i.e. Han and foreign merchants), and a massive 51 per cent belonged to Chinese officials.¹⁹ As in Yang Tseng-hsin's time, wealth flowed out of the province in a continuous stream, much of it to banks in China proper. Chin was deeply involved in the export of gold bullion – indeed according to Sven Hedin, the Provincial Chairman maintained a personal monopoly on the export of gold dust.²⁰ Naturally Chin Shu-jen left no official records of his dealings in bullion, but indications of his involvement do exist. Georg Vasel, a German engineer (and Nazi agent),²¹ who was active in the construction of airfields in Kansu during the early 1930s, records a meeting in Soochow with a German pilot named Rathje, who had been employed by Chin to fly one million dollars' worth of bullion from Urumchi to Peking.²² That Chin exported gold bullion by air is confirmed by Schomberg, a British Colonel who travelled extensively in Sinkiang on behalf of the British intelligence services during the late 1920s and early 1930s.²³ Chin also attempted to obtain hard currency from the Citroën Expedition, using much the same method as Yang Tseng-hsin had employed in his dealings with the Sino-Swedish Expedition in 1927.²⁴ Le

Fèvre records that the Chairman had made an agreement with Haardt, the leader of the Citroën Expedition, to 'advance any sum in Sinkiang currency against payment in silver dollars to his account in Tientsin'. Once again, however, Chin proved more inept than his predecessor; the rate of exchange he offered Haardt was so prohibitive that the Frenchman had secretly to resort to the Urumchi black market.²⁵

From the moment of his seizure of power, Chin Shu-jen did his best to exclude all foreigners and foreign influence from his domain.²⁶ Chin's barely concealed hostility to those Westerners who did manage to visit Urumchi is generally attributed to his supposedly deep-seated xenophobia.²⁷ Indeed, it seems highly probable that Chin had little love for Europeans, whether capitalist or communist. It should be noted, however, that many of the 'diplomats' and 'explorers' active in Sinkiang during the 1920s and early 1930s were, in fact, in the employ of foreign powers seeking to influence the course of events in Central Asia.²⁸ Nor was Chin's 'xenophobia' limited to Westerners; he imposed strict limits on contacts between Sinkiang and China proper, and excluded KMT functionaries from the province whenever possible. It has been suggested that Chin sought to conceal from Nanking the extent of his misgovernment,²⁹ but it is more probable that he simply wished to keep the KMT ignorant of his operations and thus less able to interfere; besides, in Republican China misgovernment by warlord governments, not excluding that of the KMT at Nanking, was the established norm.

Doubtless Chin Shu-jen sought to emulate his more able predecessor by maintaining in Sinkiang a closed, almost medieval society, and he would probably have been content to limit external trade to the exchange of long-distance caravans with China proper.³⁰ However, by the late 1920s this was no longer possible. Under normal conditions a transport from Urumchi to Tientsin took from 120 to 180 days,³¹ but following Feng Yü-hsiang's occupation of eastern Kansu and the resultant increase in civil disorder, trade along this route was completely disrupted.³² This severing of the traditional trade route to China coincided with the re-emergence of Russia, in its Soviet guise, as Sinkiang's major trading partner.³³ In 1926 the Soviet government decided to construct a new railroad linking Frunze, the capital of the Kirghiz SSR, with Semipalatinsk in western Siberia. This railroad, to be known as the Turksib, was aimed primarily at the development of Western Turkestan and at its fuller integration within the Soviet economic system. However, it was made clear by Artemi Kalatov, a leading official in the Soviet Railway Commissariat, that the new railroad (which ran parallel to the Sinkiang frontier for over 400 miles) was also designed to 'prevent the penetration of Western European capitalism into Sinkiang'.³⁴ With the completion of the Turksib in 1930 the Soviet economic stranglehold on

Sinkiang became all but complete.³⁵ China's share of the Sinkiang market dropped to a mere 12.5 per cent,³⁶ and the value of Soviet trade with the province, which at the time of Russian Civil War had fallen to almost nil, rose to over 32 million roubles during the course of 1930.³⁷ Moreover, the extension of a virtual Soviet trade monopoly over Sinkiang adversely affected the local merchants and cotton farmers, who found themselves unable to compete. The resultant decline in the fortunes of these Sinkiang merchants was reflected in a fall in revenue which, in an all too familiar vicious circle, led to additional forms of taxation being devised by the provincial authorities.³⁸ The completion of the Turksib also contributed substantially to the growth of Soviet political influence in Sinkiang. It became faster and easier to travel from China proper to Sinkiang via Vladivostok, the Trans-Siberian and the Turksib than across North-West China;³⁹ besides adding to Soviet prestige in the eyes of the Turkic-speaking Muslims of Sinkiang, this naturally gave the Soviet government a degree of control over Nanking's relations with Urumchi through its ability to withhold visas, and thus to control the accessibility of Sinkiang to KMT officials.⁴⁰

The annexation of the Khanate of Kumul

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

Chin Shu-jen, Governor of Chinese Turkestan, had none of the qualities essential to good rule or wise administration. He was a man beset by fears, alternately too feeble or too harsh, dealing out leniency to the rich and severity to the poor, and showing that combination of tyranny and vacillation which is the most fatal characteristic that an autocrat can possess.⁴¹

According to Nyman, Chin was prejudiced against Muslims 'because of unpleasant experiences in his home province of Kansu'.⁴² Whatever the basis of this assertion, Chin rapidly antagonised both his Turkic-speaking and Tungan Muslim subjects by introducing a tax on the butchering of all animals in the province,⁴³ and by forbidding Muslims to perform the *hajj* to Mecca, 'probably to stop money leaving the country'.⁴⁴ Clumsy attempts by the provincial administration to impose Han Chinese officials on the Kirghiz and Mongol nomads of the T'ien Shan led to armed demonstrations against Chin and the death of a number of Mongols during 1929.⁴⁵ As a result of these and other similarly

short-sighted policies, the Muslim majority of the province, as well as the militarily significant Torgut Mongols of the T'ien Shan, came bitterly to resent Chin Shu-jen.⁴⁶

Despite this widespread hostility towards Chin, the first challenges to his autocratic rule came not from the various minority peoples of the province, but from ambitious Han officers under his command. In May 1929, the *Tao-yin* of Altai attempted to stage a coup against Chin's regime, but the Provincial Chairman had been forewarned, and was able to confine any fighting to the Shara Sume area.⁴⁷ In the spring of 1931 troubles broke out in Urumchi itself, as discontented Han officers and soldiers launched an attack on Chin's *yamen*. The attack failed, and the instigators of the plot were summarily executed.⁴⁸

Chin finally pushed the Turkic-speaking Muslims of Sinkiang into open rebellion in 1931 as a result of his annexation of the Kumul Khanate, known to the Chinese as Ha-mi. After Tso Tsung-t'ang's reconquest of Sinkiang in the 1870s, a few local principalities were permitted to survive on a semi-autonomous basis, rather like the 'native states' of the British Indian Empire. Kumul, the most important of these semi-autonomous principalities, was ruled by a royal family which dated back to the Ming Dynasty and which may have been descended from the Chaghatay Khans.⁴⁹ The Khanate of Kumul, which dominated the chief road from Sinkiang to China proper and was therefore of considerable strategic importance to the Chinese, extended from I-wan-ch'üan northwards to the Barkul Tagh, thence along the tops of the mountains to Bai and south-eastwards to Hsing-hsing-hsia on the Sinkiang-Kansu frontier. To the south the Khanate was bounded by the barren wastes of the Ghashun Gobi (see map 3).⁵⁰

At the time of the 1911 revolution Maqṣūd Shāh, then aged about forty-seven years, was on the throne of Kumul – known to the Chinese as the Ha-mi *wang* (King), to his subjects as Khan Maqṣūd or Sultan Maqṣūd and to European travellers as 'the King of the Gobi'. He was the 'last independent Khan of Central Asia . . . who had seen his fellow rulers all flung into the stew-pot of progress'.⁵¹ Yang Tseng-hsin, who came to power in 1912, was content to let Kumul retain its semi-autonomous status; besides, Maqṣūd Shāh was friendly towards the Chinese.⁵² He spoke Turkic with a marked Chinese accent, and wore Chinese clothes; on the other hand, he had a long white beard and always wore a turban or an Uighur cap.⁵³ A staunch Muslim, the Khan ruled his petty oasis kingdom from an ancient and ramshackle palace in Kumul proper – one of the three towns making up the capital of the Kumul oasis and known to the Chinese as the Muslim City (Ch. *Hui-ch'eng*). The Khan had a bodyguard of forty Chinese soldiers armed with mausers, and was able to call on the services of a Chinese garrison billeted in the fortified Chinese

town, or Old City (Ch. *Lao-ch'eng*). The third town, known as New City (Ch. *Hsin-ch'eng*), had a mixed Chinese-Turkic population and contained the main bazaars.⁵⁴ By 1928, shortly after the assassination of Yang Tseng-hsin, it was estimated that the ageing Maqsūd Shāh ruled over a population of between 25,000 and 30,000 Kumulliks. The Khan was responsible for levying taxes and dispensing justice; his administration rested on twenty-one *Begs*, four of whom were responsible for Kumul itself, five others being responsible for the plains villages, and the remaining twelve administering the mountainous regions of the Barkul and Karlik Tagh.⁵⁵ Maqsūd Shāh also maintained an Uighur militia which was reputed to be better trained than its counterpart in the predominantly Chinese Old City.⁵⁶ Throughout Yang Tseng-hsin's long period of power, Kumul remained relatively peaceful and prosperous.⁵⁷ Maqsūd Shāh paid a small annual tribute to Urumchi, and in return the Sinkiang government paid him a formal subsidy of 1,200 silver taels each year – no doubt in Yang Tseng-hsin's opinion a small enough sum for ensuring the continued obedience of the strategically vital Khanate. For the Uighurs of Kumul autonomy meant freedom from 'the usual swarm of rapacious Chinese officials'.⁵⁸ The only tax paid by the citizens of Kumul was in livestock – generally sheep or goats – due annually to the Khan. The soil of the oasis was rich and well-cultivated, and the condition of the Kumulliks before 1929 was one of relative contentment and prosperity.⁵⁹ According to Mildred Cable and Francesca French, both of whom knew Maqsūd Shāh personally, the continued existence of the Khanate of Kumul was also of psychological importance to the Uighurs of Turfan and the Tarim Basin:

The Moslem elements in the important oases, always so difficult to conciliate, were only tolerant . . . so long as their own seat of government was firmly established at Hami under Khan Maksud Shah, a man of their own race, religion and speech, who still held the proud title of King of the Gobi.⁶⁰

Whilst Yang Tseng-hsin appreciated the importance of Kumul's autonomous status for the continuing peace of the province, his successor, Chin Shu-jen, clearly did not. For the first nineteen months of his rule Chin Shu-jen was content to maintain the traditional *status quo*, although when Schomberg visited Kumul in February 1929 (only seven months after Chin's seizure of power) the area was under martial law, presumably because of Tungan warlord activities in neighbouring Kansu.⁶¹ Then, in March 1930, Khan Maqsūd Shāh died of old age. Maqsūd's eldest son and heir, Naṣir, should have inherited the throne of Kumul, but Chin Shu-jen and his Han subordinates stationed in Kumul Old City had other plans for the future of the Kumulliks. Shortly after his father's death, Naṣir travelled to Urumchi, the provincial capital. There is some

doubt as to the reason for his presence in Urumchi. Both Lattimore and Hai state that Naṣir was unpopular and that he went to Urumchi to seek Chin's aid in imposing himself on the people of Kumul.⁶² According to several other sources, however, Naṣir, together with his chief counsellor Yulbārs Khan, was ordered to Urumchi by Chin Shu-jen in order to make formal submission to the provincial government.⁶³ Chin's subsequent behaviour and the fate of the Kumul Khanate would seem to indicate that the latter version of events is nearer the truth.⁶⁴

At the time of Maqsūd Shāh's death, Li Hsi-ts'eng, a Han Chinese Divisional Commander stationed at Kumul, suggested to Chin Shu-jen that the Khanate should be abolished and its inhabitants brought under the direct control of the provincial administration.⁶⁵ There can be little doubt that Chin welcomed this advice – control over Kumul would offer the possibility of increased revenue and new positions for Han Chinese officials.⁶⁶ He therefore took up the suggestion, ordered Naṣir and Yulbārs to Urumchi, and rushed a resolution through a meeting of his ministers abolishing the Khanate and dividing Kumul into three separate administrative districts, Ha-mi (centred around the capital), I-ho and I-wu.⁶⁷ When Naṣir arrived in Urumchi he was given the position of 'Senior Adviser' to the provincial government and forbidden to return to Kumul;⁶⁸ he remained in Urumchi as a virtual prisoner, and according to one Chinese source only escaped with his life by bribing Chin heavily.⁶⁹ Yulbārs, on the other hand, was sent back to Kumul with a group of Chinese officials who had been instructed by Chin to set up the new administrative machinery.⁷⁰

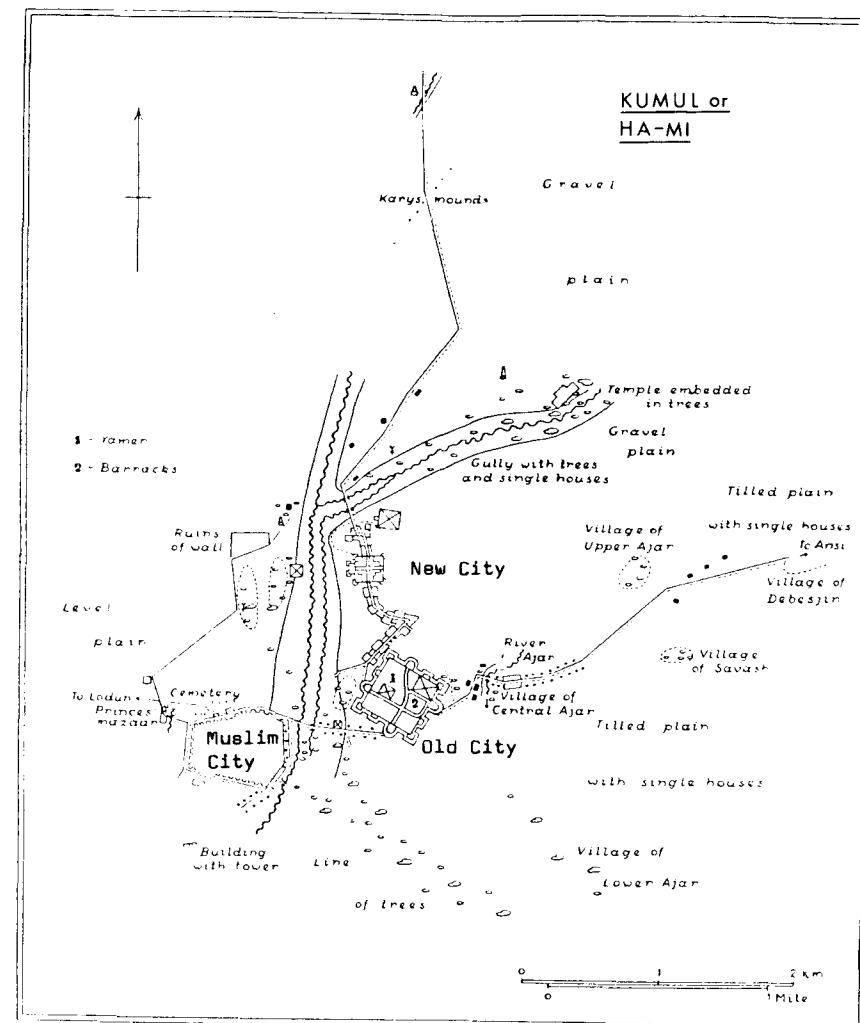
It has been suggested by Lattimore that the Kumulliks had little love for their Khanate, and that only a minority of the population wished for Naṣir to inherit his father's position.⁷¹ It is true that the old Khan had, on occasion, over-taxed his people and earned their ire as a result.⁷² There were other factors, however, which suggest that Lattimore's analysis (which relies primarily on Tu Chung-yüan, a Han Chinese source) may overstate the disregard in which the Kumulliks held their Khan; besides the question of Uighur national pride, already mentioned above, the Khanate is reported to have held some religious significance for the Turkic Muslims of Sinkiang.⁷³ There was also an important economic factor: elsewhere in Sinkiang Han Chinese immigrants were permitted to settle on unoccupied land; with the abolition of the Khanate traditional restrictions on Han settlement in the region were lifted, a development which found absolutely no approval with the Uighur citizens of Kumul.⁷⁴ Whatever the original attitude of the Kumulliks to Naṣir, Chin Shu-jen was shortly to learn that – in the words of the Nanking official Wu Ai-chen – 'subject peoples obstinately prefer self-government to good government'.⁷⁵ Since Chin's government of Kumul was anything but good, the

bitterness with which the Kumulliks regarded the passing of their Khanate may easily be imagined.

The newly appointed Chinese administration upset the people of Kumul almost from the minute of its installation. It was announced that the privilege of exemption from direct taxation by Urumchi was to be abolished; moreover, to add insult to injury, one year's 'arrears' of taxes were to be collected from the Uighur Kumulliks. Meanwhile Kumul was thrown open to Chinese settlement, and it was decreed that settlers taking this offer were exempt from taxation for two years.⁷⁶ To make matters worse, Kumul, which is situated on the chief road from north-western Kansu to Sinkiang, was at this time subjected to a flow of refugees from famine and warfare in the former province.⁷⁷ A column of these unfortunate emigrants was seen by Berger Bohlin of the Sino-Swedish Expedition in April 1931; his account makes it clear that people in Kansu were well aware of Chin's opening of the Kumul region to Han settlement:

During my stay at Hua-hai-tze I witnessed a curious spectacle. The Chen-fan region had for a number of years been visited by failure of the crops and famine, and large numbers of people therefore emigrated to more prosperous tracts. Such an emigration-wave now passed Hua-hai-tze. It consisted of a caravan of 100 camels, transporting 150 persons with all their baggage to Sinkiang, where it was said that land was being thrown open.⁷⁸

The refugees clearly were not entirely destitute, however, for Bohlin emphasises that all were 'carefree and happy' and seemed 'fairly prosperous'. Chin Shu-jen, a Kansu man himself, was anxious to settle in Sinkiang as many of these refugees as possible – yet fertile land was not as plentiful nor Sinkiang as prosperous as the refugees had been led to believe.⁷⁹ Chin solved the problem by ordering Lung Hsieh-lin, the Chinese *Amban* in charge of I-ho district, to provide land for the would-be settlers from Kansu.⁸⁰ Lung responded by forcing his Uighur subjects to leave their own cultivated land and handing it over to the Kansu Chinese. The expropriated Uighurs were 'compensated' with untilled lands on the fringe of the desert where the soil was barren.⁸¹ According to Lattimore the resettled Uighurs were then assessed for landtax on the basis of their old holdings (despite the fact that it was customary in Sinkiang for previously untilled land to be exempted from taxation for the first two years of cultivation), whilst the Kansu settlers who had been given the expropriated Uighur land were excused payment of tax for three years.⁸² The Kumulliks, sorely tried, organised a petition which was duly despatched to the Chairman's *yamen* in Urumchi. No acknowledgement was received, and nothing was done to redress the grievances of the dispossessed Uighurs.⁸³ Instead, the settlement of Kansu Chinese was



Map 4 Kumul or Ha-mi: Based on a map drawn by Field Marshal C. G. Mannerheim in 1907 (*Across Asia*), p. 386. The oasis was divided into three towns and numerous villages. The Muslim city and surrounding villages were predominantly Uighur, whilst the New City was mixed Han-Uighur, and the 'Old City' (in fact, much newer than the Muslim City) was dominated by Han Chinese.

continued, and the price of food in the Kumul region began to climb steeply as a result of the large numbers of provincial troops billeted in the oasis and on the Kansu frontier.⁸⁴ For the moment the Turkic-speaking Muslims of the region remained peaceful, perhaps lulling Chin Shu-jen into a false sense of security, but according to Sven Hedin, whose Sino-Swedish Expedition remained in Sinkiang and Kansu during Chin's

period of control, 'Discontent increased; the people clenched their teeth and bided their time; the atmosphere was tense and gloomy. Inflammable matter accumulated, and only a spark was needed to fire the powder magazine.'⁸⁵

The Kumul Rebellion

The explosion at Kumul began as the result of a religious and cultural slight which offended the sensibilities of the whole Muslim population, both Turkic-speaking and Tungan, and united them against the Chinese authorities. As a result of the administrative reorganisation which accompanied Chin Shu-jen's annexation of the Kumul Khanate, a young Chinese called Chang Mu,⁸⁶ from Chin's native district in Kansu, was appointed tax collector and chief of police to the small village of Hsiao-p'u, located to the north of Kumul.⁸⁷ According to Wu Ai-chen, this Chang was a 'wastrel' whose conduct soon became a public scandal.⁸⁸ Early in 1931 Chang's attention was caught by a pretty Turkic Muslim girl of Hsiao-p'u. He attempted to make use of his position to force the girl's father, an Uighur called Sālih,⁸⁹ to give him the girl in marriage. Islamic *Shari'a* law specifically prohibits marriage between Muslim women and men of any other religion, a proscription which is rigorously observed by all Muslims, regardless of sect.⁹⁰ Two versions of the subsequent events exist. According to Hai, who relies primarily on Fu Tung-hsien, on the night of 4 April 1931, Chang was invited to eat at the girl's house, apparently in honour of the forthcoming wedding. During the course of the meal Chang was attacked by Uighur conspirators, and was killed along with thirty-two members of his 'bodyguard'.⁹¹ Wu Ai-chen implies that Chang had already seduced the girl, and that the '*ulamā'* never had any intention of permitting the marriage to take place. Instead, on the night of the proposed ceremony, a mob appeared in the streets of Hsiao-p'u. Chang and his soldiers had been drinking, and were easily overcome by the infuriated Uighurs; all were killed, including the unfortunate Uighur girl, and between twenty and thirty rifles were captured. The rebels next turned their attention to the Kansu Chinese, said to have numbered about a hundred families, all of whom were massacred 'and their heads buried in the soil of their farms'.⁹²

Following these successes, the rebels turned their attention to the Chinese outposts at Tu-lu-hu and Lao-mao-hu; at both centres the Chinese garrisons and tax collectors were killed, and the small arsenals were captured.⁹³ Armed with weapons taken from Chin's soldiers, the rebels felt strong enough to move against Kumul itself. It seems that Kumul Muslim City, with its overwhelmingly Uighur population, fell into the hands of the rebels with little or no fighting; most of the Han Chinese,

however, withdrew into the fortified Old City and barred the gates. Those Chinese caught outside the Old City were apparently massacred wholesale,⁹⁴ but when the fighting died down it became clear that a stalemate had been reached. The rebel forces controlled Kumul Muslim City and the surrounding countryside, but the provincial forces remained secure within the fortified Old City, retaining control of its important arsenal. Kumul New City, which seems to have had no fortifications worth speaking of, was probably abandoned to the rebels.⁹⁵

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

While officials surreptitiously transferred their wealth to a place of safety, the instigators of trouble were equally persistent in their secret preparations for war. Camels and mules were requisitioned to transport weapons, ammunition and stocks of food over little-known tracks, that they might be stored in mountain caves known only to the few. Steady streams of small caravans carrying ammunition to the mountains came from the South Road, from Tunhwang and across the most lonely tracks of the desert connecting Kansu with Barkul. All these converged on the Khan's summer palace grounds in Aratām, and the stronghold of Bardash was stocked with huge supplies of food and firearms.⁹⁶

If this was indeed the case, then after the Hsiao-p'u incident the leaders of the planned rising were faced with a *fait accompli*. Yulbārs Khan, the former Chancellor of Maqṣūd Shāh, claims to have been in the T'ien Shan 'escaping from the heat' when the fighting started.⁹⁷ Whether he was at Bardash, secretly preparing an uprising, must remain open to speculation. Certainly he was soon to emerge, together with Khoja Niyās Häjji (a prominent Uighur whose name indicates that he had made the pilgrimage to Mecca), as joint leader of the Muslim insurgent forces. Cable and French indicate that the Tungan population of Kumul also joined the revolt at this stage⁹⁸ – indeed it is likely that a prominent Tungan Kumullik, referred to by the missionaries as 'Wang the Merchant', was party to the planned rebellion and may have helped to finance the purchase of arms. He is described as being 'a man of means', with business links which extended to China, India, Iran and the Soviet Union, as well as to the ownership of a string of caravanserais scattered throughout the oases of Sinkiang.⁹⁹ Besides the Tungans, the Uighur



10. Ruins of Kumul, c. 1932

11. Leaders of the Kumul Rising:
Khoja Niyās Häjjī, c. 193212. Leaders of the Kumul Rising:
Yulbārs Khan, c. 1932

insurgents of Kumul were joined by the neighbouring Kirghiz of the Karlik Tagh who held a grudge against Chin because of his attempts to impose Chinese officials on them during 1929;¹⁰⁰ according to Wu Ai-chen troubles also broke out at Barkul and the Kazakhs of that area joined the insurgents ‘to a man’.¹⁰¹ Chin had clearly succeeded in alienating all the Turkic-speaking peoples of north-eastern Sinkiang, and great skill in diplomacy was needed if a full-scale Muslim rising was yet to be avoided.

Unfortunately, Chin decided that the situation demanded strong action. Blind to the limited power of his own military forces, and rejecting the advice of Liu Wen-lung, his Commissioner for Education, and Yen Yu-shan, his Commissioner for Reconstruction, both of whom advocated a policy of conciliation,¹⁰² he ordered troops to proceed against the rebel areas where, according to Wu Ai-chen, they were instructed to ‘act with the utmost severity’.¹⁰³ Meanwhile the Muslim insurgents, unable to breach the fortifications at Kumul Old City, fanned out through the surrounding countryside looking for Han settlers and soldiers. According to R. P. Watts, the British Vice Consul-General at Kashgar, an initial detachment of 300 soldiers, sent by Chin to relieve the beleaguered troops at Kumul Old City, were surprised by the insurgents and killed almost to a man, their rifles, ammunition and a machine-gun being captured by the Muslim forces.¹⁰⁴ Many of the troops thus slain were said to have been sleeping off the effects of opium, the probability of which is borne out by Schomberg’s 1930 report which describes the officer in command of a key garrison at Kumul ‘lying stretched on the *kang*, smoking his opium in a jade pipe’.¹⁰⁵ Despite this initial success, the insurgent forces were unable to prevent provincial forces under the command of Chu Jui-ch’ih, the *Tao-yin* of Aksu, from marching to the relief of Kumul Old City.¹⁰⁶ In late April the siege was lifted. Chu occupied the Old City fortress and ordered his second-in-command, Hsiung Fa-yü, to hold Kumul Muslim City.¹⁰⁷ The Muslim insurgents retained control of the countryside and were able to harass Chu’s forces whenever they strayed too far from their fortified citadel, but they were unable to offer a serious challenge to the provincial troops in Kumul Old City. In the meantime the Chinese troops, under the leadership of Hsiung Fa-yü, began a series of reprisal massacres against Muslim non-combatants in Kumul Muslim City and the surrounding villages.¹⁰⁸

In an attempt to break this stalemate the Uighur leaders determined to seek external help in their struggle against Chin Shu-jen. According to Yulbārs Khan, a decision was taken to send an appeal to the Kuomintang government in Nanking. Accordingly ‘one day in June’ 1931 Yulbārs, who may have been chosen because of his fluency in Chinese, set out secretly for Kansu, ostensibly *en route* for the Chinese capital;¹⁰⁹ whether

he genuinely intended to appeal to Chiang Kai-shek must remain uncertain. Yulbārs claims that he travelled directly to Soochow, an important city in north-western Kansu which was at that time under the control of Ma Chung-ying, the youngest and most volatile of the 'Five Ma' Tungan warlords and a man destined to play a vital role in the history of Republican Sinkiang.

The involvement of Ma Chung-ying

Little is known of Ma Chung-ying's early years. He was born c. 1910 at Ho-chou in south-eastern Kansu. Almost nothing is known of his father,¹¹⁰ but Chung-ying shared the same paternal grandfather as the Kansu/Tsinghai warlords Ma Pu-ch'ing and Ma Pu-fang, and was thus a scion of the powerful Ma family of Pieh-ts'ang, a small village some thirty kilometres south-west of Ho-chou.¹¹¹ He was also distantly related to the Kansu/Ningsia warlords Ma Hung-k'uei and Ma Hung-pin. Together these warlords came to be known as the 'Five Ma' (Ch. *Wu Ma*) warlord clique. Ma Chung-ying first entered military service in 1924 when, at about the age of 14, he joined the local Muslim militia. One year later the Kuominchün forces of Fen Yü-hsiang, the so-called 'Christian General', invaded eastern Kansu. The Tungan warlords of western Kansu remained, for the most part, aloof from the struggle. Ma Chung-ying, however, who had been appointed an officer in the forces of his uncle Ma Ku-chung, is said to have laid siege to and captured the important city of Ho-chou on his own initiative. Ma easily defeated the troops (under the command of Ma Lin, a great-uncle) which were sent to recapture the city. As a result of these victories Ma Chung-ying, still only sixteen or seventeen years old, won a reputation as a military strategist and the nickname *Ga Ssu-ling* or 'Little Commander'. Ma Chung-ying's triumph was short-lived, however, for Ma Ku-chung had not ordered the occupation of Ho-chou, and promptly dismissed his nephew for insubordination. The 'Little Commander' learned this lesson well; he withdrew to the Hsingning area of Tsinghai and began to build up his own private army.¹¹²

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

Ekvall, an American who travelled in south-eastern Kansu at this time:

The revolt had by this time assumed all the aspects of a holy war. Chanting prayers, forty or fifty thousand fighters went into battle with fanatical zeal . . . the young rebel leader Ma Chong-ing [sic] seemed to bear a charmed life and by his reckless courage gained the utmost in obedience and devotion from his ruffian troops. The Chinese were panic-stricken at the desperate courage of the Moslems, but eventually, by machine gun fire and light artillery, proved superior.¹¹³

According to American diplomatic reports, the ravages of war and famine in Kansu reduced some people to cannibalism; between 1926 and 1929 as many as two million people may have died.¹¹⁴ One casualty was Ma Chung-ying's father, who was executed by Liu Yü-fen as a reprisal against Chung-ying during the winter of 1929.¹¹⁵

In 1929 Ma Chung-ying, his position strengthened by several victories over the Kuominchün,¹¹⁶ travelled to Nanking, where he enrolled briefly in the Military Academy. It has been suggested that during his short stay at Nanking Ma offered his services to the Nationalist Government on the understanding that, if he could win control of Sinkiang, he would be recognised by the KMT.¹¹⁷ After leaving Nanking Ma made his way to Chung-wei on the Yellow River where he rejoined his troops. He then marched his forces across the southern fringes of the Ala Shan desert to north-western Kansu where he assumed control over the four districts of Tun-huang, An-hsi, Soochow and Kan-chou.¹¹⁸

Ma Chung-ying was thus the Tungan warlord chieftain controlling north-western Kansu at the time of the Kumul rising in April 1931. According to Yulbārs Khan, who claims to have set out for Nanking in June 1931, he arrived in Soochow *en route* for the national capital and was, apparently by chance, invited to go and eat with the 'Little Commander' (who was still only some twenty-one years of age). According to his recently-published memoirs, Yulbārs was entertained by Ma Chung-ying and a number of senior Tungan officers of his command including Ma Shih-ming, Ma Fu-yüan, Ma Shih-lu and Ma Ho-ying. (Yulbārs comments that there were so many 'Mas' in Ma Chung-ying's army that it was familiarly known as the *Ma-chia-chün*, or 'Ma Household Army'.)¹¹⁹ After the meal Chung-ying dismissed his officers and began to question Yulbārs about the origins and progress of the Kumul rebellion, and about the present state of affairs of the Kumul administration. Yulbārs claims that he was careful not to criticise Chin Shu-jen because he was unsure of Chung-ying's purpose. At this point the 'Little Commander' began to curse Chin Shu-jen and to say that he was unfit to govern Sinkiang. Yulbārs claims that on hearing this he realised for the

first time that 'not all Kansu people were supporters of Chin'; he therefore took Chung-ying into his confidence and explained the purpose of his mission to Nanking. Ma Chung-ying immediately asked Yulbārs what he expected to gain from such an appeal to the KMT. On being told that the Kumulliks wanted Nanking to replace Chin with a new Governor, Ma sat silently for some time, apparently considering the matter. He then asked whether Yulbārs had any personal contacts in the Nanking government, and on receiving a reply in the negative he advised Yulbārs in the strongest terms not to go to Nanking 'or he would be disappointed'. He gave three reasons for this:

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

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

I have a way . . . I can meet the needs of the Uighurs of Ha-mi . . . In the name of Muslim brotherhood, I shall take my army into Sinkiang. First I shall alleviate the suffering of the Uighurs of Ha-mi, then I shall drive Chin Shu-jen from the stage by force of arms.¹²⁰

Despite Yulbārs' version of events – not surprisingly the only record of the discussion known to exist – it is highly unlikely that Ma conceived his invasion of Sinkiang over a spontaneous dinner with the Uighur leader in the *yamen* at Soochow.¹²¹ There is a possibility, though no more than that, that even in his memoirs, written almost forty years after the Kumul rising, Yulbārs was anxious to conceal the existence of a carefully planned Uighur rising against Chin Shu-jen to which the Tungans of north-western Kansu were also party.¹²² Ma Chung-ying was certainly interested in the Kumul rising before Yulbārs' arrival in Soochow; moreover Yulbārs was aware of this interest, for he tells us elsewhere in his memoirs that Ma Chung-ying had sent messengers to him seeking information, but that he was unable to help because he 'knew nothing'.¹²³ Ma must also have received information on the political situation in Sinkiang from two Turks, both apparently originating from Istanbul, who travelled to north-western Kansu from Urumchi early in 1931.¹²⁴ Both men subsequently

became attached to Ma's military headquarters and one, Kamāl Kaya Efendi, became Ma's Chief-of-Staff.¹²⁵ A possible indication of Ma Chung-ying's earlier involvement in Sinkiang affairs may also be found in the gun-runners of Bardash. According to the British missionaries Cable and French, the arms caravans reaching Kumul came from the south and east – that is, from north-western Kansu. Such traffic would have been all but impossible without Ma Chung-ying's acquiescence, if not his active participation. Moreover, the important Tungan community of Kumul is known to have backed the rising, chiefly with funds. Certainly a Tungan like 'Wang the Merchant', with business contacts as far afield as Iran, India and Siberia, might reasonably be expected to have approached his fellow Tungans in neighbouring Kansu for aid in the planned rebellion.¹²⁶

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

based on the assumption of the paralysing effect of frightfulness in action, and as a method of temporary invasion it answered his purpose well, but it never served him as a basis of true conquest, nor did he ever establish rule over one single acre of the land which he invaded. His was the method of the locust . . . and his army was always viewed as a plague. It came, it devoured, and when it had passed over, the patient, constructively minded peasants instantly began to repair the damage done to their fields, and to beget sons to replace those who had been swept away in his train.¹²⁷

In 1931 Ma Chung-ying's personal army was by no means large – despite some exaggerated reports it probably numbered no more than 1,000 men.¹²⁸ Yet by the very nature of its *modus operandi* – aptly described by Cable and French as 'that of the locust', Ma's army needed to move ever onwards. Besides, Ma Chung-ying was a highly ambitious young warlord who was to dream, in his wilder moments, of creating a Muslim empire which would include the whole of Soviet, as well as Chinese, Central Asia.¹²⁹ In the spring of 1931, however, Ma Chung-ying, as warlord of north-western Kansu, had only two possible directions in which to move. One was back towards China, but this would have involved an attack on his uncle, Ma Pu-fang, with whom he was conducting a vigorous propaganda war, but who may have been his secret ally;¹³⁰ the other was into Sinkiang, where his Muslim co-religionists were apparently ready to welcome him as a liberator from the corrupt Chin Shu-jen. It is therefore at least certain that, whether or not Ma Chung-ying was party to a planned Kumullik rebellion which was sparked off prematurely by the

Hsiao-p'u incident, and whether or not Yulbārs Khan really intended to travel beyond north-western Kansu to Nanking,¹³¹ the 1931 rising at Kumul occurred at a most opportune moment for the young Tungan warlord from Kansu.

The first invasion of Ma Chung-ying

Although Ma Chung-ying had clearly been contemplating an invasion of Sinkiang for some time, he did not move directly against Kumul, but began a series of manoeuvres within Kansu which may have been designed to confuse the Sinkiang authorities or may alternatively have reflected continuing indecision on the part of the young Tungan warlord. According to Cable and French, Ma Chung-ying made an impetuous decision to move against Ningsia, but was advised by Kamāl Kaya Efendi to turn suddenly against Sinkiang, thus taking the provincial authorities off their guard.¹³² Having taken the decision to attack Chin Shu-jen's forces in Sinkiang, Ma Chung-ying wasted no time making his move. After assembling a force of 500 Tungan cavalry,¹³³ he made a swift crossing of the desert between An-hsi and Kumul in the full heat of mid-summer,¹³⁴ arriving in the oasis on 28 June at almost exactly the same time as the French Citroën Expedition. An initial encounter between the vanguard of Ma's Tungan cavalry and a Chinese machine-gun detachment took place at the village of Yi-k'o-shu. Le Fèvre's account of the ensuing fighting would seem to indicate that the Chinese forces included a number of Mongol soldiers.¹³⁵ After the Tungans had been beaten back by the Chinese machine guns, the Citroën Expedition was able to continue to Kumul Old City, which they found in a state of turmoil, feverishly organising its defences. The French were immediately taken to see the Chinese Commandant, Chu Jui-ch'ih. *En route* through the muddy streets of the town, packed with military convoys and soldiers of all kinds, they saw the faces of anxious Muslims peering from their shuttered homes, and hanging from a telegraph pole the head, heart and liver of an insurgent.¹³⁶ Chu gave his permission for the French to continue towards Urumchi at their own risk. The Expedition accordingly set out on 1 July 1931; however, three of their number, including a Franco-Russian engineer called Petro, were left behind to await the arrival of spare motor parts from Kansu. They were thus to witness the first stages of Ma Chung-ying's siege of Kumul Old City.¹³⁷

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

By order of the National Government of China I have been appointed commander-in-chief of all military forces of Kansu and Sinkiang. Having assumed my new

post on this date, I allow you to petition for your resignation and I order you to hand over to me command of the Ha-mi garrison. Urgent order.¹³⁸

Chu Jui-ch'ih replied by ordering the execution of one of the messengers, and sending the head back to Ma by means of the other. On the same night Ma began a fierce attack on Kumul Old City. However, his Tungan cavalry were ill-suited for siege warfare, and the Chinese appear to have been well armed. According to Petro, the garrison had an 'immense stock' of modern rifles and ammunition, four machine guns, two Krupp 65 mm howitzers, and a number of old brass cannons.¹³⁹ Kumul Muslim City had been abandoned to the insurgents, and the Chinese garrison had withdrawn within the walls of the Old City. No contemporary description of the Old City fortifications would appear to exist, but Field Marshal Mannerheim, who visited Kumul in 1907, has left a detailed account of the fortifications at that time.¹⁴⁰ They appear to have been strong enough to pose a serious problem for Ma's Tungan cavalry, a force which was to prove itself all but invincible when facing Chin Shu-jen's troops in the open field.

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

From numerous points on the wall the Chinese were firing flares which gave a certain amount of light. There were no enemy on the glacis, but a little distance beyond, among the bushes, could be seen the flashes of their muskets. Suddenly, to the beating of drums and the blowing of trumpets, the glacis swarmed with men rushing towards the high city wall. The front rank consisted of Chinese peasants (conscripts from Kansu) carrying scaling ladders, who were driven forward by Tungan soldiers armed with huge curved swords.

The air was rent by the shrill battle cries of the Tungans and the yells of defiance of the defenders. In spite of a murderous fire, ladders were placed at different spots, and the rebels . . . began to climb up one after the other. Then the defenders discarded their firearms for pikes and axes, and hurled down on the attackers heavy rocks, blazing tow soaked in oil and hand-grenades . . . Notwithstanding the stubborn defence, several scaling ladders were placed against the wall, and the Tungans clambered up one after another. Many were speared or pushed away, but as they fell on the ground others took their place. Then the cannonade ceased, and only the clash of steel, the cries of the wounded, and an

occasional pistol shot could be heard as hand-to-hand fighting began on the wall itself . . . just when the place seemed to be doomed a machine gun, which up to this had been silent . . . suddenly came to life. Emplaced in a blockhouse flanking the wall, it opened fire, mowing down the assault, and the glacis was soon cleared except for heaps of corpses.¹⁴¹

It is clear that the attacking Tungans lacked heavy artillery for breaching the city walls. Three separate attacks were made on the night of 3 July, but all were beaten back. Chu Jui-ch'ih, a military veteran, had no intention of surrendering to the 'Little Commander' whom he dismissed contemptuously as a 'thieving cub'.¹⁴² Ma Chung-ying clearly had little enthusiasm for this sort of siege warfare, besides which his forces needed more armaments. On 5 July he led the greater part of his Tungan cavalry away from Kumul Old City leaving some 2,000 provincial troops under siege by an estimated 1,000 Uighur insurgents and a handful of Tungans.¹⁴³ Chu Jui-ch'ih, who was unaware of Ma Chung-ying's real purpose, decided against making a sortie because he feared a trap.¹⁴⁴ Meanwhile the 'Little Commander' led his highly mobile forces over the Karlik Tagh to Barkul, a move which was quite unexpected by the provincial authorities. Faced with an imminent Tungan attack, Barkul surrendered without a struggle. According to Hedin, the local Commandant went over to Ma, who seized 2,000 rifles and a large store of ammunition held in Barkul arsenal.¹⁴⁵ Leaving a garrison of a hundred to occupy the captured town, Ma turned back to the south.¹⁴⁶ According to Wu Ai-chen, with Ma's already considerable charisma much increased by the desert crossing and the subsequent capture of Barkul, Kazakhs and Tungans from the region to the north of the Karlik Tagh flocked to join his forces.¹⁴⁷ By mid-July Muslim insurgents were in effective control of the whole territory of the old Kumul Khanate, from Hsing-hsing-hsia on the Kansu-Sinkiang frontier to the vicinity of I-wan-ch'üan on the road to Turfan. Groups of invading Tungan troops from Kansu, in alliance with the insurgent Sinkiang Muslims, held Hsing-hsing-hsia and Barkul and were participating in the siege of Kumul Old City; moreover at this time Ma Chung-ying seems to have enjoyed the full support of the indigenous Muslim peoples, whether Uighur, Kazakh, Kirghiz or Sinkiang Tungan.

Chin Shu-jen's initial response to this first Tungan invasion seems to have been precipitate and ill-judged. On hearing that Ma Chung-ying, backed by the main body of his Tungan cavalry, was approaching Ch'i-chiao-ching, Chin appointed his Chief Secretary, Lu Hsiao-tsu, to be Commander-in-Chief of the provincial forces; Tu Chih-kuo and an ambitious newcomer, Sheng Shih-ts'ai, were appointed joint Chiefs-of-Staff. Lu Hsiao-tsu was a civilian with little or no military experience; moreover, according to Chan Fook-lam he was a bitter rival of Chin Shu-jen, the Commissioner for Military Affairs at Urumchi and a younger

brother of Chin Shu-jen.¹⁴⁸ Lu hurriedly mustered a force of about 1,000 men, almost all of whom were lacking in military training or experience.¹⁴⁹ Under the command of Tu Chih-kuo, this quite inadequate force was sent to Ch'i-chiao-ching where it had orders to stem the Tungan advance pending the despatch of further reinforcements. In the event, these promised reinforcements were never to arrive.¹⁵⁰

Shortly after their arrival at Ch'i-chiao-ching, these troops were surprised in a night attack by Tungan forces and killed almost to a man;¹⁵¹ the Commander, Tu Chih-kuo, is reported to have committed suicide.¹⁵² According to Kamāl Kaya Efendi, Ma Chung-ying's Turkish Chief-of-Staff, the Tungan force that defeated Tu's troops at Ch'i-chiao-ching was commanded by Ma Chung-ying in person, the young warlord having approached the oasis by little-known trails through the Karlik Tagh and Bogdo Ula after his successful capture of Barkul.¹⁵³

Following his victories at Barkul and Ch'i-chiao-ching, Ma Chung-ying is believed to have left a detachment of troops guarding the road westwards to Urumchi before returning to Kumul with the intention of completing his reduction of the besieged Old City. It is difficult to understand why Ma failed to follow up his annihilation of Tu Chih-kuo's forces with an advance on Urumchi. It may be that he overestimated the strength of Chin Shu-jen's forces defending the provincial capital; alternatively, the Tungan Commander may have been unwilling to advance further into Sinkiang without first eliminating the Kumul Old City garrison which might conceivably – were military fortunes to be reversed – block his retreat to the security of north-western Kansu. It has been suggested by Wu Ai-chen that Ma Chung-ying was wounded during the engagement at Ch'i-chiao-ching and that this prevented him from marching on the capital.¹⁵⁴ No mention of such a development is made by Petro, however, who spent a week at the Tungan HQ at Kumul shortly after the Muslim victory at Ch'i-chiao-ching and who claims to have seen and spoken with Ma Chung-ying at this time.¹⁵⁵ Wu is therefore probably mistaken, and is likely to have written in confusion over a wound received by Ma on the western front later in the autumn of 1931.

Both during and after the Tungan campaign in the west of the old Kumul Khanate, the insurgent Uighurs maintained their pressure on the forces of Chu Jui-ch'ih besieged within Kumul Old City. After Ma Chung-ying's return to Kumul the siege proceeded with renewed vigour. Between 3 July and 16 October, during which time Petro was present at Kumul either in the besieged Old City or at the Tungan HQ,¹⁵⁶ Ma's forces are reported to have staged forty-three separate attacks on the besieged Chinese garrison. The Tungans dug trenches and built barricades in their attempts to storm the walls; meanwhile the besieged troops were forced to eat their camels, horses and mules. By 1 October

the defending troops were reduced to a *per capita* ration of 750 grammes of kaoliang flour daily, and this was due to run out by the end of the month. Ammunition was also running very low, and Chu Jui-ch'ih resorted to the use of archaic weapons – 'fire arrows' and 'big swords' – preserved in an arsenal established by Tso-Tsung-t'ang during his Sinkiang campaign in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Petro reports that nothing but opium was available for sale in the bazaar. Supplies of oil were gradually exhausted – partially as a result of its being hurled, boiling, on the heads of the attackers. The Tungans made several attempts to mine and blast the walls, but they lacked sufficient supplies of powder. On one occasion a breach was made in the walls, but the besieged troops blocked it with bales of wool before an entry could be forced. A ditch was subsequently dug around the walls, flooding the Tungan trenches and preventing further mining. By mid-October the defending garrison was reduced to desperate straits. According to Petro who, after 108 days in Kumul, broke out of the encircled town on 16 October in a (successful) attempt to reach Urumchi:

What sustained the men was opium. They could not have held out without it, and so long as it lasted and no strenuous effort was demanded of them, they could get along on practically no food. At night the opium lamps of the sentries could be seen sparkling like little stars the length of the ramparts. The whole garrison was in fact intoxicated. It was fantastic!¹⁵⁷

It is equally likely that the predominantly Han garrison was driven to continued resistance by the thought of their probable fate at the hands of the Tungans should they succumb. Ma Chung-ying refused to accept any terms other than unconditional surrender, and since the struggle in Sinkiang had assumed an overtly communalist aspect, neither side had shown much inclination to take prisoners. In any case, the unexpectedly fierce resistance of Kumul Old City delayed the Tungan advance on Urumchi and enabled Chin Shu-jen to begin a hasty reorganisation of the provincial forces. As a first step, which was to prove singularly unsuccessful, Chin ordered Tsetsen Puntsag Gegeen, Regent and 'Living Buddha' of the Sinkiang Torgut Mongols, to lead his famed Torgut cavalry against the Tungan forces at Kumul. These Torgut troops were undoubtedly the best available to the provincial government, and were probably the only indigenous Sinkiang force capable of facing Ma Chung-ying's formidable Tungan cavalry.¹⁵⁸ Tsetsen Puntsag Gegeen was still smarting, however, from Chin Shu-jen's ill-considered attempt to force Chinese officials on the Sinkiang Torguts in place of their own leaders;¹⁵⁹ moreover a plot had recently been discovered by which the Regent was to have been assassinated by members of his own confederacy at Kara Shahr. Tsetsen Puntsag Gegeen suspected Chin Shu-jen's complicity in this plot, and, when the

would-be assassins fled to Urumchi and Chin refused to surrender them or to bring them to justice, these suspicions were largely confirmed.¹⁶⁰ The 'Living Buddha' accordingly refused to become involved in the hostilities at Kumul, taking his forces instead to Kara Shahr in a demonstration of power which he hoped would be noticed and understood by Chin Shu-jen. Chin understood very clearly, but for the present he was preoccupied with the deteriorating position in the north-east of the province.

Lacking sufficient numbers of reliable Han Chinese troops, Chin turned next to the sizeable White Russian community which had been established in Sinkiang, especially in the Ili Valley,¹⁶¹ since the Bolshevik victory in the Russian Civil War. Lu Hsiao-tsü, who had proved incompetent as Provincial Commander-in-Chief, was consequently replaced by Chang P'ei-yüan, the Military Commander of the Ili region. Chang immediately began to build up a force of White Russian 'volunteers' – in effect, refugees who refused to fight for the Chinese authorities at Urumchi until threatened with forced repatriation to Stalin's Russia.¹⁶² In late September or early October Chang P'ei-yüan's forces, headed by a force of some 250 White Russians under the leadership of Colonel Pappengut, a former Staff Officer of the Russian Imperial Army, left Ili with the object of relieving the besieged garrison at Kumul Old City. According to British diplomatic sources, almost all these Russian troops were experienced soldiers who had served with both the Tsarist and White Russian forces – military experience which was to make the Russian émigré army (Ch. *Kuei-hua-chün*) the most competent force in Sinkiang.¹⁶³ It is not clear whether Ma Chung-ying was informed of the approach of Chang P'ei-yüan and Pappengut, or whether, as indicated by Cable and French, he simply became tired of the siege at Kumul Old City and decided to march on the provincial capital.¹⁶⁴ Whichever might be the case, he drew most of his Tungan cavalry away from Kumul and rode westwards along the road to Ch'i-chiao-ching and the advancing Russians. What happened next is not certain, but it is clear that no major battle between Pappengut's forces and the Tungan forces took place at this time. It seems probable that during one of the initial skirmishes, according to one report at the village of Liao-tun (some 97 miles east of Ch'i-chiao-ching), Ma Chung-ying was quite seriously wounded, being shot through both legs.¹⁶⁵ Casualties appear to have been minimal, however, with the White Russians sustaining losses of one dead and two wounded.¹⁶⁶

As a result of the injury sustained by Ma Chung-ying, a large part of the Tungan forces present in Sinkiang retreated to north-western Kansu, taking their wounded leader with them. It has been suggested that Ma was 'bought off' for a substantial sum by Chin Shu-jen,¹⁶⁷ but there is no real evidence for this, and Ma's injuries were certainly serious enough to

merit a prolonged period of recuperation away from the front line.¹⁶⁸ Once safely back across the Kansu–Sinkiang frontier, Ma Chung-ying was given control of the four districts of An-hsi, Tun-huang, Yü-men and Soochow by his uncle Ma Pu-fang, a development which suggests that the two Tungan warlords had indeed been acting in concert at the time of Chung-ying's original invasion of Sinkiang.¹⁶⁹

Meanwhile, the advancing forces of Chang P'ei-yüan, still spearheaded by Pappengut's White Russian troops, moved further into the territory of the old Kumul Khanate, relieving the besieged garrison at Kumul Old City on or about 1 November 1931.¹⁷⁰ The victorious Chinese troops were given permission to sack Kumul, a 'reward' denied to the White Russians but not, apparently, to Chang P'ei-yüan himself.¹⁷¹ The provincial forces then set about the systematic destruction of large parts of the Kumul Khanate, levelling whole villages and terrorising the inhabitants. Chu Jui-ch'ih, the Commander of the besieged garrison, returned to Urum-chi; however, his lieutenant, Hsiung Fa-yü, remained at Kumul and began a series of mass executions. These reprisals were on such a scale that even those Uighurs who had remained neutral felt bound to join the rebellion.¹⁷² Refugees poured westward towards Turfan, whilst the Uighur insurgents withdrew to the Karlik Tagh, especially to their well-stocked mountain fastness at Bardash, which was to prove impregnable. From Bardash, according to Cable and French, they organised a widespread guerilla war against Chin's troops in collaboration with units of Ma's Tungan forces who remained in Sinkiang pending the recovery of their leader. Messages were regularly exchanged between Bardash and An-hsi by means of the desert track leading from Barkul.¹⁷³ Meanwhile, secure in his stronghold of north-western Kansu, Ma Chung-ying nursed his wounds and began to expand and re-equip his forces.

3 *Sinkiang, 1931–3: the rebellion of the Turkic-speaking Muslims of the south*

The Tungans are no less our enemy than the Han Chinese . . . Neither the Han Chinese nor the Tungans have any legitimate claim to Eastern Turkestan. We, the People of Eastern Turkestan, no longer need foreigners to be our masters.

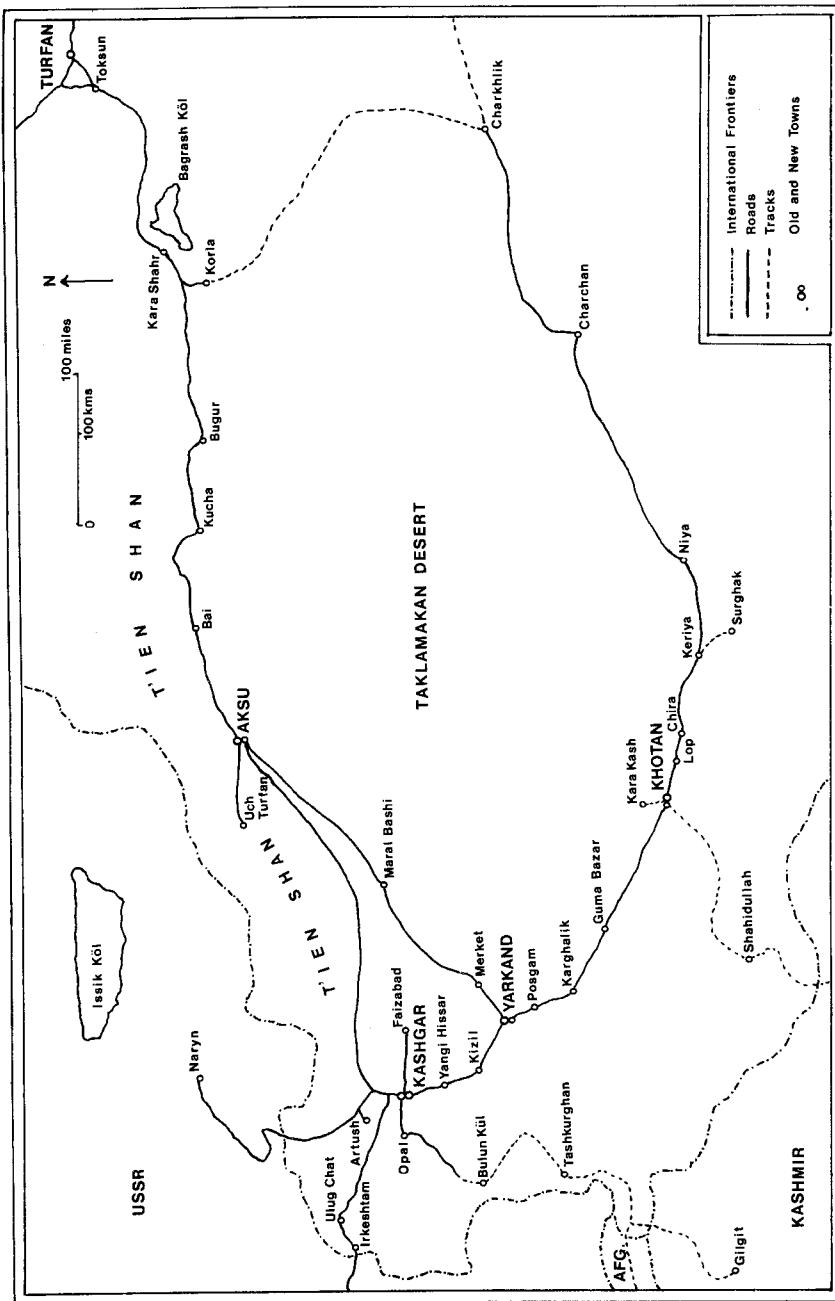
Şâbit Dâmullâh, Prime Minister of the 'Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan', Kashgar, 12 November 1933.¹

The development of Turkic nationalism in southern Sinkiang

Following the execution in June 1924 of Ma Fu-hsing, the barbarous *T'i-t'ai* of Kashgar, and the subsequent appointment of his executioner, Ma Shao-wu, to the post of *Tao-yin* at the oasis city of Khotan later in the same year,² the situation in southern Sinkiang remained peaceful until several years after the assassination of Governor Yang Tseng-hsin in July 1928. During the last years of Yang's rule southern Sinkiang, often known as 'Kashgaria', remained very much a British sphere of influence, a state of affairs which had existed since the collapse of Tsarist influence at the end of the First World War and the subsequent closure of the Imperial Russian Consulate-General at Kashgar.³

In August 1918, Sir George Macartney, Britain's long-serving Consul-General at Kashgar, finally left Sinkiang to go into retirement. He was succeeded by Colonel P. T. Etherton, a committed anti-Bolshevik who, in line with contemporary British policy, co-operated with the anti-Soviet Basmachi guerillas in Western Turkestan while working to limit the spread of Soviet influence in southern Sinkiang.⁴ Yang Tseng-hsin, who correctly perceived that British policy in Sinkiang aimed at excluding Soviet influence by encouraging the survival of (his own) stable Chinese administration,⁵ was content to permit Etherton and his successors the exercise of considerable political influence to the south of the T'ien Shan. Moreover, as Soviet prestige and influence increased in Ili and Zungharia, so Yang increased discreet co-operation with the British in Kashgar in an attempt to counter the growth of Soviet power in the north of the province.⁶

By 1924 a combination of military *realpolitik* and the re-emergence of (Soviet) Russia as Sinkiang's major trading partner had forced Yang politically to incline away from the British at provincial level. Following the signing of the Sino-Soviet agreement of 1924 (Article 1 of which provided for the re-establishment of normal diplomatic relations between Peking and Moscow),⁷ the Soviet government at Omsk sent an envoy to



Map 5 Southern Sinkiang: towns and communications

Sinkiang to discuss the question of mutual consular representation with Yang Tseng-hsin. As a result of this mission an agreement was signed on 6 October (bilaterally, without the participation of the Chinese government), providing for the exchange of consulates-general between Tashkent and Urumchi, as well as for the establishment of Soviet consulates in Sinkiang at Chuguchak, Kulja, Shara Sume and Kashgar.⁸ Yang Tseng-hsin seems to have accepted the increased Soviet presence in the north of the province with resignation if not with equanimity. The Soviet presence at Kashgar was, however, another matter. It upset the carefully maintained balance of power between Britain and the Soviet Union to too great an extent; moreover, as Yang was well aware, it permitted direct Soviet access to the densely populated oases of the Tarim Basin – the source of nearly all provincial revenue in Sinkiang.⁹

Shortly after the official opening of the Soviet Consulate at Kashgar on 10 October 1925, a local power struggle began to develop between Max Doumpiss (the Soviet Consul – a Lett by origin), Major Gillan (the British Consul-General at this time) and the *Tao-yin* of Kashgar. Sino-Soviet relations in southern Sinkiang began inauspiciously with the discovery in November 1925 of large quantities of silver bullion concealed in thirty-four boxes of Soviet ‘diplomatic bags’ *en route* to the Kashgar consulate.¹⁰ The Kashgar *Tao-yin*, who was also reportedly affronted by the ‘barely concealed dissemination of Soviet propaganda’ in the southern oases, retaliated by ordering the expulsion of a number of suspected Russian agents.¹¹ In March 1926, serious riots broke out in Kashgar which were blamed by the Chinese on an interpreter employed by the Soviet Consulate, by name Akbar ‘Ali. The rioters were suppressed by a force of 400 (local) Tungan troops and Akbar ‘Ali was thrown into prison; subsequent Soviet demands for his release were ignored by the *Tao-yin*.¹² The Chinese authorities were also seriously disturbed at the rapid expansion of Soviet consular staff of European origin from about fifteen persons in 1925 to between thirty and forty persons in 1927.¹³ All these factors must have been brought to the notice of Governor Yang Tseng-hsin in Urumchi. Yang was doubtless faced with a series of similar developments around the new Soviet Consulates at Kulja, Chuguchak and Shara Sume.¹⁴ It seems that in Kashgar, with the discreet support of the British, he determined to take action to limit the spread of Soviet influence.¹⁵

The Kashgar *Tao-yin* accordingly adopted a strong anti-Soviet line. Censorship, already severe, was tightened still further. Moreover, Yang Tseng-hsin’s ‘favourite nephew’, the Officer in Command of the Chinese troops on the Sino-Soviet frontier north of Kashgar, became a frequent and friendly visitor to the British Consulate-General at Chini Bagh in

Kashgar.¹⁶ With the death of the old *Tao-yin* in 1927 and the subsequent transfer of Ma Shao-wu from Khotan to take his place, anti-Soviet measures in southern Sinkiang were substantially increased. Ma Shao-wu's first actions included the jailing of a group of sixty alleged local communists and the tightening of Chinese control over the Sino-Soviet frontier to the north of Kashgar.¹⁷ Subsequently the freedom of the Soviet Consul to travel within southern Sinkiang was severely curtailed, and Kashgar citizens suspected of pro-Soviet sympathies became liable to the confiscation of their property and deportation to other oases.¹⁸ Yang Tseng-hsin reinforced Ma Shao-wu's attempts to limit Soviet influence in the Tarim Basin by imposing a severe tax on Muslims leaving southern Sinkiang to go on *hājj* via the Soviet Union. Similar new legislation required merchants visiting the Soviet Union to deposit a substantial sum with the Chinese authorities at Kashgar which was forfeit if the depositor failed to return to Sinkiang within sixty days.¹⁹

These policies failed to isolate southern Sinkiang entirely from Soviet influence, but they did ensure that at the time of Yang Tseng-hsin's assassination in 1928 the southern part of the province, and particularly Ma Shao-wu's fief around Kashgar, Yarkand and Khotan, retained considerable independence from the Soviet Union. This was in marked contrast to the Ili Valley, Chuguchak and Shara Sume (where Soviet influence became paramount soon after 1925), and even to the provincial capital at Urumchi, where, by the spring of 1928, the Soviet Consul-General wielded considerable influence.²⁰

It was perhaps due to Ma Shao-wu's anti-Soviet stance and the continuing dominance of British influence in southern Sinkiang during the last years of Yang Tseng-hsin's rule that Kashgar was to emerge as a centre of conservative Muslim reaction to Chinese rule during the 1930s. Because of Yang Tseng-hsin's deliberate attempt to isolate southern Sinkiang from Soviet influence, the Uighurs (and to a lesser extent the Kirghiz) of the Tarim Basin were less influenced by the 'progressive' nationalist propaganda emanating from Soviet-dominated Western Turkestan than were the Turkic-speaking Muslims of the Ili Valley and Zungharia. This is not to suggest that the socialist nationalism advocated by the *Jadid*-ists after 1917 failed to make any headway south of the T'ien Shan; nevertheless Kashgar, which lay outside the Soviet sphere of influence in north-western Sinkiang, provided a natural haven for right-wing Turkic nationalists and Islamic traditionalists who rejected Chinese rule but who were still more bitterly opposed to the advance of 'atheistic communism' and its Soviet champions in Central Asia. Many of these right-wing Turkic-speaking nationalists were defeated Basmachi guerrillas, chiefly of Uzbek, Kazakh and Kirghiz nationality, but including a number of Ottoman Turks and, according to Caroe, 'old men who had

fought against the Chinese at Kashgar'.²¹ Perhaps the most prominent Basmachi leader to flee to Kashgar was Jānib Beg, a Kirghiz who was to play an important role in the politics of southern Sinkiang during the early 1930s. After Yang Tseng-hsin's assassination in July 1928, Soviet influence in southern Sinkiang began rapidly to increase; nevertheless, at the time of the Kumul Rebellion in 1931, rumours of forced collectivisation and the suppression of nomadism in Western Turkestan sufficed to make many Turkic Muslims of southern Sinkiang suspicious of Soviet motives.

If, during the late 1920s and early 1930s, the Turkic Muslims of southern Sinkiang were divided in their approach towards the Soviet Union and the newly emergent Turkic (and Tajik) SSRs in Western Turkestan, they were at least united in their attitude towards their Tungan co-religionists to the east. Unlike the Turkic Muslim rebels of Kumul, the Uighurs and Kirghiz of southern Sinkiang were too far distant from Kansu to appeal for assistance from the Tungan warlords of the 'Five Ma' clique. Besides, Han Chinese rule in the oases of the Tarim Basin had long been maintained by Tungan troops and officials.²² Ma Fuhsing, the *T'i-t'ai* of Kashgar who had so ruthlessly exploited his Turkic Muslim subjects between 1916 and 1924, had been a Hui Muslim from Yunnan; similarly Ma Shao-wu was himself a Yunnanese Muslim. The Turkic Muslims of southern Sinkiang therefore entertained no illusions of 'Muslim brotherhood' with their Tungan co-religionists. It was Tungan troops who intervened to suppress any demonstration against Chinese misrule. The Tungans of the Tarim Basin were the allies of the Han Chinese administration and as such the enemies of the Turkic Muslim peoples – at least until they proved themselves otherwise.

The Tarim Basin, and particularly its western rim, was therefore unique in Sinkiang politics during the latter half of Yang Tseng-hsin's rule in that a large part of its Turkic Muslim population looked neither to the 'progressive' Muslim leadership of Western Turkestan nor to the Tungan warlords of Kansu; instead attention seems to have been focused on the conservative reformist regimes in Turkey and Afghanistan. Contacts between Turkey and southern Sinkiang were never strong, though the Sinkiang Muslims doubtless recalled that between 1873 and 1877 the Ottoman flag had flown over Kashgar and coins had been minted which bore the name of the Turkish Sultan 'Abd al-'Azīz.²³ Since the time of the Ch'ing reconquest tenuous links had been maintained through the activities of pan-Turanian idealists such as Husayn Bay Bachcha of Artush,²⁴ but with the defeat of the Ottoman Empire during the First World War contacts ceased almost completely. Emotional links remained strong, however,²⁵ and the nationalist revolution of Atatürk (who had little personal interest in pan-Turanianism) represented a

Turkish national renaissance which inspired all shades of Turkic opinion from the Crimea to Kumul.

Political and religious contacts with Afghanistan, which shares a common frontier with southern Sinkiang, were rather more concrete than the links with distant Turkey. In 1919 *Amīr* Amān Allāh, the last Muhammadzay ruler of Afghanistan, seized the throne of the country on the death of his father. Amān Allāh was an impetuous ruler who was ultimately to bring about his own downfall through the implementation of a series of drastic and forced reforms which were to result in the revolution of 1928.²⁶ In 1919, however, shortly after his seizure of power, Amān Allāh won widespread support amongst the Muslim peoples of Central Asia by launching, in the Third Afghan War against the British, a combined *jihād* and struggle for Afghan independence. As a result of this conflict the British were forced to acknowledge Afghanistan's right to an independent foreign policy.²⁷

During the decade following the outbreak of the First World War there emerged widespread support for Islamic revivalist and even 'pan-Turanian' sentiment in Afghanistan.²⁸ In 1915 a joint Turco-German mission under the leadership of the German Von Hentig travelled to Kabul where, by emphasising the shared Islamic links between Afghanistan and the Ottoman Empire (as well, no doubt, as Kaiser Wilhelm's claim to be the defender of the Muslim World), it attempted to persuade the *Amīr* Habīb Allāh to declare war on the British in India. Habīb Allāh, though no friend of the British, was too cautious to commit himself; accordingly the mission left Kabul in May 1916,²⁹ and Von Hentig, together with two German colleagues, travelled to Yarkand in southern Sinkiang. Once in Yarkand, Von Hentig is reported to have intrigued with members of the city's influential Afghan population until his arrest by Hsu Tao-yin and subsequent deportation to China proper cut short these activities.³⁰ Despite the failure of the Von Hentig Mission, Afghan support for the Ottoman cause remained strong at popular level throughout the First World War, and with the defeat of Turkey this support seems to have been transferred to the Basmachi guerillas, under the leadership of Enver Pasha, in their struggle against the Soviets.³¹ Moreover, in 1919, soon after the conclusion of the short-lived Third Afghan War, Enver Pasha's brother, Jamāl, arrived in Kabul. Jamāl, who may have been receiving Soviet backing, immediately established the 'Islamic Revolutionary League', an organisation purportedly dedicated to the freeing of India from British domination.³²

Amān Allāh thus came to the throne of Afghanistan at a time of considerable religious and political ferment. He is known to have been influenced by the pan-Turanian Basmachi movement, and during the first years of his rule he is said to have toyed with the idea of creating an

Islamic Confederacy which was to have included Afghanistan, Bukhara, Khiva and Khokand.³³ Certainly Amān Allāh was interested in promoting Afghan influence in Sinkiang, where numerous Afghan merchants (particularly from Badakhshan) had long resided under British protection. Following Britain's recognition of Afghanistan's right to an independent foreign policy by the Treaty of Peshawar in 1919, British diplomatic protection of Afghan citizens in Sinkiang was withdrawn. Amān Allāh accordingly determined to establish independent diplomatic links between Kabul and Urumchi, and, following negotiations with a (Sinkiang) Chinese delegation sent to Kabul by Yang Tseng-hsin in the summer of 1922, an Afghan mission under Muhammad Sharif Khan was despatched to Yarkand, arriving in the autumn of the same year. The Chinese authorities regarded the Afghan mission as a trade delegation, but Muhammad Sharif Khan carried printed visiting cards styling himself 'Afghan Consul-General in Sinkiang'; moreover he submitted a draft agreement to the Chinese demanding full extraterritorial rights and other privileges for Afghan subjects in Sinkiang, as well as the right to import opium freely into the province. Not surprisingly, Yang refused to agree to these demands, restricting his recognition of the Afghan mission to the level of that enjoyed by the Soviet representative at Kulja. An acrimonious dispute between Muhammad Sharif Khan and the provincial authorities dragged on throughout the remainder of Yang's rule, but the Afghan mission refused to leave Sinkiang, remaining at Yarkand as a focus of discontent for the Turkic-speaking Muslims of the south. As a result of this Afghan presence something of an Afghan cult began to develop at Yarkand, and the Chinese authorities at Kashgar were disturbed to hear that some local Turkic-speaking peoples were studying Pushtu.³⁴ Certainly links were established between the Afghans and Turkic nationalist circles in southern Sinkiang during this period; both British and German diplomatic sources report that in February 1927 a deputation came from Sinkiang to Kabul where it sought the backing of the Afghan government for a projected Muslim rising against the Chinese. Amān Allāh, beset by problems of his own, held out no prospect of aid for the intended insurgents, but apparently indicated his willingness to accept Muslim refugees from Sinkiang in Afghanistan.³⁵ Despite this rebuff, many Turkic Muslims of southern Sinkiang continued to look to Kabul (and in some cases beyond, to Ankara) at the time of Yang Tseng-hsin's assassination in 1928.

The outbreak of rebellion in the south and the collapse of the Chinese administration

Throughout the initial stages of the Kumul rising and the subsequent Tungan invasion, Chin Shu-jen made every effort to prevent news from the north-east of the province reaching the Muslim population of the still quiescent south.³⁶ However, contemporary British diplomatic reports (as well as subsequent events)³⁷ indicate that all attempts to isolate the south ended in failure; rumours and reports from the rebellious north-east continued to flood into the oases of the Tarim Basin, inflaming anti-Chinese feeling amongst an indigenous population already indignant at the imposition of increased taxes and the forced issue of huge quantities of unbacked paper currency to pay for Chin's war effort.³⁸

Chin Shu-jen was doubtless aware of the tensions existing in the south of the province, but, encouraged by his apparent victory over Ma Chung-ying as well as by the delivery of 4,000 rifles and 4 million rounds of ammunition from British India,³⁹ he determined to maintain his uncompromising stance. This decision was to prove most unwise. The rebellion at Kumul, far from being crushed, continued to smoulder; moreover the brutalities inflicted on the Muslim inhabitants of the Kumul area by Hsiung Fa-yü following the relief of Kumul Old City in November 1931 caused widespread anger amongst the Turkic-speaking elements of the population and a constant movement of refugees westward towards Turfan. In or about May 1932, Ma Chung-ying sent one of his Lieutenants, a young Tungan called Ma Shih-ming, to take command of the Tungan forces remaining in Sinkiang.⁴⁰ Ma Shih-ming established his base near Turfan, probably in the mountains to the north of the town. From here he worked in close co-operation with the Turkic-speaking Muslim insurgents owing allegiance to Yulbārs Khan and Khoja Niyās Hājjī; he is also thought to have made contact with Ma Fu-ming, a Tungan Officer in Command of the Sinkiang provincial forces at Turfan.⁴¹

By coincidence, it was also during May 1932 that Chin Shu-jen decided to revenge himself upon Tsetsen Puntsag Gegeen, Regent of the Torgut Mongols inhabiting the T'ien Shan north of Kara Shahr, for the latter's refusal to commit his Torgut cavalry to the struggle against Ma Chung-ying's invading Tungans. Tsetsen Puntsag Gegeen was accordingly invited to travel to Urumchi where it was understood that he would be able to attend an investigation into the assassination plotted against him.⁴² On 21 May, shortly after his arrival in Urumchi, Tsetsen Puntsag Gegeen, together with two Torgut Officers and the young Torgut Prince (who was under age), were invited to an official banquet at Chin Shu-jen's *yamen*. Once again, in the best tradition of Yang Tseng-hsin, the

banquet was to become a bloodbath. According to R. P. Watts, the British Vice Consul-General at Kashgar who chanced to arrive in Urumchi on the very day of the murders:

While drinking the usual preliminary cup of tea the regent and the two military officers were led out into a courtyard and executed. According to Chinese custom in such matters proper observance was accorded to the high rank of regent even at the moment of execution. A red carpet was spread on the ground on which he was invited to seat himself. He was then killed by being shot through the head from behind by one of the governor's special executioners. His two companions being men of inferior rank were not given the privilege of a red carpet to sit on whilst being executed.⁴³

The young prince was later permitted to return to Kara Shahr. Seemingly, Chin intended by his harsh action to remove the stubborn and powerful Torgut Regent whilst terrifying the young Torgut Prince with a display of ruthless power. In the event, Chin's treachery and brutality merely served to alienate the Torgut Mongols – the one minority nationality in Sinkiang which might normally have been expected to side with the Han Chinese against the Turkic-speaking Muslims of the province.⁴⁴ With trouble about to break out amongst the Uighurs and Tungans of Turfan, as well as amongst the nomadic Kirghiz of the T'ien Shan, Chin Shu-jen could hardly have chosen a worse time to anger the Torguts.

Early in 1932, Turkic Muslim opposition to the forced collectivisation and suppression of nomadism pursued by Stalin in the Kazakh and Kirghiz regions of Soviet Central Asia, began to spill over the Sino-Soviet frontier into Sinkiang.⁴⁵ In March 1932, large numbers of Kirghiz were driven across the Sinkiang frontier by pursuing Soviet forces. A series of guerilla counter-attacks against the Soviets were mounted from Chinese territory, and in raids on Koksu and two other Soviet posts a total of thirty-seven Russian troops were killed.⁴⁶ The 'Soviet' Kirghiz refugees naturally received aid and support from their 'Chinese' Kirghiz brethren, and in June 1932 a Chinese official was killed by Kirghiz insurgents in the T'ien Shan. The Chinese were reportedly 'much incensed' at this development, and Ma Shao-wu despatched 300 troops from Kashgar New City and 200 troops from Kashgar Old City to the frontier area. These units were joined by a further 100 troops from Opal, twenty-five miles south-west of Kashgar, and 200 troops from the Uch Turfan area, the combined forces being placed under Brigadier Yang, Yang Tseng-hsin's 'favourite nephew', reportedly one of the few competent officers in the Kashgar region.⁴⁷ In July 1932, Yang's force began joint operations with the Soviet forces against the Kirghiz insurgents under the leadership of 'Id Mirāb. The Chinese forces 'who are said to have been suffering badly from want of opium', reportedly behaved very badly towards the

Kirghiz, a number of whom were driven to take refuge in Russian territory. In an attempt to ensure future Kirghiz submission to Chinese rule, Yang's forces took about seventy hostages from a wide number of Kirghiz families; these unfortunate individuals were carried off from the high T'ien Shan and held prisoner in the lowland oases of Khotan, Keriya and Charchan.⁴⁸ Chin Shu-jen and Ma Shao-wu thus succeeded, within a few months of Ma Chung-ying's withdrawal to Kansu, in alienating both the Turkic-speaking and Mongol nomads of the T'ien Shan. Nor can the lesson of joint Sino-Soviet action against the Kirghiz and emerging Soviet military backing for Chin Shu-jen's regime have been lost on the Turkic-speaking Muslims of southern Sinkiang;⁴⁹ indeed it is likely that these developments strengthened the position of the conservative Uighur nationalists at Khotan, Yarkand and Kashgar.

Meanwhile the influence of the continuing Muslim rebellion at Kumul spread rapidly westwards. In the autumn of 1932, some months after Ma Shih-ming's arrival in the Turfan region, Ma Fu-ming, the Tungan Officer in Command of the provincial garrison at Turfan, went over to the rebel forces together with his troops.⁵⁰ Wu Ai-chen implies that Ma Fu-ming's decision was based on the continuing flow of Muslim refugees from Kumul to Turfan combined with reports of the mass executions being carried out in the Kumul region by Hsiung Fa-yü;⁵¹ however, it is at least as probable that Ma Fu-ming came to an arrangement with his fellow Tungan, Ma Shih-ming, and decided to throw in his lot with the Kansu Tungan forces threatening Turfan. According to Wu Ai-chen, Ma Fu-ming's first action was to send a telegram to Chin Shu-jen at Urumchi requesting the despatch of reinforcements; he also sent a letter to Hsiung Fa-yü at Kumul, asking him to come to Turfan as swiftly as possible. A detachment of troops was duly despatched from Urumchi to Turfan; they entered the oasis without suspecting treachery and were shot down 'to the last man' by Ma Fu-ming's forces as they passed the city gates.⁵² Some days later a detachment of just over 100 men under the command of Hsiung Fa-yü reached Turfan from the east and suffered the same fate. Hsiung was taken prisoner and later 'tortured to death in public with every refinement of cruelty and vileness of method'.⁵³ Following Ma Fu-ming's defection, the Turfan Depression became the main centre of Muslim rebellion in north-eastern Sinkiang; Kumul, which had been largely destroyed by the vengeful Chin Shu-jen after Ma Chung-ying's withdrawal to Kansu, was left to the Turkic Muslim insurgents and a handful of Tungan troops, but the greater part of the Tungan forces opposed to Chin Shu-jen, whether rebels under the 'renegade general' Ma Fu-ming, or invaders from Kansu under the command of Ma Chung-ying's adjutant Ma Shih-ming, massed at Turfan in preparation for an

attack across the Dawan Ch'eng on Urumchi itself, a mere 100 miles to the north-west.

The developments at Turfan, following closely on the Muslim rising at Kumul, were shortly followed by a series of apparently unco-ordinated risings amongst the Turkic-speaking Muslims of southern Sinkiang. It was doubtless apparent to the Uighurs of the Tarim Basin and the Kirghiz of the T'ien Shan that Chin Shu-jen's grip on the province was slipping; moreover, the presence of rebel Tungan forces in Turfan at the southern end of the Dawan Ch'eng effectively isolated the oases of the south from the provincial capital at Urumchi and Chin Shu-jen's White Russian troops – a force which might otherwise have intimidated the Uighurs and Kirghiz of *Nan-lu*. As it was, however, the White Russian and other provincial forces were hard-pressed by the combined Tungan forces of Ma Fu-ming and Ma Shih-ming; reports that Ma Chung-ying would shortly re-enter the fray in person were rife, and Chang P'ei-yüan, the Military Commander at Ili, had fallen out with Chin Shu-jen and could no longer be relied upon by the Urumchi authorities.⁵⁴ The Turkic-speaking Muslims of southern Sinkiang were thus in a better position to rebel against Chinese rule than at any time since the rising of Ya'qūb Beg in the early 1860s.

Events moved with startling rapidity. In the winter of 1932-3 successful risings occurred at Pichan (Ch. Shan-shan) to the east of Turfan, and at Kara Shahr some 175 miles to the south-west.⁵⁵ Lack of Torgut support at Kara Shahr following the murder of Tsetsen Puntsag Gegeen sealed the fate of the Chinese forces in that city, and a new Tungan leader, Ma Chan-ts'ang, emerged as Commander of the rebel forces in this area.⁵⁶ Ignoring the increasingly bitter struggle between Ma Shih-ming and the provincial forces on the Turfan-Urumchi road, Ma Chan-ts'ang marched westwards, capturing Bugur in early February and advancing to Kucha where he entered into an alliance of convenience with Temür, the local Uighur leader, described by Wu Ai-chen as 'an able fellow who had been head of the mule wagon service'. Having occupied Kucha without hostilities, the joint forces of Ma Chan-ts'ang and Temür then advanced towards Aksu, taking the small town of Bai *en route*.⁵⁷

Ma Shao-wu, the Yunnanese Muslim *Tao-yin* of Kashgar and the second most powerful official in the provincial administration after Chin Shu-jen, thus found himself cut off from the provincial capital at Urumchi by two separate armies of Muslim rebels, each composed of separate but allied Tungan and Turkic factions. One such army, apparently comprising a small but militarily competent Tungan force under Ma Chan-ts'ang and a much larger but poorly-armed mass of Uighur peasants owing allegiance to Temür, was advancing south-westwards towards Aksu; the

other army, a loose alliance of extremely competent Tungan troops under Ma Shih-ming and Ma Fu-ming fighting alongside a predominantly peasant army of Turkic-speaking Muslims owing allegiance to Khoja Niyās Hājjī and Yulbārs Khan, continued to press its attack across the Dawan Ch'eng on Urumchi.

In February 1933, completing the confusion in the south (as well as the isolation of Ma Shao-wu at Kashgar), the rebellion against the Chinese spread southwards across the Tarim Basin to its southern rim. Fitzmaurice, the British Consul-General at Kashgar, blamed this development on Tungan agitators sent to the Khotan and Keriya oases from Kucha.⁵⁸ Whatever the truth of this assertion, risings against the Chinese administration broke out almost simultaneously amongst the gold-miners of Surghak, near Keriya, and of Kara Kash, near Khotan. The gold-miners of the southern oases had long resented the imposition by the provincial government of a fixed rate for the purchase of gold throughout Sinkiang; moreover conditions of employment were extremely harsh.⁵⁹ As a result of the spiralling inflation which resulted from Chin Shu-jen's unrestrained issues of unbacked paper notes, the miners of Surghak and Kara Kash were forced to exchange their gold for increasingly worthless paper currency.⁶⁰ By the spring of 1933 their patience with the provincial authorities had clearly run out, and Uighurs under the leadership of Ismā'il Khan Khoja seized control of Kara Kash, killing the *Amban* and a number of other Han Chinese; at the same time rebellious Uighurs at Keriya seized control of the Surghak mines and threatened to take over the whole oasis. Rebel notices displayed at Kara Kash and subsequently conveyed to the British Consul-General at Kashgar indicate that rebellion broke out as a result of economic unrest in the gold-mining community. Prominent rebel demands included the lifting of government-imposed trade monopolies, the payment of a fair price for the purchase of gold and silver, and prohibition on the purchase of precious metals with paper currency. More general demands included the lowering of taxes, a prohibition on usury, an end to government tyranny, the introduction of Islamic *Shari'a* law, and the stationing of Muslim soldiers 'in every city'.⁶¹ The notices indicated a willingness to compromise with the Chinese authorities, promising that, if their demands were met, the rebels were 'ready to live as peaceful subjects'.⁶² Moreover it is noteworthy that, although the gold-miners of Kara Kash represented a rare example of a genuine proletariat in Republican Sinkiang, there was no indication of Soviet or socialist influence in the terminology employed by the rebel leadership; rather the tone was distinctly Islamic, adding weight to the evidence that the south Sinkiang rebellion of 1933 was primarily of a religious nationalist character, and not pro-Soviet. Thus the anonymous author of one of the

Karakash notices addressed the Chinese authorities in the following terms:

A friend for the sake of friendship will make known a friend's defects and save him from the consequences of his defects. You, who are supposed to rule, cannot even realise this, but try to seek out the supporter of Islam to kill him. Foolish infidels like you are not fit to rule . . . How can an infidel, who cannot distinguish between a friend and a foe, be fit to rule? You infidels think that because you have rifles, guns . . . and money, you can depend on them; but we depend upon God in whose hands are our lives. You infidels think that you will take our lives. If you do not send a reply to this notice we are ready. If we die we are martyrs. If we survive we are conquerors. We are living but long for death.⁶³

Ma Shao-wu, the Kashgar *Tao-yin*, decided to move first against the Muslim insurgents threatening Aksu – no doubt reasoning that, should Ma Chan-ts'ang and Temūr be defeated, the much weaker rebel forces at Kara Kash and Surghak would offer little resistance. Another reason for relieving Aksu lay in the fact that Ma Shih-ming's forces at Turfan had severed the telegraph line between Urumchi and Kashgar; the line had been re-routed via Aksu, but, if Aksu were to fall to rebel forces, communication with the provincial capital would be possible only via the USSR, thus permitting Soviet interception of secret cables.⁶⁴ Accordingly Brigadier Yang, at the head of a mixed force of 280 cavalry and 150 infantry, set out for Aksu on 6 February 1933.⁶⁵

Ma Shao-wu's position was not strong. On 9 February Chin Shu-chih, the younger brother of Chin Shu-jen and Commander-in-Chief at Kashgar New City, died after a sudden illness.⁶⁶ His place was taken by a Chinese officer called Liu, who took command of three detachments of cavalry (estimated strength 480 men) and one detachment of artillery (estimated strength 160 men) formerly under the command of Chin Shu-chih. Ma Shao-wu retained direct command over two regiments of cavalry (estimated strength 700 men) and three detachments of infantry (estimated strength 300 men), all stationed at Kashgar Old City.⁶⁷ In the middle of February reports reached Kashgar that Brigadier Yang, heavily outnumbered by the rebels under Ma Chan-ts'ang and Temūr, had fallen back from Aksu and was holding a defensive line at Maral Bashi. On 23 February celebrations were held at Kashgar to mark Chin Shu-jen's conferral of the title 'Special Commissioner for the Suppression of Bandits' on Ma Shao-wu: salutes were fired at the *yamen* and Kuomin-tang flags were flown on buildings throughout the city.⁶⁸ Shortly afterwards 'practically all' the New City forces under the command of Liu were despatched to Maral Bashi to bolster the position of General Yang.⁶⁹ In a bid to suppress the risings at Surghak and Kara Kash before a full-scale rising could develop on the south road, 200 men under the command of a Colonel Li were despatched to Khotan; similarly a force of

unspecified strength under Colonel Chin, the former *Amban* of Maral Bashi, was despatched to Yarkand.⁷⁰ Since the movement of troops to both the Khotan and Maral Bashi fronts resulted in the serious depletion of the forces defending Kashgar, Ma Shao-wu ordered the raising of a force of Kirghiz levies and recalled Chinese troops from the frontier districts to the west of Kashgar. As a result of these policies, the Chinese garrison at Sarikol withdrew to Kashgar on 12 February, leaving the region's Tajik inhabitants to their own devices pending the restoration of Chinese authority elsewhere in southern Sinkiang.⁷¹ At Kashgar itself soldiers were posted on the walls of both cities, orders were given for the closure of all city gates at 7 o'clock in the evening, and restrictions were placed on the movement of the local inhabitants.⁷²

Despite these moves, the provincial forces proved quite incapable of stemming the rebel advance along both the north and south roads to Kashgar. On 25 February rebel forces entered Aksu Old City, shot all the Chinese residents and seized their property; it seems probable that this was the work of Temür's men, as the Tungan forces of Ma Chan-ts'ang are reported to have peacefully occupied Aksu New City, where they took possession of both the arsenal and the treasury. British consular sources reporting the fall of Aksu indicate clearly for the first time that Ma Chan-ts'ang, at the head of approximately 300 well-armed Tungan troops, was allied to Ma Shih-ming at Kara Shahr, and hence to Ma Chung-ying, still recuperating from his wounds in north-western Kansu. The contents of the Aksu New City treasury and arsenal were reportedly sent to the Tungan headquarters at Kara Shahr.⁷³ Later Ma Chang-ts'ang, accompanied by Temür at the head of an estimated 4,700 ill-armed Uighur irregulars, resumed his advance on Maral Bashi and Kashgar.⁷⁴

Meanwhile, on the southern road, both Keriya and Khotan passed into the hands of Uighur insurgents. In the Keriya oasis the Han Chinese officials agreed to adopt Islam and to hand over their goods, but on 3 March a group of thirty-five Chinese, including the leading officials, were executed and their heads hung up in the bazaar.⁷⁵ Khotan Old City seems to have passed into rebel hands with minimal resistance on or about 28 February, whilst Khotan New City came under siege before surrendering to the insurgents on 16 March.⁷⁶ As a result of the rebel victories at Khotan, a reported 266 Han Chinese agreed to accept Islam, whilst both the New City treasury and arsenal, containing 'thousands of weapons and almost a ton of gold', fell into insurgent hands.⁷⁷ Meanwhile successful risings also occurred at Chira, under the leadership of a Uighur called 'Abd al-Qādir, and at Shamba Bazaar, where numerous Han Chinese and two Hindu money-lenders were murdered.⁷⁸ Beyond Keriya the oasis town of Niya fell to rebel forces from Khotan,⁷⁹ whilst still further to the east, at the remote oases of Charchan and Charkhlik, bloodless risings

are reported to have taken place after a small Tungan force owing allegiance to Ma Shih-ming advanced into the region via the little-used desert track between Kara Shahr and Lop.⁸⁰

Meanwhile, to the west of Khotan, Uighur forces under Ismā'il Khan Khoja blocked the main road to Yarkand at the caravanserai of Tokhta Langar and turned back all but two of a delegation of Uighur notables sent from Kashgar by Ma Shao-wu in an attempt to negotiate with the rebel leadership at Khotan. Nothing further was heard from the two *Begs* permitted to proceed to Khotan, and with the failure of their mission the whole south road from the eastern fringes of the Guma oasis to distant Lop Nor passed out of Chinese control. The rebel leaders at Khotan secured their position against possible counter-attack from Kashgar by destroying the roadside wells in the desert to the east of Guma, and proceeded to set up an overtly Islamic administration in the 'liberated areas'.⁸¹

By mid-March 1933, Ma Shao-wu's political control over southern Sinkiang was effectively limited to a wedge of territory roughly defined by the provincial garrisons at Kashgar, Maral Bashi and Yarkand. Morale, already low, was not improved by the refusal of the British Indian government to send troops to the assistance of the Chinese at Kashgar despite an official request made to the British Consul-General by Ma Shao-wu on 25 February.⁸² It was all too apparent that no help would be forthcoming from Urumchi; after the cutting of telegraph links between Kashgar and Urumchi at Aksu, Ma Shao-wu received three telegrams from Chin Shu-jen via the Soviet Union. The first confirmed Ma in his position as Commander-in-Chief of the provincial forces in the south; the second related to the winding up of the estate of Chin's late brother, Chin Shu-chih; and the third directed Chin's Kashgar representative to remit a large sum of money to Tientsin where the Provincial Chairman maintained a personal bank account.⁸³

Despite the reinforcement of Yarkand by troops under the command of Colonel Chin (subsequently sent to the south-eastern front at Guma), rampant inflation continued unchecked and a sense of panic developed amongst the Chinese officials stationed in the region.⁸⁴ In response the Chinese *Amban* at Yarkand New City, described by Fitzmaurice as a 'classical scholar', ordered his counterpart and all Chinese residents of Yarkand Old City to withdraw at once within the fortified New City, the walls of which were hurriedly repaired and stocked with heavy stones to throw on the heads of besieging rebel forces; at the same time 500 dummy figures were added to these defences 'in order to give the impression of a well-manned rampart'.⁸⁵ Meanwhile, on or about 21 March, the insurgent forces at Tokhta Langar resumed their advance on Yarkand. Colonel Chin's forces seem to have made no attempt to resist the rebel

attack, but instead looted Guma, and fell back via little-used hill tracks by-passing Karghalik and Posgam, killing a large number of Uighur civilians *en route*.⁸⁶ The rebel forces, advancing unopposed by the main road towards Yarkand, seized Karghalik on 24 March and Posgam one day later. In both places a number of Hindu moneylenders of British Indian nationality were killed, and their property looted.⁸⁷

Meanwhile, in Yarkand New City, the provincial forces continued to strengthen their defences. Towards the end of March a group of 150 Chinese troops who had succeeded in fleeing the rebels at Khotan arrived in Yarkand; a further 300 Chinese troops were reported to have arrived in the oasis on 2 April.⁸⁸ No doubt these troops were used to strengthen the New City garrison, which had been sadly depleted by fighting on the Maral Bashi front.⁸⁹ During late March and early April, large numbers of Muslim insurgents had massed on the east bank of the Yarkand River; although reportedly ill-armed and untrained, the rebels crossed the river in the first week of April and advanced against Yarkand itself. On 11 April Yarkand Old City fell to a mixed force of insurgents from Khotan, Karghalik and Posgam; an estimated 100 Han Chinese who were still outside the fortified New City were caught and massacred. According to British sources, Afghan nationals from Badakhshan present in Yarkand took part in the attack on the Old City *yamen*.⁹⁰ During the afternoon of 11 April the bazaar between Yarkand Old and New Cities was set on fire and destroyed; the shops of Chinese moneylenders were destroyed and their property looted, and Yarkand New City came under siege. On 12 April rebel forces advanced beyond Yarkand to Kök Rabat, one stage on the road to Kashgar; meanwhile insurgent reinforcements from Khotan began to stream into the Yarkand Oasis.⁹¹

By early April 1933 Ma Shao-wu's position was almost untenable. His only hope lay in reaching an agreement with the attacking force of his fellow Hui, Ma Chan-ts'ang, or failing that in the militarily competent but politically unreliable Kirghiz levies raised in March after the withdrawal of Chinese units from the western frontier at Sarikol and elsewhere. Negotiations with Ma Chan-ts'ang were duly opened through the agency of Fitzmaurice, the British Consul-General at Kashgar;⁹² these appeared promising, but Ma Chan-ts'ang could not speak for his Uighur ally, Temür – indeed, relations between the two rebel leaders had apparently become increasingly strained.

Unfortunately for Ma Shao-wu, his harsh action against the Kirghiz rebels under 'Id Mirâb during the previous summer had made Kirghiz co-operation in the maintenance of Chinese power a vain hope.⁹³ On 5 April a large force of Kirghiz levies mutinied at Sughun Karaul, a Chinese fortified post some sixty-five miles north-west of Kashgar. Almost simultaneously, peasant risings broke out amongst the Uighur population

at Artush, some fifteen miles north-west of Kashgar, and at Fayzabad, approximately forty miles due east of Kashgar.⁹⁴ Calculating correctly that the mounted and well-armed Kirghiz levies posed a more immediate threat to Kashgar than either the Khotanlik rebels, still largely occupied with the siege of Yarkand New City, or the forces of Ma Chan-ts'ang (with whom discreet negotiations were still in progress), on 13 April Ma Shao-wu ordered Brigadier Yang and the troops on the Maral Bashi front to fall back on Kashgar. Before withdrawing from Maral Bashi, Yang's troops looted and burned the town, after which:

They set out on their way to Kashgar with a large number of carts laden with refugees or loot or both; but this proved to be the last straw. The troops made slow progress, and in the meantime the whole countryside, incensed beyond endurance, rose against the Chinese. A bridge was broken at Kara Yulgun and, while the column was halted, it was set upon by a vast horde of rebels.⁹⁵

As a result of this attack, Brigadier Yang was wounded and taken prisoner by the rebels. Of his original force, estimated by Fitzmaurice at well over a thousand men, a mere sixty-five had straggled back to Kashgar by 27 April.⁹⁶ Meanwhile the main force of the Kirghiz mutineers had advanced to Artush by 15 April; from here they menaced Kashgar whilst other Kirghiz bands attacked Kizil Oi and Ulugh Chat on the road to Irkeshtam and demolished the Chinese post at Bulun Kül in Sarikol.⁹⁷ With the disintegration of Yang's Maral-bashi force Kashgar was completely isolated.

Ma Shao-wu, no doubt still hoping to reach an agreement with Ma Chan-ts'ang, remained in residence at the Old City *yamen*, but took the precaution of putting Kashgar New City, with its comparatively small Uighur population, into a state of defence. Guns were accordingly set up on the New City walls, the city gates were kept almost permanently closed, and freedom to enter or leave was restricted to residents carrying official passes.⁹⁸

At this stage, with the Chinese administration supine and apparently awaiting the *coup de grâce*, trouble began to develop between the invading Tungan forces and the various Turkic Muslim factions. It appears that Ma Chan-ts'ang, apparently worried by reports of Uighur insurgency at Khotan and beyond which clearly owed no loyalty to his own Tungan forces,⁹⁹ determined to reach an agreement with Ma Shao-wu (who had already indicated a willingness to compromise) by which Tungan power might be established at Kashgar, the military and economic key to all southern Sinkiang. He accordingly sent a message to the besieged *Tao-yin* via the British Consul-General at Kashgar in which he offered assurances that the sole objective of the Tungan forces in Sinkiang was the overthrow of the tyrannical Chin Shu-jen and the

reform of the provincial administration.¹⁰⁰ Having thus distanced himself from the Turkic-speaking Muslims of the south, whose apparent aim was complete secession from the Chinese Republic, Ma Chan-ts'ang advanced on Kashgar in the company of Temür and his Uighur forces.¹⁰¹

Meanwhile, in Kashgar Old City, Turkic-speaking nationalist elements represented by a group referred to in British diplomatic sources as the Young Kashgar Party (YKP) had become suspicious of Ma Chan-ts'ang's motives, and were anxious to prevent collusion between the Kansu Tungans and Ma Shao-wu – a development which the Uighur nationalists feared would lead to Tungan domination of Kashgar and the replacement of a Han Chinese colonial regime by a Tungan colonial regime. Accordingly seven leading members of the YKP set out from Kashgar to persuade Ma Chan-ts'ang that Ma Shao-wu was determined to offer resistance. The YKP representatives met the Aksu leaders at Fayzabad, where consultations were apparently being held with 'Uthmān 'Ali, the leader of the Kirghiz mutineers. On hearing that Ma Shao-wu was not prepared to surrender but had armed all the Chinese in the oasis, the rebel leaders agreed that 'Uthmān 'Ali should attack and attempt to capture Kashgar Old City. Ma Chan-ts'ang doubtless agreed to this move in the hope that the elimination of Ma Shao-wu – who had remained at his *yamen* in the Old City – would open the way to a deal with some more compliant Tungan leader in the better fortified New City.¹⁰²

Following the rebel conference at Fayzabad, the attack on Kashgar Old City went ahead as planned. Early in the morning on 2 May a considerable force of Kirghiz under the command of 'Uthmān 'Ali approached Kashgar from the direction of Artush. After crossing the Tumen River the mounted Kirghiz opened a swift attack on the Old City. According to eye-witness reports reaching the British Consul-General,

They took up positions opposite each of the four gates of the city and at the same time sent parties to call up the country people (Uighurs). These appeared from all sides in thousands, armed with clubs and sticks, and there was a great display of enthusiasm . . . Firing continued until about two in the afternoon, when the Kirghiz either forced an entry or were admitted by the Tushik Gate.¹⁰³

Most of the non-Chinese garrison reportedly went over to the side of the rebels, into whose hands the whole city, with the exception of the *yamen*, rapidly fell. At the *yamen* Ma Shao-wu and his bodyguard continued to hold out, and many Han Chinese caught in the Old City by the speed of the Kirghiz attack were able to take refuge in this stronghold. During the course of these events, a letter from the Kirghiz leader 'Uthmān 'Ali was delivered to the British Consulate-General (which was situated at Chini Bagh, between the Old and New Cities), in which the rebel Commander explained the reasons for the rising, stated his objection to any continu-

ation of Han Chinese or Tungan rule in southern Sinkiang, and expressed a pious hope that the British might assist the insurgent forces in their quest for independence.¹⁰⁴

Meanwhile the Kirghiz levies, having secured the Old City, prevented the Uighur peasantry from looting and ordered them to return to their villages. The reason for this unexpected display of restraint became clear on the morning of 3 May, when the Kirghiz, left in sole possession of the Old City, proceeded to sack and loot it themselves. According to the British Consul-General, about 100 Chinese were killed, as well as the Turkic wives and mistresses of any Chinese on whom the Kirghiz could lay their hands. The looted property of the unfortunate Chinese was either carried off or auctioned on the street.¹⁰⁵

During the afternoon of 3 May about 300 Uighurs under the command of Temür arrived at Kashgar and were admitted to the Old City 'without question' by the Kirghiz; on the same afternoon the advance guard of Ma Chan-ts'ang's Tungan forces also arrived, but, instead of joining the victorious Kirghiz and Uighurs in Kashgar Old City, they marched to the walls of Kashgar New City, some two-and-a-half miles distant, and after brief negotiations were admitted by the Chinese defenders. No doubt, as Fitzmaurice speculated, the latter thought it 'better to surrender to the Tungans than to be slaughtered by the Kirghiz'.¹⁰⁶ With the fall of Kashgar New City on 3 May 1933, Han Chinese power in southern Sinkiang – except at the besieged garrison of Yarkand New City, which continued briefly to hold out – was effectively brought to an end.¹⁰⁷

The struggle between the Turkic- and Chinese-speaking Muslims at Kashgar and Yarkand

On 7 May, four days after the fall of Kashgar New City, Ma Chan-ts'ang and the main body of Tungan troops from Aksu arrived at Kashgar. The Tungan Commander soon learned that he had been misled by the Young Kashgar Party at Artush, and that Temür, who had come under the influence of this Turkic nationalist organisation,¹⁰⁸ was no longer a reliable ally. During the period between the initial capture of Kashgar Old City and the arrival of Ma Chan-ts'ang at Kashgar, the Kirghiz, no doubt involved in negotiations with Temür over the distribution of the spoils of their victory, had made no serious attempt to storm the Old City *yamen* where Ma Shao-wu was still holding out. Ma Chan-ts'ang, whose troops retained undisputed control of Kashgar New City, realised that the influential (and still legitimate) *Tao-yin* would make an invaluable ally against the Turkic nationalists who controlled Kashgar Old City and much of the rest of southern Sinkiang. He accordingly entered the Old City *yamen* shortly after his arrival and began negotiations with Ma Shao-

wu. The latter, who through Fitzmaurice had already indicated a willingness to compromise, readily entered into an agreement with the Tungan Commander. As a result of this, on 8 May, Ma Chan-ts'ang had notices posted announcing that the *Tao-yin* and all other *Ambans* of the former regime should retain their official posts. This move 'caused a sensation' amongst the Turkic Muslims, who did not share Ma Chan-ts'ang's professions of loyalty to Nanking. The Kirghiz accordingly closed the Old City gates and manned the walls in preparation for a trial of strength with the Tungan forces. At this point the diplomatically astute Ma Shao-wu temporarily defused the situation by resigning as *Tao-yin* and handing over his seals of office to Ma Chan-ts'ang.¹⁰⁹ The latter did not assume the office of *Tao-yin*, but retained control of the Old City *yamen* as well as the New City, and kept Ma Shao-wu under his protection as a possible ally in his continuing struggle with the Turkic-speaking nationalists.

Ma Chan-ts'ang's strategy seems to have been to drive a wedge between 'Uthmān 'Ali's Kirghiz and Temür's Uighurs before a unified Turkic alliance, possibly including the Khotan forces, might be formed. He was also concerned to limit the influence of the Turkic nationalist Young Kashgar Party, which seems to have been as anti-Tungan as it was anti-Chinese.¹¹⁰ On 10 May he ordered the arrest of the most prominent YKP activist, 'Abd al-Rahīm Bay Bachcha, who was released only after agreeing to supply the Tungan forces with 1,000 uniforms at his own expense.¹¹¹ Following this move against the YKP, Ma Chan-ts'ang attempted to neutralise the Uighur forces by seizing Temür, who had been proclaimed Commander-in-Chief of the combined Muslim armies at Kashgar on 7 May.¹¹² Temür was accordingly invited to a meeting at the Old City *yamen* on the evening of 17 May and placed under arrest shortly after his arrival. Had Ma Chan-ts'ang been able to transfer the captive Uighur Commander to the Tungan stronghold of Kashgar New City, his plan might have worked. As it was, he had insufficient troops to defend both New and Old Cities, and when he attempted to seize control of the latter by locking out Temür's leaderless Uighur forces and 'Uthmān 'Ali's Kirghiz, the Turkic-speaking Muslims (led by the Kirghiz, who made excellent irregular fighters) scaled the city walls and forced Temür's release.¹¹³

With the failure of his attempt to hold Temür, Ma Chan-ts'ang had revealed his purpose to the Turkic Muslims and had largely confirmed the YKP in their claims that he intended to set up a Tungan administration at Kashgar. On 18 May the incensed Kirghiz (who, as a result of Tungan participation in the suppression of the 'Id Mirāb rebellion of 1932, had always been more anti-Tungan than Temür's Uighur forces from Aksu) mounted a surprise attack on the Old City. They avoided the Old City *yamen* where Ma Chan-ts'ang and Ma Shao-wu remained under the

protection of a powerful Tungan force armed with artillery and machine-guns,¹¹⁴ but during the course of the day sought out and murdered any Tungan (or surviving Chinese) residents of the Old City on whom they could lay their hands. Heavy firing continued until the evening, and Fitzmaurice recorded that casualties were probably heavier than they had been on 2 May when the Kirghiz had originally seized the Old City from Ma Shao-wu.¹¹⁵

As a result of the Kirghiz attack, Ma Chan-ts'ang agreed to hand over control of Kashgar affairs to Temür and 'Uthmān 'Ali. On 19 May a very inconclusive truce was agreed by which Temür was confirmed as Commander-in-Chief with headquarters at Kashgar Old City, and 'Uthmān 'Ali was given the rank of General in command of the Kirghiz forces. Ma Chan-ts'ang was given no official position, but retained control of the Tungan forces and on 22 May, accompanied by his fully armed troops from the Old City *yamen*, withdrew to the Tungan stronghold at Kashgar New City. Ma Chan-ts'ang's Tungan Chief-of-Staff, Su Chin-shou, and Yūnus Beg, an Uighur of Kumul, were appointed joint *Tao-yin* of Kashgar, whilst Ma Shao-wu was permitted to leave the Old City *yamen* and to take up residence at a nearby country house under the formal protection of Temür and Ma Chan-ts'ang.¹¹⁶

Following the truce of 19 May, Kashgar subsided into an uneasy peace, with the Tungans in firm control of the New City (including its treasury and important arsenal) and the Turkic-speaking Muslims controlling the Old City and *Tao-yin*'s *yamen*. Fitzmaurice records that 'Ma Chan-ts'ang, Temür and 'Uthmān 'Ali all settled down to the congenial business of accumulating wealth and wives',¹¹⁷ whilst the YKP continued its intrigues against the Tungans, organised a 'parliament' of forty members (subsequently greatly expanded), and sent two delegates to Khoja Niyās Hājjī, the leader of the Uighur rebels at Kumul.¹¹⁸ Temür seems to have passed completely under YKP influence, as a result of which he began to issue passports styling himself 'Temür Shāh'; these documents employed only the Islamic *Hijrī* date, the Chinese Republican date having been dropped in a clear repudiation of Nanking's authority.¹¹⁹

Meanwhile, on the southern rim of the Tarim Basin in an area untroubled by the invading Tungans and free from the complication of Kirghiz involvement, Khotan had emerged as a centre of exclusively Uighur influence. Ismā'il Khan Khoja, the leader of the rebellious gold-miners at Kara Kash, was soon eclipsed by the Uighur nationalist Committee for National Revolution (CNR) which had been founded in Khotan at the beginning of 1932 by Muḥammad Amīn Bughra, a Muslim scholar in his mid-thirties,¹²⁰ together with his two younger brothers, 'Abdullāh and Nūr Ahmad, and a number of similarly minded 'friends

and students'.¹²¹ At the beginning of 1933 this group was joined by 'Abd al-Bāqī Şabit Dāmullāh, a school teacher and former *qādī* (judge) from Kulja who had travelled extensively in the Soviet Union, Turkey, Egypt and India.¹²² According to Muḥammad Amīn Bughra, Şabit Dāmullāh 'brought political information and experience' to the Khotanlik Committee for National Revolution, a group which at this time numbered slightly in excess of 300 members, and which possessed about fifty antiquated rifles.¹²³ The political philosophy of the CNR, like that of the YKP, was uncompromisingly 'Turkic nationalist'; however, it stood further to the right, being pronouncedly anti-communist and anti-Christian as well as anti-Tungan and anti-Han Chinese. The CNR leadership apparently favoured the establishment of an Islamic theocracy in Sinkiang, probably with Muḥammad Amīn Bughra as head of state. Links had been established between the Khotanlik Muslim revolutionaries and Khoja Niyās Hājjī of Kumul as a result of the latter's visit to southern Sinkiang in 1927; it seems improbable, however, that there existed any coherent co-ordination between the Kumul and Khotan rebellions of 1932 and 1933.¹²⁴

According to Hayit, Muḥammad Amīn Bughra was working in Khotan as a *mudarris*, or teacher at Qur'ānic college, at the time of the Kara Kash and Surghak risings in February 1933. On 20 February the CNR leadership met somewhere in the Khotan Oasis – probably in the Old City – and formed a provisional government with Muḥammad Niyās A'lām (the *qādī* of Kara Kash), as President, Şabit Dāmullāh as Prime Minister, and Muḥammad Amīn Bughra as Commander of the Armed Forces.¹²⁵ The elder Bughra, who appears to have been the most powerful member of the provisional administration, took the title '*Amīr al-Islām*', whilst his younger brothers styled themselves '*Amīr 'Abdullāh Khan*' and '*Amīr Nūr Ahmad Jān*' respectively.¹²⁶ As a result of these somewhat grandiose titles, the Khotan Islamic Government (as the CNR provisional administration was subsequently renamed)¹²⁷ is more generally referred to in contemporaneous sources as the 'Government of the Khotan *Amīrs*'.

The religious intolerance of the Khotan *Amīrs* was revealed in their capture of Khotan New City on 16 March, as a result of which an estimated 266 Chinese were forcibly converted to Islam.¹²⁸ Following this event, numerous Hindu moneylenders were murdered and the Swedish missionaries resident at Khotan were ordered to leave southern Sinkiang.¹²⁹ Meanwhile, Islamic *Shari'a* law was implemented in the southern oases under CNR control, with the strict application of *hadd* criminal legislation.¹³⁰ At some time in March or April the conservative nature of the *Amīrs*' regime was reinforced by the arrival at Khotan of Jānib Beg, a well-known Basmachi leader who, after fleeing from Soviet



13. The Khotan *Amīrs*: A group of Khotanlik 'ulamā, c. 1933. The *Amīr* Muḥammad Amīn Bughra is in the foreground wearing a black *chapan*



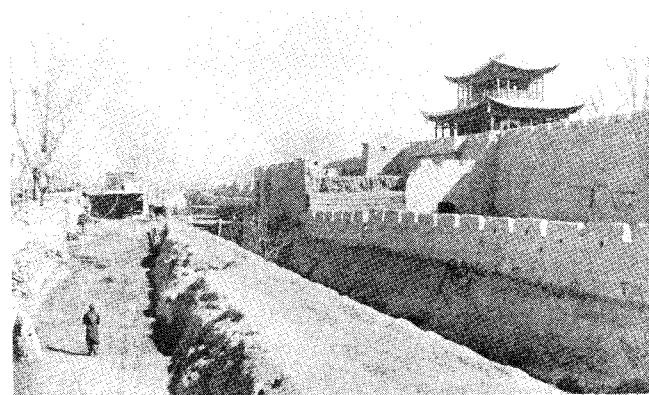
14. The Khotan *Amīrs*: The *Amīr* 'Abdullāh Bughra, killed at Yarkand in April, 1934



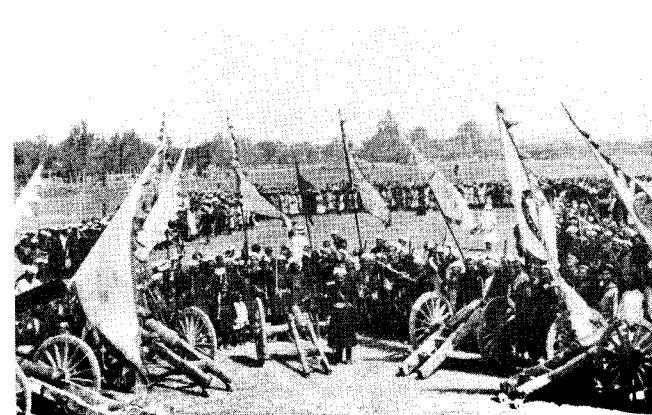
15. The Khotan *Amīrs*: The *Amīr* Nūr Ahmadjān Bughra killed at Yangi-Hissar in April 1934



16. Main street of Khotan, 1932, plaited awnings provide shade from the fierce rays of the sun



17. Yarkand: the Kashgar Gate



18. Military parade by Khotanlik forces, 1932. The Amīr Muhammād Amīn Bughra is in the foreground

territory to Kashgar, had been banished to the Keriya Oasis by Ma Shao-wu in 1931.¹³¹ Jānib Beg made common cause with the *Amīrs* and, probably in recognition of his military experience during the Basmachi struggle, was placed in charge of a large body of the Khotanlik rebel forces.

Following the consolidation of their hold on the Khotan Oasis, the *Amīrs* began to extend their influence both eastwards, towards Lop Nor, and westwards, towards Kashgar. In response to an appeal from the Uighurs of Charchan who had risen against their Tungan 'liberators',¹³² a force of 100 Khotaniks was despatched to that oasis to guard against the Kara Shahr Tungans (who appear to have remained in control of the Charkhlik Oasis throughout the period from 1933 to 1937).¹³³ Meanwhile, on the western front, Khotanlik forces had seized Guma, Karghalik, Posgam and Yarkand Old City by 11 April, and an estimated 2,000 Han Chinese and Tungans were besieged in Yarkand New City.¹³⁴

On 24 April the *Amīr* 'Abdullāh Khan, styling himself *Wāli al-hukūma* of the Khotan Islamic Government (a post approximating to Vice-Regent), arrived in the Yarkand Oasis to prosecute the siege of the New City.¹³⁵ According to Fitzmaurice the Khotanlik forces, who had already organised a military band, were attired in red uniforms (the officers sporting red-velvet tunics) in contrast to the less flamboyant, but more practical green favoured by the Tungan troops of Ma Chan-ts'ang.¹³⁶ The *Amīr* 'Abdullāh was reportedly greeted with great ceremony, whilst some of the Yarkand *Begs* and other Turkic-speaking officials who had served under the Chinese were dragged through the streets in chains as a public spectacle.¹³⁷ On 27 April he gave orders for the arrest of the Swedish missionaries stationed at Yarkand. After they had been bound and brought before him, 'Abdullāh kicked and beat them himself, announcing that by their teaching the missionaries had 'destroyed' the religion of Islam, and that it was therefore his duty to kill them. The Swedes were saved from the firing squad only by the intervention of the former British *Aqsaqal* of Khotan and his colleague from Yarkand; following this reprieve they were imprisoned and subsequently expelled from the country.¹³⁸

'Abdullāh next turned his attention to the siege of Yarkand New City where the attacking Khotanlik forces had cut the water supply and were attempting to pierce the walls by tunnelling. On 27 April three delegates from Ma Shao-wu arrived at Yarkand Oasis and attempted to negotiate with the *Amīr*. 'Abdullāh had a prisoner shot in their presence 'to bring them to a proper state of mind', and then sent them into the besieged New City to inform the defenders that their lives and personal property would be spared if they agreed to adopt Islam and to lay down their arms.¹³⁹ The besieged Chinese, under the command of Colonel Chin (who had

retreated from Guma in March), agreed to accept these terms, and 12 May was set for the final surrender. Shortly before this date, however, the first Tungan and Turkic-speaking troops, fresh from their victory at Kashgar, began to arrive in the Yarkand Oasis.¹⁴⁰ The *Amīr* 'Abdullāh, who believed that victory lay almost within his grasp and was, moreover, openly hostile to the Tungans, made it clear to the newcomers that their assistance was neither required nor appreciated.¹⁴¹ Faced with this Khotanlik hostility, the small but well-armed Tungan force – which owed allegiance to Ma Chan-ts'ang at Kashgar, and through him to Ma Chung-ying – followed the example of their fellow Tungans in the Kashgar Oasis, and entered the besieged New City, thus strengthening the Tungan element amongst the defending garrison and stiffening resistance to the *Amīrs'* forces.¹⁴² This Tungan manoeuvre obviously took 'Abdullāh by surprise, and his hostility towards these hardened Chinese Muslim troops can hardly have been diminished by their action on 18 May, when they led a sortie from Yarkand New City, briefly capturing the Altin and Khanqah gates of Yarkand Old City and setting fire to the surrounding areas before retreating, in good order, to their original base.¹⁴³

The Uighur troops from Aksu and Kashgar, under the command of Hāfiẓ, a subordinate of Temūr, seem to have remained neutral until 22 May, when news of the Tungan–Turkic split at Kashgar first reached the Yarkand Oasis. Following this development, the two Turkic-speaking armies at Yarkand co-operated in the siege of the New City, but did not merge into a single unit – indeed, Hāfiẓ and 'Abdullāh remained bitter rivals.¹⁴⁴ Faced thus with a united Turkic attack, and realising that there was no possibility of relief from Kashgar, the Chinese in Yarkand New City surrendered on 26 May under the terms originally offered by the *Amīr* 'Abdullāh for the 12th. The surrender was incomplete, however, as the besieged Tungans insisted on retaining their arms and on being allowed to proceed to Kashgar to join Ma Chan-ts'ang.¹⁴⁵ The victorious Uighurs and Kirghiz are reported to have relieved the Chinese garrison of some 540 rifles, which were subsequently divided between the forces of 'Abdullāh and Hāfiẓ, with the latter apparently obtaining the majority of the serviceable weapons.¹⁴⁶

The defeated Chinese and still defiant Tungans were divided into two parties, each about 1,000 strong, and given permission to proceed to Kashgar. Neither party was to reach its destination unmolested, however. The first column, which consisted primarily of Tungan cavalry and dependent non-combatants, was attacked and cut to pieces in the desert near Kizil. The force responsible for this treacherous attack – which subsequently became known as the 'Kizil Massacre' – was predominantly Kirghiz, apparently owing allegiance to 'Uthmān 'Ali at Kashgar.¹⁴⁷ The second column was attacked and looted even before it

had left Yarkand Oasis, though on this occasion no general massacre seems to have taken place.¹⁴⁸ Meanwhile, following their successful attack at Kizil, the Kirghiz irregulars entered Yangi Hissar, where they killed all the Han Chinese and Tungans on whom they were able to lay their hands.¹⁴⁹

When news of the events at Kizil and Yangi Hissar reached Kashgar, Su Chin-shou, the Tungan joint *Tao-yin*, left the Old City *yamen* in protest at the massacre of his fellow Tungans and joined Ma Chan-ts'ang in Kashgar New City.¹⁵⁰ At about the same time, on 31 May 1933, in a further indication of growing Turkic–Tungan hostility in southern Sinkiang, the Uighurs of Aksu rose up and expelled the few Chinese Muslim units remaining in their oasis. The incumbent *Tao-yin*, who had been appointed by Ma Chan-ts'ang and was therefore considered to be too 'pro-Tungan', was duly removed from office and replaced by the leader of the Aksu insurgents, a Uighur named Ismā'il Beg whose political loyalties lay with the staunchly anti-Tungan government of the 'Khotan *Amīrs'*.¹⁵¹

The fall of Yarkand New City and the subsequent massacres at Kizil and Yangi Hissar thus signalled not only the final collapse of Han Chinese authority in southern Sinkiang, but also the complete alienation of the Chinese-speaking Muslims from their Turkic-speaking co-religionists. By the summer of 1933 political power in the south had passed to a disparate and disunited collection of Uighur and Kirghiz factions, the most prominent of which was represented by the *Amīr* Muḥammad Amin Bughra at Khotan. Meanwhile, the Tungan forces of Ma Chan-ts'ang – still the best armed and most disciplined troops in the south of the province – remained securely within the fortified walls of Kashgar New City, making occasional sorties against the various Turkic-speaking factions holding the Old City and surrounding countryside, whilst awaiting the arrival of Tungan reinforcements from Turfan or Kansu.¹⁵²

Turkic factionalism at Kashgar and Yarkand

With the effective exclusion of Ma Chan-ts'ang and his Tungan troops from the struggle for control over southern Sinkiang, tension between the rival Turkic-speaking Muslim factions at Khotan and Kashgar increased substantially. Following the fall of Yarkand New City on 26 May, Temūr's representative Hāfiẓ attempted to conciliate the Khotan *Amīrs* 'Abdullāh and Nūr Ahmad Jān, who were still smarting from the inequitable distribution of captured weapons, by handing over the New City granary and a quantity of antiquated arms and ammunition found in the New City *yamen* to the Khotanlik forces.¹⁵³ Relations between the rival Commanders remained strained, however, so Hāfiẓ strengthened

the forces at his command, estimated at 400 Uighurs from Aksu and Kashgar, by conscripting 200 'Dulanis' from Merket.¹⁵⁴

The *Amīrs* responded by transferring overall command of their Yarkand forces to the youngest Bughra brother, Nūr Ahmad Jān, whilst 'Abdullāh set out for the Kashgar Oasis at the head of 2,000 Khotanliks, presumably with the intention of bringing direct pressure to bear on Temür; meanwhile, a separate column of approximately 1,000 Khotanliks, under the command of the former Basmachi leader Jānib Beg, arrived at Kashgar on 11 June.¹⁵⁵

Jānib Beg's sudden arrival at Kashgar, albeit with very poorly-armed troops, caused consternation both amongst the local Turkic-speaking leadership and at the Soviet Consulate-General, where it was feared that the influence of the strongly anti-Soviet ex-Basmachi leader would swing the revolution sharply to the right. This Soviet concern must have been redoubled when it became known that Jānib Beg had established his headquarters in the garden of the Turkic nationalist 'Abd al-Rahīm Bay Bachcha, thus raising the spectre of an alliance developing between the Khotan *Amīrs* and the Young Kashgar Party, elements of which had come to favour co-operation with the USSR.¹⁵⁶ Kashgarlik feeling at this time was strongly pro-*Amīr*, and Fitzmaurice doubted whether Temür's troops would have obeyed an order to fire on the Khotanlik forces. 'Uthmān 'Ali was also disturbed by the arrival of Jānib Beg; his Kirghiz followers were reportedly angered by the increasing amount of time he was devoting to his opium pipe and newly acquired harem, and saw in the former Basmachi guerilla a possible alternative leader.¹⁵⁷

On 4 July the Khotanlik presence was substantially increased by the arrival of the *Amīr* 'Abdullāh at the head of his column of troops from Yarkand, together with Şābit Dāmullāh, Prime Minister and *Shaykh al-Islām* of the Khotan Islamic government.¹⁵⁸ 'Abdullāh's forces were numerous but very ill-equipped; British diplomatic reports indicate that about 300 of his followers were armed with Russian rifles, whilst another 300 had antiquated muzzle-loaders and the rest bore *chumaq*, or heavy cudgels.¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless, their presence posed a serious threat to both Temür and 'Uthmān 'Ali, neither of whom wished to share the large stocks of food, money and arms held in Kashgar New City with the Khotan *Amīrs* – always assuming that these stocks could be captured from the besieged Ma Chan-ts'ang.¹⁶⁰ Temür therefore made an elaborate show of 'welcoming' 'Abdullāh, and installed him in a garden between the Old and New Cities pending a suitable moment to move against this troublesome new rival.¹⁶¹

Meanwhile, at Yarkand, negotiations continued between Hāfiẓ and the youngest *Amīr*, Nūr Ahmad Jān. Hāfiẓ advanced Temür's claim to all territories west of the Yarkand River, including both Yarkand Old and

New Cities; Nūr Ahmad Jān, on behalf of the Khotan Islamic Government, countered with a claim to both Kashgar and Maral Bashi.¹⁶² After several minor incidents between the two rival Turkic-speaking armies, Nūr Ahmad Jān took action against a number of Yarkandlik *Begs* who had petitioned Hāfiẓ to intervene on their behalf in a dispute with the Khotanlik forces. The offending notables were arrested and executed, their heads subsequently being displayed in public in an open challenge to Hāfiẓ.¹⁶³

When news of this incident reached Kashgar, Temür, who was 'irritated beyond endurance by the *Amīrs'* attitudes and claims', decided to move against the Khotanlik forces at Kashgar. According to Fitzmaurice, Temür 'played his cards well'. He ensured the support of his Kirghiz ally, 'Uthmān 'Ali, by stressing Jānib Beg's potential threat to the latter's position, and reportedly bought off many of the lesser Kirghiz leaders. Subsequently, in mid-July, 'Uthmān and his Kirghiz cavalry made ostentatious preparations to return to the mountains above Kashgar, thereby lulling the Khotanlik leaders into a false sense of security. It was therefore with the element of complete surprise that Temür, on the morning of 13 July, sent a force of some 750 men to arrest Jānib Beg at his headquarters in 'Abd al-Rahīm Bay Bachcha's garden. After a brief display of resistance, the former Basmachi Commander was taken into custody. The *Amīr* 'Abdullāh, on being informed of Temür's action, sent 100 of his men to assist Jānib Beg; this force arrived too late, however, and was in turn arrested and disarmed.¹⁶⁴

Following their successful move against Jānib Beg, Temür and 'Uthmān 'Ali moved in unison against the *Amīr* 'Abdullāh, arresting him and disarming many of his troops. Realising that he too was in imminent danger of arrest, the Khotanlik *Shaykh al-Islām* Şābit Dāmullāh fled towards Artush, but was apprehended by troops loyal to Temür and 'Uthmān 'Ali and brought back to the Old City *yamen* where the *Amīr* 'Abdullāh was also held captive. Casualties during Temür's action against the Khotanlik forces were low on both sides,¹⁶⁵ and on the evening of 13 July with the primacy of Temür and 'Uthmān 'Ali in Kashgar Old City clearly established, both the *Amīr* 'Abdullah and Şābit Dāmullāh were permitted to return to their garden, albeit under close observation.¹⁶⁶ In marked contrast, Jānib Beg was kept under close arrest, lending weight to Fitzmaurice's theory that the Soviet Consulate-General had planned and financed Temür's coup in a bid to remove the strongly anti-Soviet ex-Basmachi from the political stage of southern Sinkiang.¹⁶⁷

The new balance of power in southern Sinkiang was confirmed at a conference held in Kashgar Old City on 4 July and attended by all the most prominent Muslim leaders except Jānib Beg and, of course, the Tungan Ma Chan-ts'ang. At this meeting it was agreed that the entire

Yarkand Oasis should be transferred to Temür's control, whilst the territories under the jurisdiction of the Khotan Islamic Government should terminate at the east bank of the Yarkand River.¹⁶⁸ When news of this agreement reached Yarkand, however, panic set in amongst the ill-trained Khotanlik troops, who, on being ordered to withdraw from Yarkand New City by Temür's local Commander Hāfiẓ, 'stampeded, either riding ponies or donkeys or on foot', towards the Khotan road.¹⁶⁹ Hāfiẓ moved quickly to take advantage of this situation and, sending 200 men to hold the ferries across the Yarkand River to cut off the Khotanlik retreat, he arrested the *Amīr* Nūr Ahmēd Jān and disarmed hundreds of his troops. These latter were subsequently permitted to cross the river into the territories of the Khotan Islamic Government; Nūr Ahmēd Jān, however, was imprisoned in Yarkand Old City, just as his brother 'Abdullāh was detained under house arrest at Kashgar. Shortly after this rout of the Khotanlik forces, and in violation of the agreement made at Kashgar, Hāfiẓ' own forces crossed the Yarkand River into the territories of the Khotan government, seizing the town of Karghalik on 20 July.¹⁷⁰

With these serious reverses for the Khotan *Amīrs* following so closely upon the withdrawal of Ma Chan-ts'ang and his Tungan forces to Kashgar New City, the victorious Uighur leader Temür and his Kirghiz ally 'Uthmān 'Ali seemed well-placed to extend their political control over the whole of the western Tarim Basin. Such a development might indeed have been possible had the two leaders proved capable of sustained co-operation against the besieged Tungans. As it was, 'Uthmān 'Ali, now styling himself *Amīr al-Muslimīn* (Prince of the Believers) and *Ghāzi* (Holy Warrior), was keen to press the attack against Ma Chan-ts'ang with whom he had particularly bad relations.¹⁷¹ Temür, on the other hand, had never been particularly anxious to open full-scale hostilities against his former ally; moreover, when news of Khoja Niyās Hājjī's realignment with the provincial authorities against Ma Chung-ying reached Kashgar in mid-July, Temür is reported to have objected strongly both to the Kumullik leader's action, and to any prospect of Uighur co-operation with the Han Chinese against the Tungans.¹⁷²

Probably as a result of Temür's vacillation and possibly because he also wished to reassert his authority in the Kirghiz uplands, 'Uthmān 'Ali withdrew from Kashgar Oasis to the hills on 18 July 1933. Shortly after the Kirghiz leader's departure, on 26 July, a party of Khoja Niyās Hājjī's officers, accompanied by an escort of thirty Kumullik soldiers, arrived in Kashgar from the north-east and presented Temür with an official seal and letter recognising his position as Commander-in-Chief at Kashgar.¹⁷³ According to Fitzmaurice, Khoja Niyās Hājjī's delegates also put strong pressure on Temür to attack Ma Chan-ts'ang's Tungan forces in Kashgar New City. Temür still had 'no wish to participate in operations against the

Tungans', but he agreed nevertheless to invite 'Uthmān 'Ali to return to the Kashgar Oasis with a view to possibly opening joint operations against the besieged New City.¹⁷⁴

Accordingly, at the beginning of August 1933, 'Uthmān 'Ali returned from the hills at the head of a large force of his Kirghiz followers. It soon became apparent, however, that Temür was still less than willing to participate in an all-out attack against his former Tungan allies, and on 8 August the Kirghiz leader once again withdrew from the Kashgar Oasis 'in protest' at Temür's attitude.¹⁷⁵

Temür may have seen this development as providing an ideal opportunity for eliminating his erstwhile Kirghiz ally, thereby emerging as the sole Turkic-speaking Muslim Commander of any consequence at Kashgar – in which case he would almost certainly have attempted to reach an agreement with Ma Chan-ts'ang and his Tungans. Accordingly, he ordered the greater part of his army to 'pursue and disarm' 'Uthmān 'Ali and his Kirghiz. That Temür's Uighur irregulars should overtake and disarm 'Uthmān's mounted Kirghiz, all of whom were experienced fighters, was clearly a vain hope. Nevertheless, on 9 August Temür left Kashgar Old City by car to see how his forces were faring. Shortly after his departure, a force of some 500 Tungan troops debouched from Kashgar New City and rapidly overran the ill-defended Old City. Temür, who had made the fatal mistake of alienating one Turkic-speaking Muslim leader after another without openly aligning himself with the Tungans, was intercepted by Ma Chan-ts'ang's forces on his way back to the Old City. He was arrested and shot without ceremony, following which his head was cut off and exhibited on a spike outside the 'Id-gāh Mosque in Kashgar Old City.¹⁷⁶

As a result of Temür's execution, the Uighur forces at Kashgar were left leaderless. Both Jānib Beg and the *Amīr* 'Abdullāh took advantage of the confusion to escape from imprisonment, but neither was anxious to fall into the hands of Ma Chan-ts'ang, and both fled south-eastwards towards Yarkand.¹⁷⁷ The former *Tao-yin* Ma Shao-wu also took advantage of this opportunity to slip away from the country house where he had been detained since shortly after the fall of the Old City *yamen*, and to join Ma Chan-ts'ang in the fortified New City. Meanwhile the victorious Tungans made no serious attempt to garrison the captured Old City, but removed all arms and ammunition to the New City arsenal, leaving only a nominal force to guard the Old City against the possibility of a renewed Turkic attack.¹⁷⁸

Between 11 and 13 August 'Uthmān 'Ali and his Kirghiz followers made a cautious return to the Kashgar Oasis. A message was sent to Ma Chan-ts'ang requesting that the Kirghiz be given a share in the weapons taken from Temür's defeated forces, and that arms taken from 'Abdullāh

Beg, a Kirghiz Commander, during the fighting on 9 August, be returned forthwith. When Ma Chan-ts'ang refused to comply, the Kirghiz attacked the Old City, recapturing it from the Tungans on 16 August. During the fighting 'Uthmān 'Ali's younger brother 'Umar was killed, whilst about 150 further Kirghiz lost their lives in a subsequent abortive attack on the Tungan-held New City.¹⁷⁹ Following his recapture of Kashgar Old City, 'Uthmān 'Ali assumed Temür's titles and position as Commander-in-Chief of the Turkic-speaking armies at Kashgar. He did not, however, enjoy the full support of the local Uighur population, and his own Kirghiz followers were unwilling to pursue a prolonged siege of the heavily fortified New City, being increasingly anxious to return to their own upland territories in the T'ien Shan.¹⁸⁰

At this stage, two new and unexpected factors entered the increasingly complex political equation at Kashgar. Thus, on 26 August, a Syrian Arab adventurer, by name Tawfiq Bay, arrived at the Kashgar Oasis. Tawfiq was clearly a charismatic figure – styling himself *Sayyid*, or descendant of the Prophet Muhammad – who had served for a time as an official of King 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn-Sa'ūd, and who had some formal military training and experience.¹⁸¹ Two days later, on 28 August 1933, representatives of Khoja Niyās Hājjī, the former rebel leader at Kumul who had entered into an alliance of convenience with the provincial authorities against the Tungans, arrived in the Kashgar Oasis. This Kumullik delegation, which according to Fitzmaurice was 'bitterly anti-Tungan but conciliatory towards the [Han] Chinese', rallied the dispirited Turkic-speaking forces in Kashgar Old City and urged them to renew their attack on the besieged Ma Chan-ts'ang, stressing Khoja Niyās Hājjī's desire that the New City, with its important arsenal and treasury, be captured as swiftly as possible.¹⁸² At the prompting of the Kumulliks, 'Uthmān 'Ali and his Kirghiz renewed their military operations against Ma Chan-ts'ang; moreover they were joined in this endeavour by the Uighur forces formerly owing allegiance to Temür, which were now reorganised under the command of the respected Tawfiq Bay.¹⁸³

Meanwhile, on the southern front, the position of Temür's representative Hāfiẓ had been seriously undermined by Ma Chan-ts'angs coup of 9 August. On learning of Temür's death, Hāfiẓ halted his advance against the Khotanlik forces (which had reached Guma) and returned to Yarkand New City. Following this withdrawal, the dispirited and leaderless Khotanlik began a very tentative advance on Yarkand, reaching Karghalik on or about 29 August. At about this time the *Amīr* 'Abdullāh, who had fled southwards from the Kashgar amidst the confusion following Temür's death, reappeared in the Yarkand Oasis where he took command of the undefended Old City. From this base he rallied the

disorganised Khotanlik forces still at Karghalik, and began a siege of Yarkand New City, still held by Hāfiẓ and a mixed force of about 600 Uighurs and Dulanis.¹⁸⁴ Meanwhile, both Tawfiq Bay and the representatives of Khoja Niyās Hājjī at Kashgar sent messengers to the *Amīrs*, stressing the need for joint Turkic action against the Tungans at Kashgar New City and appealing for a cease-fire between Hāfiẓ and 'Abdullāh at Yarkand. Accordingly, on 26 September 1933, Yarkand New City opened its gates to the Khotanlik forces and Hāfiẓ, together with his Uighur followers from Aksu and Kashgar, were disarmed and permitted to leave the oasis unharmed.¹⁸⁵ Following this unexpected success for the Khotanliks, the *Amīr* 'Abdullāh assumed control over the entire Yarkand Oasis, whilst his younger brother Nūr Ahmad Jān (who had been held under house arrest by Hāfiẓ) advanced at the head of a sizeable force to Yangi Hissar, where he assumed control of the fortified citadel.¹⁸⁶ The authority of the Khotan Islamic government – still administered by the *Amīr* Muhammad Amin Bughra from Khotan – was thus extended westwards to the fringes of the Kashgar Oasis; moreover, at the invitation of Tawfiq Bay, the Khotanlik Prime Minister and *Shaykh al-Islām* Šabit Dāmullāh entered Kashgar Old City to negotiate the formation of a unified Turkic-speaking Muslim alliance in southern Sinkiang.¹⁸⁷

Such an alliance was fast becoming a military necessity from the point of view of the Turkic insurgents. At Kashgar New City the besieged Tungan troops of Ma Chang-ts'ang continued to beat off the combined forces of Tawfiq Bay and 'Uthmān 'Ali with comparative ease, and even proved themselves capable of offensive action. Thus on the evening of 7 September a strong force of Tungans made a sortie from the New City and inflicted a severe defeat on their Turkic-speaking opponents at the village of Sekes Tash; during this engagement an estimated 200 Uighurs and Kirghiz were killed, with the Tungans withdrawing to their stronghold in good order.¹⁸⁸

Following the Khotanlik advance to Yangi Hissar, Tawfiq Bay and 'Uthmān 'Ali received numerous reinforcements, including Hāfiẓ and his 500 followers, a further group of 300 Uighur recruits from Aksu under a Commanding Officer named Idrīs, and a rather mysterious force of 300 'Andijani' Uzbeks under the command of one Sātibaldī Jān, a 25-year-old Uzbek from Margelan in Soviet Uzbekistan, who was widely suspected of being pro-Russian and was mistrusted by the other Turkic leaders as a consequence.¹⁸⁹

With this heterogenous and ill-armed force, 'Uthmān 'Ali and Tawfiq Bay attempted to maintain pressure on Ma Chan-ts'ang's Tungans, but to little or no avail. Attempts to mine the New City walls ended in failure, as did attempts to reduce the besieged garrison through starvation.¹⁹⁰ Divisions between 'Uthmān 'Ali's Kirghiz and the local Uighurs began

to grow, and the Kirghiz leader, who clearly felt that his forces were bearing the brunt of the fighting, had three Uighurs executed at the Old City ammunition works for ‘filling cartridges with sand instead of powder’. Other Uighurs were publicly hanged outside the ‘Id-Gāh Mosque for selling food to the besieged Tungans.¹⁹¹

Support for the continuing struggle was clearly waning, and by the end of September the morale of the local Kashgariks had fallen to such an extent that the Turkic authorities refused to issue passports to prospective *hājjīs* in an attempt to prevent a general exodus from the oasis.¹⁹² To add to the difficulties of the Turkic-speaking insurgents, on 26 September Tawfiq Bay was seriously wounded in the stomach during an abortive attack on the New City, and took no further part in the fighting. This development clearly had a decisive effect on ‘Uthmān ‘Ali, who was already disillusioned with the siege, and on 2 October the Kirghiz leader resigned his post as Commander-in-Chief of the Turkic forces at Kashgar and ‘departed hurriedly to the hills, being followed by Sātibaldī and other local leaders’.¹⁹³

With the resignation of ‘Uthmān ‘Ali, the last member of the triumvirate that had originally co-operated in the overthrow of Ma Shao-wu and which had subsequently halted the westwards advance of the Khotan *Amīrs* at Yarkand disappeared from the political stage.¹⁹⁴ The resulting power vacuum in the Kashgar Oasis was filled by Šābit Dāmullāh, the Prime Minister and *Shaykh al-Islām* of the Khotan Islamic Government who had come to Kashgar Old City at the invitation of Tawfiq Bey following the death of Temūr. In this way the whole of southern Sinkiang, with the important exception of the Tungan stronghold at Kashgar New City, passed under the control of the Khotan *Amīrs* almost by default.

4 *Sinkiang, 1933–4: Tungan invasion, Turkic secession and Soviet intervention*

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

Sven Hedin, on Ma Chung-ying.¹

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

Rewi Alley, on Ma Chung-ying.²

Ma Shih-ming’s attack on Urumchi and the overthrow of Chin Shu-jen

As has been shown, following his wounding at Liao-tun during the autumn of 1932, Ma Chung-ying withdrew with the bulk of his forces to his old fief in north-western Kansu. Here he set up headquarters at An-hsi and, through his subordinates, began greatly to expand his forces through extensive conscription. The British missionaries Mildred Cable and Francesca French were resident in the neighbouring oasis of Tun-huang at this time and have left a graphic account of Ma Chung-ying’s recruiting methods. Shortly after the arrival of Tungan forces at Tun-huang:

The town was robbed of everything in the nature of food, goods and money . . . next to food the most coveted possessions of the oases were the young, vigorous, hardy men . . . These were the men whom Ma Chung-ying wanted for gun-fodder, and orders were issued to the press-gang to fetch them in from every farm of the neighbourhood, and collect them in Tunhwang City. Every day we saw them being rounded up. The ropes which they themselves had twisted from desert grass were used to tie their hands behind their backs, and to noose their necks in a running-knot. Roped together in droves of twenty to thirty, according to the success of the raid, they were brought to town by captors who rode the horses levied from these boys’ own stables. Thrust behind the high palings of temple courtyards, the imprisoned youths lined the barriers, looking out for some passers-by who might belong to their own group of farmsteads and would take a report home that son or husband had been captured.³

After initial training at Tun-huang these raw recruits were taken to An-hsi where further intensive discipline awaited them. No doubt similar methods of forced recruitment were applied at An-hsi itself and elsewhere in north-western Kansu, with the result that Ma’s army grew at a prodigious rate.⁴ Cable and French were also ordered to An-hsi, where they were instructed to treat Ma Chung-ying’s wounds and to care for those Tungans who had been injured by the antiquated ‘fire arrows’ used

by the defenders during the siege of Kumul Old City. Every day the missionaries were taken to Chung-ying's private rooms, and as a result of their treatment 'within a short time he was able to ride again'.⁵

Meanwhile, in Sinkiang, following his failure to crush the Uighur rebellion at Kumul and faced with continued Tungan intervention in the Turfan area, Chin Shu-jen turned increasingly to the Soviet Union for assistance.⁶ In September 1931 he bought two biplanes from the Soviet Union at a price of 40,000 Mexican silver dollars each. These planes, which were equipped with machine-gun mountings and bomb-dropping apparatus, were flown by two Russian pilots who were lent to the Sinkiang government as part of the deal.⁷ A few days later, on 1 October 1931, Chin signed a secret trade agreement with the USSR as a result of which eight Soviet trading agencies were established throughout Sinkiang, at Urumchi, Chuguchak, Kulja, Kashgar, Aksu, Kucha, Yarkand and Khotan.⁸ Customs duties on Soviet goods – which already dominated the Sinkiang market – were reduced, and new Sinkiang-Soviet telegraph and radio communications were opened.⁹ Chin signed this agreement illegally, without authorisation from the national government at Nanking and without reporting it to the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.¹⁰ As a result of this treaty, Chin received substantial economic and military assistance from the Soviet Union, including, in July 1932, a further eight aircraft which were flown from Chuguchak to Urumchi by Chinese pilots from Peking.¹¹

Despite this Soviet military assistance, Chin's provincial forces – with the exception of Pappengut's White Russian detachment – remained ill-trained and poorly-officered. Following the relief of Kumul Old City and Ma Chung-ying's withdrawal to Kansu, Chang P'ei-yüan, the Provincial Commander-in-Chief and Military Governor of Ili, was ordered to proceed to Urumchi. Seemingly Chin did not altogether trust Chang P'ei-yüan, perhaps reasoning that the victory at Kumul might have awakened dangerous ambitions in the mind of the latter. This lack of trust seems to have been mutual, for on receiving notice of his transfer to the provincial capital, Chang chose to disobey the order and to return to Ili in a move verging on open rebellion. Chin responded by appointing Sheng Shih-ts'ai, Chang P'ei-yüan's Chief-of-Staff during the Kumul campaign, to the position of Provincial Commander-in-Chief.¹² This action was to prove of major importance both in Chin Shu-jen's own future, and for the future of Sinkiang.

Sheng Shih-ts'ai, who as Chin Shu-jen's successor was to rule Sinkiang from 1933 to 1944, was born in 1895 at Liaoning in southern Manchuria, the son of a small landowner and member of the local gentry. In 1917 he travelled to Japan to study political economy at Waseda University in Tokyo, returning to China in 1919 in time to participate in the May

Fourth Movement as a representative of the Liaoning students. During this period Sheng began to develop radical and anti-Japanese political sentiments¹³ as a result of which, according to his biographer Chan Fook-lam, he became convinced of the 'futility of book-learning' and determined to take up a military career.¹⁴ He accordingly attended military training school in Kwantung Province and later enrolled in the North-Eastern Military Academy. Sheng entered active military service under Kuo Sung-ling, Deputy of the powerful north-eastern warlord Chang Tso-lin, and rapidly rose to become a Staff Officer with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. In 1924 Kuo sponsored Sheng's admission to the Shikan Gakko (Military Academy) in Japan for advanced military studies. Sheng returned briefly to the north-east during Kuo's abortive attempt to overthrow Chang Tso-lin, but although implicated in the anti-Chang coup he was later able to return to Japan with the support of Feng Yü-hsiang and Chiang Kai-shek. Sheng left Japan for China in 1927 and participated in the Northern Expedition as a Staff Officer attached to Chiang Kai-shek's field headquarters. Following the completion of the Northern Expedition he was made chief of the war operations section of the general staff at Nanking; however, in 1929 he resigned after a disagreement with his superiors.¹⁵ After this apparent setback to his career, Sheng is reported to have remained at Nanking and to have interested himself in the question of strengthening China's border defences.¹⁶

Shortly after Sheng's resignation a delegation from the Sinkiang provincial government visited Nanking in search of financial aid. Chin Shu-jen had instructed one of the delegates, the Deputy General Secretary of the Sinkiang administration, Kuang Lu, to find an able young officer who could assist in the reorganisation of the provincial military forces. Kuang Lu made discreet enquiries and was duly introduced to Sheng Shih-ts'ai. As a result of this meeting Sheng, whose experience and qualifications were clearly far greater than Kuang Lu could have hoped for, was appointed to Chin Shu-jen's staff and travelled to Sinkiang via the Soviet Union, arriving in Urumchi during the winter of 1929-30.¹⁷ By all accounts his initial welcome in Sinkiang was somewhat cool. Chin Shu-jen was suspicious of the well-qualified overseas graduate, and doubtless regarded him as a potential threat. Moreover, the Provincial Commissioner for Military Affairs, Chin's brother Chin Shu-hsin, was less than pleased at the appointment of a young officer whose military knowledge and experience were clearly much greater than his own. Despite these doubts Chin Shu-jen, whose military position in the province was far from secure, appointed Sheng Chief of Staff of the Sinkiang Frontier Army and subsequently made him Chief Instructor at the Provincial Military College. Chan Fook-lam argues that in accepting Sheng's services Chin Shu-

jen 'buried a time bomb under his bed and brought about his own doom'.¹⁸ In fact, through his venality and incompetence Chin had already ensured his own downfall. Sheng Shih-ts'ai had simply to wait for the explosion and then to pick up the pieces.

In spite of both British and Soviet military assistance, Chin Shu-jen's grip on the province continued to slip. During his convalescence at An-hsi, probably in or about May 1932, Ma Chung-ying sent his Adjutant, Ma Shih-ming, to take charge of the continuing Tungan military operations at Turfan.¹⁹ As has already been shown, Ma Fu-ming, the Provincial Commander at Turfan and himself a Tungan, went over to the side of the rebels during the autumn. At the time of Chang P'ei-yüan's insubordination and his own subsequent promotion to Commander-in-Chief, Sheng Shih-ts'ai was based at Kumul directing an unsuccessful campaign against the Uighur insurgents of the Karlik Tagh. Following Ma Fu-ming's defection and the Tungan capture of Turfan, Sheng marched westward from Kumul in a bid to prevent the combined Muslim forces from marching on Urumchi. After a bloody two-day battle he succeeded in recapturing the city of Turfan, but not the whole oasis.²⁰ In any case, Sheng's victory seems to have had little effect on the Tungan forces of Ma Shih-ming, who had already transferred his headquarters to Kara Shahr.

During the bitterly cold Central Asian mid-winter Ma Shih-ming and his Tungan cavalry, aided by the forces of the 'renegade General' Ma Fu-ming and large numbers of Turkic insurgents, began their advance on Urumchi. According to Hedin, a force of provincial troops sent from Urumchi by Chin to guard the Dawan Ch'eng Pass was surprised by the Tungans and decisively defeated. Meanwhile full-scale rebellions had broken out at Kucha (under Temür) and at Khotan (under the 'Amirs') in the south of the province. Chin responded by expanding Pappengut's White Russian contingent from its original strength of 250 to an estimated strength of 1,500.²¹ Once again the White Russians, most of whom came from the Ili Valley, had no alternative but to enlist. According to Nicholas Vakar, who described Chin's conscription of Russian exiles in the *Slavonic Review* of 1935, besides threatening the White Russians with deportation to the Soviet Union, Chin ordered the arrest of many Russian women to compel their husbands to enlist in Pappengut's forces.²² These White Russian 'volunteers' were to play a vital role in the defence of Urumchi, as well as in the overthrow of their persecutor, Chin Shu-jen.

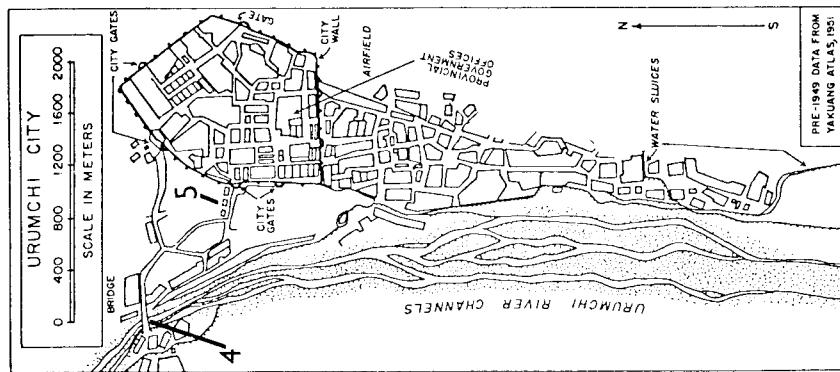
By early January 1933, Ma Shih-ming's Tungan forces had crossed the Dawan Ch'eng and were operating almost at will in the Chai-wu-pao corridor to the immediate south of the capital.²³ Wu Ai-chen, a political envoy of the Nanking government who travelled to Sinkiang via the Soviet Union and arrived at Urumchi on 25 December 1932, reports that

on 29 January 1933 the city gates were suddenly closed. There followed a month of growing food shortages and rising communal tension between Han Chinese and Muslims, but it was not until 21 February that Ma Shih-ming's Tungan troops reached the capital. According to Wu Ai-chen, who survived the attack and left a graphic account of the fighting, the Tungans advanced towards the city under the cover of darkness and seized the Great West Bridge after heavy fighting (see map 6a). The Provincial Commander defending the city had only 700 troops at his disposal, and things would have gone ill with the provincial forces had not a detachment of 300 White Russian soldiers suddenly arrived on the scene. The White Russians (whom Wu describes as 'splendid fighters . . . who suffered from moods of savage melancholy in which they drank heavily') succeeded in driving back the attacking Tungan and Uighur forces after two days of hand-to-hand fighting.²⁴ Meanwhile other Tungan forces had seized the radio station and a nearby height called Devil's Hill which commanded the Urumchi suburbs. Chin Shu-jen turned to a local Buddhist-Taoist temple for advice, and according to Wu was informed that for those ordained to die, flight offered no escape, whilst for those fated to survive all places were of equal safety: 'Safe is the home and safe is the country', said the oracle; 'but how shall one born for disaster seek to escape?'.²⁵

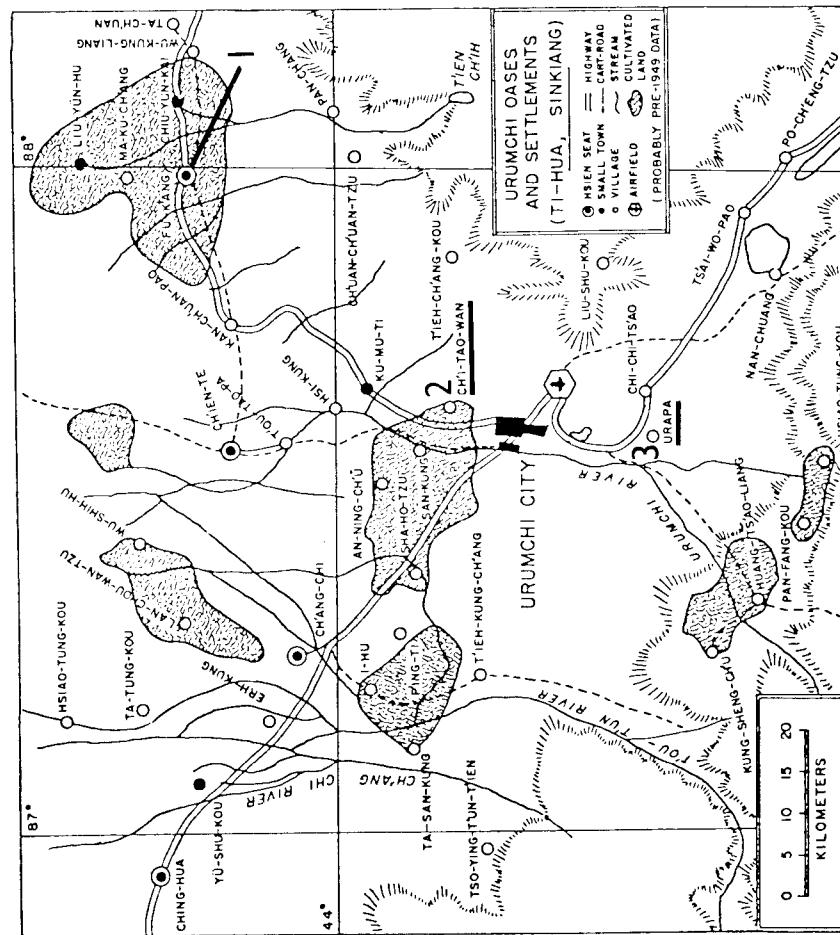
The Chinese authorities, fearing to admit further Muslim civilians to the fortified Old City, kept the city gates firmly closed against the large numbers of refugees from the suburbs who gathered outside the walls, particularly at the West Gate (see map 6b). Outside the West Gate ran the 'Street of the Lesser Teaching' (Ch. *Hsiao-chiao chieh*, a condescending euphemism for Islam).²⁶ During the Tungan attack in late February 1933, the West Gate became the focus of the most severe fighting. Wu Ai-chen, who witnessed this struggle, records that:

In times of peace this street was one of the most prosperous in the city, but now it was crowded with innocent fugitives, whose plight was terrible indeed. There was worse to come, however, for now the advancing rebels came to this quarter and seizing the houses made loop-holes in the walls. In the flat roofs they set up machine-gun posts which could enfilade Government positions on either side of them. I could see for myself that the situation was desperate and that our troops would be penned against the walls. General Pai, who was in command, did not hesitate. He gave the order that the street of the small religion should be set on fire.

Then followed a scene so frightful that the reader's imagination must suffice. As the flames swept down the long lane of wooden structures they became an inferno of horror, for the roar of the conflagration was added to the rattle of gunfire, and the hideous shrieks of those who were trapped. The rebels sought safety in flight, and as they crossed the open were machine-gunned from the Red Mountain; but the fugitives had nowhere to fly to and perished to the last man,



Map b 4 Great West Bridge
5 Street of the 'Lesser Teaching'



Map a 1 Fu-k'ang
2 Chi-tao-wan
3 Urapa (Uruba)

woman and child. Nevertheless the city was saved, and when at last the flames died down the approach to the West Bridge was strewn with the bodies of our assailants.

On the evening of the second day I had completed ten thousand words of copying. I asked how many were dead. I was told 'at least two thousand'. Once again I returned to my task, reflecting that a human life had been taken at every fifth word.²⁷

Following this defeat, the Muslim forces were forced to fall back from the immediate vicinity of the West Gate; however, they retained their hold on the Great West Bridge, a mere half-mile to the north-west, and 'after dark were capable of amazing boldness. Several were killed while attempting to scale the walls under the very mouths of the guns.'²⁸ The White Russian troops who provided the backbone of the defence succeeded in holding the city walls and in making occasional sorties against the attackers,²⁹ but Urumchi would certainly have fallen had not Sheng Shih-ts'ai, at the head of a strong force of provincial troops from Turfan, marched to the relief of the city. With the approach of Sheng's comparatively disciplined and well-equipped forces, the Muslim insurgents broke off their attack and withdrew to the surrounding countryside, most of which had fallen under their control. Fearing that the melting of the snows would lead to an outbreak of cholera, the Chinese authorities took advantage of the respite gained by Sheng's arrival to bury the dead. Wu Ai-chen, who participated in the burials, has left a harrowing description of conditions in the city at this time. More than 1,000 bodies were buried in a single mass grave in the suburbs,³⁰ and the final death toll was probably in excess of 6,000 Chinese and Muslims.³¹

Following Sheng Shih-ts'ai's relief of Urumchi the insurgent forces consolidated their hold on much of the surrounding countryside. The strategic Dawan Ch'eng was taken, the district of Fu-k'ang – some twenty-five miles north-east of the capital – fell into rebel hands, and in the neighbouring district of San-to-pao an estimated 900 Han Chinese were killed, whilst large stocks of rice which would normally have provisioned Urumchi were captured and burned.³² The rebels were able to operate with impunity within a few miles of the capital, and on 1 March a detachment of about 100 provincial troops was decimated at Ch'i-tao-wan, a mere three miles to the north of the capital, by a column of Muslim insurgents reported by Wu to have been more than 1,000 strong.³³ Meanwhile the situation elsewhere in the province continued to deteriorate; to the south Ma Shao-wu was isolated at Kashgar, whilst to the north a Kazakh rebellion had broken out in the Shara Sume region under the leadership of one Sharif Khan.³⁴ The Zungharian Tungans were also restive, and a rising at Manass under the leadership of a mutinous Lieutenant in the provincial forces was only put down with difficulty.³⁵

The Kazakh rising at Shara Sume seems to have finally convinced the Soviet leadership that the administration of Chin Shu-jen, whose ineptitudes they had watched with increasing misgiving, could not survive the Muslim insurgency which had spread across the whole of Sinkiang. A decision was accordingly taken, apparently with the knowledge and support of Nanking, to send reinforcements to the provincial government at Urumchi.³⁶ By fortuitous chance – from Stalin's point of view – a force of approximately 2,000 battle-experienced Chinese troops had been forced across the Heilungkiang–Siberia border by the Japanese during the latter's attack on Manchuria in 1931. These troops, who had been interned by the Russians, were now transported by the Trans-Siberian and Turk–Sib Railways to the Sinkiang frontier at Chuguchak.³⁷ Chan notes that this force, known as the North-East National Salvation Army, was composed of 'regular soldiers, well-disciplined, well-trained, and full of fighting spirit'.³⁸ The arrival of these north-eastern troops in Urumchi on 27 March 1933, substantially strengthened the position of the provincial administration, and more particularly the position of the Provincial Commander-in-Chief, Sheng Shih-ts'ai, who was a fellow north-easterner.³⁹

Under the command of Sheng, the reinforced provincial army succeeded in pushing back the invading Tungan forces of Ma Shih-ming, who appears to have retreated over the Dawan Ch'eng to his headquarters at Kara Shahr. The Uighur insurgents were undoubtedly dismayed by these new developments, and Khoja Niyās Hājjī, who controlled a wide belt of territory extending from the vicinity of the Sinkiang–Kansu frontier to Turfan, is reported to have sent an urgent appeal for assistance to Ma Chung-ying, still convalescing at An-hsi in north-western Kansu.⁴⁰ Meanwhile Chin Shu-jen, who had played no part in these successes and whose authority was seriously undermined (while Sheng's was strengthened) by the arrival of the troops of the North-East National Salvation Army,⁴¹ was faced by increasing unrest in the capital. During the defence of Urumchi in February and March, the White Russian forces, although bearing the brunt of the fighting, had been irregularly paid and provided with the worst of the horses and ammunition.⁴² Moreover Chin's unpopularity amongst all nationalities including the Han Chinese was not improved by the actions of his brother, Chin Shu-hsin, and his former batman, Ts'u Chao-chi, who had succeeded in cornering grain supplies whilst the city was under siege and were reportedly manipulating the market for personal gain.⁴³

Following the withdrawal of the insurgent forces, Pappengut and the other white Russian officers approached the leaders of the North-East National Salvation Army with an account of their grievances against Chin Shu-jen, and, having been assured of the Northeasterners' support,



19. Sheng Shih-ts'ai, probably c. 1928



20. Ma Chung-ying in KMT 36th Division uniform, c. 1933



21. Turkic conscripts near Kumul, 1933

mounted a coup against Chin on the night of 12 April. About 400 Russians were involved in the fighting, 200 of whom seized the city gates and chairman's *yamen*, whilst the remainder mustered outside the city walls in a show of strength.⁴⁴ Chin, who had probably made provisional arrangements for this eventuality, succeeded in escaping over the city walls and in fleeing to the Soviet Union via Chuguchak. From here he returned to China by way of the Turk-Sib and Trans-Siberian railways.⁴⁵ His younger brother, Chin Shu-hsin, was captured and later executed.⁴⁶

Sheng Shih-ts'ai, who was encamped at Uruba at the time of the coup, insists in his memoirs that the Chin's overthrow was engineered by the Soviet Union and that he had no foreknowledge of the event.⁴⁷ In fact Sheng's wife, Ch'iu Yü-fang, the ambitious and intelligent daughter of a trusted subordinate of the north-eastern warlord Kuo Sung-ling,⁴⁸ is reported to have entered into negotiations with the leadership of the North-East National Salvation Army several days before the coup, and to have obtained their backing for her husband in his move by proxy against Chin Shu-jen.⁴⁹ Following the *coup d'état* a message was sent to Sheng at Uruba requesting him to return to the capital.⁵⁰ In the negotiations which followed Liu Wen-lung, formerly Minister of Education under Chin Shu-jen, was appointed Provincial Chairman,⁵¹ whilst Sheng Shih-ts'ai, who protested that he was 'only a common soldier'⁵² (but who enjoyed the full backing of both the White Russians and the North-East National Salvation Army),⁵³ was confirmed in the all-powerful position of *Tupan* or Border Defence Commissioner, as *de facto* ruler of the province.⁵⁴

The second invasion of Ma Chung-ying

Following Ma Shih-ming's failure to capture Urumchi and Khoja Niyās Häjji's renewed plea for assistance, Ma Chung-ying determined to re-enter the fray in person. There can be little doubt that, far from being downcast at Ma Shih-ming's reverses, Ma Chung-ying was delighted at the ease with which his Adjutant had crossed the Dawan Ch'eng and almost seized Urumchi – a factor which, combined with Ma Chan-ts'ang's seizure of Kashgar New City in southern Sinkiang, convinced the young Tungan warlord that Sinkiang was his for the taking. Moreover, whilst Chin Shu-jen's position appeared to be hopeless,⁵⁵ Ma Chung-ying's position had been considerably strengthened by eighteen months' recuperation in north-western Kansu, during which time his army had been restructured and greatly expanded through widespread conscription. Ma's personal prestige had also been much enhanced, for early in 1932 the Nanking government, probably motivated by news of Chin Shu-jen's illegal treaty with the Soviet Union, recognised his Tungan forces as

the 36th Division of the National Army of China, with Chung-ying as Commanding Officer.⁵⁶

Following Ma Chung-ying's treatment at An-hsi by the British missionaries Cable and French, he transferred his headquarters to Soochow, probably in April or May 1932. Here he continued to train and expand his army, witnessed by the German engineer Vasel, whose descriptions of the young Tungan warlord indicate very clearly the latter's unstable character. In conversation with Vasel, Ma professed his admiration for Napoleon, Bismarck and Hindenburg. He was frequently to be seen running at the head of his troops during training, even in sub-zero temperatures. Military training was pursued with a 'spartan rigour . . . pushed to the verge of utter ruthlessness'. Desertion was punishable by death, and on one occasion Vasel saw Ma personally behead five such offenders. On another Vasel recalls seeing Ma,

In one of those sudden fits of exuberance that were typical of him, snatching up casually some hand grenades, which he had made himself, and hurling them, one by one, against the lofty clay-coloured walls of the city. And then he laughed heartily when he saw his men fling themselves flat on the ground as splinters of steel hurtled in all directions. He scorned to seek safety by throwing himself on the ground, and was quite delighted when he saw that I too did not seek cover.⁵⁷

During the spring of 1933 Ma Chung-ying continued his preparations for the forthcoming invasion of Sinkiang. The Swede Bexell, who was working in the Kansu-Tsinghai frontier region at this time, records that in preparation for the invasion Ma pushed taxation of his own fief in north-western Kansu to the limits of the peasants' endurance; moreover he sent detachments of soldiers into Tsinghai illegally to tax an area which owed allegiance to the Tsinghai authorities at Hsi-ning.⁵⁸ During May 1933, Ma Chung-ying's army withdrew from Soochow and advanced on Yü-men. Vasel has left a description of the 36th Division's departure:

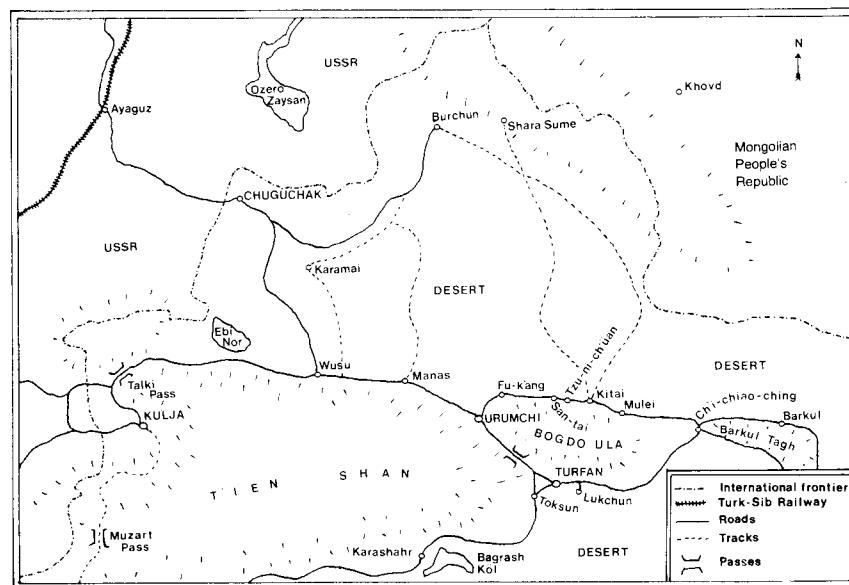
A dark mass of human beings, camels and oxen, was pouring out of the city gate towards the west amid clouds of dust. There were hundreds of heavily-laden camels, the bells on their necks clanging monotonously, their drivers easily discernible by their gaudy headgear. In the rear followed high-wheeled ox-carts, flanked on either side by infantry. Behind them again came a company of cavalry, which presently galloped past the lumbering camels and oxen along the track through the desert . . . and now I had an opportunity of seeing at close range General Ma's famous cavalry riding past me and keeping its post at the head of the marching columns. This was the famous white cavalry regiment of which General Ma was especially proud. The broad iron swords of the dragoons clanked as they rode along on their magnificent white horses, while on their shoulders they carried carbines of the most varied and antiquated patterns. Next came the brown regiment, while in the rear followed the black regiment, comprising some two thousand horsemen.

A short distance behind the cavalry came the infantry – regiment after regiment, headed by the Chinese (Kuomintang) standard. On they swept, platoon after platoon, followed by their officers, with their mausers at the ready. The columns strode along, keeping perfect time with their shrill, high-pitched, mournful, Asiatic marching songs.

Sandwiched between some of these trained and trustworthy soldiers I saw large drafts of recruits who had been compelled to join General Ma's forces. These raw levies were constantly kept under very close observation.⁵⁹

Although accurate statistics giving the full size of Ma Chung-ying's reorganised army during his second invasion of Sinkiang do not, apparently, exist, there can be no doubt that it was substantially stronger than during his first invasion in 1931 (perhaps by as much as ten times).⁶⁰ It was also better trained, better armed, and better paid.⁶¹ Moreover, following Ma Chung-ying's arrival in north-eastern Sinkiang, large numbers of young Uighur men were conscripted into his ranks. The threat posed to the provincial authorities at Urumchi was, therefore, substantial.

In May 1933, Ma Chung-ying despatched a force of about 2,500 Tungans, under the command of his younger brother, Ma Chung-chieh, to take the ruined town of Kumul. This was achieved with little fighting, most of the area being firmly in the hands of Ma Chung-ying's ally, Khoja Niyās Häjjī. Whilst Ma Chung-chieh issued bilingual proclamations to



Map 7 Zungharia and the Ili Valley: towns and communications

the effect that the people of Kumul had been freed for ever from the tyranny of Chin Shu-jen (who, by this time, was safely in the Soviet Union), Ma Chung-ying travelled from An-hsi to Kumul by lorry, remote, for once, from the front-line fighting.⁶² Meanwhile Sheng Shih-ts'ai, who had hardly been able to secure his own position before facing the renewed Tungan challenge, hurriedly prepared a force of about 5,000 Sinkiang, White Russian and north-eastern troops to the north of the Dawan Ch'eng at Urumchi.⁶³ Having rejoined the main force of his troops at Kumul, Ma Chung-ying advanced, unopposed, on Ch'i-chiao-ching, the furthest point west reached during his invasion of 1931. Instead of advancing along the main road to Turfan, the Tungan forces next crossed the narrow defile between the Barkul Tagh and the Bogdo Ula ranges, and advanced on the provincial garrison town of Kitai. The first clashes took place at Mu-lei, a few miles to the east of Kitai, on about 15 May. On 17 May Kitai was attacked by a mixed force of Tungans and Turkic Muslims estimated by the local Provincial Commander, Li Hai-ju, to be 4,000 strong. Once again, the Tungan Commanding Officer was Ma Chung-chieh, Ma Chung-ying apparently choosing to stay in the background. On 26 May Sheng Shih-ts'ai set out from Urumchi at the head of some 5,000 troops, more than 1,000 of whom were White Russian conscripts. He had informed Wu Ai-chen that his intention was to hold San-tai, half-way between Kitai and Urumchi, but, following bitter fighting during which Ma Chung-chieh was killed, Kitai fell to the invading forces.⁶⁴ Sheng Shih-ts'ai retreated to Urumchi, arriving in the capital on the night of 1 June. At this time his fortunes were at their lowest ebb. Still unsure of Nanking's reaction to the *coup d'état* against Chin Shu-jen,⁶⁵ his position was threatened to the east by Ma Chung-ying, who had set up his headquarters at Kitai, and to the west by Chang P'ei-yüan, the Military Governor of Ili, whose loyalty remained questionable and who was secretly negotiating with the Tungan invaders.⁶⁶

Meanwhile Ma Chung-ying, whose forces were within striking distance of the capital, unexpectedly halted his attack and sent a telegram to the provincial authorities offering to come to terms.⁶⁷ Ma's unexplained failure to advance, which may have been due to his realisation that Chin Shu-jen had been overthrown and had fled the province, enabled Sheng to reorganise his defences. A peace mission, under the leadership of the Nanking representative Wu Ai-chen, was despatched to Kitai, whilst Pappengut's White Russians were sent to hold a new front line at Fu-k'ang.⁶⁸ Despite initial promise of success, Wu's peace mission failed to achieve its purpose. Ma Chung-ying assured the provincial delegates that he would observe a cease-fire, and that there would be no further fighting between his forces and those of Sheng Shih-ts'ai. However, according to Wu, shortly after his return from Kitai to Urumchi aerial reconnaissance

reports indicated that Tungan troops were once again on the move, advancing westward towards San-tai. Sheng immediately left Urumchi for Fu-k'ang, where he took personal command of the provincial forces and advanced to meet Ma Chung-ying at the hamlet of Tzu-ni-ch'üan. During the subsequent battle, which took place during mid-June, the provincial forces gained the upper hand following the onset of severe weather conditions for which the lightly-clothed Tungans were ill-prepared.⁶⁹ The Uighur forces of Khoja Niyās Häjjī, who were present in the region at the time of the battle, took no part in the fighting.⁷⁰ The defeat of the Tungans at Tzu-ni-ch'üan, although a serious setback for Ma Chung-ying, was not, however, a complete rout. The defeated troops succeeded in withdrawing in good order and in retreating, via Kitai, to Ch'i-chiao-ching. From this point they advanced westward to Turfan, where they joined up with the remnants of the Tungan forces under Ma Shih-ming, and proceeded to extend their authority towards the southern end of the Dawan Ch'eng.

It was also during mid-June that Huang Mu-sung, a 'Pacification Commissioner' sent by the national government in Nanking, arrived by air in Urumchi. Huang's mission was ostensibly to establish a lasting peace between the provincial authorities and Ma Chung-ying, both of whom professed at least nominal allegiance to the Nanking government. Sheng remained suspicious of Huang's motives, however, clearly feeling that Nanking might lend its backing to the Tungan forces whom, especially after his victory at Tzu-ni-ch'üan, he still hoped to defeat.⁷¹ His reaction was accordingly swift and harsh. Abandoning all pursuit of Ma's forces, Sheng returned to Urumchi and placed Huang Mu-sung under house arrest. Shortly thereafter three leading officials of the Sinkiang government whom Sheng accused of plotting with Huang Mu-sung, Chang P'ei-yüan and Ma Chung-ying to effect his overthrow were arrested and executed by firing squad.⁷² Having thus distanced himself from Nanking, Sheng followed the example of his predecessor, Chin Shu-jen, by turning increasingly to the Soviet Union for aid in his continuing struggle with the various Muslim rebel forces.⁷³

During the summer and early autumn of 1933, Ma Chung-ying remained in the Turfan region reorganising his forces, whilst Sheng devoted his energies to securing his position at Urumchi and elsewhere north of the T'ien Shan. During July and August provincial authority was restored at Shara Sume, which had been looted and burned by Kazakh rebels during April,⁷⁴ and also, according to Hayit, in the border region of Chuguchak.⁷⁵ Meanwhile Khoja Niyās Häjjī, the most influential of the Kumullik rebel leaders, had grown increasingly uneasy in his alliance with the Tungan forces of Ma Chung-ying.⁷⁶ At some stage during late June or early July, probably following the battle of Tzu-ni-ch'üan, he

opened secret negotiations with Sheng Shih-ts'ai which resulted in his recognition of the new provincial authorities and appointment to the position of 'Chief Defence Commissioner for Southern Sinkiang'.⁷⁷ Following this *volte-face* he marched his Uighur troops across the Dawan Ch'eng and occupied Toksun, only to be attacked and badly defeated by the Tungan forces of Ma Shih-ming.⁷⁸ As a result of these developments, by late July Khoja Niyās Häjjī and his ramshackle army had completely disappeared from the political stage in north-eastern Sinkiang, having been forced to retreat via Kara Shahr to Kucha, into a region owing at least nominal allegiance to the rebel forces at Kashgar and Khotan.⁷⁹

Meanwhile Nanking's Pacification Commissioner Huang Ma-sung had secured his release from house arrest in Urumchi by wiring Nanking with the recommendation that Sheng Shih-ts'ai and Liu Wen-lung be confirmed in their posts as chief military and civil authorities in Sinkiang.⁸⁰ Nanking, presented with a *fait accompli* and fearing the further growth of Soviet influence in Sinkiang, had no alternative but to comply with Huang's recommendation. On 2 September Lo Wen-kan, Nanking's Foreign Minister, arrived in Urumchi by air. His brief was formally to confirm Sheng in office (which he did at an official ceremony on 7 September), and then to mediate between Sheng Shih-ts'ai and Ma Chung-ying on the clear understanding that Nanking recognised the former as the legitimate *Tupan* of Sinkiang. As a result of Lo's mission, Ma Chung-ying was offered the post of Garrison Commander of Eastern Sinkiang – an appointment which he agreed to accept, duly assuming legitimate authority over a region which included Kumul, Barkul and part of the Turfan Depression.⁸¹ Shortly after Lo Wen-kan's departure from Sinkiang in early October, however, Sheng announced the discovery of a new 'plot' against him. The figurehead Provincial Chairman, Liu Wen-lung, was accused of conspiring with Ma Chung-ying, Chang P'ei-yüan, and, through Lo Wen-kan, with Nanking, to overthrow Sheng Shih-ts'ai. Liu was accordingly forced to resign, and was replaced as Provincial Chairman by Chu Jui-hsi, a still more pliable cipher.⁸²

Whilst Sheng was thus occupied in strengthening his grip on the provincial government at Urumchi, his enemies in the rest of the province were preparing for a final, all-out attempt to unseat him. Ma Chung-ying, apparently encouraged by Ma Shih-ming's successes against Khoja Niyās Häjjī, decided on a 'lightning stroke' against the capital, and in December 1933 swiftly moved his forces across the strategic Dawan Ch'eng to attack Urumchi.⁸³ In response to this move Chang P'ei-yüan, the military governor of Ili, finally determined to throw his support behind the invading Tungans. He accordingly led his troops across the Talki Pass into Zungharia and attacked the provincial forces stationed at Wusu.⁸⁴ Meanwhile, encouraged by the advance of the Kansu Tungan

forces, the indigenous Tungans of Zungharia rose *en masse* and flocked to Ma Chung-ying's banner.⁸⁵ In late December a detachment of the 36th Division, led by the indefatigable Ma Shih-ming, bypassed the capital and attacked the border town of Chuguchak. By coincidence Georg Vasel, who had witnessed the departure of the KMT 36th Division from Soochow in May, was sheltering in the local Soviet Consulate during its entry to Chuguchak. His description of the Tungan army's appearance and composition after an advance of more than 1,500 miles across the mountains and deserts of Central Asia is evocative of the lawlessness and turmoil of Sinkiang during this warlord period:

The sun's rays, by this time, were shining obliquely across the street and showed us the Tungan army entering the town . . . Stirrup to stirrup, the young regular soldiers in their smart uniforms looked a well-disciplined, trim and efficient force. I recognised one of their officers, Ma Shih-ming, the Commander-in-Chief's adjutant, who had frequently been my guest in Soochow. These regular soldiers rode past on beautiful horses, while huge red flags floated in the breeze above their heads, bearing the character 'Ma' in black letters on a white ground. At a short distance followed a horde that was tolerably well equipped . . . I saw needle-guns, blunderbusses and muzzle-loaders . . .

In their rear dense clouds of dust, which shut out the light, billowed onward, and then came the infantry . . . men with wild eyes and matted hair . . . outlaws who had nothing to lose and everything to gain from the upheaval that was going on. After the infantry followed a huge horde of camels, with their rhythmical swaying gait, laden with produce and goods of every conceivable type . . . the breath came from their mouths like smoke – their necks were craned forward, and their heads kept bobbing up and down.⁸⁶

As a result of the Tungan advance into Zungharia and Chang P'ei-yüan's defection to the side of the rebels, by the mid-winter of 1933 Sheng Shih-ts'ai's position at Urumchi appeared all but untenable. Meanwhile, in the south of the province, the secessionist movement of the 'Khotan *Amīrs*' had entered a new and potentially decisive phase.

The 'Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan'

During September and October 1933, whilst the armies of the rival warlords Sheng Shih-ts'ai and Ma Chung-ying continued their struggle for power in northern and eastern Sinkiang, the rebel forces in southern Sinkiang maintained their siege of Ma Chan-ts'ang's Tungan forces in Kashgar New City whilst gradually consolidating their control over a wide swathe of territory which stretched from Charchan in the east to Aksu in the north. Following the execution of Temür and the withdrawal from Kashgar of the Kirghiz leader, 'Uthmān 'Ali, the Khotan *Amīrs* had by the beginning of October emerged as the leaders of the south-Sinkiang

Muslim Rebellion 'almost by default'. In marked contrast to the Kumullik leaders Khoja Niyās Hājjī and Yulbārs Khan, neither of whom had explicitly stated their commitment to secession from the Chinese Republic,⁸⁷ the Khotan *Amīrs* were committed to just such a separatist policy, and to the establishment of a radical theocratic Muslim state in southern Sinkiang.

Following his defeat by the forces of Ma Shih-ming and subsequent retreat from Toksun to Kucha in late July 1933, Khoja Niyās Hājjī, the spiritual leader of the Uighur forces in both north-eastern and southern Sinkiang, found himself on the periphery of the secessionist region ruled by the government of the Khotan *Amīrs*. Since the Khoja had but recently agreed to recognise the administration of Sheng Shih-ts'ai and had accepted the title of 'Chief Defence Commissioner for Southern Sinkiang', his position was, to say the least, somewhat anomalous. According to Muḥammad Amīn Bughra, the eldest Khotan *Amīr*, a decision was taken to woo the Khoja (and his sizeable if ramshackle army)⁸⁸ away from the provincial authorities in Urumchi by offering him the presidency of their secessionist Islamic state.⁸⁹ Khoja Niyās Hājjī, a pragmatist of little political vision who was, no doubt, mindful of the Turkic-speaking forces to his west as well as of the Tungan armies to his east, promptly accepted this offer, proclaiming a 'Republic of Eastern Turkestan' with himself as President, either at Kucha or at Aksu, on 10 September 1932.⁹⁰ Although by this action the Khotan *Amīrs* succeeded in driving a wedge between Khoja Niyās Hājjī and his erstwhile Chinese allies, nothing came of the resultant 'Republic of Eastern Turkestan', which remained purely notional until 12 November 1933, when, perhaps in desperation at the behaviour of Khoja Niyās Hājjī (who, from his new headquarters at Aksu, was reportedly negotiating for aid from the Soviet Union), Sābit Dāmullāh, the *Shaykh al-Islām* of the Khotan government, proclaimed a 'Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan' (Tk. *Sharqī Türkistan Türk-Islām Jumhūriyatı*), or TIRET.⁹¹

The policies of the TIRET were closely aligned with the original principles of the Khotanlik CNR, combining a clear commitment to the application of Islamic *Shari'a* law (*tajdīd*) with an apparent preparedness to adapt or reform aspects of Islamic custom in accordance with the requirements of contemporary political and social conditions (*ijtihād*).⁹² The domestic policy of the TIRET was thus directed towards the establishment of a radical Islamic system, based on the *Shari'a* but encompassing certain educational, economic and social reforms,⁹³ whilst its foreign policy was as staunchly anti-Soviet as it was anti-Tungan and anti-Han.⁹⁴ Moreover, the leadership of the TIRET – with the exception of the Kumullik patriarch Khoja Niyās Hājjī, who was permitted to retain the titular presidency⁹⁵ – was clearly based on the original CNR leader-

ship in alliance with a number of anti-communist Muslim refugees from Soviet Central Asia (see Appendix II). Thus the Khotanlik *Shaykh al-Islām*, 'Abd al-Bāqī Ṣābit Dāmullāh, became Prime Minister of the TIRET, based in the secessionist capital at Kashgar Old City. Elsewhere within the TIRET-controlled territories, power remained concentrated in the hands of Ṣābit's CNR colleagues, the Khotanlik Bughra brothers. Thus the *Amīr* 'Abdullāh retained control over the Yarkand Oasis and surrounding districts, whilst the youngest Bughra brother, the *Amīr* Nūr Aḥmad Jān, continued to hold the fortified citadel at Yangi Hissar whilst being accorded full 'ministerial rights' at Kashgar.⁹⁶ Meanwhile the eldest Bughra brother, the cautious and somewhat shadowy *Amīr* Muḥammad Amīn, remained the wealthiest and probably the most influential of the TIRET leadership, exercising authority over 'the one district which deserved to be the seat of government',⁹⁷ his native oasis of Khotan.

The nascent TIRET rapidly assumed the unwieldy trappings of full 'statehood', with a cabinet of at least twelve ministers and a National Assembly. The Chinese Republican legal system was replaced by Islamic *Shari'a* law, and a constitution of some complexity was promulgated.⁹⁸ In a reaffirmation of the Islamic identity of the new state, a 'National Flag' comprising a white star and crescent on a blue ground was widely displayed at Kashgar.⁹⁹ Sinkiang provincial currency, as well as the cruder notes being issued by the Tungan warlord Ma Chung-ying, ceased to be recognised as legal tender, and TIRET bank notes were issued at both Kashgar and Khotan in their stead. The press of the former Swedish mission at Yarkand was taken over by the TIRET authorities, and used to publish radical Islamic literature in support of the new state, including the journal *Istiqlāl*, or 'Freedom'.¹⁰⁰

TIRET policies, which were theoretically founded on Qur'ān and *Hadith*, were described by the British Consulate-General at Kashgar as being essentially five in number, viz.:

1. To form an independent Muslim state.
2. To seek freedom from the 'Soviet stranglehold'.
3. To restore peace and put down lawlessness.
4. To encourage and restore trade.
5. To seek friendly relations with the British Government and to obtain its aid as far as was possible.¹⁰¹

In many ways the TIRET was the direct spiritual successor of the Amirate founded by Ya'qūb Beg in the mid-nineteenth century, which was also centred on Kashgar and the Uighur-populated oases of the Tarim Basin. Like Ya'qūb Beg, the TIRET looked to British India and to the Muslim Middle East for aid and recognition in its struggle for

independence. However, unlike Ya'qūb Beg, who succeeded in winning recognition and some degree of material assistance from both the British and the Ottoman Turks, the TIRET was to fail completely in this aim.

The TIRET authorities made approaches to the British both through the medium of HMCGK Thomson-Glover – newly arrived at Kashgar in November 1933 – and, more directly, through Uighur emissaries despatched to the British Indian authorities at New Delhi. Thomson-Glover, who was ardently anti-Soviet and a complete novice in the complicated arena of Sinkiang politics, was initially enthusiastic in his response to Ṣābit and the *Amīrs*; he reported to New Delhi that 'the Moslem spirit from Khotan . . . has alone made any attempt to stem the tide of Soviet domination', and recommended that, should any lasting unity between the *Amīrs* and Khoja Niyās Hājjī emerge, then 'With nominal allegiance to Nanking it might be possible for a friendly power to extend practical sympathy and help to the new and struggling Republic'.¹⁰²

The Government of India lost no time in reminding Thomson-Glover that the British recognised Nanking as the sole authority in Sinkiang, and that all moves to counter Soviet penetration of the area should be based, as always, on a policy of support for the Chinese authorities in the province.¹⁰³ The TIRET emissaries who reached New Delhi in February 1934 were similarly rebuffed, whilst *The Times* of London commented:

So far as Delhi is concerned, the Republicans have gone to the wrong address. Sinkiang is the province of a state with which the British Government are on good terms and the delegates will get no more than the advice to settle their differences with Sinkiang before worse befalls them.¹⁰⁴

The TIRET leadership also attempted to win recognition and aid from the Muslim Middle East but again met with little success. In November 1933, two Turkish nationals, Dr Muṣṭafa 'Ali Bay of Izmir and a military officer called Mahmūd Nadīm Bay, appeared in Kashgar as 'advisers' to the secessionist Republic.¹⁰⁵ Reports of the developments within Sinkiang were initially greeted by the Turkish press with some exuberance. The Turkic-speaking rebels were represented as 'true Turks', and the TIRET as 'a modern state which will advance along the road to perfection'. A New Year's telegram which was sent by the TIRET to the Turkish government at Ankara, conveying greetings from the 'Blue Flag of newly liberated Eastern Turkestan to the Red Flag of beloved Turkey', was widely circulated by the Anatolian News Agency, but no material support for the secessionists was forthcoming from Ankara, and the Turkish Foreign Minister, Tawfiq Hüştü Bay, warned that nations who were neighbours of Soviet Russia must, above all, be on good terms with her, for she 'alone can be of use to her neighbours in the way of development'.¹⁰⁶

Such advice was of little use to the anti-communist leadership of the TIRET, however. As Muḥammad Amīn Bughra was later to comment, ‘The Russians were our natural enemies.’¹⁰⁷ Accordingly, the Khotan *Amīr* turned to the Afghan government of Muḥammad Zāhir Shāh, which regarded the Islamic rebellion in southern Sinkiang with some sympathy, and which had sent its congratulations to Kashgar on the foundation of the TIRET in November 1933.¹⁰⁸ As a result of this apparent good will, the *Amīr* Muḥammad Amīn Bughra sent a delegation to Kabul in January 1934 in an attempt to obtain formal recognition and to acquire arms. Bughra comments:

The Afghan Government received our embassy formally, whilst it was too early, however, to recognise the independence of Eastern Turkestan. They decided to provide a quantity of arms in exchange for money, and they appointed a political representative to represent Afghanistan in Eastern Turkestan.¹⁰⁹

In the event, however, the TIRET was unable to acquire significant quantities of munitions through Kabul, either because the Soviet Union – which viewed the emergent anti-communist regime at Kashgar with considerable distaste – brought discreet diplomatic pressure to bear on the Afghan authorities, or, as Muḥammad Amīn Bughra suggests, because the Tungan armies of Ma Chung-ying seized the TIRET capital at Kashgar Old City before arms deliveries could be arranged.¹¹⁰

It can thus be seen that all attempts made by the rebel leadership in southern Sinkiang to win diplomatic or material support in their bid to set up a secessionist state ended in failure. In effect, the TIRET was doomed from the moment of its inception, for, having adopted an uncompromisingly ‘Turkic-Islamic’ stance, it had deprived itself of effective allies whilst ensuring the enmity of the three most powerful forces in Sinkiang – the Tungans, the provincial authorities, and the Soviet Union.

Soviet intervention in support of Sheng Shih-ts’ai

As has already been shown, by the beginning of January 1934, Sheng Shih-ts’ai was beleaguered in the provincial capital at Urumchi whilst the Tungan forces of Ma Chung-ying ranged almost at will across Zungharia. Sheng could expect no assistance from Nanking, whose envoys he had accused of plotting his downfall and from whose forces Sinkiang was, in any case, isolated by a wide swathe of territory under the control of Ma Chung-ying’s fellow Tungans belonging to the ‘Five Ma’ warlord clique. To compound Sheng’s isolation, the strategic Ili Valley was under the control of forces owing allegiance to the renegade General Chang P’ei-yüan, who was himself threatening Urumchi from Wusu, whilst the

greater part of southern Sinkiang was under the control of the avowedly secessionist ‘Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan’. It was at this eleventh hour that the Soviet Union, which had become increasingly disturbed by the continuing turmoil in Sinkiang, finally determined, in response to an urgent appeal from Sheng Shih-ts’ai, to intervene directly in support of the provincial authorities at Urumchi.

It is not known when Sheng Shih-ts’ai first approached the Soviets with a request for aid. Certainly, in October 1933 Sheng despatched Ch’en Te-li and Yao Hsiung as his personal representatives to the Soviet authorities in Moscow. In his memoirs Sheng claims that the purpose of their mission was to urge the Soviets to supply the provincial authorities with weapons which they had promised to Chin Shu-jen in 1931, but which had not been delivered.¹¹¹ It is interesting to note, however, that shortly after the 12 April *coup d'état*, the provincial council which replaced Chin Shu-jen determined to send a messenger to Nanking to inform the National Government of developments in Sinkiang. According to Wu Ai-chen, who held an influential position on this provisional council, Sheng Shih-ts’ai’s Chief of Staff, Ch’en Chung, was chosen to be the council’s representative and was duly despatched to Nanking by way of Chuguchak and Moscow. Before his departure Ch’en Chung was ‘royally feasted’ by Sheng and a wealthy White Russian called Gmerkyn.¹¹² Nothing was heard from Ch’en throughout the months of April and May, though on 3 June a message was received in Urumchi which announced that the special envoy to Nanking would shortly be returning to Sinkiang. Wu Ai-chen was greatly puzzled by the speed with which Ch’en Chung had completed his mission, and went to meet him at Urumchi airport on his return. Here he learned that Ch’en had only travelled as far as Moscow before returning to Sinkiang, having forwarded his report to Nanking by mail – a task which could easily have been performed, by air, from Urumchi itself. Wu’s account of his conversation with Chen concludes thus: ‘I was too well trained in tact to ask him by whose order he had altered his movements – it was certainly not on our council’s instructions that he had done so. Something, it was clear, was going on behind the scenes.’¹¹³

In retrospect it seems probable that Ch’en Chung travelled to Moscow on the orders of his Commanding Officer, Sheng Shih-ts’ai, and that whilst in Moscow he began negotiations with the Soviet authorities on Sheng’s behalf. When news of Chin Shu-jen’s arrest and imprisonment by the Nanking authorities reached Sheng, he must have become doubly cautious in his dealings with the Soviet Union, none of which were sanctioned by the National Government of China. Sheng’s hostility towards the Nanking emissaries Huang Mu-sung and Lo Wen-kan might well have been based on his fear that Nanking had learned of these secret

negotiations with Moscow, and had determined to install the anti-Soviet Ma Chung-ying in his place as *de facto* Governor of Sinkiang.¹¹⁴ By October 1933, however, Sheng had effectively burned his bridges with Nanking,¹¹⁵ and was in serious military difficulties at Urumchi, with the greater part of Sinkiang in rebel hands. He therefore had no alternative but to follow the path taken by his predecessor, Chin Shu-jen, in turning to the Soviet Union for military and financial aid. Accordingly, with Ma Chung-ying's troops in command of the strategic Dawan Ch'eng and threatening the capital, Sheng sent Ch'en Te-li and Yao-hsiung to Moscow in a last, desperate plea for assistance.

Sheng's emissaries to the Soviet Union were received with sympathy in Moscow. The Soviet leadership was disturbed by two aspects of the developments in Sinkiang. In the south, they viewed the emergence of an anti-Soviet, secessionist 'Turkish-Islamic Republic' with deep concern. Although the TIRET itself posed no military threat to the Soviet Union, there was always the possibility that, with British or Japanese support, the TIRET might manage to survive as an autonomous unit, providing a haven for discontented Muslim elements from Western Turkestan and a general focus for anti-Soviet activities in Central Asia. More seriously, the Soviet Union appears to have feared that Ma Chung-ying, who was on the verge of capturing Urumchi, was under Japanese influence. In March 1932, only eighteen months before Ma Chung-ying's forces reached the Sino-Soviet frontier at Chuguchak, the Japanese Kwantung Army had invaded North-East China and had set up the puppet state of 'Manchukuo'; moreover in February 1933 Japanese forces had pushed westward into the Chinese province of Jehol. It is in this wider international context that Soviet policy towards Sinkiang in the mid-1930s must be considered.

As has already been shown, by 1931 the Soviet Union had effectively attained 'most favoured nation' status in Sinkiang. The external trade of the province was almost wholly with the Soviet Union, and the Provincial Chairman Chin Shu-jen had exceeded his authority to the extent of signing a secret agreement permitting the Soviets to establish eight trading agencies at various locations throughout the province.¹¹⁶ In return the Soviet Union had provided Chin with limited logistical and financial backing, though not with direct military support. Following Chin's overthrow and the continued Japanese aggression in North-East China, however, the Soviet Union became increasingly anxious about the situation in Sinkiang – especially after a Japanese national attached to Ma Chung-ying's staff, by name Tadashi Onishi, was captured by Sheng Shih-ts'ai's forces after their victory at Tzu-ni-ch'üan in June 1933.¹¹⁷ Tadashi appears to have been no more than an 'adventurous forerunner' of Japanese imperialism in Sinkiang, and to have had no official backing

from the Japanese Foreign Office which, when approached by Nanking, denied all knowledge of his existence.¹¹⁸ Despite this Japanese disavowal, however, the Soviet Union was seriously disturbed by the capture of a Japanese 'agent' attached to Ma Chung-ying's staff and, through *Pravda* denounced the incident as a further manifestation of Japanese imperialism in Central Asia.¹¹⁹

Seemingly, the Soviet Union was less concerned with British economic competition in the Kashgar region, and, although publicly chastising the British for attempting to create 'a Greater Tibetan Empire' which was supposedly to include southern Sinkiang,¹²⁰ the Politburo must have drawn comfort from Britain's refusal to have dealings with the secessionist 'Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan'. Of more concern to the Soviets were reports of tentative Japanese contacts with the TIRET,¹²¹ and of visits by TIRET representatives to the embassy of Nazi Germany in Kabul.¹²² Already wary of German and Japanese intentions on her western and far-eastern frontiers, the Soviet leadership had no intention of permitting either Berlin or Tokyo to extend their influence to the remote Central Asian frontiers of the USSR, be it either through the medium of the secessionist TIRET, or through the agency of the ambitious and politically unpredictable Ma Chung-ying.¹²³ The official Soviet attitude towards developments in Sinkiang during 1933 may best be summed up by the contemporary warning of a Soviet diplomatic mission to Nanking: 'We do not mind if you Chinese develop [Eastern] Turkestan. But if you permit [Eastern] Turkestan to become a second Manchuria, we must act to protect ourselves.'¹²⁴ Meanwhile, the Soviet Press at Tashkent reminded its readership that, were the Japanese to take control of Sinkiang, the oil fields at Baku would be within reach of their bombers.¹²⁵ Thus it was that in late 1933, following Sheng Shih-ts'ai's urgent appeal for assistance, the Soviet Union determined to intervene directly in Sinkiang – for Sheng, although manifestly unreliable, was at least known to be convincingly anti-Japanese.¹²⁶

Accordingly, when Ch'en Te-li and Yao-hsiung returned to Sinkiang from Moscow in December 1933, they were accompanied by G. Apresoff, an experienced Soviet diplomat, who was to be the new Soviet Consul-General at Urumchi.¹²⁷ Shortly after Apresoff's arrival, Sheng conducted a purge of his armed forces – about twenty officers of the North-East National Salvation Army were arrested and shot,¹²⁸ as were a number of senior officers from the White Russian 'volunteer' force, including its Commanding Officer, Pappengut. The White Russian unit was subsequently reorganised under the command of Soviet officers.¹²⁹ At the same time, between forty and fifty senior Chinese officials suspected of holding anti-Soviet sentiments were removed from office¹³⁰ and a secret police force, the Pao-an-chü (Security Preservation Bureau),

reportedly under the supervision of a senior Soviet official, was established.¹³¹ There are also a number of unconfirmed reports that at this time Sheng signed a secret agreement with the Soviet Union by which it was granted further economic concessions in Sinkiang as well as the right to build a railway from Ayaguz (Sergiopol), through Chuguchak, to Urumchi.¹³² To complete his alignment with the Soviets, Sheng announced his 'Six Basic Policies' of: (1) anti-imperialism, (2) kinship to Sovietism, (3) racial or national equality, (4) 'clean' government, (5) peace, and (6) reconstruction.¹³³

The Kremlin was clearly satisfied with these moves, for early in January 1934, without the approval of the Chinese national authorities at Nan-kang, two brigades of GPU troops, numbering an estimated 7,000 men and supported by tanks, planes and artillery, moved across the Sino-Soviet frontier and attacked rebel positions at Kulja and Chuguchak.¹³⁴ The Soviet forces, who had been ordered to 'clear the roads and liquidate the rebellion',¹³⁵ rapidly overcame the provincial forces of Chang P'ei-yüan, who is reported to have committed suicide.¹³⁶ The Tungan forces of Ma Shih-ming put up much fiercer resistance and, although forced to retreat from the Chuguchak region, succeeded in blocking the Soviet advance on Urumchi. According to Alexander Barmine, the Soviet official who was in charge of the supply of Soviet arms to Sinkiang at this time, continuing Tungan resistance prevented for some time the despatch of planes and munitions from the Soviet frontier to Urumchi:

Finally the command of the Red Army Force operating there took charge of this shipment. They 'delivered' our cargoes, consigned to the governor, by dropping the bombs on the rebel forces gathered around the capital, and by landing the planes right on the airfield of the besieged fortress. I was instructed to send the bill for the bombs, as well as the other goods, to the governor.¹³⁷

According to Vasel, the Tungan forces managed to beat back repeated attacks by the numerically and technically superior Soviet units for a period of some thirty days, on one occasion foiling a Soviet pincer attack by 'crawling through the snow, camouflaged by reversed sheepskins, and storming, from a very short distance, Soviet machine-gun posts whilst wielding the characteristic curved sword of Islam'.¹³⁸ The main battle between the Tungans and the GPU troops reportedly took place on the frost-bound banks of the Tutun River, some thirty miles north-west of Urumchi. According to *The Times* correspondent, Peter Fleming, the Battle of the Tutun River 'raged for several days; but the Tungans' unskilled ferocity was no match for a mechanised foe, and the troops . . . were badly demoralised by gas bombs dropped by the Soviet airmen'.¹³⁹

Both Soviet and Tungan forces suffered serious losses,¹⁴⁰ but ultimately the GPU units prevailed, and Ma Chung-ying withdrew from Urumchi to

the Dawan Ch'eng, closely pursued by a mixed force of provincial Chinese, White Russian and Soviet troops.¹⁴¹ At the Dawan Ch'eng the Tungans attempted to make another stand when, according to Vasel, a detachment of Soviet troops supported by armoured cars was attacked by a force of some 500 Tungans. After savage hand-to-hand fighting the Soviet forces were driven back, and their armoured cars were rolled off the mountainside by the victorious Tungans. At this juncture, by a strange twist of fate, the surviving Soviet troops were relieved by a force of White Russian 'volunteers', and Ma Chung-ying was forced to continue his retreat through Toksun to Korla.¹⁴²

Meanwhile in southern Sinkiang, the Soviet Union was actively attempting to destabilise the already distinctly shaky 'Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan'. On the one hand, in a move apparently designed to protect the Soviet frontier and to insulate Soviet Central Asia from Turkic nationalist influences emanating from Kashgar, a Soviet-backed force of irregulars known as the 'Törtünjis' was set up at Ulug Chat under the command of one Yüsuf Jän.¹⁴³ On the other hand, in a move clearly designed to isolate the anti-communist 'Khotan Amirs' who effectively controlled the TIRET, the Soviets entered into negotiations with Khoja Niyās Häjjī who, although titular President of the TIRET, had remained at Aksu with the bulk of his army.¹⁴⁴ As a result of these negotiations the Khoja acquired a limited supply of Soviet armaments – though scarcely enough to make him a threat to any faction other than his supposed TIRET colleagues at Kashgar¹⁴⁵ – whilst a wedge was successfully driven by the Soviet Politburo between the 'President' of the TIRET at Aksu and his strongly anti-Soviet 'cabinet' at Kashgar.¹⁴⁶

The collapse of the TIRET and the flight of Ma Chung-ying

The ineffectual nature of Khoja Niyās Häjjī's predominantly Uighur army became clear in mid-December when, despite recent Soviet arms supplies, his headquarters at Aksu fell to an 800-strong advance guard of Ma Chung-ying's Tungans almost without offering resistance. Following this defeat Khoja Niyās withdrew westward, arriving at Kashgar with about 1,500 men on the evening of 13 January 1934.¹⁴⁷ Despite the opposition of the Khotan Amirs to his policy of *rapprochement* with the Soviets, Khoja Niyās Häjjī was given an 'outwardly cordial welcome' by Säbit Dämulläh, who went so far as to vacate the Old City *yamen* in his favour.¹⁴⁸ For a brief period of about two weeks, Säbit and the Khoja co-operated in a series of increasingly desperate attacks against the Tungan forces of Ma Chan-ts'ang, still besieged in Kashgar New City, but on 28 January the last of these joint attacks was beaten back with heavy losses and the short period of co-operation between the Kumullik and

Khotanlik factions within the TIRET came to an end. On 5 February, faced with the imminent arrival at Kashgar of Ma Chung-ying's Tungan forces, both Šäbit Dämulläh and Khoja Niyās Hājjī withdrew separately towards Yangi-Hissar, which was still held by Nür Ahmad Jān, youngest of the Khotan *Amīrs*.¹⁴⁹ Within twenty-four hours the Tungan advance guard, still clad in the uniform of the KMT 36th Division and under the command of Ma Fu-yüan, entered the Kashgar oasis. They met with little resistance and, according to Thomson-Glover, 'some 800 Tungans and 1,200 conscripts caused nearly 10,000 rebel troops to flee from Kashgar'.¹⁵⁰ Ma Fu-yüan was at pains to stress Tungan loyalty to Nanking, and on 13 February, one week after the relief of the besieged garrison of Kashgar New City, it was announced that Ma Shao-wu, the former *Tao-yin* of Kashgar, had 'assumed senior military and civil control on behalf of the Chinese Republic at the request of Ma Chan-ts'ang and Ma Fu-yüan'.¹⁵¹ Thus, in a development which emphasised the deeply conflicting interests of Turkic-speaking and Chinese-speaking Muslims in southern Sinkiang, the capital of the secessionist TIRET was recaptured for Nanking not by the provincial forces of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, but by the Tungan forces of Ma Chung-ying.

Following the Tungan capture of Kashgar, the administration of the TIRET – or what was left of it – was re-established under Šäbit Dämulläh and Nür Ahmad Jān at Yangi-Hissar. In marked contrast, Khoja Niyās Hājjī, who still held the titular presidency of the stillborn republic, fled to Irkeshtam on the Soviet frontier. Here, according to Hayit, he signed a treaty with the Soviets by which he agreed to dissolve the TIRET and to place his (predominantly Kumullik and Turfanlik) forces at the disposal of the provincial authorities in their struggle against the Tungans and the Khotan *Amīrs*. In exchange, Khoja Niyās Hājjī was to become 'Civil Governor for Life' of Sinkiang, under the military governorship of Sheng Shih-ts'ai.¹⁵²

Meanwhile on 14 February, following an abortive Khotanlik attempt to recapture Kashgar,¹⁵³ the Tungan forces of Ma Chan-ts'ang and Ma Fu-yüan took their revenge on their Turkic co-religionists for the 'Kizil Massacre' of June 1933. For two days the Tungans systematically looted Kashgar Old City, whilst between 1,700 and 2,000 citizens were massacred.¹⁵⁴ Subsequently both Ma Chan-ts'ang and Ma Fu-yüan advanced on Yangi Hissar, where on 28 March they looted the Old City and bazaar whilst 'killing every living thing'.¹⁵⁵ In the face of this new Tungan advance, the *Amīr* Nür Ahmad Jān took refuge in the fortified citadel of Yangi Hissar New City, where he was soon closely invested by Tungan troops, whilst Šäbit Dämulläh fled towards Yarkand. Once within the fortified New City, the *Amīr* Nür Ahmad Jān put up unexpectedly fierce resistance, and it was not until 2 April, when the *Amīr* Abdulläh arrived

from Yarkand with several thousand troops, that the Tungans were able to achieve any military success. Caught in the open, 'Abdulläh's Khotanlik troops were no match for the Tungans, and many were killed. Finally 'Abdulläh himself was cut down – it is relevant to note that he was defended to the last by a bodyguard of Afghans – and his head was sent to Kashgar to be exhibited outside the 'Id-gāh Mosque.¹⁵⁶ The Khotanlik forces within the Yangi Hissar citadel continued to resist the attacking Tungans (who were armed only with rifles), 'conserving their scanty ammunition and rolling back the attackers scaling the walls by means of large stones and tree trunks'.¹⁵⁷ During the siege the Tungans are reported to have suffered several hundred casualties, but on 12 April, following the successful mining of the citadel walls, the New City fell to the attacking Tungan forces and about 500 defenders, including the *Amīr* Nür Ahmad Jān, were put to the sword.¹⁵⁸

Approximately four weeks before the Tungan attack on Yangi Hissar, probably on or about 1 March, Šäbit Dämulläh and the TIRET cabinet received notice from Khoja Niyās Hājjī that he had reached an agreement with the Soviets at Irkeshtam, and that the secessionist TIRET should be dissolved. At a special meeting of the TIRET cabinet on 2 March, Šäbit and his colleagues rejected the Khoja's instructions and declared their erstwhile President a traitor.¹⁵⁹ When news of this decision reached Khoja Niyās, he marched from Irkeshtam to Yarkand, where Šäbit Dämulläh and certain prominent officials of the TIRET were conferring with Muhammad Amīn Bughra, the eldest and only surviving Khotan *Amīr*. Khoja Niyās arrived at Yarkand in mid-April, several days before the Tungan forces of Ma Fu-yüan and Ma Chan-ts'ang, and arrested Šäbit Dämulläh. The sole surviving *Amīr* managed to evade the Khoja's forces, and fled back towards Khotan.¹⁶⁰ Khoja Niyās proceeded to collect all the gold he could find – a good deal of which was reportedly in the house of the deceased *Amīr* 'Abdulläh – and then withdrew, taking Šäbit as his prisoner, through Merket and Maral Bashi towards Aksu. The Tungans arrived at Yarkand on 20 April, and immediately set off in pursuit of the Khoja, whilst other Tungan forces left Kashgar for Fayzabad in an apparent attempt to prevent the Khoja from reaching Aksu, which had fallen to provincial forces on or about the 12th.¹⁶¹ Despite these last-minute attempts to capture Khoja Niyās, he managed to evade the Tungan pursuit and to arrive safely at Aksu, where he handed over Šäbit Dämulläh to the provincial authorities. Both Šäbit Dämulläh and the TIRET Justice Minister, Sharif Qārī, were subsequently hanged at Aksu in July.¹⁶² It should be noted that, in their 'struggle' against the secessionist TIRET, the provincial authorities had to do little more than tie the rope around Šäbit Dämulläh's neck. The TIRET capital at Kashgar fell to the Chinese Muslim forces of Ma

Chung-ying, and the TIRET leadership was finally dispersed or arrested by the predominantly Uighur Muslim army of the Kumullik leader Khoja Niyās Hājjī.¹⁶³

Meanwhile, on 6 April, 1934, the Tungan Commander-in-Chief Ma Chung-ying had arrived at Kashgar. His forces, totalling an estimated 10,000 men (some 60 per cent of whom were Turkic conscripts), were reportedly more than a match for the provincial forces in hand-to-hand fighting, but had been badly demoralised by Soviet bombing. The Tungan army had been closely pursued as far as Aksu by the provincial forces (now composed primarily of Chinese, White Russians and Mongols, few GPU troops having advanced beyond Turfan), but after the fall of Aksu the pressure of the pursuit had slackened.¹⁶⁴ Ma Chung-ying had accompanied the rear-guard of his army, and arrived at Kashgar in a lorry which he had requisitioned from Sven Hedin's Sino-Swedish Expedition at Korla.¹⁶⁵

Following his arrival at Kashgar, Ma denounced Sheng Shih-ts'ai as a puppet of the Soviet Union and stressed his loyalty to the Chinese national government at Nanking – indeed he went so far as to lecture his Turkic-speaking fellow-Muslims after Friday prayer at the central 'Id-gāh Mosque on the importance of loyalty to Nanking.¹⁶⁶ Meanwhile Tungan troops occupied Sarikol¹⁶⁷ and, having rejected peace overtures from the *Amīr* Muḥammad Amin,¹⁶⁸ continued their advance on Khotan which was occupied, without fighting, on 12 June. In marked contrast to their behaviour at Kashgar and Yangi-Hissar, the Tungans refrained from looting Khotan, but sent a detachment of troops in pursuit of Muḥammad Amīn, who had escaped, together with about 3,000 followers, towards Keriya.¹⁶⁹ The *Amīr* succeeded in evading his pursuers and, having doubled back towards Khotan, 'fled with several pony loads of gold towards Shahidullah'. Some weeks later he arrived at Leh, the capital of Ladakh in British India, and, having registered with the authorities, he was permitted to travel to Srinagar.¹⁷⁰

Although with the flight of the last of the Khotan *Amīrs* to India the secessionist TIRET came to an end, the Turkish-Islamic separatist ideal which the short-lived regime had embodied lived on in southern Sinkiang, nurtured, to some considerable degree, by an aura of martyrdom and myth of near success which came increasingly to surround the Khotan *Amīrs* following their defeat.

Following the overthrow of the secessionist TIRET and the (largely symbolic) restoration of Nanking's authority in southern Sinkiang, Ma Chung-ying was able to turn his attention more fully to the continuing struggle with his arch-rival Sheng Shih-ts'ai. At the time of his arrival at Kashgar Ma had clearly hoped to obtain munitions and possibly diplomatic support from the government of India. Accordingly, on 6 April, he

visited the British Consulate-General where he explained to Thomson-Glover that he had come to Kashgar 'to try and save south Sinkiang from Russian influence', and continued to stress his loyalty to Nanking.¹⁷¹ Thomson-Glover was clearly impressed with Ma Chung-ying, for he informed New Delhi at some length of his discussion with the Tungan Commander-in-Chief, adding, 'his version of current affairs . . . from all other evidence available . . . appears to more or less represent the course events are taking'.¹⁷² Meanwhile, on the military front, Ma Chung-ying established defensive lines at Maral Bashi and Fayzabad and placed his half-brother (or brother-in-law) Ma Hu-shan in command of the main Tungan force opposing the provincial advance.¹⁷³

During May and June 1934, it gradually became clear to Ma Chung-ying that, despite some manifestation of British sympathy for his position,¹⁷⁴ 'both on account of neutrality and the physical difficulties of the routes to India and Afghanistan', he could expect no direct intervention on his behalf by the government of India.¹⁷⁵ Following this realisation, Ma Chung-ying's visits to the Soviet Consulate at Kashgar became increasingly frequent, and he reported to Thomson-Glover, perhaps in a last bid to win British support, that the Soviets had approached him 'to find out how much he would require to be bought off'.¹⁷⁶ Certainly Ma seems to have reached some accommodation with the Soviets, for following heavy provincial bombing attacks against his forces at Maralbashi towards the end of June, Ma Chung-ying ordered the Tungan armies to evacuate Kashgar and to proceed to Khotan, announcing that he would be accompanying them in person.¹⁷⁷

What happened next remains something of a mystery. On 4, 5 and 6 July the Tungan armies streamed out of Kashgar towards Khotan, apparently expecting Ma Chung-ying to follow with the rear guard, as he had done during the retreat from Korla to Kashgar. What actually happened, in the words of the British Consul-General Thomson-Glover, was that:

Ma Chung-ying left Kashgar for Irkeshtam early on 7th July with three or four of his officers . . . and an escort of some 50 Tungans and one or more members of the USSR Consulate or Trade Agency. Arrived near the border to Russia the escort were met by Russian or Russian-employed troops. The Tungan escort dispersed or handed over their arms to some of Khoja Niyās' levies, and Ma Chung-ying disappeared into Russia.¹⁷⁸

Why the young Tungan warlord should have chosen voluntarily to put himself in the hands of the foreign power which was providing support for his rival Sheng Shih-ts'ai remains a mystery. Ma's position at Kashgar was not under immediate military pressure from the provincial forces, as can be seen from the fact that the city was not occupied by Sheng's troops

until almost two weeks after Ma's journey to the Soviet Union. Moreover Ma could have accompanied his forces to Khotan, which his half-brother Ma Hu-shan was to hold successfully for a further three years before returning safely to his native Kansu.¹⁷⁹ Soviet motives in offering Ma sanctuary are easier to understand, however. With Ma Chung-ying dead, a fugitive in India, or safely back in his fief in north-western Kansu, Moscow's *protégé* Sheng Shih-ts'ai would assume full power over Sinkiang and, although no doubt duly grateful to the Soviet Union for their assistance, might well feel able to re-assert his independence. On the other hand, with Ma Chung-ying safely removed from the political stage in Sinkiang and living in the Soviet Union as 'honoured guest', the Kremlin would retain a card which might be played to great effect against a possibly recalcitrant Sheng Shih-ts'ai,¹⁸⁰ or indeed, should the necessity arise, against a hostile Nanking or an expansionist Japan.

Almost nothing is known of Ma Chung-ying's movements after his crossing of the Soviet frontier at Irkeshtam. G. Apresoff, the Soviet Consul-General at Urumchi, told Sven Hedin that Ma had been arrested and disarmed on entering Soviet territory.¹⁸¹ Later Grosskopf, the German Consul at Novosibirsk, reported that Ma had been taken from Irkeshtam to Alma Ata, where it was presumed that he was being held in captivity.¹⁸² In January 1935, it was reported in the *Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society* that Ma had travelled to Moscow, but had died on arrival.¹⁸³ In the summer of 1935, however, *The Times* correspondent Peter Fleming was shown a picture of Ma Chung-ying 'posed in an arresting attitude. His hair was long, like a foreigner's (all the Tungans crop their heads); and he wore the uniform of a cavalry officer in the Soviet Red Army. It appeared that internment on Soviet soil was not without its compensations.'¹⁸⁴ Ma was again reported to have been seen in Moscow at the beginning of 1936,¹⁸⁵ and a British diplomatic source dating from April 1940 still placed him in that city before advancing the (unlikely) theory that he had been sent by the Soviets on several occasions to Kansu.¹⁸⁶ Ma Chung-ying's ultimate fate remains unknown, though according to one report he was executed on Stalin's orders following Sheng Shih-ts'ai's visit to Moscow in 1938. Certainly the young Tungan warlord was never seen again, and in retrospect it seems likely that, as predicted by Vasel, Ma ended his life 'in some dungeon'.¹⁸⁷

Almost two weeks after Ma Chung-ying's precipitate departure for the Soviet Union, a unit of 400 Chinese troops under the command of General Kung Cheng-han, Urumchi's Pacification Commissioner for southern Sinkiang, arrived at Kashgar. He was accompanied by a force of some 2,000 Uighurs under the command of Khoja Niyās Hājjī's former Chief-of-Staff, a Turfanlik Uighur named Mahmūd Muhibbī, but known simply as Mahmūd Shih-chang.¹⁸⁸ Kashgar thus passed peacefully under

the control of the provincial authorities at Urumchi for the first time in almost a year. Meanwhile Ma Chung-ying's command passed to his half-brother, Ma Hu-shan, who set up Tungan headquarters at Khotan whilst his troops fanned out through the oases to the south of the Taklamakan, eventually establishing their control over a region which extended from Karghalik in the west to Charkhlik and the frontiers of Kansu in the east.¹⁸⁹ The provincial forces, probably for want of Soviet backing, made no attempt to advance against Ma Hu-shan and his sizeable Tungan army, and in September 1934, following the visit of Tungan delegates to Kashgar, an armistice was signed which brought hostilities between the Tungans and the provincial authorities temporarily to an end.¹⁹⁰

5 Sinkiang, 1934–44: The Muslims under Sheng Shih-ts'ai

Sheng Shih-ts'ai to Stalin:

(In a rush of excitement): Once a new Sinkiang comes into being with all nationalities enjoying a happy and prosperous life, it will prove that communism is the saviour of mankind. All religious groups, including Moslems and Buddhists, might then see that by developing our economy in this fashion their fanciful paradise in heaven can come into reality on earth.

Stalin to Sheng Shih-ts'ai:

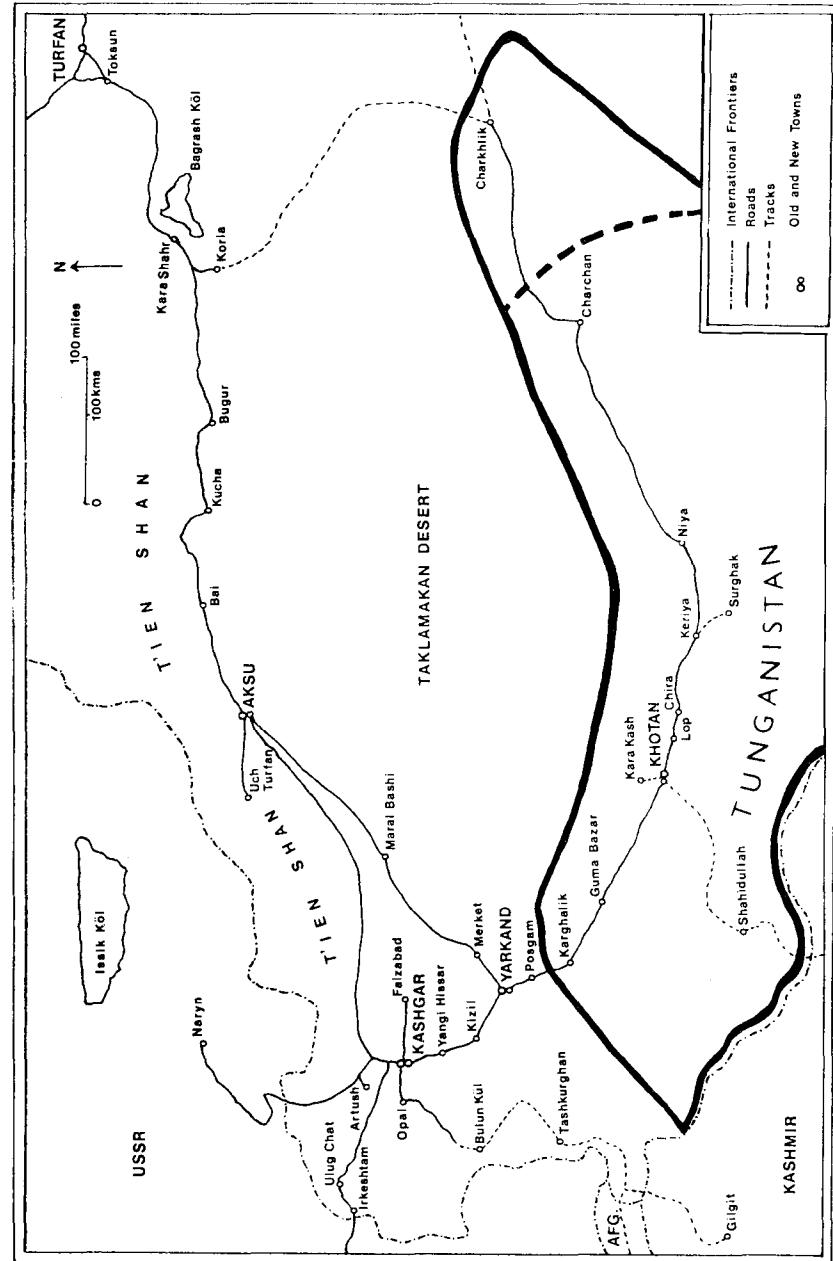
(Smiling sympathetically): You are quite right. (Molotov and Voroshilov nod agreement.)¹

The Hui satrapy of 'Tunganistan'

Following the armistice of September 1934, the strife-torn province of Sinkiang entered a brief period of peace, with the secessionist TIRET overthrown and its leaders dead or in exile, but with power still divided between the provincial authorities under Sheng Shih-ts'ai at Urumchi, and the Tungan KMT 36th Division under Ma Hu-shan at Khotan.

Following his withdrawal to Khotan in July 1934, Ma Hu-shan gradually consolidated his hold over the remote oases of the southern Tarim Basin, effectively establishing a Tungan satrapy where Hui Muslims ruled as colonial masters over their Turkic-speaking Muslim subjects – a system which well serves to illustrate the traditional relationship between Chinese-speaking and Turkic-speaking Muslim in southern Sinkiang. The territory thus administered from 1934 to 1937 was given the entirely appropriate name of 'Tunganistan' by Walther Heissig.²

Little is known of 'Tunganistan', which was surrounded on two – eventually three – sides by the provincial forces of Sheng Shih-ts'ai and, on the fourth, by the high Tibetan plateau.³ The only presses in this isolated region were used for the printing of money. Thus no internal literature or news sheets were produced – or, at least, are known to have been produced – and our knowledge of the period is based almost exclusively on the accounts of two or three travellers,⁴ as well as on the diplomatic report made by HMVCGK Gillett following his official visit to Khotan and Keriya during the spring of 1937.⁵ From these sources it is clear, however, that Ma Hu-shan – who ruled 'Tunganistan' as a complete autocrat, known to his Turkic subjects as *padishah* (Ir. 'king') – consistently stressed his ultimate loyalty to the Nationalist Authorities at Nanking, and indeed regarded himself as the standard-bearer of Chinese nationalism in Sinkiang, Sheng Shih-ts'ai having become, in Tungan eyes,



Map 8 'Tunganistan' (southern Sinkiang, 1934-7)

a Soviet puppet.⁶ At no time did Ma Hu-shan consider seceding from the Chinese Republic and establishing 'Tunganistan' as an independent Muslim state. Nor did Islam ever play an important role in the politics of 'Tunganistan' beyond providing a vague spiritual focus for shared Tungan and Turkic opposition to the 'Sovietisation' of Zungharia, Ili and the northern part of the Tarim Basin.⁷ Indeed, shortly after the establishment of Tungan rule in southern Sinkiang, Ma Hu-shan sent emissaries to Nanking pledging his continued allegiance to the Chinese Republic and seeking assistance in his struggle against the Soviet-dominated provincial authorities. The Tungans were, moreover, 'strongly anti-Japanese', and the oases under their control were posted with 'most of the stock anti-Japanese slogans from China proper', whilst 'Resistance to Japanese Imperialism' formed a basic principle of Ma Hu-shan's government.⁸

In effect, 'Tunganistan' represented a Tungan warlord enclave transplanted from Kansu to the remote far west – a bastion of Chinese colonialism, and not of Muslim separatism, in Sinkiang. Thus, when Gillett first visited Ma Hu-shan's fief in January 1937, he noted:

My first impression of the Tungans was that their mode of government was almost Fascist, being a young man's government (there is no one holding an important post under the 36th Division who is over 45), an authoritarian government and a militaristic government. My next impression was that they were, in some measure, colonists. They all endeavour to live as Chinese a life as possible, have brought with them Chinese cooks and have established, in the larger places, Chinese baths. In all the district towns street names were put up in Chinese as well as in Turki, and the police had set up crude lamps that were lit at night, refuse bins and entirely inadequate water butts for use in case of fire, all of which things were duly labelled in Chinese. These first impressions suggested that the Tungans might have developed some administrative ability.⁹

After a stay in 'Tunganistan' of about two months' duration, Gillett was to alter his initial evaluation somewhat:

Subsequent experience and investigations . . . showed that the Tungans were still fulfilling their historic role of a fine fighting force, but even so a purely destructive force and one completely unable adequately to administer the territory it controls by force of arms. What I had first taken for Fascism turned out to be an attempt to modify martial law into something that would work in times of peace . . . The whole aim of the government is to provide the military with the necessary money and supplies, while the needs of the people are entirely disregarded. Education is utterly neglected, and taxation is cruelly heavy.¹⁰

Certainly Tungan rule was a severe burden for the Turkic-speaking peoples of the southernmost oases of Sinkiang (known to the Uighurs as *Ashtin Yol*, or 'the lower road'). Filchner reports that the administration of Ma Hu-shan assessed the taxable value of the isolated oasis of

Charchan 'at the immense sum of 1,000 lot of gold, the equivalent of 180,000 silver dollars'. Every inhabitant of the oasis was expected to make a contribution of 90 dollars (180 in the case of property-owners), all payable exclusively in gold. Those who could not pay were initially beaten, and then imprisoned until relatives or friends agreed to buy them out. Faced with these conditions, one third of the population of Charchan had fled towards Charklik or into the mountains.¹¹ Fleming, who visited Keriya Oasis in the heart of *Ashtin Yol*, recorded similar impressions:

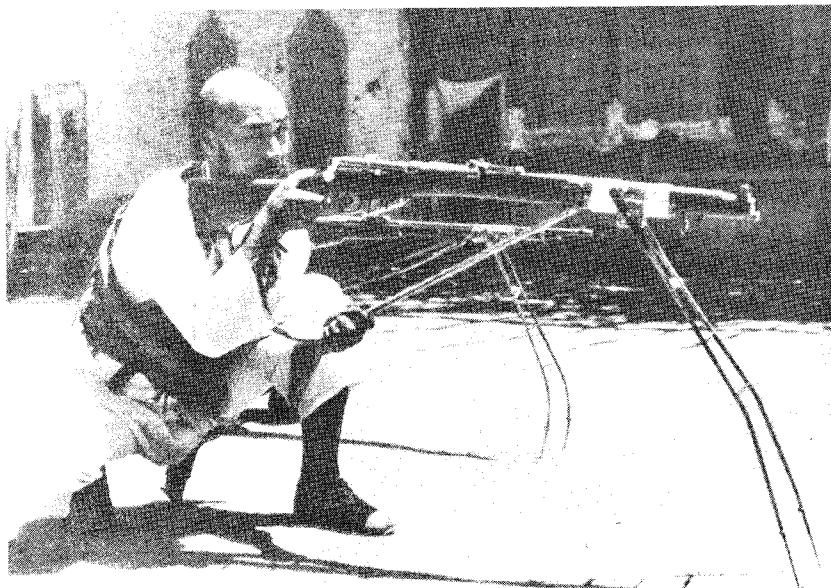
There was no doubt that Tungan rule lay heavily on the oases; the Turkis were groaning under the weight of other people's military ambitions. Almost all the activity that was going on was for the benefit of the garrison; the donkeys trotting in from the outskirts of the oasis with loads of fodder or fuel, the men who were levelling the new parade ground – these and other signs of forced labour abounded. Both farmers and merchants were victimized by exactions. On the day we were in Keriya the Tungans commandeered, without paying for them, no less than 6,000 eggs, 300 measures of vegetable oil, and 140 bricks of tea; these they beat up and fed to their horses. We heard that they used to do this once or twice a month to make a change in their animals' diet of maize. . .¹²

Ma Hu-shan's rule represented a vicious circle of exploitation for the Uighurs under his control. With an estimated minimum strength of 10,000 soldiers and a similar number of horses, the KMT 36th Division was the single most powerful armed force in Sinkiang during the mid-1930s.¹³ To maintain this sizeable force (which was entirely unproductive, being occupied solely in military training), Ma Hu-shan bled white the string of oases under his control. The resulting Turkic discontent could be suppressed only by the widespread maintenance of large military garrisons, which in turn necessitated further exactions in tax. Moreover, Ma Hu-shan nurtured ambitions to extend his control over the whole of Sinkiang, and accordingly conscription by press-gang was a common phenomenon. This served further to alienate the Uighur subjects of 'Tunganistan', and adversely affected agricultural production in the region. Those minor industries which 'Tunganistan' possessed were also badly hit. The production of raw silk declined, the manufacture of finished silk slowed almost to a stop, and work on the jade mines ceased altogether. Even the internationally renowned Khotan carpet industry was affected – in 1937 Gillett noted that 'the government carpet factory has abandoned the traditional designs and makes mostly carpets of blatantly Chinese design, characterised by shoddy workmanship and unstable dyes'.¹⁴

The resources of the small area under Tungan control were strictly limited, and it was clear that it could only be a matter of time before Ma Hu-shan, having exhausted the oases of *Ashtin Yol*, was forced to move onwards.¹⁵ In 1935, following his retreat to Khotan, Ma would have been



22. Ma Hu-shan, 1937



23. Tungan rifleman



24. Watched by Uighur woman with child, Tungan troops drill at Khotan, 1937



25. Printing money at the Khotan 'mint', 1937

able to return to his native Kansu by way of Charkhlik and Tun-huang, together with most of his forces – indeed communications via this route are known to have been established with Ma Pu-fang, the warlord of Tsinghai and western Kansu, shortly after the Tungan takeover of Khotan.¹⁶ Ma Hu-shan showed no inclination to return to Kansu, however, and clearly intended resuming his struggle with Sheng Shih-ts'ai at the earliest opportunity. To this end the whole of 'Tunganistan' was maintained as an armed camp, with military training grounds attached to each oasis, however small,¹⁷ whilst at Khotan itself: '... bugles were always blowing somewhere, and all day the fierce Moslem songs rolled about the city like the sound of an angry sea. I have never seen troops in China train so hard.'¹⁸

It seems certain that Ma Hu-shan intended to strike westward, towards Kashgar,¹⁹ but delayed doing so in the hope that his charismatic half-brother would reach some agreement with the Soviet leadership before returning to Khotan to lead the attack on Sheng's forces. The Soviets, who were anxious to maintain a Tungan presence in southern Sinkiang as a counterbalance to Sheng Shih-ts'ai, but who had no desire to see a renewed outbreak of hostilities before they could consolidate their position at Urumchi and in the rest of the province, were careful to encourage Ma Hu-shan's belief that Ma Chung-ying would shortly return. To this end regular letters were despatched 'from Ma Chung-ying' in Soviet territory to Ma Hu-shan at Khotan. Each of these letters bore the personal seal of the exiled leader, and was read out to the troops of the KMT 36th Division to boost morale.²⁰

It seems that for the best part of two years Ma Hu-shan chose to believe the contents of these letters – though he must surely have had some doubts as to their authenticity. What Hu-shan may not have perceived, however – at least until it was too late – was that beneath this continuing Soviet deception lay a deeper stratum of diplomatic and military purpose, for by 1937, when Ma Hu-shan seems finally to have despaired of Ma Chung-ying's return to Sinkiang,²¹ Soviet control had been firmly established over Sheng Shih-ts'ai, whilst the military inactivity of the Tungan armies had undermined the very fabric of 'Tunganistan' from within.

The first indications of stress within 'Tunganistan' developed as early as mid-1935, when the oasis of Charkhlik was racked by a Uighur rising which was put down by the Tungans with great severity.²² Later in the same year, and more seriously for Ma Hu-shan, the Tungan garrison at Charkhlik mutinied, possibly because of their proximity to Kansu.²³ Relations between the Tungans and the Turkic-speaking Muslims grew steadily worse as Ma Hu-shan's occupation of the oases of *Ashin Yol* continued. Prices rose steadily,²⁴ and the Tungans flooded the region with

unbacked and almost worthless currency. When Maillart visited Khotan in mid-1935 the mint was the only industry in 'Tunganistan' running at full capacity:

It was a Chinese house, like any other in the main street, except that there was an orderly on guard. On the flags of the courtyard thousands of coloured squares were drying in the sun. They were the bank notes of the Tungan Republic. Squatting youths were arranging them in bundles of a hundred. Inside, behind the paper windows, in rooms where the atmosphere was alcoholic with the exhalations from the colours, men went on indefatigably printing notes on mulberry-bark paper with blue, black, red and green stamps. The director told us that they had been turning out some thirty thousand a day for a year past, but he added that it was not enough; they needed as many more again.²⁵

To meet this additional need, Ma Hu-shan reissued the notes of the defunct TIRET, on each of which was superimposed the seal of 'Tunganistan'.²⁶ These worthless notes were used to pay the Tungan rank-and-file, who in turn forced them into circulation at the point of a bayonet. Faced with these conditions, relations between the Turkic-speaking Muslims and their Tungan masters continued to deteriorate,²⁷ whilst unrest within the ranks of the KMT 36th Division increased proportionately. As early as mid-1935 Fleming had noticed Tungan discontent and a desire to return to Kansu. In a 'poor inn' at Lop he had shared his quarters with an itinerant Tungan patrol:

There was something medieval about the spectacle of its commander – the overweening sullenness of his face enhanced in sleep – being fanned by a pretty Turki girl lest the flies should disturb his rest. One of his men (the noun is a courtesy title, for he was very young) poured out his woes to us in a low voice. He had been pressed into the service of Ma Chung-ying three years before, hated a soldier's life and the company of soldiers, and yearned to see again his family in Tunghwang. There must be many in the Tungan armies like him.²⁸

By 1937, when it finally became clear to the Tungan leadership that Ma Chung-ying would not be returning to Sinkiang from the Soviet Union, and that immediate military action was imperative, 'Tunganistan' was already on the verge of collapse. Uighur opposition to consistent Tungan requisitioning had led to fighting in the streets,²⁹ and desertion from Tungan ranks had reached major proportions, with Ma Hu-shan, like his half-brother before him, personally executing miscreants in public.³⁰

The 1937 Muslim Rebellion in southern Sinkiang

Following the collapse of the secessionist TIRET and Sheng Shih-ts'ai's Soviet-assisted victory over the Tungan forces of Ma Chung-ying, an uneasy peace descended over those areas of Sinkiang which had passed

under provincial control. Sheng's victory had not been complete, however, and he still required substantial Soviet assistance and the good will of his Turkic-speaking Muslim subjects to counter the ever-present threat of Ma Hu-shan's powerful armed forces billeted in 'Tunganistan'.

Accordingly, in late 1934, shortly after Ma Chung-ying's flight to Soviet territory, Sheng declared that the provincial government of Sinkiang had nine chief duties to perform. These were:

1. To eradicate corruption.
2. To develop economy and culture.
3. To maintain peace by avoiding war.
4. To mobilise all manpower for the cultivation of land.
5. To facilitate communications.
6. To keep Sinkiang a Chinese province for ever.
7. To start the work of anti-imperialism and anti-Fascism, and to maintain a close relationship with the Soviet Union.
8. To construct a 'New Sinkiang' (Ch. *Hsin Hsin-chiang*).
9. To protect the position and privileges of religious leaders.³¹

In Sheng's eyes, the most important of these 'duties' was clearly the maintenance of a close relationship with the Soviet Union.³² The Soviet government responded by extending substantial financial and material aid to Urumchi, including a five-year loan of five million 'gold roubles' (in fact, Sheng received silver bullion), in an agreement ratified without Nanking's consent on 16 May 1935.³³ At about this time Soviet geologists began a survey of Sinkiang's mineral resources (again, without the permission of the Chinese National Government), as a result of which, later in 1935, Soviet oil rigs began drilling at Tu-shan-tzu, near Wusu, to the north of the T'ien Shan.³⁴ Writing of these events after his flight from the Soviet Union to the United States, Alexander Barmine, the Soviet official in charge of supplying arms to Sheng Shih-ts'ai, recorded that:

According to Stalin's plan, Sinkiang was to become a sphere of exclusive Russian influence and to serve as a bulwark of our power in the east. We had to equip 10,000 Sinkiang troops completely, from boots to Kuomintang insignia. Soviet advisers, who actually exercised the authority of ministers, were placed at the governor's elbow. A commission headed by Stalin's brother-in-law, Svanidze, was sent to Sinkiang to draw up a plan of reconstruction for the province. My trust (the Auto-Moto-Export Trust, a Soviet automobile export trust which acted as a front organisation for arms exports) was instructed to send engineers to build roads, airdromes and hangars all over Sinkiang. Sinkiang was soon a Soviet colony in all but name.³⁵

Ties between Sinkiang and the Soviet Union may have been further strengthened through a secret agreement said to have been signed on 1 January 1936, and which reportedly included a Soviet guarantee to come

to the aid of Sinkiang 'politically, economically and by armed force . . . in case of some external attack upon the province'.³⁶ Whatever the truth of this claim, by mid-1936 considerable numbers of Soviet specialists were active in Sinkiang, working in such fields as construction, education, health and military training. Russian replaced English as the foreign language taught in Sinkiang's schools, whilst hundreds of Muslim youths – and a number of Muslim girls – were sent to study in Soviet Central Asia. Within Sinkiang itself, Muslim women were encouraged to appear in public unveiled, and a vigorous atheistic propaganda campaign was instituted.³⁷ In Urumchi and those regions of the province most securely under Sheng's control, social clubs known as *uyushma* were opened. According to one source:

These clubs became the centres of Soviet propaganda and proved a great help in increasing Soviet influence. The smoking of hashish and opium was forbidden but drinking *araq* and vodka was encouraged, probably in order to undermine Moslem traditions . . . At the same time the Soviets tried to liquidate the remnants of the 'reactionary' Moslem and nationalist leaders in Sinkiang, some of whom were refugees from Soviet Asia. They also tried to destroy the power of Islam. The mosques were closed or converted into clubs and theatres. The *mullahs* were publicly ridiculed and persecuted.³⁸

These radical policies seem to have been accepted with equanimity, though certainly not with enthusiasm, in both Ili (where Soviet influence had been consistently predominant from the early 1920s) and in Urumchi, where, according to Sven Hedin, the Soviet Consul-General Apresoff was 'more powerful than Sheng *Tupan*' himself.³⁹ Sheng's pro-Soviet policies seem to have been less acceptable to the fiercely independent Kazakhs of northern Zungharia, however, and by early 1937 Sinkiang's Altai region was once again in a state of open rebellion against the provincial authorities.⁴⁰

Still more serious for Sheng was the situation in south-western Sinkiang where the concept of 'Turkish-Islamic' separatism remained strong, and where GPU troops remained few in number. Following the collapse of the TIRET and the retreat of Ma Hu-shan to 'Tunganistan' in the autumn of 1934, Sheng attempted to conciliate the Turkic-speaking Muslim population of Sinkiang by appointing various Kumullik and Turfanlik Uighurs to positions of apparent authority in the new administration. These Uighurs belonged to the non-secessionist group of rebels which had followed Khoja Niyās Hājjī – thus Yūlbars Khan, despite his long association with Ma Chung-ying, was named District Magistrate and Garrison Commander at the north-eastern oasis of Kumul. Similarly Khoja Niyās Hājjī's Military Commander, Māhmūd Shih-chang was appointed Divisional Commander at Kashgar Old City,

with a force of about 2,000 Turkic-speaking troops under his command, whilst Khoja Niyās himself was given the rank of Vice-Chairman of the provincial government, and remained at Urumchi under the watchful eye of Sheng Shih-ts'ai.⁴¹ Both Yulbārs and Khoja Niyās belonged to the conservative Kumullik aristocracy, and can have had little enthusiasm for Sheng's anti-Islamic and pro-Soviet policies. However, from their posts at Urumchi and Kumul, both of which were strongly garrisoned with Soviet-supplied (and in some cases Soviet-officered) troops, neither was in a position to offer serious opposition to the reforms of the new provincial administration. In Kashgar, however, isolated from the main Soviet power base in Sinkiang by the T'ien Shan, and doubtless reassured by the proximity of both Ma Hu-shan's anti-Soviet fief and the British Indian frontier, Mahmūd *Shih-chang* was better placed to offer resistance to the more radical innovations instituted by the provincial administration at Urumchi.

Little is known of Mahmūd *Shih-chang*. According to HMCGK Packman, he was 'a wealthy but intriguing and unreliable ex-merchant from Turfan',⁴² whilst Packman's predecessor, Thomson-Glover, records that Mahmūd 'was a simple and kindly man, and a zealous Mohammedan. . . [who] might have walked on stage without any make up and taken the part of Henry VIII'.⁴³ Certainly Mahmūd seems to have been something of a patriarch, and, following the arrest or flight of the local TIRET authorities, many sections of the Kashgarlik Muslim population looked to him for leadership.

As has already been shown, following the flight of Ma Chung-ying to Soviet territory in early July 1934, Kashgar was occupied by provincial troops under the command of Mahmūd *Shih-chang* and Kung Cheng-han on 20 July. Partly to reassure the local populace, and partly to allow himself further time to consolidate his hold on the north and the east of the province, Sheng appointed Mahmūd overall Military Commander (Ch. *Ssu-ling*) of the Kashgar region and reappointed the Yunnanese Hui Muslim, Ma Shao-wu, to the position of *Tao-yin* at Kashgar New City. Sheng was clearly uneasy with Muslim officials in charge at Kashgar, however,⁴⁴ and within a month had despatched a fellow north-easterner, Liu Pin, to assume the position of Commanding Officer at Kashgar.⁴⁵ Following Liu's arrival at Kashgar on 7 August 1934, Mahmūd lost his elevated position as *Ssu-ling* but was permitted to retain his former rank as Divisional Commander, together with authority over the 2,000 Turkic-speaking Muslim troops garrisoning Kashgar Old City, Yangi Hissar and Yarkand. In contrast Ma Shao-wu was reportedly ordered to travel to Urumchi – instructions which, if complied with, would almost certainly have resulted in his imprisonment or execution. Mahmūd seems to have accepted this blow without open complaint, though his support for

Sheng's administration can hardly have been strengthened by his demotion. Ma Shao-wu, however, was less co-operative. He had been ordered to Urumchi on several occasions in the past, but had always contrived to avoid answering the summons.⁴⁶ Seemingly the shrewd old Yunnanese *Tao-yin* demurred once again. On this occasion, however, he was no longer dealing with the incompetent Chin Shu-jen and, probably as a direct result of his procrastinations, he was seriously wounded in an assassination attempt and forced to travel to the Soviet Union for treatment.⁴⁷ With Ma Shao-wu's fall from power the last of the old-style feudal mandarins best represented by Yang Tseng-hsin left the political stage of Sinkiang.

Even before Mahmūd's demotion and the attempted assassination of Ma Shao-wu, power at Kashgar had effectively passed to Han Chinese appointees of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, foremost amongst whom was Liu Pin, a staunch Chinese nationalist and a Christian. Liu, although apparently an upright official, seems to have understood little of local Muslim sensibilities, for almost his first act was to order that a picture of Sun Yat-sen, the father of modern Chinese nationalism, should be hung in the 'Id-gāh Mosque in Kashgar Old City. A Uighur notable who objected to this (clearly sacrilegious) act was arrested and put on trial for 'disrespect to the founder of the Chinese Republic'. The Kashgarliks greeted this development with dismay, and, according to the British Consul-General, 'many murmurs were heard that the Bolsheviks had taken over the country and were bent on destroying religion'.⁴⁸

Kashgarlik disaffection with the new administration at Urumchi was further increased as a result of a series of ill-considered and over-hasty educational reforms – thus many teachers, including women, were brought in from Soviet Central Asia, and it was made compulsory for the Turkic-speaking Muslims to send their daughters, as well as their sons, to school. In itself this might have proved acceptable, but simultaneously Qur'ānic studies were cut back, military drill was introduced, and an attempt was made to replace Turkic numerals with those employed in Russia and the West.⁴⁹ To complete the alienation of the oases of the south-west, Urumchi forced new currency notes into circulation whilst refusing to honour those which had been issued by Ma Shao-wu following the relief of Kashgar New City and the collapse of the TIRET. A police force composed largely of pro-Soviet Kirghiz was set up under the command of a Uighur communist called Qādir Beg,⁵⁰ and Kashgarliks who refused to accept the newly issued Urumchi currency notes were beaten up and, in some cases, nailed by their ears to the walls of the 'Id-gāh Mosque.⁵¹

Opposition to the new regime crystallised, once again, around the 'Turkish-Islamic' nationalist elements which tended to dominate Uighur

politics in the Kashgar region. Outside the province, in Afghanistan, a few survivors of the TIRET began to assemble in Kabul, where they lobbied the Afghan government and certain foreign embassies – most notably the Japanese – for support. The Japanese Ambassador to Kabul, Kitada Masamoto, who had previously served in Cairo and was ‘deeply interested in all aspects of Islamic culture as well as of Central Asian politics’,⁵² provided a willing audience for these anti-communist exiles, especially after being informed by the Afghan Foreign Minister that – in the opinion of the Afghan government – Soviet moves in Sinkiang stemmed from continuing widespread Muslim unrest in the Soviet Union, and that some 600,000 Turkic- and Iranian-speaking Muslim refugees had fled to Afghanistan from the Soviet-controlled north during the first half of the 1930s.⁵³

Amongst those former TIRET leaders to visit Kitada was Tawfiq Bay, in whose name an appeal was forwarded to the Japanese Foreign Office in May 1935, claiming that

Moslems in the vast area east of Kashgar to Ha-mi [Kumul] have anti-Soviet, pro-Japanese sentiment which may enable Japan to make an ideological drive into Sinkiang. For this armed invasion is unnecessary. Such an ideological drive might disturb the situation in Soviet Turkistan, the weak point of Soviet Russia.⁵⁴

Also in mid-1935, Kitada was visited by Muhammed Amīn Bughra, the last of the Khotan *Amīrs*, who had travelled to Afghanistan in disguise and under an assumed name, via Leh and Chitral. Once in Kabul, he was awarded a monthly allowance of 500 afghanis (c. 125 Indian rupees) by the Afghan government, an action which would seem to confirm the existence of earlier links between the administration of the Khotan *Amīrs* and Kabul.⁵⁵ Paralleling Tawfiq Bay’s proposals, Muhammed Amīn Bughra submitted a detailed plan proposing the establishment of an ‘Eastern Turkestan Republic’ under Japanese sponsorship, with munitions and finance to be supplied by Tokyo. Following Japanese penetration of Sinkiang, an armed revolt by the local Muslim population would, the *Amīr* assured Kitada, ‘disturb the rear, assisting the advance of Japanese troops’. The *Amīr*’s final goal was, purportedly, the establishment of an ‘independent’ Sinkiang, which would offer special economic and political privileges to Japan. Perhaps most revealing of all the *Amīr*’s proposals, however, was the identity of the Uighur Muslim he suggested as the future leader of this proposed Central Asian ‘Manchukuo’ – none other than Māhmūd *Shih-chang*, the Divisional Commander of the Kashgar region.⁵⁶

Meanwhile, within Sinkiang, following the extension of Sheng Shih-ts’ai’s atheistic propaganda campaign to the south of the province during the latter half of 1936,⁵⁷ opposition to the pro-Soviet government in

Urumchi had indeed crystallised around the ample figure of Māhmūd *Shih-chang* who, besides being a ‘zealous Mohammedan’, was also ‘a man of property [who] resented and was keenly apprehensive of the increase in Russian influence in South Sinkiang’.⁵⁸ Māhmūd made use of his position as the leading Uighur official in the south to form a semi-secret group around himself, ‘ostensibly for the protection of Islam, but actually in the hope of checking the increase of Russian influence in the Kashgar area’.⁵⁹ Sheng Shih-ts’ai moved against Māhmūd with caution, no doubt fearing that any hasty action on his part might cause the Uighur leader to make common cause with Ma Hu-shan in the neighbouring oases of ‘Tunganistan’. In fact Sheng need not have worried, for Kashgarlik affection toward the Tungans, never strong even at the best of times, had not been strengthened by hostile reports brought to Kashgar from Khotan by Uighur refugees fleeing the continuing depredations of Ma Hu-shan. Nevertheless, Sheng made no move to arrest Māhmūd, but took steps to undermine the latter’s position through the appointment of a significant number of Soviet-trained officers to subordinate but influential positions within the Kashgar garrison.

As a result of this process, by the beginning of 1937 Sheng felt strong enough to order Māhmūd to Urumchi ‘to attend the April 12th celebrations’ which marked the anniversary of Chin Shu-jen’s overthrow. Māhmūd had no intention of travelling to Urumchi, however, and at his instigation the Turkic-speaking Muslims of Kashgar Old City staged large-scale street demonstrations which caused Sheng to rescind his orders. Yet, despite this temporary success, Māhmūd remained understandably ill-at-ease, and his fears are reported to have reached a peak when it was rumoured in Kashgar that Sheng Shih-ts’ai had despatched a high-ranking military official from Urumchi to effect his arrest. Māhmūd’s nerve seems finally to have broken in late March 1937, and on 2 April of that year he fled to India via Yangi Hissar and Yarkand.⁶⁰

Unfortunately for Sheng, Māhmūd’s precipitate departure for India – though in itself, no doubt, eminently desirable – was to prove the spark which touched off yet another large-scale rising amongst the Turkic-speaking Muslims of southern Sinkiang. Shortly after Māhmūd left Kashgar for India his exasperated troops, fearing that Soviet influence would now become predominant in the Muslim oases of south-western Sinkiang, rose against the provincial authorities at Yarkand and Yangi Hissar and proceeded to execute all officials who were either Soviet-trained or suspected of harbouring pro-Soviet sentiments. Subsequently an ‘independent’ Turkic administration was set up in the rebel area under the command of two of Māhmūd *Shih-chang*’s officers, Kichik Akhund and ‘Abd al-Niyās.⁶¹

Faced with these unwelcome developments Liu Pin, who had only 700

reliable north-eastern troops at his command but who remained in control of the whole Kashgar Oasis, sent an urgent appeal for assistance to Sheng at Urumchi. At the same time he used a squadron of nine Soviet planes to bomb both Yangi Hissar and Yarkand, though apparently to little effect.⁶² Meanwhile Ma Hu-shan and his Tungan forces, who had completely exhausted the oases under their control and were anxious to expand the frontiers of 'Tunganistan', watched the developing situation with interest.

Possibly emboldened by Liu Pin's failure to move against them, the Muslim rebels attacked the Kashgar airfield on 20 May, only to be repulsed with slight losses.⁶³ Ten days later a much larger force of approximately 1,500 Uighurs and Tungan irregulars under the leadership of Kichik Akhund attacked and seized Kashgar Old City, where they were welcomed by the local populace as liberators.⁶⁴ This new rebellion seems once again to have been 'Turkish-Islamic' and anti-communist in nature, for Kichik Akhund let it be known that he was fighting 'in the defence of Islam' – and, in case any local Muslim missed this point, each of his troops sported an arm band bearing the legend '*fī sabil Allāh*' (Ar. 'in the way of God').⁶⁵

Sheng Shih-ts'ai responded to this new rebellion by recalling Liu Pin to Urumchi and appointing Chiang Yü-fen, Liu's former Chief of Staff, to the position of Commanding Officer at Kashgar.⁶⁶ Sheng was clearly unwilling to commit fresh troops to the Kashgar front whilst Ma Hu-shan's Tungans remained uncommitted, and moreover were capable of striking not only at Kashgar but more directly towards Urumchi via the Taklamakan and Aksu or even by way of Charchan in the east.⁶⁷ To make his position still less enviable, the rebellion in south-western Sinkiang was shortly followed by a Kirghiz rising in the mountains above Kucha,⁶⁸ and, more seriously, by renewed Muslim unrest in the strategic oasis of Kumul.⁶⁹

For almost two months following Māhmūd *Shih-chang*'s flight to India, Ma Hu-shan remained at Khotan watching the situation. Eventually, however, the counsels of his Chief-of-Staff, Pai Tzu-li, and of Ma Ju-lung, the Commander of the Tungan 1st brigade stationed at Karghalik, persuaded Ma Hu-shan to strike northwards against Kashgar.⁷⁰ Accordingly on 2 June, only three days after Kichik Akhund's capture of Kashgar Old City, the Tungan 1st brigade under Ma Ju-lung arrived at Kashgar 'to put down the rebels'.⁷¹ In fact there seems to have been some understanding – though not a full alliance – between the Tungans and the Turkic-speaking rebels; thus, on 3 June, when Ma Hu-shan arrived to take possession of Kashgar Old City, Kichik Akhund and his forces moved off towards Aksu without fighting. At about the same time the Tungan 2nd brigade under Ma Sheng-Kuei occupied the Fayzabad-Maral

Bashi area.⁷² Ma Hu-shan clearly intended to let the Turkic-speaking Muslim rebels bear the brunt of the fighting with Sheng Shih-ts'ai's provincial forces whilst consolidating his own hold on southern Sinkiang. Accordingly, his troops surrounded Kashgar New City (which was still in the hands of north-eastern troops under Chiang Yü-fen), and messages were sent to the British Consulate-General explaining that the Tungan forces – still officially the KMT 36th Division – were 'acting in covenant with the Turkis with a view to overthrowing the Provincial Government and replacing it by an Islamic Government offering strict allegiance to Nanking'.⁷³

Ma Hu-shan's caution was well-founded. For one thing, his troops had done no serious fighting for almost three years, and although well-trained, were badly in need of more arms and ammunition.⁷⁴ Another important factor was Soviet backing for Sheng Shih-ts'ai. The Red Army had intervened against Ma Chung-ying in 1934, and was almost certain to renew this intervention if its zone of traditional influence in Ili or its new economic investments in Zungharia were once again threatened by Tungan armies. Besides, control of the Kashgar-Khotan area offered Ma Hu-shan and his advisers a safe escape route to British India if things went wrong for them. Sinkiang was not their home province, and a steamer from Calcutta would return them safely to the China coast and, ultimately, to their native provinces of Kansu and Tsinghai, where the 'Five Ma' warlord clique still reigned supreme.

In fact, unknown to Ma Hu-shan, the decision to intervene had been taken by the Kremlin even before Tungan forces moved northwards against Kashgar. In late May 1937, some 5,000 Red Army troops backed by an air unit and an armoured regiment moved across the Soviet-Sinkiang frontier at Sheng Shih-ts'ai's request.⁷⁵ With the intervention of this powerful force, the fate of the Muslim rebels in southern Sinkiang was sealed. Towards the end of August provincial forces backed by regular units of the Red Army fell on Kichik Akhund's troops before Aksu. The rebels suffered a severe defeat, although both Kichik Akhund and 'Abd al-Niyās evaded capture and fled towards Kashgar with about 200 men.⁷⁶ Following this débâcle the Tungan administration in southern Sinkiang collapsed like a house of cards.

Shortly after the rout of Kichik Akhund, Ma Sheng-kuei, the Commander of the Tungan 2nd brigade stationed at Fayzabad about sixty miles east of Kashgar, turned against Ma Hu-shan and declared his support for the provincial forces of Sheng Shih-ts'ai.⁷⁷ His reasons for taking this action are not clear, but would seem to have been founded on a mixture of political dissatisfaction with the Tungan administration at Kashgar, and military realism in the face of advancing provincial and Red Army units.⁷⁸ Having announced this change of allegiance – and

apparently with the full support of the Tungan 2nd brigade – Ma Sheng-kuei marched on Kashgar, arriving in the oasis on 1 September 1937, only to find that Ma Hu-shan, Ma Ju-lung and Pai Tzu-li had withdrawn to Karghalik at the head of the Tungan 1st brigade. The mutiny of the Tungan 2nd brigade signalled the final downfall of Tungan power in Sinkiang. On 7 September Ma Hu-shan, accompanied by Ma Ju-lung, Pai Tzu-li, and various other high-ranking officers of the Tungan 1st brigade, deserted their men at Karghalik and fled across the mountains to India.⁷⁹

With the arrival of the Tungan 2nd brigade at Kashgar, the siege of the New City, which had lasted since the end of May, was lifted. General Chiang Yü-fen, who remained GOC Kashgar, immediately despatched his forces in pursuit of the retreating Tungan 1st brigade, whilst provincial forces advancing in a second column from Maral Bashi drove the retreating forces of 'Abd al-Niyās and Kichik Akhund towards Yarkand.⁸⁰ According to K. C. Packman, the British Consul-General in Kashgar at this time, the provincial forces were assisted in these actions by planes of the Red Airforce operating directly from bases in Soviet Central Asia.⁸¹ By 9 September Yarkand had fallen to Sheng's forces, and on 15 September 'Abd al-Niyās was captured and executed in the same area.⁸² Subsequently provincial forces moved to occupy Khotan and the hinterland of 'Tunganistan' whilst the remnants of the KMT 36th Division melted away into the wastes of Tsinghai and southern Tibet.⁸³ The fate of Kichik Akhund is not known, but, with the disbandment of the mutinous Tungan 2nd brigade at Kashgar on 12 October and the transfer of Ma Sheng-kuei to a subordinate post at Khotan,⁸⁴ both the Turkic-speaking Muslim Rebellion of 1937 and the Hui satrapy of 'Tunganistan' were effectively brought to an end.

1937–42: Sinkiang as a Soviet satellite

Following the collapse of the Turkic Muslim rebellion in southern Sinkiang and the flight of Ma Hu-shan to India, Sheng moved quickly to restore his authority elsewhere in the province. By the beginning of October 1937, the disturbances at Kumul had been brought to an end by the arrival of Red Army troops in that oasis and the flight of Yulbars Khan to Kansu.⁸⁵ Shortly thereafter provincial troops were also sent to the mountains above Kucha to deal with the recalcitrant Kirghiz of that area.⁸⁶ As a result of these operations, by the end of October the Muslim opposition in Sinkiang was bereft of leadership and in complete disarray,⁸⁷ whilst Sheng's writ, for the first time, ran throughout the length and breadth of the province.

It soon became apparent, however, that the price of Sheng's supremacy was to be the almost complete domination, both politically

and economically, of Sinkiang by the Soviet Union. The most striking indication of this increased Soviet influence came shortly after the renewed military intervention of the Red Army in May 1937, when Garegin Apresoff, the Soviet Consul-General in Urumchi, 'informed' Sheng Shih-ts'ai that a self-contained task force was to be stationed at the strategic oasis of Kumul, on the main trunk road between Sinkiang and China proper. This unit, to be known as the Red Army 8th Regiment, was to remain in Sinkiang 'indefinitely'.⁸⁸ It has been argued with some justification that the Soviet Union took this action 'to guard the eastern approaches to Sinkiang against the possibilities of a motorized Japanese raid through Inner Mongolia'.⁸⁹ Certainly the Soviet military command was wary of Japanese intentions towards Central Asia, particularly since the Japanese Army had demonstrated its ability to mount a fast-moving, motorised advance by its ten-day conquest of the Chinese province of Jehol in February 1933.⁹⁰ It is important to note, however, that the stationing of a Soviet regiment at Kumul in 1937 was undertaken without the permission of the Nationalist Government at Nanking,⁹¹ as well as (if Sheng Shih-ts'ai is to be believed) without the permission of the provincial authorities at Urumchi.⁹²

In fact, Soviet motives for garrisoning Kumul were probably at least four in number. Besides wishing to pre-empt a possible (though hardly likely) Japanese thrust into Sinkiang, Moscow sought to limit and even totally to exclude Nanking's influence from China's westernmost province;⁹³ to prevent further incursions by the Tungan soldiery of the 'Five Ma' warlord group who still controlled neighbouring Kansu, Tsinghai and Ningxia; and finally, to inhibit further rebellion by the indigenous Muslim peoples of Sinkiang against the rule of Stalin's protégé, Sheng Shih-ts'ai.⁹⁴

Moreover, the stationing of a Red Army regiment at Kumul in the first half of 1937 proved to be merely the first, albeit probably the most significant, manifestation of a permanent Soviet military presence in Sinkiang. Shortly after the establishment of the Red Army advanced base at Kumul, following the 'Marco Polo Bridge incident' of 7 July 1937, open hostilities broke out between Nanking and Tokyo. During the summer of 1937, although war had not been officially declared by either side, Japanese forces rapidly overran most of north China. The Soviet leadership, deeply alarmed by the speed of the Japanese advance, determined to come to China's aid – no doubt with the intention of halting the Japanese war machine before it could advance to threaten the inner Asian frontiers of the Soviet Union. As a result of this decision, a Sino-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact was signed on 21 August 1937, and the Soviet Union advanced substantial credits to the Nanking authorities to finance the purchase of war *matériel*.⁹⁵ Moscow also sent five air wings of

Soviet planes and pilots to assist the Chinese, and a sizeable military mission which at its peak numbered some 500 men, including such formidable military figures as Generals Grigori K. Zhukov and Vasili I. Chuikov.⁹⁶

Stalin's chosen route for the supply of war *materiel* to Nanking lay through Sinkiang and Kansu, via the Zungharian Gate, Urumchi, Kumul and Lanchow. Fuel and other heavy supplies crossed Sinkiang and Kansu by road, carried either by Soviet lorries, or by huge camel caravans.⁹⁷ Still more significantly, of the 885 aircraft supplied to the Chinese authorities by the Soviet Union, nearly all flew via Sinkiang.⁹⁸ To maintain these aircraft, Moscow agreed to provide a complete aeroplane assembly plant on Chinese soil. The nationalist authorities at Chungking (Nanking having fallen to the advancing Japanese in December 1937) requested that this plant should be established in Kansu, but the Kremlin was adamant that it should be set up in Sinkiang.⁹⁹ Under immediate threat from the Japanese, the Chinese government was in no position to quarrel with Moscow over the presence of Soviet troops in Sinkiang, and accordingly the aeroplane assembly plant was constructed at T'ou-t'ung-ho near Urumchi.¹⁰⁰ Under the guise of the Sinkiang 'Agricultural Implements Factory', this assembly plant was surrounded by heavy fortifications and manned by more than 1,500 Soviet troops equipped with a force of about twenty tanks.¹⁰¹ At about this time, the Soviet Union also established a flying school for Chinese pilots at an airfield near Kulja.¹⁰²

As a corollary to this increased Soviet military presence in Sinkiang, the Soviet economic hold on the province – already clearly predominant over both Chinese and British commercial interests – was expanded to become a virtual monopoly. With the defeat of Ma Chung-ying following the Red Army intervention of 1934, the Soviet Union had achieved almost total domination over the foreign trade of both northern and eastern Sinkiang; following the intervention of 1937 and the collapse of 'Tunganistan', decisive steps were taken to extend this dominance over the southern part of the province as well.

Shortly after the extension of provincial control to the oases of southern Sinkiang in September 1937, Sheng Shih-ts'ai, doubtless acting at the behest of his Soviet patrons, took steps to diminish British influence and prestige in this traditionally British-influenced region. Although Britain had never wavered in her support for Chinese control over Sinkiang, and had remained consistently aloof from the various Muslim rebel groups who had seized control of Kashgar and the surrounding oases since the death of Yang Tseng-hsin,¹⁰³ the British authorities were accused of complicity in the rebellion of 1937 and the British Consul-General at Kashgar was effectively boycotted.¹⁰⁴ At the same

time, an anti-British trade embargo was introduced,¹⁰⁵ the consular mails between India and Kashgar were interfered with,¹⁰⁶ and British Indian nationals long resident in Khotan and Yarkand were expelled from the province and forced to attempt a crossing of the Himalayas in the depth of winter.¹⁰⁷ In a related move, steps were also taken to force the closure of the Swedish missions at Yarkand and Kashgar Old City. An anti-Swedish boycott was instituted during the winter of 1937–8 on the orders of the provincial government, with the result that by February 1938 all Swedish missionary work in Sinkiang had effectively been brought to a halt.¹⁰⁸ Meanwhile, Soviet goods in plentiful supply and at cheap prices flooded the markets of southern Sinkiang, although across the border in Soviet Central Asia the great cities of Samarkand and Tashkent were experiencing acute shortages of consumer supplies.¹⁰⁹ These Soviet moves to drive out British competition in Sinkiang, both by decree and by special pricing, were so successful that by June 1938 K. C. Packman, the British Consul-General at Kashgar, was constrained to report to Delhi that

Soviet Russia has at last regained in full the influence Russia used to exercise in Imperial days, and which was temporarily lost, as a result of the Russian revolution, during the period 1917–1931; Russian methods, Russian ideas and Russian trade predominate throughout the province; most of the important posts in the province are filled by Russophile officials (often Russian-trained and speaking Russian); and both provincial and local authorities frequently seek the advice and assistance of the Russian Consular establishment in the province, to which advice and assistance they attach great weight.¹¹⁰

Despite these commercial successes, it is evident, however, that the Soviet Union's major economic goal in Sinkiang was not control of the province's trade, but exploitation of its mineral resources. As has already been indicated, following the Red Army intervention of 1934, Soviet geological specialists began extensive surveys of Sinkiang without obtaining the permission of the Chinese authorities at Nanking. Because of the veil of secrecy surrounding these surveys, little information is available as to their nature and extent. According to Allen Whiting, however, a large Russian map, drawn in 1935 and held in the personal archives of Sheng Shih-ts'ai on Taiwan, identifies numerous deposits of manganese, copper, lead, tin, wolfram and oil in Sinkiang. According to the map, few of these resources were then in production, although many are identified 'on the basis of survey'.¹¹¹ It is pertinent to note that 'a particularly rich cluster of minerals' is identified by this map as lying in the north-western part of Sinkiang, near the Soviet frontier. It was in this region, near the town of Wusu, that Soviet technicians began drilling for oil in mid-1935. According to later Chinese Nationalist sources, actual production from these oil fields began in 1939.¹¹² Although initial production was low, a

refinery with an estimated capacity of 50,000 tons of crude oil per annum was subsequently established by the Soviets at Tu-shan-tzu.¹¹³ Moreover, according to observers in Sinkiang at the time of Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union in April 1941, following the initial Soviet débâcle in Europe, production at Tu-shan-tzu 'increased markedly . . . with constant truck convoys travelling between the fields and the Soviet frontier'.¹¹⁴ According to Whiting, in addition to Soviet exploitation of Sinkiang's oil reserves, large amounts of tungsten were extracted from 'well-engineered' mines located along Sinkiang's north-western frontier in an operation which enabled the USSR to cut back in tungsten imports from other parts of China.¹¹⁵ Similarly, according to US Consul O. Edmund Clubb, a 'joint mining enterprise' was established near the Borotala River in western Zungharia 'engaged, it was widely believed, in the exploitation of a deposit of uranium ore'.¹¹⁶

Although specific details of contemporaneous Soviet mineral exploitation in Sinkiang are generally unavailable, there is one major exception to this rule – namely, the 1940 Tin Mines Agreement – which clearly indicates that Moscow's commercial relationship with Sinkiang during this period, far from being based on 'fraternal solidarity', was based on nakedly exploitative criteria which effectively reduced Sinkiang to little more than an economic colony of the Soviet Union. Valid for fifty years, the 'Sin-tin' agreement granted the Soviet Union 'exclusive rights for the prospection, investigation and exploitation of tin and its ancillary minerals' within Sinkiang.¹¹⁷ With this monopoly, the Soviet Union gained exclusive control over power supply, road transport, and telegraph and radio communications in all zones (and areas leading to such zones) under 'Sin-tin' management. Similarly, Soviet personnel received unlimited entry privileges and unrestricted right of movement anywhere within Sinkiang. The agreement further stipulated that 'Sin-tin' should have the right to establish 'without hindrance . . . branch offices, sub-branch offices, and agencies within the whole territory of Sinkiang'; that the corporation was to be provided with land 'on application' and 'without delay'; and that the Sinkiang government should 'remove all the population residing in such areas' as had been allotted to 'Sin-tin'.¹¹⁸ In effect, these clauses enabled the Kremlin to establish control over large areas of a neighbouring sovereign state, and to do so without recourse or reference to the Chinese Nationalist authorities at Chungking. As if to emphasise the existence of this state within a state, armed guards controlled by the corporation excluded all outsiders from 'Sin-tin' premises, including the Sinkiang provincial police.¹¹⁹

In exchange for this remarkable series of concessions, the economic benefits accruing to Sinkiang were minimal, whilst the Soviet Union profited greatly. All exports of 'Sin-tin' produce were to be duty-free,

compensated for only by a 2 per cent *ad valorem* charge. Rent for land was to be paid in kind at the rate of 5 per cent of production; this was then to be sold to the Soviet Union at prevailing world prices.¹²⁰ No share in net profits and no participation in management was given to either the Sinkiang or the Chinese Nationalist authorities. On the contrary, the Sinkiang government was expressly forbidden to 'inspect, supervise, investigate, or audit the various operations of production, finance, and commerce' of 'Sin-tin'. In return, Sinkiang (not 'China') was to receive all the corporation's facilities, 'without compensation', after a period of fifty years.¹²¹

If Sheng's own account of his discussions with the group of officials sent from Moscow to 'negotiate' the Tin Mines Agreement is accurate, then it is clear that in seeking to establish an effective Soviet monopoly over the mineral resources of Sinkiang, Stalin was finally demanding repayment (with interest) for his interventions on Sheng's behalf in both 1934 and 1937. Not unnaturally, Sheng was dissatisfied with the original text of the Tin Mines Agreement. Accordingly, he pointed out to the principal Soviet negotiator, Bakulin, that the text had been drawn up without prior consultation with the Sinkiang authorities; that certain clauses were totally unacceptable; and that important revisions would have to be made before the agreement could be signed. Bakulin informed Sheng 'in curt, clipped tones' that:

When we were preparing to leave Moscow for Sinkiang, Comrade Stalin told us that the contents of this secret agreement on the Soviet lease of tin mines must not be revealed to anyone except Commissioner Sheng, who is to put his signature on it . . . Both contracting parties must sign the agreement tomorrow, or the day after tomorrow at the latest.

Sheng continued to object, but was 'rudely interrupted' by Bakulin:

Although it is our wish to hear your opinions on the agreement we must call your attention to the fact that when we were given our mission Comrade Stalin said that Commissioner Sheng must sign the agreement as it is and not a single word of it is alterable.¹²²

Sheng records that he could no longer restrain his temper, and spoke from his heart, likening the Tin Mines Agreement (with considerable justification) to Japan's infamous Twenty-One Demands. Nevertheless, Sheng realised that he was in no position to oppose the will of his Soviet backers, and accordingly signed the agreement on 26 November 1940.¹²³

Although the 'Sin-tin' agreement represents a considerable landmark in Moscow's establishment of a dubious *de jure* economic control over Sinkiang, it is important to note that, long before the signing of that agreement, the province had already become a *de facto* political

appendage of the Soviet Union. It must have been clear to Sheng that the price of the Soviet intervention of 1934 would be the establishment of a pro-Soviet, anti-Japanese government in Sinkiang, and indeed it seems likely that Sheng, driven from his north-eastern homeland by the invading (Japanese) Kwantung Army, was only too pleased to commit Sinkiang whole-heartedly to the anti-Japanese cause. It is difficult to understand, however, just why Sheng threw himself so enthusiastically into the arms of the Soviet Union – even Stalin must have been (pleasantly) surprised.¹²⁴

As has already been shown, following the Soviet intervention of 1934 and the subsequent flight of Ma Chung-ying, Sheng Shih-ts'ai implemented a series of policies ostensibly designed to create a 'New Sinkiang' (Ch. 'Hsin Hsin-chiang') which was to be closely allied to the Soviet Union. In line with this declared objective, Sinkiang's armed forces were redesignated the 'Anti-Imperialist Army' (with Japan and Britain as the perceived Imperialists), while an 'Anti-Imperialist Society' was established as a supposed alternative to political parties.¹²⁵ Indications of the closeness of the New Sinkiang's ties with the Soviet Union may be found in Sheng's adoption of a six-pointed red star as the emblem of the province,¹²⁶ and, less symbolically but more practically, in the transfer of provincial traffic from left-hand drive (as in the rest of China) to right-hand drive (as in the USSR).¹²⁷ Of more serious consequence for the various peoples of Sinkiang, however, was the establishment in July 1934 of the Pao-an-chü, or Security Preservation Bureau, and of its sinister offshoot the Pao-an-tui, or Security Preservation Corps, a Soviet-style secret police force modelled on the NKVD and controlled by an NKVD Brigadier-General called Pogodin.¹²⁸

In 1936 this secret-police network was expanded and strengthened by the creation of an Office of Border Affairs, with Sheng Shih-ts'ai assuming the position of its Commander-in-Chief. From this time onward, both entry to and exit from Sinkiang, as well as travel within the province, came under increasingly tight control.¹²⁹ Sheng also made extensive use of censorship to maintain his monopoly of power.¹³⁰

Dramatic proof of Sheng Shih-ts'ai's involvement with the NKVD was forthcoming in 1937, when, following the collapse of 'Tunganistan', the Great Purge which had been sweeping the Soviet Union since 1936 was extended to Sinkiang at Stalin's behest.¹³¹ In his *apologia*, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, Sheng Shih-ts'ai, writing in a style reminiscent of the Stalinist idiom of the 1930s, describes his discovery of a 'far-reaching conspiracy extending from Tokyo to Berlin, linked by the international Trotskyist movement'.¹³² After the manner of Yezhov's NKVD purges, 'the mastermind behind the Trotskyite plot was none other than the Soviet Consul-General in Tihua (Urumchi), Garegin Apresoff'.¹³³ The goal of

the 'Fascist-Trotskyite plotters' was 'nothing less than the assassination of Sinkiang's political and military leaders, overthrow of the provincial government, and armed uprising throughout the Soviet Union'.¹³⁴

Sheng Shih-ts'ai and his Soviet backers used the twisted logic and rhetoric of the Great Purge as a vehicle for the indictment of a 'Trotskyist network' of no less than 435 persons, including such unlikely bedfellows as the Tungan Ma Hu-shan, the Uighurs Khoja Niyās Hājjī and Mahmūd Shih-chang, the loyal nationalist official Ma Shao-wu, various prominent Kazakhs, Mongols and Tatars, and the Han Chinese Huang Han-chang, Secretary-General of the Sinkiang provincial government.¹³⁵ Sheng called in NKVD officials to 'take part in the investigation', following which the alleged conspirators were either executed or imprisoned within Sinkiang, or sent across the frontier to the Soviet Union for further interrogation by the NKVD.¹³⁶ In retrospect, it is clear that the only factor linking the ethnically and politically diverse 'Fascist-Trotskyite plotters'¹³⁷ was their opposition – or perceived potential opposition – to the Soviet-sponsored *status quo* in Sinkiang and, more particularly, to Sheng Shih-ts'ai himself. Thus, as Allen Whiting has indicated:

The purge may have served Sheng, as it did Stalin, to destroy rival centers of potential power. In addition, Sheng seems to have shared the Georgian dictator's paranoid tendencies. Seen in this light, the purge of 1937 appears as an extension of Stalinism into Sinkiang, with Sheng acting as the willing executioner of both policy and people.¹³⁸

Following the Soviet intervention of 1937 and the subsequent NKVD-style purges, Sheng Shih-ts'ai found himself isolated from the remainder of China and almost completely dependent upon the Soviet Union. In a possible attempt to offset this dangerous imbalance, Sheng approached two high-ranking Chinese communists *en route* from Moscow to Yenan with a formal request that he should be permitted to join the CCP.¹³⁹ According to Sheng, this request was conveyed to the CCP Politburo in Yenan, but was subsequently referred to Moscow for approval – an indication, if correct, of how closely Sinkiang, although still theoretically an integral part of the Chinese Republic, had become bound to the USSR.¹⁴⁰ Stalin clearly had no desire to enhance CCP influence and prestige in Sinkiang at the expense of the CPSU, and is accordingly reported to have vetoed Sheng's application.¹⁴¹ This development, possibly coupled with the contemporaneous reinforcement of Soviet garrison troops in the neighbouring Mongolian People's Republic,¹⁴² seems finally to have convinced Sheng that the expanding tide of Soviet influence in Central Asia was irreversible. Accordingly, the ruler of Sinkiang followed his natural inclination to flow with the tide; thus the chameleon warlord became 'Redder than Red'.

The period of Sheng's closest alignment with the Kremlin began in October 1938 when, together with his family, Sheng travelled to Moscow for consultations with the Soviet leadership. He arrived at Moscow incognito, but immediately began a round of intensive discussions at the Kremlin, culminating in a drinking party at Molotov's *dacha* 'in the pleasant countryside far from the gray Moscow environs'.¹⁴³ During his stay in Moscow, Sheng expressed his wish to strengthen the links between Sinkiang and the Soviet Union and, having assured Stalin of his 'devotion to Marxism-Leninism', he further stated his desire 'to receive party training and indoctrination immediately'.¹⁴⁴ Stalin promptly agreed to this request, and before leaving Moscow Sheng was enrolled as a member of the All-Union Communist Party.¹⁴⁵ In other words, Sheng Shih-ts'ai, although a Chinese national and the Military Governor of Sinkiang province, voluntarily became a member of the CPSU, and not of the CCP as he claims originally to have intended.¹⁴⁶ Sheng further records that he left Moscow 'in an aura of cheer and optimism', noting with great satisfaction that 'I had seen Stalin not once, but three times. I had been dealt with by the most important men in the Kremlin as though I were head of China, instead of being merely governor of a province, and a rather undeveloped province at that'.¹⁴⁷

Following his visit to Moscow, Sheng's foreign policy became a virtual carbon copy of the Kremlin's, whilst at home the survival of his regime became still more dependent upon Soviet advisers and police controls.¹⁴⁸ The power of his Soviet backers was seemingly amply confirmed by General Zhukov's crushing defeat of a section of the Japanese Kwantung Army at Nomonhan (Khalkin Göl), on the MPR-'Manchukuo' frontier, in May-August, 1939.¹⁴⁹ Sheng subsequently endorsed the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 23 August 1939, applauded Stalin's absorption of the Baltic States, supported the Soviet Union in its war with Finland, and hailed the Nazi-Soviet partition of Poland as the 'glorious mission of the great and courageous Red Army . . . to help the White Russian and Ukrainian peoples inside the Polish border, saving them from falling under German fascist oppression . . . [and] bringing them over from the dark camp of the old world to the bright new world'.¹⁵⁰ By 1939 it may therefore fairly be said that Sinkiang, though still nominally a part of China, had become a virtual dependency of the Soviet Union, differing scarcely at all from the neighbouring Mongolian People's Republic.

The Muslims of Sinkiang during Sheng's 'progressive' period

As a direct result of Sheng Shih-ts'ai's adoption of a stridently pro-Soviet line during the years 1934-42, his policies became associated, in the eyes of numerous contemporary writers, with the anti-fascist 'peace camp'

dominated by Stalin and the Comintern from Moscow. Yet whilst the opportunistic foreign policy and domestic repression of the Stalinist era in the Soviet Union have long since been recognised by dispassionate scholarship as incontrovertible fact, the myth of Sheng Shih-ts'ai's 'progressive' period has remained all but unchallenged.¹⁵¹

Much of Sheng's reputation as a progressive reformer during the first eight years of his rule is derived from Tu Chung-yüan's panegyric, *Sheng Shih-ts'ai yü hsin Hsin-chiang* (Sheng Shih-ts'ai and the New Sinkiang), the only detailed firsthand study of Sheng's rule, based on the author's experiences in Sinkiang c. 1937.¹⁵² Although never translated into English, Tu's book provided the basis for Martin Norins' 1944 study, *Gateway to Asia: Sinkiang*, which concludes that:

. . . Far from being a Soviet Russian 'puppet', Sheng Shih-ts'ai has been one of the most far-sighted, enlightened and independent military leaders of modern China. That he has . . . brought to Sinkiang . . . much of the best qualities of both China and of neighbouring Soviet Russia is truly an amazing achievement, too long unappreciated by the outside world.¹⁵³

Similarly Owen Lattimore, in his 1950 study, *Pivot of Asia: Sinkiang*, draws heavily on the *prima facie* evidence of Tu Chung-yüan in claiming that, at least during the years 1934-42, Sheng had 'embarked on a period of real reform', and that 'Sheng Shih-ts'ai ran Sinkiang very smoothly on the three wheels of friendly relations with the Soviet Union, democracy, and interests of the "nationalities", or ethnic groups of the province'.¹⁵⁴ These claims have been echoed in such later studies of Sinkiang as Davidson's *Turkestan Alive* (1957) and Chen's *Sinkiang Story*.¹⁵⁵ Even Allen Whiting, whilst noting that Sheng Shih-ts'ai employed 'a crude compound of anti-imperialism and anti-capitalism, offered under the rubric of Marxism-Leninism . . . to equip him [-self] with ideological pretensions fitting his visions of political leadership', adds the caveat that Sheng 'genuinely aspired to make Sinkiang a model province' and that 'to deny this . . . is to overlook a major aspect of his policy'.¹⁵⁶

To what extent, therefore, did the Muslim population of Sinkiang benefit from Sheng's 'progressive' policies between 1934 and 1942? As Whiting has indicated, 'most firsthand accounts, whether friendly or hostile, agree as to the construction of schools, medical facilities, and roads, as well as to the improved fiscal and enlightened cultural policies of his rule'.¹⁵⁷ Yet a careful examination of the available contemporaneous sources would seem to indicate continuing Muslim, and especially Kazakh, hostility towards Sheng throughout this period.

As has been shown, following the collapse of the 1937 Muslim rebellion in southern Sinkiang and the suppression of lesser disturbances in the Tien Shan and at Kumul (events which, in themselves, provide evidence

of widespread Muslim hostility to Sheng's regime), Sheng Shih-ts'ai instituted an NKVD-backed police state which clearly owed more to the terror of the *yezhovshchina* than to any abstract ideals of democracy or national equality.

Much has been made of Sheng's appointment of Sinkiang Muslims to senior positions within his administration following the collapse of the secessionist TIRET in 1934,¹⁵⁸ yet these officials – perhaps best exemplified by such powerless figureheads as the hapless Khoja Niyās Hājjī – had not long to survive. During 1937 Stalin's Great Purge swept across Soviet Central Asia, stunning the Muslim population and leaving scarcely a family untouched.¹⁵⁹ Anti-religious propaganda was stepped up, as was the hunt for 'bourgeois nationalists' and 'pan-Turkists' of all descriptions. Even apparently loyal communists in positions of great power and influence were not safe. Thus Faizulla Khodzhayev, the Prime Minister of Soviet Uzbekistan, was accused of having buried his dead brother according to Islamic rites; he was subsequently dismissed from office, ordered to report to Moscow, and executed.¹⁶⁰ Similarly Akmal Ikramov, First Secretary of the Uzbek Communist Party, was accused in a newspaper article of being a Turkic nationalist, called to Moscow, and executed.¹⁶¹ Stalin was anxious to crush all vestiges of Muslim independence in Central Asia – as indeed was his protégé, Sheng Shih-ts'ai, within Sinkiang. It was therefore entirely predictable that when the purges were extended from the Soviet Union to Sinkiang, the great majority of those executed or imprisoned by Sheng and his NKVD backers for allegedly plotting with Germany and Japan were Turkic-speaking Muslims.¹⁶² Moreover it is clear that, following the 1937 purges, very few Turkic Muslims (and virtually no Tungans)¹⁶³ were permitted to hold high office in Sinkiang.¹⁶⁴ It thus seems probable that Sheng's continuing reputation for employing Muslim officials in senior positions under his administration rests almost exclusively on a number of token appointments made during the first three years of his rule, from 1934 to 1937. In this context it is instructive to note the comments of the Norwegian, Wilfred Skrede, who spent some time in Kulja during 1941. Skrede, who subsequently travelled to British India via Urumchi, Aksu and Kashgar, records that:

The wearing of uniform was confined to persons of one definite racial type out of all those in Sinkiang's very mixed population. That was easy to see. The members of the army and police all had the distinguishing marks of the Chinese. Thus, for all his communism, Comrade Shun [sic] was practising a sort of racial policy. Moslems of all kinds were kept out of it.¹⁶⁵

As a result of Sheng's Draconian policies, following the defeat of the 1937 Muslim Rebellion and the blood-letting of the subsequent purges,

Muslim resistance to Sheng's regime seems to have been temporarily broken throughout most of the province. Accordingly, specifically anti-religious propaganda slackened, whilst anti-British and anti-Japanese propaganda increased.¹⁶⁶ According to British diplomatic sources, during the years 1937–41, the indigenous population of the traditionally secessionist south of the province remained relatively quiescent, as, seemingly, did the population of Ili. Meanwhile in Urumchi itself, 'any observant visitor' could not fail to notice 'The large proportion of men in military or police uniform . . . the large number of Russians in the city . . . the cowed look of the Chinese and Moslem population, and the arrogant bearing of the Russians.'¹⁶⁷

During these years large numbers of Muslim people – in particular landowners, petty officials and mullahs, but also those caught reading religious books – were arrested and thrown into prison.¹⁶⁸ Those who escaped a summary bullet in the back of the neck were sent to work in the gold mines of the Altai, or in some cases were forced to erect fortifications and dig air-raid shelters outside the capital. Groups of prisoners in the latter category were transported through Urumchi each evening 'with their faces covered', thus providing a salutary warning to the populace of the fate in store for all opponents of Sheng's regime.¹⁶⁹ Police surveillance seems to have been all-pervasive, as a result of which in Kumul 'conversation was limited to the growing of melons, the weather and market prices',¹⁷⁰ whilst in Urumchi:

No person, whether official, military officer, soldier, or ordinary civilian [could] be exempt from the fear that he [might] suddenly be denounced by some secret agent and suddenly disappear. I was told that the friends of a person who had so disappeared were afraid to say so openly, and that the expression 'gone to Chuguchak' was generally used in such cases.¹⁷¹

It is clear that the widespread purges carried out by the Pao-an-chü (under NKVD tutelage) between 1937 and 1942 inspired sufficient fear effectively to crush opposition to Sheng's regime, at least amongst the settled urban and rural population of Sinkiang. As in the Soviet Union, however, police terror was to prove less effective when directed against nomadic Muslim peoples such as the Kirghiz, and more especially the Kazakhs.

Sheng's problems with the 'religious tribes' of the Altai and the T'ien Shan date from the very beginning of his rule in Sinkiang,¹⁷² and are closely linked with contemporaneous developments across the Soviet frontier where, in pursuit of collectivisation, Stalin had implemented a policy which amounted to deliberate genocide. The Soviet government's collectivisation of the Kazakh steppe and its concurrent attempts to suppress nomadism have been catalogued elsewhere, as indeed has the

fierce resistance of the Kazakh people to those policies.¹⁷³ Suffice it briefly to record that, according to Soviet statistics, between 1926 and 1939 the Kazakh population of the USSR declined by approximately one-third,¹⁷⁴ whilst during the six years between Yang Tseng-hsin's assassination in 1928 and Ma Chung-ying's defeat in 1934, livestock losses in Soviet Kazakhstan ran to an estimated 73 per cent of all cattle, 83 per cent of all horses and 87 per cent of all sheep.¹⁷⁵

During the years of collectivisation (known to the Kazakhs as the *qatl-i 'āmm*, or 'general massacre'),¹⁷⁶ many thousands of Kazakhs fled across the Sino-Soviet frontier to Sinkiang.¹⁷⁷ Here they set up their *yurts* in north-western Zungharia and attempted to make good their losses in a zone still outside Soviet control. Following the Red Army intervention of 1934, however, and the subsequent gradual reduction of Sinkiang to Soviet satellite status, the Kremlin adopted a more forward policy towards the recalcitrant Kazakhs of Zungharia whom they attempted to bring under the direct control of the Urumchi administration.¹⁷⁸ To escape this interference a large group of Kazakhs, variously estimated at between 15,000 and 18,000 strong, moved out of Zungharia and began a long trek to the Kansu-Tsinghai-Sinkiang border area, where they settled in the region of Gez Köl.¹⁷⁹

Information concerning subsequent Kazakh rebel activity is both sparse and unreliable, but according to Kazakh refugee sources emanating from Kashmir and Turkey, following the emigration to Gez Köl, three separate centres of Kazakh opposition to Sheng's regime were to emerge. These were in the central T'ien Shan under the joint leadership of 'Ali Beg Rahim and Yūnus Hājjī; at Gez Köl itself, under Husayn Teyci and Sultān Sharīf; and (most significantly) in the Altai, under 'Uthmān Bātūr.¹⁸⁰ It appears that between 1936 and 1944 the Sinkiang Kazakhs fought a series of sustained but low-key guerilla actions against the Urumchi authorities.¹⁸¹ Little is known of developments at Gez Köl or in the T'ien Shan during this period,¹⁸² but it is at least clear that the Altai Kazakhs under 'Uthmān Bātūr proved to be a constant thorn in the side of the provincial administration. Thus Sheng, in his *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, accuses the Altai Kazakhs of complicity in the 'Fascist-Trotskyite' conspiracy of 1937. Following the 1937 purges, troops were sent to 'crush the rebels of the Altai by force of arms',¹⁸³ yet, despite Soviet assistance, Sheng was only partly successful in this aim. 'Uthmān Bātūr withdrew to the high Altai beyond the reach of the provincial forces, only to return in 1940 to lead a new Kazakh rising which broke out in September of that year, particularly in the districts of Kokotohai and Tsingho.¹⁸⁴ Once again Sheng sent troops to suppress this revolt, though apparently with little success. By November 1940, unrest is reported to have spread throughout the three north-western border districts of Ili, Chuguchak and Shara

Sume (Altai), as well as – for the first time since 1937 – to the southern, Uighur-inhabited oasis of Aksu.¹⁸⁵

In sum, therefore, it seems that the benefits brought to the indigenous Muslim peoples of Sinkiang during Sheng's 'progressive' years have been greatly exaggerated. On the credit side it is – perhaps – possible to set Sheng's rapid extension of road and telegraphic communications within the province,¹⁸⁶ the partial stabilisation of provincial currency,¹⁸⁷ and certain much-vaunted (but largely unsubstantiated) educational and cultural reforms which should, however, only be evaluated in the context of contemporaneous 'educational and cultural reform' in neighbouring Soviet Central Asia.¹⁸⁸ Against this, following a painstaking examination of the available sources (none of which are truly non-partisan), there emerges a picture of police terror, military repression, and continuing Muslim resistance to Sheng's rule.

1942-4: The fall of Sheng Shih-ts'ai and the emergence of Kuomintang authority

As has been shown, by the time of the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939, Sinkiang had become a virtual territorial extension of the Soviet Union, whilst its ruler, Sheng Shih-ts'ai, although still a Chinese national, had become a member of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and was amongst the most vociferous (and sycophantic) of Stalin's foreign supporters. As a corollary to this development, a number of senior CCP members under the leadership of Chen T'an-chiu and including Mao Tse-tung's brother, Mao Tse-min, were despatched to Sinkiang early in 1938.¹⁸⁹ Once in Urumchi, they took up various important posts in the provincial administration, though it is clear that they remained suspicious of Sheng's *bona fides*, and that their loyalty lay ultimately with Yenan.¹⁹⁰

Soviet influence in Sinkiang undoubtedly reached a peak in November 1940 when Sheng Shih-ts'ai ratified the infamous 'Tin Mines Agreement', apparently at Stalin's demand.¹⁹¹ The year 1941, however, saw two striking developments, both of which seriously affected the military and political position of Sheng's Soviet ally. Firstly, on 13 April 1941 the Soviet Union and Japan signed a mutual non-aggression pact which was obviously detrimental to Chinese interests.¹⁹² This development can hardly have pleased Sheng, who, although otherwise politically amoral, seems to have remained staunchly anti-Japanese throughout his long political career.¹⁹³ At the time of the signing of the Soviet-Japanese Non-Aggression Pact, however, Sheng was clearly in no position to express overt hostility towards a policy of détente with Japan. Accordingly, he seems to have 'hedged his bets' by suggesting that the Soviet Union

should institute a fully fledged Soviet regime in Sinkiang, whilst simultaneously opening secret negotiations with the Kuomintang authorities in an apparent move to bring Sinkiang back into the Nationalist Chinese fold.¹⁹⁴

Sheng's political indecision was not to last long. Within two months of Stalin's reaching agreement with Japan, the political balance in Central Asia was once again radically changed by Hitler's June 1941 invasion of the Soviet Union. Within days it became apparent that the supposedly invincible Red Army had suffered a series of cataclysmic defeats at the hands of the Germans, and was reeling back towards the Urals. In October 1941 the severely over-strained Soviet Government informed Chungking that all shipments of military aid to China would have to be suspended,¹⁹⁵ whilst by November of the same year German forces had brought Leningrad under siege, were within some thirty miles of Moscow, and had thrust far into the Ukraine. By the end of the year these developments had served both to weaken Soviet influence and prestige in Sinkiang, and severely to diminish the attractions of the Soviet Union as an ally in the eyes of Sheng Shih-ts'ai. Meanwhile, the Kazakh revolt in the Altai continued to smoulder.¹⁹⁶

On 7 December 1941, a third factor entered the increasingly complicated equation of Central Asian politics with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour. As a result of this development, Chiang Kai-shek gained a powerful and committed ally in the United States of America, as well as a new source of military and financial aid to replace the hard-pressed Soviet Union. Kuomintang morale received a considerable boost as a result of this political windfall, and Chiang Kai-shek – now fully confident that Japan would lose the war¹⁹⁷ – took steps to strengthen his position within China in preparation for the internecine KMT–CCP conflict which would inevitably follow Japan's defeat.¹⁹⁸ Sinkiang obviously figured prominently in Chiang's calculations. If the KMT wished to secure its rear and to isolate the main CCP base at Yenan from the Soviet Union, it would clearly be necessary to wean Sheng Shih-ts'ai away from his Soviet and CCP advisers and back into the Nationalist camp. Meanwhile, 1,500 miles away in Urumchi, faced with spreading Muslim unrest and rapidly diminishing Soviet assistance, Sheng had reached a similar conclusion. It only remained for the negotiations to take place.

Accordingly, in March 1942 General Chu Shao-liang, Commander of the Eighth War Area, with headquarters at Lanchow, flew to Urumchi to hold secret talks with Sheng Shih-ts'ai.¹⁹⁹ It seems highly probable that Chu, acting on Chiang Kai-shek's instructions, suggested to Sheng that he should break with Moscow and realign himself with Chungking. As Clubb has indicated, the *quid pro quo* would presumably have been Chiang's agreement to Sheng's continuation in power, together with the

promise of a share in the financial aid already pledged to the KMT by the American government.²⁰⁰ Sheng apparently signalled his acceptance of Chiang's offer in April 1942 when, in rapid succession, he stopped publication of the pro-Soviet monthly organ *Fan-ti chan-hsien* (Anti-Imperialist War Front),²⁰¹ and ordered the arrest of numerous 'progressives' and CCP members working in Sinkiang. Amongst those arrested were Sheng's childhood friend, Tu Chung-yüan, and Mao Tse-min, brother of the CCP Chairman, Mao Tse-tung, together with more than 100 CCP activists.²⁰² At about this time Sheng Shih-ts'ai's own brother, Sheng Shih-ch'i, who commanded the motorised brigade at Urumchi, was shot and killed, apparently because of his pro-Soviet views.²⁰³

Negotiations between Sheng Shih-ts'ai and the Nationalist authorities at Chungking continued throughout the summer of 1942, with Chu Shao-liang acting as intermediary. Chu made a second, unofficial, visit to Sinkiang in May and a third, official, visit in July.²⁰⁴ Finally, accompanied by Madame Chiang Kai-shek and by Chaucer H. Wu, the Nationalists' Special Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, Chu flew into Urumchi on 29 August to finalise the agreement. According to Chinese Nationalist sources, Madame Chiang carried with her a letter from her husband promising Sheng 'not only forgiveness for past deeds, but accepting full responsibility for their consequences'.²⁰⁵

Following the successful conclusion of Sheng's negotiations with the KMT and Sinkiang's official reincorporation into the Chinese national fold on 5 October 1942, Sheng Shih-ts'ai sent a memorandum to the Soviet Consulate-General in Urumchi demanding the general withdrawal of all Soviet military and technical personnel within a period of three months. Pushkin, the Soviet Consul-General, prevaricated.²⁰⁶ The war in Europe was not going well for the Russians. Amongst other reverses, during the autumn of 1942 German armoured divisions rapidly overran the Kuban and struck deep into the Caucasus, raising the Nazi swastika on Mount Elberus and threatening the strategically vital oil-producing region of Baku. Under these circumstances Stalin understandably was not anxious to relinquish Soviet control over the Sinkiang oil-field at Tu-shan-tzu.²⁰⁷ He accordingly ignored Sheng's three-month warning, and opened negotiations with the Nationalist authorities at Chungking in a vain attempt to salvage the Soviet position.²⁰⁸ Meanwhile Sheng, in a move apparently designed both to impress Chiang Kai-shek and to preempt the possibility of a Soviet-sponsored coup in Urumchi, began a new and vicious purge of all 'progressive' elements in Sinkiang. Amongst those tortured and executed at this time were both Mao Tse-min²⁰⁹ and Tu Chung-yüan.²¹⁰

Within a few months of this dramatic *volte-face*, however, it became apparent that Sheng had miscalculated badly. In early February 1943,

shortly after the linking of Sinkiang's currency to that of the Nationalist government,²¹¹ and just as the first KMT-appointed officials were arriving to take up their posts in Urumchi,²¹² news reached Sinkiang of the crushing German defeat at Stalingrad. Seemingly the premise upon which Sheng had based his shift of allegiance in 1942 had been erroneous; the Soviet Union was not to be conquered by the Nazis after all.

During the spring of 1943 the Soviet armies began their reconquest of the Ukraine. As the German panzer divisions were rolled back from the Caucasus, so the immediate importance to Stalin of the Tu-shan-tzu oil-fields in Sinkiang diminished. Accordingly, on 17 March the Soviet Union notified Chungking that all Soviet personnel and equipment attached to the Urumchi aircraft factory and the Tu-shan-tzu oil-fields and refinery would be withdrawn. One month later, on 10 April, a similar notification was passed to Sheng Shih-ts'ai which also promised the evacuation of Soviet geological teams from Sinkiang and the withdrawal of the Red Army 8th Regiment from Kumul.²¹³ Stalin was clearly most unhappy at these developments, however. Final Soviet withdrawal from Sinkiang was not completed until October 1943, almost one year after Sheng had first issued his 'three-month' ultimatum. Moreover, the period of withdrawal was a most unsettled one, with the Kremlin protesting to Chungking over Sheng's 'hostility' whilst at the same time – according to Sheng – making threatening tank movements across the Ili frontier.²¹⁴ As the Soviets withdrew, they capped the Tu-shan-tzu oil-wells and carried back across the frontier every bit of equipment which could be moved, from heavy plant to medical supplies.²¹⁵ Yet it is clear that this withdrawal was regarded as a purely temporary expedient, in indication of which Soviet geologists and engineers are reported to have frankly informed Chinese observers: 'We'll be back in two years.'²¹⁶

Meanwhile Chiang Kai-shek had acted to strengthen Nationalist links with the 'Five Ma' Tungan warlord group in North-West China by appointing Ma Pu-ch'ing, an uncle of Ma Chung-ying and potential rival of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, to the post of Pacification Commissioner for Western Tsinghai.²¹⁷ Sheng was thus in a very weak position when, in June 1943, KMT troops under the command of General Chu Shao-liang began to enter Sinkiang from Kansu. Following the final withdrawal of the Soviets in October of the same year, it became clear that Sinkiang was slipping from Sheng's grasp, and that it could only be a matter of time before he was removed from power and the provincial administration passed fully under KMT control.

In fact, Sheng was to survive in power until the autumn of 1944. Moreover, during the intervening period, he was to make a last, desperate attempt to change sides once again. Sheng's last gamble began in the spring of 1944, at a time of rising KMT-CCP tensions within China, and

of rapidly worsening Sino-Soviet relations in Central Asia.²¹⁸ Accordingly, in February 1943, the Sinkiang warlord declared himself ill and began to absent himself from meetings with KMT functionaries in Urumchi.²¹⁹ Then, in April of the same year, the Japanese suddenly launched their first large-scale anti-Chinese offensive of six years, driving swiftly south from the Lunhai railway line in Honan to conquer Nationalist positions as far south as Hainan Island and the frontiers of Indo-China. Sheng saw his opportunity, and in June began arresting 'numerous' students and teachers whom he suspected of holding Nationalist sympathies. Then, on 11 August, shortly after the fall of the Nationalist strong-point of Heng-yang to the advancing Japanese, Sheng called an emergency meeting of provincial officials in Urumchi and promptly arrested all those KMT functionaries who were unwise enough to attend.²²⁰ This move signalled the beginning of Sheng's fourth major purge, during which martial law was declared and over 300 KMT officials had their property seized and were imprisoned without trial.²²¹ Next, Sheng acted to confuse the KMT garrison forces stationed near Urumchi by informing the Nationalist commander that he had uncovered a 'communist plot' to overthrow the Sinkiang administration, whilst at the same time secretly alerting his own military forces for action against the KMT garrison should this become necessary.²²² Finally, according to at least two sources,²²³ Sheng sent a message to Stalin via the Soviet Consulate-General requesting that the Red Army should again intervene on his behalf – only on this occasion against the legally constituted and internationally recognised Government of China, and not against Muslim rebel forces. It is hardly surprising that this appeal failed to draw a Soviet response.²²⁴

As a result of Stalin's refusal to intervene, Sheng was left politically isolated and militarily defenceless before the superior power of the KMT. Accordingly, on 29 August 1944, Sheng Shih-ts'ai was notified by the Nationalist government that he had been transferred to the post of Minister of Forestry and Agriculture at Chungking. At the same time, General Chu Shao-liang was appointed Acting Chairman of the Sinkiang Government, whilst command of all troops in the province was transferred to the Nationalist Military Affairs Commission (headed by Chiang Kai-shek).²²⁵ Shortly thereafter, on 11 September 1944, Sheng flew out of Sinkiang for the last time to take up his sinecure in Chungking.²²⁶

During his ten years of absolute power in Sinkiang, Sheng Shih-ts'ai was responsible for the imprisonment of an estimated 100,000 people, many thousands of whom were subsequently tortured, sent into internal exile, or simply executed.²²⁷ Inevitably, the great majority of these people were Turkic-speaking Muslims, whether 'reactionary' victims of Sheng's pro-Soviet period, or 'progressive' victims of his virulently anti-

communist later years. As a result of this prolonged reign of terror (coupled with important Soviet military and financial assistance during the period 1934–42), Sheng was able permanently to break the power of the Tungans in Sinkiang, and temporarily to suppress Turkic Muslim separatism, particularly in the troubled south of the province. Yet Muslim opposition to Chinese rule in Sinkiang did not diminish as a result of Sheng's repressive policies; rather it went underground, where it developed in extent and maturity, only to re-emerge, following Sheng's break with the Soviet Union and subsequent fall from power, as the bitter legacy of Sinkiang's last warlord to his Kuomintang successors.

6 *Sinkiang, 1944–6: Muslim 'separatism' under the Kuomintang*

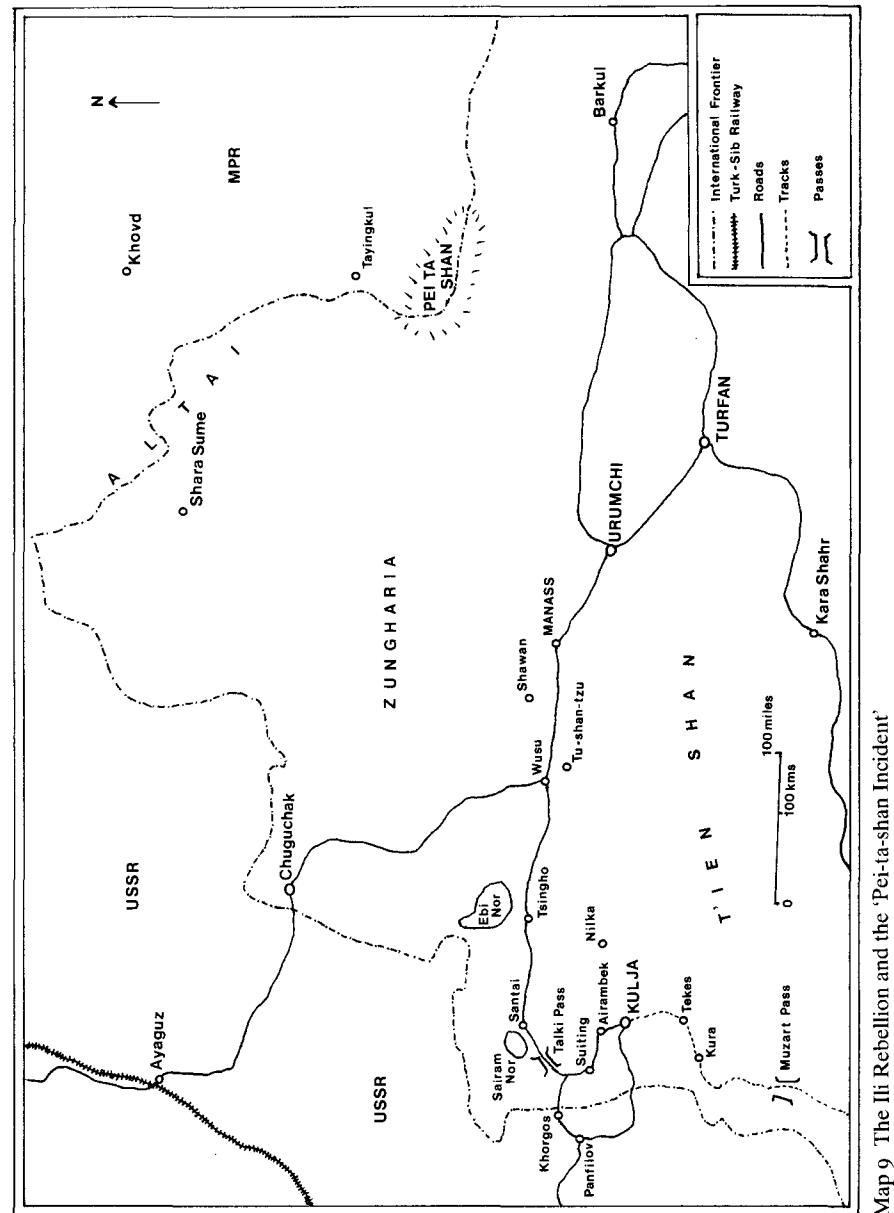
The peoples along the Sino-Soviet frontier are all brethren. The racially-related populations will one day be united as citizens of the same nation. This cleavage at present is like a water-melon cut into two halves which sooner or later will again combine as a single entity.

Soviet advisers in conversation with Sheng Shih-ts'ai.¹

KMT policies in Sinkiang, 1942–5

With the transfer of Sheng Shih-ts'ai to Chungking in September 1944, and with the concurrent appointment of General Chu Shao-liang to the post of Acting Chairman of the Sinkiang provincial government, direct Central Government control over China's far North-West was re-established for the first time since 1911. Whereas Yang Tseng-hsin and his successors, Chin Shu-jen and Sheng Shih-ts'ai, had established themselves in Sinkiang by force before being recognised by the central authorities as the *de jure* rulers of the province, following Sheng's deposition, power of appointment passed directly to the Nationalist government in Chungking. In practice this was to mean that, from the autumn of 1944, effective control over the Sinkiang administration passed to Chiang Kai-shek, the KMT Generalissimo, and to his principal supporters within the KMT, the influential and authoritarian 'CC Clique'.² Between 1944 and 1948 the KMT was to appoint four officials in rapid succession to the post of Chairman of Sinkiang. These were the Han Chinese Wu Chung-hsin (1944–6) and Chang Chih-chung (1946–7), the Uighur Maṣ'ūd Ṣabrī (1947–8), and finally the Tatar Burhān Shahīdī (1948–9), who was subsequently to become the first Chairman of Sinkiang under the CCP.

Wu Chung-hsin, the first KMT appointee, flew into Urumchi on 4 October 1944, after a brief interregnum during which Sinkiang was officially administered by the CC Clique-influenced General Chu Shao-liang.³ Wu was an experienced bureaucrat, formerly Governor of his native Anhwei, who, according to Lattimore, was also 'long associated with the CC Clique, long active in frontier affairs, and long distrusted by Mongols and Tibetans'.⁴ That Wu was distrusted by China's national minorities was hardly surprising, for he was a follower of the 'Great Han' school of thought, much beloved of Chiang Kai-shek and certain powerful factions of the KMT, which holds that all the inhabitants of China belong to one (Chinese) family, and that incidental differences of culture, religion and language are unfortunate aberrations, destined to be sub-



sumed in a 'Greater Han' Chinese whole.⁵ As an adjunct to this belief, Wu actively supported the KMT policy of encouraging Han Chinese colonisation of national minority regions, particularly along China's long and vulnerable Inner Asian frontier.⁶

Wu's first months in Sinkiang were hardly auspicious, though the new regime was distinguished more by administrative incompetence and tactless paternalism than by the outright brutality of its predecessor. Possibly the KMT's first mistake was its delay in appointing a new Governor, for during the brief seventeen-day interval between Sheng Shih-ts'ai's departure for Chungking and Wu Chung-hsin's arrival in Urumchi, Sheng's trusted Lieutenant and Chief of Police, Li Yi-ch'ing, was able to conduct his own purge of Sinkiang's prisons, during which an estimated 400 to 500 political prisoners were 'liquidated' – an action which took place under KMT auspices, if without official KMT sanction.⁷ Moreover, this error was compounded – whilst KMT complicity in the killings was surely confirmed in the eyes of most Sinkiang Muslims – by Wu's subsequent failure to have Li Yi-ch'ing arrested for this crime.⁸ Following Wu's assumption of office, a number of political prisoners were released, with great fanfare, from the fourteen or fifteen major gaols which Sheng had maintained in Urumchi.⁹ According to the newly established British Consulate in Urumchi,¹⁰ however, between October 1944 and February 1945 no more than 500 political prisoners were thus released, and most of these were KMT adherents or officials who had been detained by Sheng during his final, abortive purge of the preceding summer.¹¹ In marked contrast, non-KMT political refugees who had fled Sinkiang to escape Sheng's dictatorial rule were forbidden to return by the new authorities;¹² similarly, none of Sheng's prisons were closed, and no attempt was made to dismantle his much-feared secret police force, which continued its surveillance activities as before, but under Wu Chung-hsin's orders.¹³

Meanwhile inflation and corruption, both of which had been kept within manageable limits during Sheng's 'progressive' years, spiralled upwards and out of control, so that the saying 'One Sheng Shih-ts'ai went out, but two came in' became current throughout Sinkiang.¹⁴ In effect, the economic collapse of the province began in 1942, following Sheng's break with the Soviet Union and the establishment of close fiscal and economic links between Sinkiang and Nationalist China. As Lattimore has shown, during periods of close economic co-operation between Sinkiang and the Soviet Union (as in 1934-42), the oases of southern Sinkiang, with their relatively large population and demand for consumer goods, bought more from the Soviet Union than they sold. Conversely, the predominantly nomadic region of Zungharia, with its small population and large herds of livestock, sold more to the Soviet Union than it

bought. The Zungharian nomads were thus able to use some of the surplus cash derived from their profitable trade with the USSR to buy arable products and other goods from the southern oases (and Ili). The pattern of Sinkiang-Soviet trade was therefore circular, with the main current flowing from Zungharia to the Soviet Union, then from the Soviet Union to the southern oases surrounding the Tarim Basin, and, finally, from the southern oases back to Zungharia.¹⁵

Following Sheng's break with the USSR, however, this trade cycle was ruptured, with disastrous consequences for Sinkiang in general, and for the southern oases in particular. By the end of 1942 trade with the Soviet Union, which had completely dominated the provincial economy for over a decade, had ground to a virtual standstill.¹⁶ The only manufactured goods available in Sinkiang were cigarettes, imported from the Nationalist-controlled areas of China proper. According to Chen, practically no industrial goods could be bought in the shops or bazaars of the major towns, whilst in the southern oases iron had become a 'precious metal', one pound of which could purchase several ten-yard bolts of locally woven cloth.¹⁷ To compound this economic collapse, in November 1942 Sheng accepted a KMT plan for the linking of Sinkiang's currency to that of the Nationalist government at an exchange rate which substantially overvalued the inflated Nationalist currency. Immediately, near-worthless Nationalist dollars began to flood into Sinkiang, whilst valuable provincial produce was syphoned into China proper in exchange.¹⁸ Inevitably, this process added to existing provincial inflation, so that by 1943 the Provincial Commercial Bank alone was receiving Nationalist currency notes at the rate of one million dollars per day.¹⁹

Sheng's break with the Soviet Union was also to have an important impact on his own, purely personal business activities, which both adversely affected the provincial economy, and pointed the way for the first of many KMT 'carpet baggers' who began to arrive in Sinkiang from 1942 onwards. Even before 1942, during his 'progressive' years, Sheng had dominated a large part of Sinkiang's trade through the misleadingly named Provincial Trading Corporation, in fact a private company with a working capital of US\$2.5 million, which was owned by Sheng and run by various agents on his behalf.²⁰ In 1942, no doubt motivated by an increasing awareness of the insecurity of his own position, Sheng apparently determined to increase his share of the profits from the Sinkiang economy. Accordingly, a complete trading monopoly was granted to the Provincial Trading Corporation, through which Sheng purchased wool, livestock, cotton, furs and other local products at compulsory prices fixed well below the market price, transported them on his own trucks, and sold them, primarily to the Soviet Union, in exchange for Soviet manufactured goods. Moreover, in 1943, following the sharp

decline in Sinkiang-Soviet trade and the introduction of Nationalist currency, payment in manufactured goods was gradually phased out by the Provincial Trading Corporation, to be replaced by compulsory purchase, at fixed rates, in the grossly devalued paper currency pouring out of Sheng's own printing presses in Urumchi.²¹

Sheng's monopoly of provincial trade was to be short-lived, however, for, following the establishment of a KMT provincial headquarters at Urumchi in January 1943, the growth of Nationalist political influence in Sinkiang was closely paralleled by an expansion of KMT commercial interests throughout the province. The artificial exchange rate prevailing from November 1942 strongly favoured merchants from China proper, who began to export local produce from Sinkiang to Kansu and all points east at high rates of profit. The chief beneficiaries of this transfer of trade from the USSR to China were the 'Big Four Families' of the KMT, including the Chens of the CC Clique, the Soongs, the Kungs, and Chiang Kai-shek himself.²² In a bid to regulate and control the flow of goods between Sinkiang and China proper, a 'North-Western Development Company' was established, under KMT auspices, at Lanchow in Kansu.²³ At the same time, economic pressures were brought to bear against indigenous trading companies operating from within Sinkiang; thus the passport fee for a merchant leaving the province was at first trebled, and then multiplied by ten.²⁴ Faced with economic discrimination on this scale, even firms such as Mūsā Bay's (Mussabayev's), the largest and best-known Turkic Muslim trading company in Sinkiang, were hard pressed to survive.²⁵ As a result of these policies, by the end of 1944 inflation in Sinkiang was running in excess of 1,200 per cent per annum,²⁶ whilst basic consumer goods had become all but unavailable. According to Jack Chen:

Tea became a luxury beyond the reach of the common people. Salt and sugar disappeared. Stocks of cheap manufactured cotton were soon exhausted. Islamic custom prescribes that a corpse be wound in a shroud, which requires up to twenty feet of cloth. Now there was nothing in which to bury the dead. This was the final affront, the final indignity.²⁷

Staple foodstuffs were also seriously affected by inflation. According to Lattimore the price index of wheat flour, taking June 1940 as 100, had already increased to 865 by December 1942. In 1945, during the administration of Wu Chung-hsin, it reached 75,000, whilst in 1947, under Wu's successor Chang Chih-chung, it was to rise to an astonishing 517,500.²⁸

Turkic Muslim discontent stemming from KMT economic mismanagement in Sinkiang was further exacerbated by the massive deployment of Han Chinese and Tungan troops throughout the province which

accompanied the reassertion of central government authority after 1942. It has been estimated that, at the time of his break with the Soviet Union, Sheng Shih-ts'ai had 20,000 troops at his command,²⁹ of whom only the 2–3,000 troops formerly attached to the North-East National Salvation Army were politically reliable or militarily competent. During the period 1942–4, the number of troops at Sheng's command seems to have been expanded considerably,³⁰ whilst four divisions of the KMT's New 2nd Army were transferred to Sinkiang from Kansu. Finally, one year after Sheng's departure for Chungking, two divisions of Tungan cavalry from Tsinghai (the 5th and 42nd Cavalry Armies, whose loyalty to the Nationalist cause remained wholly dependent upon the continuing marriage of convenience between the KMT and the 'Five Ma' warlord clique) were transferred to strengthen the Nationalist garrison in Sinkiang.³¹ By 1944–5, therefore, the KMT was maintaining an estimated 100,000 troops in Sinkiang, almost all of whom were of Han Chinese or Tungan ethnic origin.³² It is hardly surprising that the indigenous population of Sinkiang regarded this huge force as an army of occupation – and, moreover, an army which they were obliged to maintain through greatly increased taxation (generally payable in kind, since the provincial government refused to accept its own, almost worthless, currency) and through forced labour.³³

Still more disastrous for the Nationalist administration in Sinkiang, however, was the official encouragement of Han Chinese migration to the far north-west. In effect, this represented the reintroduction of a policy which had been instrumental in bringing about Chin Shu-jen's downfall, and which had subsequently been banned by Sheng Shih-ts'ai in an attempt to pacify Sinkiang's Turkic-speaking Muslim majority.³⁴ Renewed Han migration to Sinkiang seems to have begun in late 1942, shortly after Chiang Kai-shek announced a 'Northwest Development Movement' which, besides pledging large sums of money to finance the transfer of some 10,000 officials, together with their families, from China proper to Sinkiang,³⁵ also aimed to encourage the migration of Han Chinese peasant farmers to the far north-west. Whilst no doubt unpopular, the mass movement of Han Chinese officials to Sinkiang (aptly characterised by Whiting as a 'subsidised migration'), was probably acceptable to an indigenous Muslim population long accustomed to living under an almost exclusively Han bureaucracy. Han Chinese land settlement, however, particularly when introduced with the clear intention of permanently altering the ethnic balance in Sinkiang, raised bitter memories of the annexation of Kumul, and was clearly unacceptable to the Muslim population as a whole. In fact, the number of Chinese migrants settled on the land in Sinkiang during the KMT period was

never large. Moreover, most of the 'colonists' thus settled were impoverished refugees fleeing famine and war in China proper, and may thus legitimately be described as victims of China's internece strife, in much the same way as those Muslims whose land they usurped. Nevertheless, deserving of sympathy though these Han settlers may have been, their plight in no way diminished the very real hostility which their arrival (frequently accompanied by KMT brutalities towards the indigenous population) engendered amongst the Muslim peoples of Sinkiang.

The first such Han settlers, over 4,000 of whom arrived in Sinkiang during 1943, were victims of a severe famine in Honan.³⁶ In the early 1930s, Chin Shu-jen had attempted to settle Han immigrants on land which was already cultivated, and which belonged to sedentary Uighur agriculturalists, with disastrous consequences. The KMT clearly had no desire to repeat this experiment, besides which, during the intervening ten years, pressure on farming land had increased substantially owing to population growth and resultant over-cultivation.³⁷ Accordingly, a decision seems to have been taken to settle the Honanese refugees on land occupied by Muslim nomads, initially near Kitai, and subsequently elsewhere in Zungharia.³⁸ The chief victims of this new colonisation policy were the Sinkiang Kazakhs, numbers of whom were forcibly transported from their ancestral home in the Altai region,³⁹ whilst, according to Lattimore, in some instances KMT troops used machine guns mounted on trucks to wipe out whole Kazakh encampments.⁴⁰

Needless to say, during the period 1942–5 rampant inflation, official corruption, and renewed Han Chinese immigration combined to produce a deep-rooted animosity towards KMT rule amongst all the Turkic-speaking Muslim peoples of Sinkiang. Even Mas'ud Sabri Baykuzu, a Uighur Turk living in Chungking whose political loyalties are reported to have lain with the CC Clique, and who was subsequently to become the third KMT Governor of Sinkiang, felt constrained to write in 1945 that the main characteristics of Nationalist rule in Sinkiang were domination by a large number of troops who were regarded as 'human-faced locusts', and promotion of the kind of Chinese colonisation that had contributed so much to the rising at Kumul in 1932;⁴¹ similarly the exiled Khotan *Amīr* Muhammad Amīn Bughra, since c. 1943–4 a companion of Mas'ud Sabri at Chungking, was subsequently to comment:

With the departure of Sheng Shih-ts'ai from Turkestan . . . a person like Wu Chung-hsin, who cherished the policy of obliterating the nationalities dependent upon China, was appointed. Attempts were made to separate the Turkish tribes who had lived as brothers from of old. By promoting old-fashioned and evil men and crushing the enlightened youth, our educational and cultural activities were stifled. Economic activities were destroyed, and this policy of Wu Chung-hsin

resulted in the Ili Revolt and the intervention of the Russians. The Chinese government did not listen to those of us who warned them that this misguided policy was a mistake.⁴²

The Kazakh Revolt in Zungharia and the birth of the 'East Turkestan Republic' in Ili

As has been shown, during his 'progressive' years (1934–42), Sheng Shih-ts'ai was engaged in an almost continuous, though low-key, struggle with the Muslim Kazakhs of Zungharia. By 1940 Kazakh unrest had spread throughout Ili, Chuguchak and Shara Sume, the three northernmost administrative districts of Sinkiang, often referred to collectively in contemporaneous sources as 'The Three Regions'. Moreover, a clear leader of this nomadic revolt had emerged in the person of 'Uthmān Bātūr (Tk. 'Uthmān the Hero'), a powerfully built and charismatic patriarch of the Kirei Kazakh tribe who is reported to have been born in an isolated Altai encampment in north-eastern Sinkiang some time during 1899.⁴³

'Uthmān, who is said to have taken part in guerilla raids against the Chinese even before his thirteenth birthday, was essentially a Kazakh freebooter whose activities in the Sinkiang–Russian–Mongolian border area might more accurately be described as banditry than as a struggle for 'Turkic' or Kazakh national liberation. Certainly he was a political opportunist who shared few of the Turkic nationalist ideals which motivated the Khotan *Amīrs* to set up the secessionist 'Turkish–Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan' at Kashgar in 1933; nor, by most accounts, was he an over-zealous Muslim.⁴⁴ Yet in many ways it was the very absence of these ideals – which, although vague and nebulous in southern Sinkiang, had caused the rebellious Uighurs to establish provisional organs of government and a 'capital' which presented an easy target for Chinese counter-attack – that made 'Uthmān Bātūr and his Kazakh followers an elusive but persistent thorn in the side of the Chinese administration at Urumchi.

By the time of his break with the Soviet Union in late 1942 Sheng Shih-ts'ai had, with Soviet aid, succeeded in re-establishing his authority over the greater part of the 'Three Regions'. Even in the Kazakh stronghold of Shara Sume, provincial forces were in control, whilst 'Uthmān and his followers had been driven to take refuge across the Sinkiang–Mongolian frontier in the remote fastness of the Mongolian Altai, where they are reported to have spent the winter of 1942–3 at Tayingkul, on the upper reaches of the Bulgan River (see map 9).⁴⁵ Following Sheng's break with the Soviet Union, however, the alignment of forces in northern Sinkiang changed dramatically as Stalin, in a bid to maintain Soviet influence over

the mineral-rich 'Three Regions' of northern Sinkiang, swung his support behind Sheng's Muslim opponents. As a result of this development, 'Uthmān Bātūr and his followers suddenly ceased to be targets for Soviet air and ground attack, and became instead political and military clients of the Mongolian People's Republic – itself, of course, a Soviet client state.

According to Kazakh refugee sources, talks between 'Uthmān Bātūr, Mongol representatives of the MPR, and two Soviet-sponsored Kazakh delegates from the nearby Kazakh SSR, took place at Tayingkul in mid-1943.⁴⁶ Little substantive information is available concerning these talks, but it seems that 'Uthmān was provided with a certain amount of arms and equipment via the MPR, as well as with a safe base area outside the frontiers of Sinkiang from which to harass Chinese forces in Shara Sume.⁴⁷ In exchange, the Kazakh leader is reported to have offered the MPR grazing rights within the Altai region of Sinkiang, as well as an unspecified amount of livestock.⁴⁸ Thus strengthened, 'Uthmān formulated a policy that called for Kazakh–Mongol co-operation within an autonomous Altai region, and for the barring of all Han Chinese military and civilian officials from that region.⁴⁹

Sheng Shih-ts'ai and his KMT backers responded by mounting renewed attacks against the Altai Kazakhs, their yurts, and their livestock, whilst Sheng asserted publicly that 'Uthmān was receiving Soviet aid and direction, and that Sinkiang would know neither peace nor prosperity until the Kazakhs had been suppressed.⁵⁰ Fighting between 'Uthmān's Kazakh horsemen and Sheng's predominantly Han Chinese troops flared up in December 1943, and again in March 1944 when the provincial forces suffered a severe defeat which left 'Uthmān in full control of the disputed area.⁵¹ Urumchi blamed this defeat on the Soviet Union, and Chaucer H. Wu, the Nationalists' Special Commissioner for Foreign Affairs who was in Sinkiang at the time, cabled Chungking to report that Soviet aircraft and MPR troops were acting in conjunction with the Kazakh rebels.⁵² Official protests by both Urumchi and Chungking met with a flat Soviet denial of interference in Sinkiang; however, on 2 April 1944, *Tass* announced from Ulan Bator that Chinese forces in pursuit of fleeing Kazakhs had crossed the Mongolian frontier and had been duly repelled by MPR troops.⁵³ In case the KMT should remain in any doubt as to the official Soviet stance, this message was followed up on 3 April by a further *Tass* announcement, this time from Moscow, to the effect that 'China has moved troops along the Outer Mongolian border. Soviet Russia, on the basis of its mutual assistance pact with Outer Mongolia, is obliged to render assistance.'⁵⁴ Clearly Stalin intended that 'Uthmān should remain a thorn in the side of the Chinese authorities, and that his sanctuary in the MPR should remain inviolate.

Meanwhile, prompted by KMT colonisation policies in the Kitai

region,⁵⁵ and by an order that 10,000 horses should be requisitioned for Nationalist cavalry forces,⁵⁶ the Kazakh revolt continued to spread. By the time of Sheng's departure from the provincial scene in September 1944, the greater part of Shara Sume and much of Chuguchak administrative districts had become disputed territory, and 'Uthmān Bātūr effectively controlled the Sinkiang sector of the Altai range, in which region he is reported to have carried out a mass slaughter of Han Chinese 'regardless of sex or age'.⁵⁷ It is important to note, however, that no attempt was made by 'Uthmān to set up an alternative administration in Shara Sume and that his revolt, which might perhaps best be described as a nomadic reaction to agricultural encroachment and centralised authority, lacked a coherent political philosophy and remained essentially anarchic in character.

All this was to change in the autumn of 1944, when, within a few weeks of Sheng Shih-ts'ai's departure for Chungking, a major revolt broke out in the Ili Valley which was to involve not only the nomadic Kazakhs (and Kirghiz), but also the settled Uighur ('Taranchi') population, which had long remained quiescent under Chinese rule.⁵⁸ Moreover, although the Ili Revolt was initially 'Turkic Muslim' in character, it was later to attract significant support amongst many non-Muslim peoples of the Ili region, including numbers of White Russians, Mongols, Tunguzic peoples (Sibo, Solon and Manchu), and even some Han Chinese. In this the Ili Revolt (or, as it subsequently became generally known, the 'Revolt of the Three Regions')⁵⁹ is unique in the annals of Sinkiang history.

Seemingly, trouble had been brewing in the Ili Valley ever since Sheng's break with the Soviet Union in 1942. Ili, the richest and most fertile district of Sinkiang, had long enjoyed a special relationship with its Russian neighbour. The entire valley had been occupied by Tsarist forces between 1871 and 1882, and had only reluctantly been returned to China after prolonged negotiations.⁶⁰ During this period of Tsarist occupation, numerous Russian settlers moved into the Ili region. Their numbers were later reinforced by 'White' Russian refugees, both during and after the Russian Civil War. Throughout the Republican period, Ili had remained unaffected by the Muslim revolts which swept through Zungharia and the Tarim Basin, and because of its close economic links with the USSR (which remained largely uninterrupted under both Yang Tseng-hsin and Chin Shu-jen, as well as during Sheng's 'progressive' years), the region had enjoyed a prosperity beyond any other in Sinkiang. Following Sheng's break with the Kremlin, however, Ili's special economic relationship with the Soviet Union was abruptly severed, causing the valley to lose its principal market for the sale of cattle and raw materials, and its principal source of manufactured goods. As a result, according to Soviet sources, 'imports grew fewer and fewer, so that prices of manufactured

goods soared, whilst those of cattle-breeding fell almost to nothing'.⁶¹

This decline in trade with the Soviet Union, combined with the greatly increased inflation, taxation, and requisitions in labour and kind which accompanied KMT rule,⁶² soon caused widespread discontent in Ili. The inhabitants of the region seem also to have suffered because of their long-standing cultural and educational links with the Soviet Union, and many Soviet-educated Turkic-speaking Muslims were forced to flee across the neighbouring Sino-Soviet frontier to escape the widespread anti-communist purges which swept Sinkiang following Sheng's break with the USSR. As was the case with 'Uthmān Bātūr's Kazakhs at Tayingkul in the MPR, these Turkic-speaking Muslim refugees met with a warm reception from the Soviets, and in 1943 a 'Sinkiang Turkic People's National Liberation Committee' (STPNLC) was reportedly set up at Alma Ata, the capital of Soviet Kazakhstan, with a view to organising 'progressive' opposition to the Sheng-KMT regime in Urumchi.⁶³ Meanwhile, possibly as early as 1943, but certainly by mid-1944, Turkic-speaking Muslims of the Ili Valley started to take to the T'ien Shan in small numbers, where they began to organise resistance to Chinese rule.⁶⁴

During September and October 1944, Kazakh unrest in the Shara Sume and Chuguchak districts spilled over into Ili.⁶⁵ This spreading nomadic unrest was accompanied by a small-scale rising at Nilka, a small village on the right bank of the River Kash about 130 miles east of Kulja, where in mid-September a mixed group of Kazakhs and Uighurs launched an attack on the local KMT garrison. According to Chinese sources, the leaders of this attack were Ghānī Bātūr, a local Uighur, and Farhād, variously described as a Tatar or an Uzbek, who is said to have 'entered China from Soviet Central Asia, and to have brought with him arms, including trench mortars and machine guns, for the rebelling tribesmen'.⁶⁶ This accusation was vigorously denied by the Kremlin,⁶⁷ and Soviet sources maintain that, in protest against KMT requisitions and taxes, 'an excited countryside rose with fowling pieces, pitchforks, hatchets and sticks'.⁶⁸ Be this as it may (and it must be remembered that most Kazakh and Kirghiz fighting men would have been mounted and armed with rifles, however antiquated), the KMT garrison at Nilka, together with its small arsenal, fell to the Muslim rebels on or about 7 October 1944. Shortly thereafter a band of insurgents, variously estimated at between 1,000 and 2,000 strong, set out over the mountains to attack Kulja, the administrative capital of Ili.⁶⁹

On balance, it seems probable that the Nilka rising was a spontaneous and purely local affair, in which both the USSR and its 'progressive' front organisation, the STPNLC, played no direct part, but which both were subsequently swift to exploit for their own ends. Possible indications of this may be found in the raising of the green flag of Islam at Nilka, and

in the general massacre of Han Chinese which seems to have taken place.⁷⁰ Similarly Jack Chen, whose writings on Sinkiang faithfully echo the orthodox Maoist line, notes that 'it took time to channel into constructive activities the revolutionary flood loosed by the first victory of the people in Nilka'.⁷¹ Most telling of all, however, is the (apparently) casually expressed comment of the Soviet historian N. N. Mingulov that 'what the insurgents now needed was co-ordination, and this was provided by a Committee presided over by Ahmadijan Qasim with headquarters at Kulja'.⁷² For it was the Soviet Union, and not the CCP, which was to 'channel into constructive activities' the 'revolutionary flood' loosed at Nilka. Documentary proof, alas, is lacking, but circumstantial evidence strongly suggests that Ahmadijan Qasim was Stalin's man in Kulja, whilst the committee he chaired in that town was almost certainly the local (underground) branch of the Soviet-sponsored and Alma Ata-based STPNLC.⁷³

Little is known of Ahmadijan Qasim, the Uighur Turk who was to assume *de facto* control over the Ili Rising and who was subsequently to become the most influential leader of the 'East Turkestan Republic' (ETR). According to Chen, Ahmadijan Qasim was born in the Ili Valley during 1912. His family must have been reasonably well-to-do, for, although his father died when Ahmadijan was only five years old, the young boy was well looked after by his mother and uncle, and received a good education. Shortly after the assassination of Yang Tseng-hsin, when Ahmadijan had reached the age of seventeen, he was taken to the Soviet Union by his uncle. Here he remained for the best part of a decade, returning to Sinkiang in 1938, at the height of Sheng Shih-ts'ai's 'progressive' period.⁷⁴ Ahmadijan's activities in the USSR remain an almost complete mystery, though it appears he received a higher education under Soviet auspices (probably in Moscow),⁷⁵ and may even, according to Chinese sources, have adopted Soviet nationality.⁷⁶ By the time of his return to Sinkiang in 1938, Ahmadijan was a 'communist-minded progressive' with a Russianised name (Akhmedzhan Kasimov).⁷⁷ He is reported by Chen to have found work as a carpenter and glazier (though Beloff describes him as a school teacher)⁷⁸ until, following Sheng Shih-ts'ai's break with the Soviet Union, he was arrested as a suspected communist and thrown into jail. Chen concludes on a reassuringly domestic note which is not altogether convincing: 'Released only in 1944, he returned to his work and studies and got married. Two weeks after the wedding the Ili Uprising began.'⁷⁹

Whatever the nature of Ahmadijan's activities in the months immediately preceding the outbreak of fighting at Nilka, it is at least clear that both he and his 'progressive' colleagues acted swiftly following the fall of Nilka in early October to take political control over the burgeoning

rebellion. In the words of Jack Chen: 'the revolutionaries in Ili did not wait to be liberated'.⁸⁰ As soon as news of the events at Nilka reached Kulja, the STPNLC began to prepare an armed uprising designed both to oust KMT forces from the city and to pre-empt its 'liberation' by rural partisans whom the urban 'progressives' suspected of anti-Soviet Islamic fundamentalism and anti-Han chauvinism. The STPNLC's partial attainment of this objective was, it seems, considerably facilitated by the military incompetence of the KMT.

According to Chen, the KMT maintained three battalions in and around Kulja. One of these, a force of Han regulars raised and trained in China proper and armed with 'modern automatic rifles, mortars, light and heavy machine guns, and plenty of ammunition', was quartered in central Kulja 'in barracks on present-day Stalin Street, a poplar-shaded avenue not far from KMT army headquarters'. The second battalion, 'a scratch force distrusted by the Kuomintang', was stationed in the West Park area of Kulja. Made up of conscripts from the various non-Han nationalities in the Ili region, this force was poorly armed, having 'only two or three rifles to a company'. The third battalion, also of well-armed Han regulars, was stationed in the Airambek district and guarded the nearby airfield.⁸¹ Both Chen and Mingulov suggest that immediately before Ahmadijan Qasim's rising, nationalist strength within Kulja was seriously depleted by the despatch of the greater part of the KMT garrison towards the rebel-held village of Nilka;⁸² according to contemporaneous British diplomatic reports, however, only a 'small detachment of troops' was involved in this sortie,⁸³ and there must be a distinct possibility that both Chen and Mingulov have deliberately exaggerated the weakness of the Kulja garrison as a device to explain the apparent ease with which rebel forces, said to have been armed initially with 'fowling pieces, pitchforks, hatchets and sticks', succeeded in defeating two battalions of Han regulars armed with machine guns, artillery and even aeroplanes.

As might be expected, accounts of the rising at Kulja and the subsequent struggle for control of the whole Ili Valley are both few in number and differ radically in their interpretation of events. It seems clear, however, that by early November 1944 the column of Muslim insurgents from Nilka had arrived at the outskirts of Kulja New City, having evaded the contingent of KMT troops despatched to engage them in the countryside. Meanwhile, within Kulja the KMT, 'panicky and desperate' according to Chen, had declared martial law and 'unleashed a wave of terror' during which

Security guards rounded up hundreds of suspects. Patrols indiscriminately gunned down anyone moving on the streets. Suspects were butchered. Without even a pretense of investigation or trial thirty-three men and women were shot

inside the first district police station. Another thirty-five were shot at the central police station. Two hundred and thirty-three newly arrested people were herded together, shot in batches, and buried in a single mass grave. Another thousand caught in groups was shot and tumbled into wells and ravines.⁸⁴

The Kuomintang terror was ‘wild and indiscriminate’. However, whilst the revolutionary organisation in Ili suffered losses, ‘its leading cadre was intact and swiftly reacted to the attack’.⁸⁵ Although the actual sequence of events surrounding the rebel capture of Kulja remains unclear, by piecing together the available Chinese, Russian and British accounts of the rising,⁸⁶ it becomes possible to state with some certainty that, despite KMT counter-measures, the STPNLC succeeded both in establishing contacts with the Nilka partisans and in winning over to the rebel cause the greater part of the Turkic and Mongol conscripts serving in the KMT’s West Park battalion.⁸⁷ On the night of 6–7 November 1944, a large band of insurgents assembled in an orchard near Kulja New City. It seems probable that this force comprised both Nilka partisans and local Kulja rebels. Early on the morning of 7 November, this insurgent force attacked KMT positions in Kulja Old City (which, like the New City, had no defensive walls), and within a short time had captured the administrative headquarters. According to Graham, the British consular representative in Urumchi who made an official visit to Ili in 1946, ‘Many Chinese soldiers threw down their arms and hid, only to be routed out and butchered at leisure’.⁸⁸ Other Han troops took up strong defensive positions, most notably at the power station and the central police station, which they defended with vigour. It took the insurgents almost a week to reduce these last strongholds of KMT resistance within Kulja. Meanwhile, the regular Han troops stationed at the airfield were brought under siege, though no major rebel attack was launched in this direction.⁸⁹ By 12 November ‘green flags dominated more and more buildings’, so that the insurgents deemed themselves sufficiently well in control of Kulja to set up a Central Military Staff of their own, and to plan the formation of a provisional government.⁹⁰ The central police station (reportedly defended by over 300 armed police who must have known that their lives were unlikely to be spared in the event of defeat) finally fell on 13 November. Two days later, on 15 November 1944, a new separatist regime, operating under the soubriquet ‘*Sharqī Türkistan Jumhūriyyatı*’ (‘East Turkestan Republic’, or ETR), was set up at Kulja under the titular presidency of ‘Ali Khān Türe, an Uzbek religious leader who enjoyed widespread support amongst the Muslim peoples of Ili’.⁹¹ It was soon to become apparent, however, that the real power behind the ETR lay in the hands of the Soviet-sponsored STPNLC, under the chairmanship of the Uighur ‘progressive’ Ahmadjān Qāsim.

The Soviet Union and the initial consolidation of the ETR

Possibly the most vexatious question surrounding the shadowy ‘East Turkestan Republic’ is the degree to which the predominantly Muslim rebels received support and encouragement from the neighbouring Soviet Union. Predictably enough, Wu Chung-hsin and the KMT authorities lost no time in accusing the Soviets of military intervention in Sinkiang.⁹² Equally predictably, the Soviet authorities strenuously denied this charge, subsequently informing the Nationalists that the Kremlin ‘had no intention of interfering in China’s internal affairs’.⁹³ In his *Pivot of Asia* (1950), Lattimore makes it clear that he discounts reports of Soviet involvement, adding that ‘most of the Uighur (rebels) were in fact without rifles and were armed only with hand grenades’.⁹⁴ In contrast, Whiting in *Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?* (1958) clearly accepts that there was some degree of Soviet involvement, though he adds the caveat that this conclusion rests entirely on circumstantial evidence, whilst ‘firm evidence on the relationship between the rebels and Soviet strategy is lacking’.⁹⁵ However, as a result of materials made available to us by the Russians, the British and the Chinese over the years since Whiting published his conclusions, it is now possible to state with certainty that the Soviet Union was deeply involved in the establishment of the ETR, though the precise degree of Soviet aid to the rebels must remain in some doubt. Similarly, any analysis of Soviet diplomatic purpose in setting up a ‘secessionary’ Muslim statelet in north-western Sinkiang – or of parallels between the ETR and the two contemporaneous secessionist movements backed by the Soviet Union in north-western Iran (the ‘Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan’ and the ‘Kurdish Republic of Mahabad’)⁹⁶ – must inevitably remain speculative.

As has been shown, despite Chinese claims to the contrary, it seems probable that the rising at Nilka in September 1944 was a spontaneous and purely local affair. Following the 7 November rising at Kulja, however, Chinese claims of Soviet complicity with the rebels were redoubled. Thus, on 8 November, whilst the fighting in Kulja was still in its early stages, the KMT Special Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, Chaucer H. Wu, cabled Chungking from Urumchi to the effect that:

According to a telegram from Ili, on the morning of November 7, approximately 500 naturalised White Russians began a revolt in I-ning [Kulja] with machine guns and grenades. When our airplane flew into I-ning for reconnaissance, machine guns in the Soviet consulate opened fire.⁹⁷

Whilst this report remains unconfirmed by any independent primary source, it is difficult to believe that a group of insurgents armed chiefly with clubs, ‘fowling-pieces’ and KMT weaponry captured from the small

garrison at Nilka could so swiftly have overcome many hundreds of heavily armed Han regular soldiers and KMT police, particularly when the less than spectacular military performance of the TIRET and Kumullik rebels during the 1930s is taken into consideration. Chen ascribes the rebel victory to superior morale,⁹⁸ but Graham, who was probably the first Westerner to visit Ili under the ETR, reported that 'The insurgents were . . . joined by many Russians with military experience, both with and without Soviet papers, who fought well, and many of whom were killed'.⁹⁹ The involvement of Russian soldiers in the early stages of the rebellion is confirmed by the Soviet historian N. N. Mingulov, who describes them as 'settlers living in Sinkiang, having migrated there from Semirech'ye in the 19th century'; he identifies their leaders as F. Leskin and A. Polinov.¹⁰⁰ Taken together, these three sources (one Chinese, one British and one Russian) would seem to establish beyond reasonable doubt that a sizeable group of trained Russian soldiers took part in the initial stages of the Ili rising, though whether their political colouring was 'White' or 'Red' remains unclear. Besides, as Hedin had indicated in the early 1930s, time and geographical isolation had served to heal the wounds of the Civil War, and many ostensibly 'White' Russian settlers in Sinkiang had become reconciled to the Soviet system prevailing in their motherland.¹⁰¹

Seemingly, therefore, during the initial stages of the rising at Kulja, the rebel forces were divided into two main factions. Of these the largest and the least well organised might loosely be described as 'Turkish-Islamic' and conservative, consisting primarily of partisans from Nilka assisted by 'gangs of Moslems armed only with sticks, who paraded the streets shouting slogans and murdering defenceless Chinese'.¹⁰² In marked contrast to this group, the Soviet-sponsored STPNLC under Ahmadijan Qasim sought to establish a secular, pro-Soviet secessionist state which might – ostensibly – embrace people of all nationalities and religious persuasions, not excluding Han Chinese.

In this context, whilst it is clear that during the early stages of the Ili Rising anti-Han pogroms seem to have been the rule rather than the exception, it is also pertinent to note that when such massacres took place not all Han Chinese fell victim to the mob. Turrall, the British Consul at Urumchi in 1944–5, identified the most common victims of anti-Han pogroms as first-generation Chinese immigrants, KMT officials, and soldiers.¹⁰³ This point is elaborated by Graham, who notes that:

Hardly any Chinese civilian officials escaped. For example, of over a hundred telegraph employees in the Ili *Ch'u*, only three are known to be safe. The only senior official to escape was the postmaster, who was hidden by a Muslim friend, but his family was butchered. Of non-official Chinese, men from Manchuria had the least chance, as Sheng and the majority of his troops were from the north-

eastern provinces . . . The descendants of the camp followers of Tso Tsung-Tang's army in the 1870s, mostly Tientsin sutlers and prostitutes, fared best; and generally, though by no means invariably, the mobs spared women and children. Fanaticism was evidently not entirely unbridled.¹⁰⁴

There are no indications as to the STPNLC's attitude to these massacres. Ahmadijan Qasim was subsequently to admit that initially the ETR 'made no distinction between Han Chinese and the Kuomintang reactionary clique, considering the whole Chinese nationality as our enemy'.¹⁰⁵ In retrospect it might be supposed that most of the blame for the anti-Chinese pogroms of 1944 and early 1945 lay with the more conservative, 'Turkish-Islamic' faction within the rebel group. On the other hand, a more Machiavellian interpretation would point to STPNLC complicity, for the victims were chiefly KMT officials, followers of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, and recent colonists, whilst small merchants, tradesmen and lumpen proletarian elements were generally spared.

It is at least clear that the ETR government proclaimed on 15 November 1944 was based on a coalition between 'progressive' and 'reactionary' elements within rebel ranks. Whilst Ahmadijan Qasim and his 'progressive' STPNLC was certainly better armed and more efficiently organised within Kulja, the 'reactionary' Turkish-Islamic faction equally certainly enjoyed more support in the countryside, and was substantially more numerous. Accordingly, in a move designed to promote unity amongst the anti-KMT forces, the Uzbek *Älim* 'Ali Khan Türe was declared President of the ETR, whilst Hákim Beg Khoja, an influential Uighur landowner, was appointed as his Deputy. Mingulov notes with approval the 'flexible tactics' employed by the STPNLC at this juncture, and comments: 'the organisers were alive to the necessity of roping in everybody at this initial stage, from toiling peasant to affluent merchant or great landowner'.¹⁰⁶ The conservative faction within rebel ranks seems to have also been prepared to compromise at this stage, for both the epithets 'Turkic' and 'Islamic' were omitted from the title of the new secessionist regime (not least, one suspects, because of 'White' Russian involvement in the rebellion), whilst a tentative welcome was extended to various non-Muslim minority nationalities (including, besides Russians, Mongols, Sibos, Solons and Manchus) who either supported, or did not actively oppose, the revolutionary movement. No mention was made of Islam as the state religion of the ETR, though the green flag of Islam bearing a white crescent and star was retained as the 'national flag' of the nascent Republic.¹⁰⁷

An examination of the more influential figures in the ETR administration at this stage indicates that, apart from 'Ali Khán Türe and Hákim Beg Khoja, most senior officials belonged to the 'progressive' faction. Besides Ahmadijan Qasim, 'progressive' elements attached to the

Central Staff of the ETR are known to have included the Uighurs Saif al-Dīn 'Azīz, Rahīmjan Sābir Khoja and 'Abd al-Karīm 'Abbās; the Kazakh, 'Abd al-Hayir Türe; the Kirghiz, Ishāq Beg (also known as Ishāq Jān); the Mongol, Fucha-Afandi; and the Russians, F. Leskin, A. Polinov and Glimkin.¹⁰⁸ Besides Ahmadjān, only two members of this shadowy group were to achieve real prominence. These were the Kirghiz, Ishāq Beg, who became Commander-in-Chief of the rebel armies, and above all the Uighur Saif al-Dīn 'Azīz, better known as 'Saifuddin', the son of a well-to-do merchant from Artush, near Kashgar. Born c. 1914, Saif al-Dīn received his early education in Sinkiang. He then travelled to the Soviet Union, where he studied law and politics at the University of Tashkent, became fluent in Russian, and joined the CPSU. Following his return to Sinkiang, he was to serve the ETR as Minister of Education and (according to the *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*) as head of the *Yashlär Tashkilati*, or Ili youth organisation.¹⁰⁹ According to KMT sources, of the 'progressive' figures cited above, Ishāq Beg, Polinov and Glimkin were members of the STPNLC, whilst 'Abd al-Karīm 'Abbās and Leskin were 'either Soviet agents, or closely associated with the Russians'.¹¹⁰

Further indications of Soviet involvement with the ETR may be found in the sequence of events which followed the founding of the separatist regime in November 1944. As Mingulov points out, despite the success of the rebels in seizing Kulja, the most immediate problems facing the new regime remained military. Accordingly, a 'Home Guard' was established, and KMT military stores captured intact were made available to the nascent armed forces under the leadership of Leskin and Ishāq Beg.¹¹¹ Whilst the KMT forces holding the airfield at Airambek were closely besieged, it was clearly imperative to reduce this position before KMT reinforcements could arrive from Zungharia. In an apparently successful attempt to pre-empt this latter development, a force of rebels under the command of Leskin was sent to hold back the KMT at a gorge near Kensai; according to Mingulov, by December 1944 this group had succeeded in stemming the KMT advance.¹¹² Meanwhile, smaller detachments of rebel troops moved against KMT garrisons in Tekes and Kura to the south-west of Kulja, both of which fell by the end of the year.¹¹³ A similar advance on Suiting seems to have been accompanied by a local rising; however, the local KMT garrison 'defended themselves stoutly' and were not overcome until 3 January 1945, 'when mortars were brought up to batter the walls of their positions'.¹¹⁴

Considerable mystery surrounds the reduction of the KMT stronghold at Airambek, which did not fall until 29 January. According to Chen, more than 8,000 KMT troops and officers, together with their families and 'hangers-on', had taken refuge in three carefully prepared military

positions in and around Airambek. Once again, Chen attributes the victory of the rebels to superior morale and innovative siege tactics which included the use of a converted 'Stalinetz' tractor as a tank.¹¹⁵ Chen's version of events would seem to be partially confirmed by Turrall, who, in a report dated 5 February 1945, informed the India Office that 'the small garrison at the [Airambek] airfield succumbed probably through starvation, owing to the failure of supplies dropped by air'.¹¹⁶ On the other hand, KMT sources cited by Lee Fu-hsiang claim that 'two regiments of Soviet artillery came from Jarkent [Panfilov], a Russian city near the Sino-Soviet border, to help the insurgents in fighting the Chinese garrison troops'.¹¹⁷ Moreover, this latter version of events is borne out by Graham, who notes that, as at Suiting, mortars were brought up to reduce the Airambek garrison. He continues:

According to a White Russian, whenever the rebels were unable to make progress, detachments of the Red Army were brought in from over the frontier, did what was necessary, and retired; and these mortars were part of their contribution. I should have accepted this statement with reserve, as the mortars might have been captured from the Chinese, and would not have been beyond the capacity of the rebels to use, but for a less doubtful report, tending in the same direction. During the two months' defence of the aerodrome the Provincial Government tried to assist the garrison by dropping supplies by parachute, but after the first consignment had been dropped, anti-aircraft guns were used against the Chinese. Such guns were not seen in Kulja before or since, and it seems reasonable to suppose that they were brought in from over the frontier, and withdrawn as soon as the need for them had passed.¹¹⁸

Whether Soviet troops participated covertly in the fighting or not, the rebels enjoyed remarkable success, and by the end of January 1945 the whole Ili Valley, excepting only 'some pockets of resistance on the borders towards Kensai . . . and Santai', was in rebel hands. Mingulov notes that these last pockets of resistance 'could not be liquidated until the month of March'.¹¹⁹ The fighting in the Ili Valley during the late autumn and winter of 1944–5 seems to have been both fierce and pitiless. KMT sources continued to allege anti-Han massacres, most notably at Suiting, Kulja, and in the Tekes and Borotala Valleys,¹²⁰ whilst the ETR continued to accuse the KMT of murdering prisoners and other brutalities. In this context Graham, following his visit to the rebel zone in 1946, reported that 'Both sides allege atrocities, mutilation and murder of prisoners, and I see no reason to doubt either'.¹²¹

Meanwhile, having consolidated their hold on the Ili Valley, the rebel forces turned their attention to the neighbouring administrative districts of Chuguchak and Shara Sume. On 30 January 1945, one day after the fall of the KMT strongpoint at Airambek, rebel forces won a major victory at Sairam Nor, thus 'leaving the way open for the revolt to surge out of the

Ili Valley into the Zungharian plains'.¹²² Shortly thereafter 'Uthmān Bātūr, leader of the Kazakh rebellion in the Altai region, 'placed himself at the disposal of the ETR'.¹²³ Taking advantage of the KMT's preoccupation with events in the Ili Valley, 'Uthmān's Kazakhs swiftly occupied both Shara Sume and Chuguchak. The fate of the KMT garrison in the former administrative centre remains uncertain, but at Chuguchak no resistance was offered, the Han officials and soldiery preferring to flee *en masse* to neighbouring Soviet territory.¹²⁴ 'Uthmān was subsequently appointed ETR special executive officer for the Altai, with headquarters at Shara Sume.¹²⁵ Links between the two centres of rebellion remained tenuous, however, and it seems that 'Uthmān never paid more than lip service to the 'progressive' ideals of the ETR. During this period Kazakh rebels in the central and eastern T'ien Shan owing allegiance to 'Ali Beg Rahīm stepped up their harassment of the KMT, raiding towards Manass and mounting guerilla attacks on the small towns lying along the road to the north of the T'ien Shan, both east and west of Urumchi.¹²⁶

Following the KMT defeat at Sairam Nor, a relatively stable front between rebel-held and KMT-held territory formed in the region of Tsingho, where the provincial forces began to mass, ostensibly in preparation for a counter attack.¹²⁷ It is clear, however, that a series of rapid and unexpected reverses suffered by the KMT between October 1944 and January 1945 had both thrown the provincial forces into disarray and, for a short time, had caused acute panic in Urumchi.¹²⁸ Turrall, the British Consul in that city, reported to his superiors at the India Office that 'Central Government troops of Li T'ieh-chün's 29th Army have not merely failed to break into the Ili Valley . . . but are being driven back', a development which he attributed to 'the fact that . . . Central Government troops . . . are not as well accustomed to, or equipped for, the icy north-west winds of the Sairam Nor Basin as their highly mobile and incredibly tough [Kazakh] opponents'.¹²⁹ Wu Chung-hsin and Chu Shao-liang, however, preferred to explain KMT reverses in terms of massive Soviet intervention on behalf of the Ili rebels. Despite being shown captured armaments, Turrall remained unconvinced of these claims, commenting to his superiors:

I have of course myself no proof one way or the other as to Soviet complicity, but on the face of it, it seems to me unlikely. What the Chinese authorities will not accept is the fact that there are ample causes purely internal to Sinkiang which do not need supplementary external causes to explain in the fullest degree not merely the present discontents but also a future conflagration of the greatest size.¹³⁰

However, whilst Turrall was certainly correct in blaming the Chinese authorities for creating the conditions which led to the outbreak of rebellion in Ili, developments within the rebel zone during the first half of

1945 pointed increasingly towards substantial Soviet complicity in backing the secessionist regime.

To begin with, following the fall of Suiting and the effective establishment of rebel supremacy in the Ili Valley, on 5 January 1945 the 'provisional government' of the ETR issued a declaration (subsequently known as the 'Kulja Declaration') setting out its aims. According to Mingulov, these were:

1. The 'annihilation' of the Kuomintang.
2. The creation of a 'Democratic Base' founded on the equality of all nationalities inhabiting the territory of the ETR.
3. The formation of a competent, multi-national People's Army.
4. Nationalisation of banks; postal, telegraphic and telephone communications; forestry; and mineral resources.
5. The development of industry, agriculture, stock-breeding and private trade.
6. The establishment and preservation of religious freedom.
7. The development of educational and public health services.
8. The establishment of friendly relations with 'all democratic countries of the world' and, in particular, with Sinkiang's 'next-door neighbour', the Soviet Union.¹³¹

Mingulov comments approvingly that this programme, 'as will be observed from several of its items', took into account the specific character of society in the Three Regions: '. . . that is, its patriarchal or feudal stamp; the backward productive relations in the villages where elements of domestic serfdom persisted; and the powerful influence of the Muslim clergy'.¹³² According to Kuomintang sources, however, the first clause of the 'Kulja Declaration' made no reference to the 'annihilation of the KMT', but announced that the objective of the Ili Revolt was to 'sweep away the Han Chinese'.¹³³ KMT sources also report that the programme contained the following ominous passage:

After having led a slave life under the yoke of the Han Chinese for sixty years in the dark ages, we have now awoken by raising the revolutionary flag of the crescent and star which signifies the bright future of Eastern Turkestan . . . But our goal has not yet been reached, and the sixty-year blood debt has not yet been paid by the Han Chinese.¹³⁴

Whatever the truth behind these conflicting claims, there can be no doubt that anti-Han sentiment played a major role in the initial stages of the Ili Revolt.¹³⁵ It may also be, as indicated above, that during this early period STPNLC elements within the rebel leadership turned a blind eye to 'anti-Hanism', either out of weakness, or out of political expediency, or out of a combination of both. Subsequently, however, the anti-Han tenor of earlier pronouncements by the ETR leadership was gradually

set aside as Ahmādjān Qāsim and other 'progressive' pro-Soviet elements came to eclipse Muslim fundamentalists and members of the 'national bourgeoisie' represented within rebel ranks by 'Ali Khan Türe, Hākim Beg Khoja, and a string of lesser Muslim '*Ulamā'*'.¹³⁶

The influence of the 'progressive' STPNLC faction within the ETR seems to have achieved primacy during the spring of 1945, following the fall of the KMT stronghold at Airambek. From this time onwards anti-Han rhetoric was phased out of ETR pronouncements (not least, one suspects, because so few Han Chinese settlers and officials had survived the pogroms),¹³⁷ and a series of genuinely constructive social reforms was introduced.¹³⁸ These reforms included the implementation of a 'sowing campaign' aimed at boosting agricultural production in which loans of seed and money were advanced to the rural population 'to enable them to press ahead with the spring sowings of 1945'.¹³⁹ In the field of public health, the incidence of typhus in the Ili Valley is said to have been arrested, whilst in education, 'Courses for teachers and extension courses were organised so that the scholastic year could begin in all schools in the Ili district by 1st September, 1945'.¹⁴⁰ Meanwhile, the central administration of the ETR was reorganised into eleven departments¹⁴¹ under the indirect supervision of a 'National Council' composed of members of 'every nationality' resident in the Ili region, each nationality supposedly being represented in proportion to the size of its population.¹⁴² According to Lattimore, these developments encouraged the participation of various non-Muslim nationalities in the Ili Revolt, thus: 'The Chinese residents of Kulja cautiously declared that they had nothing in common with the oppressive policy of the provincial government', whilst the Tunguzic agriculturalists delivered supplies to the rebel administration, the Sibos in particular earning great praise for 'distinguishing themselves in carrying out tasks assigned them by the Kulja regime, such as delivering grain and clover'.¹⁴³ It is noteworthy, however, that, despite their adherence to the Islamic faith, the Tungan minority in the Ili region seems to have played little or no part in the rebel movement.¹⁴⁴

It seems clear that 'Ali Khan Türe and the 'Turkish-Islamic' element in the rebel alliance remained opposed to the participation of non-Muslim peoples (and especially of Han Chinese) in the ETR, and to this end they fought a vigorous rearguard action against the STPNLC 'progressives' during the first half of 1945. According to Chen, a triumvirate of Muslim 'fundamentalists' including 'Ali Khan Türe, the titular President of the ETR, 'Abd al-Muṭṭa 'Ali Khalīfa, the Minister of Religious Affairs, and Sa'ūd Dāmullāh, the Vice-Minister of Education, attempted to 'integrate state and religion' by advocating that Islamic *Shari'a* law should be applied throughout the ETR; that the Muslim religion should be taught in all state schools; and that (according to Lee Fu-hsiang), ETR officials

should be selected exclusively from amongst 'those who are familiar with the teachings of the Qur'an'.¹⁴⁵ Chen further notes that during this period:

Religious courts tended to dogmatic interpretations of religious texts and failed to adapt to the complexities of modern conditions. They particularly infringed on the rights of women, whose emancipation was one of the aims of the revolution. Great injustices were done to women when age-old religious laws and customs were blindly upheld.¹⁴⁶

By mid-1945, however, Muslim 'fundamentalist' moves to Islamicise the ETR seem finally to have been defeated, with the result that, according to Mingulov, 'in criminal law it was made a heinous offence to stir up communal hatred'.¹⁴⁷ Indications of this 'progressive' victory may be found in the two chief propaganda organs of the ETR (printed on Russian presses either imported from the Soviet Union or seized from the KMT administration at the time of the Ili Rising), namely *Azad Sharqī Türkistan* (Free Eastern Turkestan),¹⁴⁸ and subsequently *Inqilabi Sharqī Türkistan* (Revolutionary Eastern Turkestan),¹⁴⁹ as well as in the numerous propaganda leaflets produced from about this time which emphasised the close ethnic and cultural ties existing between the ETR and the Soviet Central Asian Republics, and which stressed the 'freedom' enjoyed by the various national minorities within the Soviet Union when contrasted with the oppression suffered by the peoples of Sinkiang living in the region still under KMT control.¹⁵⁰

Meanwhile, the ETR continued to assume the trappings of statehood with remarkable swiftness. Thus, the newly established administration instituted an (apparently viable) system of taxation,¹⁵¹ issued its own currency,¹⁵² and (in marked contrast to its incompetent and ill-fated predecessor at Kashgar), set about creating a well-armed and disciplined 'popular army' as described in clause three of the 'Kulja Declaration' cited above. According to Mingulov, shortly after the announcement of this revolutionary programme on 5 January 1945, a defence fund was started to which 'the people of Ili District contributed with great enthusiasm'.¹⁵³ By 8 April 1945, the foundations of this 'child of the people' (variously styled the 'Ili National Army' by Kotov, the 'National People's Army' by Chen, and the 'Sinkiang Democratic Army' by Barnett),¹⁵⁴ had been successfully laid.¹⁵⁵ Overall command of this force was given to the Kirghiz leader Ishāq Beg, who had been a Brigade Commander in the service of Sheng Shih-ts'ai before the latter's break with the Soviets in 1942, and who – according to A. Doak Barnett – had actually commanded one of the GPU units sent by Stalin to aid Sheng during his struggle with Ma Chung-ying during 1933–4.¹⁵⁶ It is known that Ishāq Beg was assisted in this task by the 'White' Russians Polinov (who

had similarly been a Regimental Commander in Sheng's Soviet-equipped forces before 1942),¹⁵⁷ and Leskin, who was responsible for having defeated the initial KMT counter-offensive near Kensai in December 1944. All three leading officers of the 'Ili National Army' are thus known to have been associated with the pro-Soviet STPNLC (indeed, according to Barnett, Ishāq Beg was reported to hold dual Soviet and Chinese nationality and was 'one of the most completely pro-Russian men in the Ili group'),¹⁵⁸ whilst only in distant Shara Sume, in the person of the Kazakh chieftain 'Uthmān Bātūr, did a powerful rebel leader without avowedly 'progressive' views hold sway.

The Soviet Union and the military expansion of the ETR

Following Leskin's victory over units of the KMT 29th Army at Sairam Nor on 30 January 1945, the defeated provincial forces fell back on Tsingho, which became the effective front-line between ETR- and KMT-held territory. Here General Hsieh, the Commander of the provincial units opposing Leskin's rebel forces, began to reorganise his dispirited troops in preparation for a counter-attack scheduled for the spring of 1945, by which time the bitterly cold weather, which was considered by both Wu Chung-hsin and Chu Shao-liang to favour the local Kazakh partisans,¹⁵⁹ should have abated. In retrospect it seems clear that the KMT leadership miscalculated badly in taking this decision, for during the intervening winter months the ETR was able to liquidate all continuing KMT resistance within the Ili region, and to build up a surprisingly powerful 'Ili National Army' (INA).

Information concerning the following military struggle is both sparse and contradictory. It seems clear, however, that despite an apparently overwhelming superiority in men and *materiel* (consisting of an estimated 100,000 troops in Sinkiang, many of whom were armed with modern American weaponry),¹⁶⁰ the KMT were unable to break through the Talki Pass and into the Ili Valley. Rather, when full-scale hostilities broke out in July 1945, it was the INA which assumed the offensive, sweeping the KMT forces back towards Urumchi and striking deep into Chuguchak and Shara Sume to make contact with the Kazakh rebels owing allegiance to 'Uthmān Bātūr.

How was this possible? Clearly, within a period of six months following the fall of the KMT stronghold at Airambek, the rebel forces must have been transformed from a group of partisans numbering, at most, a few thousand (and armed, it will be recalled, with 'fowling pieces'), into a sizeable, well-disciplined force capable of routing a powerful, if dispirited, force of professional soldiers armed with tanks, field artillery and

planes. According to Chen, by the summer of 1945 the INA had expanded to an estimated strength of 30,000 men:

... a modern force, armed with several thousand rifles and other modern equipment captured from the enemy. Designations and flags were given to the various units. There were ten regiments: the First, Second and Third were infantry, the rest were cavalry units . . . In addition there were machine gun and mortar companies, an artillery battery, rear service establishments and a political department for the education of the troops. Captured Kuomintang trucks became the core of an independent motorised battalion.¹⁶¹

Chen continues by emphasising both the mixed ethnic composition of the INA and, true to the 'Red before Expert' dialectic fashionable at the time of the Cultural Revolution, his contention that that which the rebel forces lacked in firepower was more than compensated for in terms of political commitment; thus:

Regular political education was introduced from the start . . . political commissar[s] . . . led the men in discussions of the aims of the national liberation struggle and the policies of the provisional government [ETR]. All instruction and other activities were designed to bind commanders and men together in brotherly unity, to teach them to observe revolutionary discipline conscientiously and to love and care for the people as if they were all one family. They took the oath of the army [INA] 'to serve the people to the death and never retreat in the struggle to overthrow the Kuomintang oppressors'.¹⁶²

Other sources, however, adopt a less sanguine view of the ETR's intrinsic military potential. According to Whiting, the 'Ili National Army' not only obtained substantial supplies of ammunition through the Soviet Consulates located in Kulja, Chuguchak and Shara Sume but also received much-needed reserves of fighting men 'from ethnically akin groups across the border'.¹⁶³ The American reporter A. Doak Barnett, who travelled extensively in Sinkiang at the time of the ETR-KMT struggle, similarly noted reports that Soviet advisers ('most of them Asians from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan') were attached to every major unit of the INA. His contemporaneous account continues:

Military supply on the Ili side is somewhat of a mystery, even to Chinese intelligence officers with whom I talked in Sui-lai [Manass]. There is not enough industrialization in Ili territory to support sizeable numbers of troops. Although some of their arms . . . were captured from the Chinese in the initial campaign, they undoubtedly have received aid from the Russians . . . It seems probable . . . that the Ili Army is dependent upon Russia for some military supplies, and it is definitely known that the Ili troops wear a Russian-type uniform.¹⁶⁴

For some time the origin of these 'Russian-type' uniforms remained uncertain. Thus, when reporting on direct negotiations between senior KMT and rebel officials at Manass in October 1945, Turrall described the

uniforms of the ETR delegates as being 'green, bearing the [Islamic] emblem of a crescent and star'.¹⁶⁵ When Graham visited Kulja during the summer of 1946, however, he was able to get a closer look at the mysterious garb of the INA, as a result of which he reported to his superiors in the British embassy at Nanking that 'All flags, uniforms and inscriptions' within the rebel zone bore the insignia 'ETR' ('East Turkestan Republic'), but in Russian language and cyrillic script ('VTR', or '*Vostochnaya Turkestanskaya Respublika*) and not, as might more reasonably have been expected, in Turkic ('STJ', or '*Sharqī Türkistan Jumhūriyyatı*', even in the cyrillicised script adopted in 1939–40 by the neighbouring Kazakh SSR); indeed, according to Graham: 'the letters VTR [in Ili] were as common as SPQR in Rome'.¹⁶⁶

Given this fact, the origins of the INA's 'Soviet-type' uniform (and therefore, by association, much of its more sophisticated *materiel*) can be in little doubt. Moreover, although the Soviet Union continued (and has since continued) vociferously to deny having aided or abetted the INA, on at least one occasion the Kremlin seems to have let slip its guard. Thus, on 14 May 1967, in a Uighur-language broadcast beamed into Sinkiang by Radio Tashkent, the Soviets announced that

In 1944 the peoples of East Turkestan broke the chain of tyranny and slavery of the KMT hordes and set up an East Turkestan Republic under a national government . . . The Soviet State formed, under the leadership of the great Lenin, provided the East Turkestan national army with arms and trained commanding cadres . . . Moreover, the Soviet Union extended all-out aid to the young Turkestan Republic for its economic and cultural construction.¹⁶⁷

In this context it is also pertinent to note that the secondment of Soviet military advisers to the INA has been independently acknowledged by a senior CCP cadre in the presence of Mao Tse-tung.¹⁶⁸

It is clear, therefore, that by the time the spring thaw came to northern Sinkiang in April–May 1945, the KMT forces stationed around Tsingho were no longer facing a militarily inexperienced, if enthusiastically anti-Chinese, band of Muslim rebels. This must have become painfully apparent to the Nationalist High Command in Urumchi as, in July of that year, the INA went over to the offensive. According to Chen, the 'White' Russian Polinov was first to break out of the Sairam Nor region, leading a cavalry column across the KMT's right flank towards Chuguchak. He was followed by the Kirghiz Ishāq Beg who, at the head of the main body of the INA (a force estimated at 15,000 men), pushed south to attack the KMT 29th Army concentration at Tsingho (also estimated at 15,000 men).¹⁶⁹ At about the same time a third rebel column of uncertain strength is reported to have set out from Suiting, marching in a wide arc to the north and east of the Ebi Nor, in a move apparently designed to

bypass Tsingho and to take the KMT garrison town of Wusu from the rear.¹⁷⁰ The subsequent chronology of events remains unclear, but on or about 6 September 1945 the INA, having captured Tsingho and severely disrupted Nationalist communication lines to the north of Urumchi,¹⁷¹ succeeded in destroying the KMT New 2nd Army in the immediate vicinity of Wusu. As might be expected, partisans of the ETR and pro-Nationalist sources differ widely in their accounts of this stunning rebel victory. According to Chen, the INA forces involved in the capture of Wusu amounted to no more than 3,000 poorly armed men. Against this the KMT could muster 8,000 troops 'armed with submachine guns in considerable numbers, light and heavy machine guns, some artillery . . . and a couple of light tanks'.¹⁷² Chen admits that 'According to the principles of orthodox warfare the proportions between attackers and defenders should have been reversed', but continues by explaining that 'this revolutionary war of the peoples of Sinkiang against their oppressors shattered all such accepted principles'.¹⁷³ Whiting, however, citing KMT sources, offers a more militarily orthodox explanation:

In a major battle near Wusu in early September . . . The legions of the self-proclaimed 'Eastern Turkestan Republic' . . . smashed the new Nationalist Second Army with combined air, cavalry and infantry assaults, capturing a divisional commander and several thousand prisoners.¹⁷⁴

KMT claims that the INA enjoyed air support at Wusu have never been confirmed by independent sources, but on 7 September, one day after the KMT defeat, the Chinese Foreign Office officially protested to the Soviet Ambassador over the alleged presence of Soviet aircraft among rebel forces.¹⁷⁵ Meanwhile, the rebel advance towards Urumchi continued unchecked until the INA reached the next major KMT defensive position, on the banks of the Manass River. According to Lattimore:

The fighting at Manass was so severe that the population was reduced from 40,000 to 17,000 and the physical devastation was proportionately great. By this time the Kulja insurgents were reported to have 40,000 men under arms, and were considered a grave threat to Urumchi itself. Crack troops from the command of Hu Tsung-nan, which throughout the war against Japan had been garrisoned in Northwest China to 'contain' the Chinese Communists, were sent to Sinkiang, but failed to throw back the insurgents.¹⁷⁶

As a result of the INA victory on the banks of the Manass River, there was serious panic in Urumchi. According to Graham, 'the population began to pour East, and the price of a perch on an already overcrowded lorry rocketed, and the Provincial Government began to prepare to move, probably to Hami'.¹⁷⁷ Meanwhile the fighting had spread to southern Sinkiang for the first time since 1937. In late August and early

September bands of Kazakh horsemen owing allegiance to the ETR had crossed the Muzart Pass from the Tekes Valley to seize the towns of Aksu and Bai.¹⁷⁸ Almost simultaneously groups of predominantly Kirghiz rebels appeared in the Sarikol region, driving the Nationalist garrison from Tashkurgan and advancing to threaten Kashgar.¹⁷⁹ Sinkiang was clearly slipping from KMT control at an increasing speed, and by the autumn of 1945 the situation must have appeared as bleak to the government of Wu Chung-hsin in Urumchi as it appeared promising to the rebel leadership in Kulja.

It was at this point, however, that Chungking and Moscow intervened once again decisively to influence the course of events in Sinkiang. Faced with the near-certainty of military defeat before Urumchi, Chiang Kai-shek determined to negotiate with the leadership of the self-styled 'East Turkestan Republic'. Accordingly, following the KMT débâcle before Wusu, the Chungking government despatched General Chang Chih-chung, Commander of the KMT's North-Western Headquarters at Lanchow, to assist the incompetent Wu Chung-hsin at Urumchi.¹⁸⁰ It is apparent that the KMT laid the blame for the unparalleled advances of the INA squarely upon the Soviet Union – and with some justification, for, on 13 September, General Chang went directly to the Soviet Consulate-General in Urumchi where he informed the Russians that 'Unless a cease-fire were effected immediately, China would make an international affair of the matter.'¹⁸¹ On 14 September a Soviet consular official is reported to have left Urumchi for rebel lines; only twenty-four hours later Moscow was able to transmit to Chungking an ETR request that the dispute should be mediated, accompanied by an expression of Soviet willingness 'to act in such a mediatory capacity'.¹⁸² This development, which must surely provide yet another positive indication of Soviet links with the Ili rebels, was to lead to an almost immediate ceasefire between the INA and the Nationalist forces, and subsequently to an armistice by which the province of Sinkiang was effectively partitioned into KMT- and ETR-controlled zones.

The Soviet Union and the KMT-ETR Armistice of 1946

Chang Chih-chung, the senior Nationalist Commander despatched by Chiang Kai-shek to negotiate with the Ili rebels in September 1945 was a man of markedly different stamp from the Provincial Governor Wu Chung-hsin. Born in Anhwei in 1891, reportedly the son of a poor family, Chang began his association with the military in 1911, when he joined a student corps dedicated to the overthrow of the Ch'ing Dynasty. Subsequently he attended the Paoting Military Academy, graduating in 1917, before travelling to Kwangtung where he gained a commission in the

Nationalist forces surrounding Sun Yat-sen. Chang remained associated with the KMT after Sun's death, and participated in the Northern Expedition as Chief-of-Staff of the Nationalist 1st Army's 2nd Division. His career continued to prosper and, following visits to Europe, the United States and Japan in 1927, Chang became Dean of the Central Military Academy in 1929. During the following eight years he saw active service against both the Japanese and the CCP before, in November 1937, being appointed Governor of Hunan. In 1938, following the burning of the provincial capital of Changsha, Chang lost this post, being 'demoted but retained in office'.¹⁸³ Despite this (temporary) setback to his career, however, in 1939 Chang travelled to Chungking where, as a result of his wartime services,¹⁸⁴ he was to become one of Chiang Kai-shek's most trusted lieutenants.

By 1945, therefore, when he was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the KMT's North-Western Headquarters at Lanchow, Chang Chih-chung was a tried and trusted military figure of impeccable Nationalist credentials. Yet he was also a man of known political integrity who had a predilection for compromise and was not associated with any of the various pressure groups (such as the 'CC Clique' and the 'Political Science Group') operating within the KMT.¹⁸⁵ These qualities clearly made Chang an acceptable figure to opponents of the KMT, and, when in 1945 differences between the KMT and the CCP came into the open, it was Chang Chih-chung that Chiang Kai-shek sent to Yenan as his personal representative in discussions with the CCP Politburo. Following this mission, as a result of which, in August 1945, Mao Tse-tung was persuaded to travel to Chungking for talks, Chiang Kai-shek ordered Chang Chih-chung to Urumchi in the hope that his chief negotiator might also succeed in bringing the Ili rebels to the conference table. Chang was either accompanied, or closely followed, by three leading Uighur opponents of Sheng Shih-ts'ai who had fled Sinkiang and had been living for a number of years in China proper, where they had become closely associated with the KMT. These Uighur nationalists, who shared none of the Ili group's sympathies towards the Soviet Union, were Mas'ud Sabri, 'Isa Yusuf Alptekin, and the former 'Khotan Amîr' Muhammad Amîn Bughra.¹⁸⁶ Another Uighur of markedly anti-Soviet views who re-entered Sinkiang with KMT approval at about this time was Yulbars Khan, the former Chief Counsellor of Khan Maqṣûd Shâh of Kumul and erstwhile political associate of Khoja Niyâs Hâjjî.¹⁸⁷

Following the delivery of Chang Chih-chung's ultimatum to the Soviet Consulate-General in Urumchi on 13 September 1945, a preliminary meeting between the Ili rebels and the provincial authorities was arranged at Urumchi for mid-October. According to Turrall, on 12 October three senior representatives of the ETR (the Uighurs Ahmad-

jān Qāsim and Rahīmjān Şabīr Khoja, and the Kazakh 'Abd al-Hayir Türe, all of whom were closely associated with the pro-Soviet 'progressive' faction within the Ili group) arrived at the Chinese lines some six miles to the east of Manass, where they were met and escorted to Urumchi.¹⁸⁸ Negotiations, which began on 14 October and took place under Soviet mediation, progressed well. The Kulja delegates professed themselves willing to renounce their separatist goals and to drop the secessionary designation 'East Turkestan Republic', provided that Chungking would agree to grant autonomous self-government to the whole of Sinkiang. Chang Chih-chung indicated Chungking's preparedness to allow the rebel area to maintain its armed forces as a local 'Peace Preservation Corps', but insisted that the KMT retain overall military command and exclusive authority over diplomatic relations.¹⁸⁹ Despite the tone of compromise set at this initial meeting, however, negotiations were to extend over several months, with both the Ili delegates and Chang Chih-chung breaking off talks at regular intervals in order to return to their respective capitals for consultations.¹⁹⁰ These prolonged talks are reported to have centred on two main issues: (1) the ethnic and political composition of a new Sinkiang government which would give due representation to the non-Han peoples of the province, and (2) the future form of military organisation for the province.¹⁹¹ The main treaty, guaranteeing full freedom of religion, publication, assembly and speech, was signed on 2 January 1946. Under this treaty it was agreed that district officials (formerly appointed directly by the provincial government) would in future be elected by universal adult suffrage; that Uighur and Kazakh should, besides Chinese, become official languages; that non-Han nationalities should have the right to use their own languages in primary schools with Chinese becoming a compulsory language only at middle-school level; that taxation should be calculated according to 'the real productive power of the people' and 'their ability to pay'; and that the 'free development of racial cultures and arts' should be guaranteed.¹⁹²

An annex attached to this treaty and signed at the same time provided for the reorganisation of the Provincial Commission which was to be expanded to 25 members, 10 of whom (including the Chairman) were to be directly appointed by Chungking, whilst the remaining 15 (including the Vice-Chairman) were to be recommended by locally elected representative bodies and their appointments subsequently confirmed by the central government. Of these 15 locally recommended members, the Ili group was explicitly granted the right to choose 6 commissioners of senior rank, including the Vice-Chairman, the Deputy Secretary-General, the Commissioner of Education (or Reconstruction), and the Assistant Commissioner of Civil Affairs (or Finance).¹⁹³ A second annex to the main agreement, dealing with the military reorganisation of the

province, proved far more troublesome than the first and was not signed until 6 June 1946. By this second annex it was agreed that the 'Ili National Army' should be reorganised into three cavalry and three infantry regiments with a total strength not exceeding 12,000 men. One infantry and two cavalry regiments were to be enlisted in the National Army (and thereby to receive military equipment and other supplies from the Nationalist authorities), whilst the other units were to be incorporated into the provincial Peace Preservation Corps. All six regiments were to remain in exclusive control of the (former) rebel zone, under their own military commanders, though they would (in theory) be answerable to a chain of command originating from Chang Chih-chung's own North-Western Headquarters at Lanchow. Moreover, in a further striking concession by the KMT, all police units within the (former) rebel zone were to be locally staffed and directed.¹⁹⁴

As a result of the signing of this second annex, the overall peace agreement was ratified on 6 June 1946, to come into effect on 1 July of the same year. From that day, at least in theory, the 'Three Regions' of Ili, Chuguchak and Shara Sume would be reincorporated within the Chinese province of Sinkiang, and the secessionist 'East Turkestan Republic' would cease to exist.

As has already been indicated, the signing of the KMT-ETR Armistice of 1946 through the 'good offices' of the Russian Consul-General at Urumchi provides a clear indication of the high degree of political control exercised by the Soviet Union over the Kulja regime. Yet in providing an answer to this long-debated point, the KMT-ETR ceasefire raises a series of further, inter-related questions, which also require clarification. Why, for example, did the Soviet Union halt its surrogate divisions so shortly before their final advance on Urumchi? Why did the predominantly Muslim rebel forces concur with such apparent readiness in this decision? And why had the Kuomintang not made an 'international affair' of the Sinkiang conflict at a much earlier stage, as soon as Soviet involvement had become apparent?

O. Edmund Clubb, the contemporaneous US Consul in Urumchi, equates Chang Chih-chung's talk of 'internationalising' the KMT-ETR struggle with a barely implicit threat to involve the United States, then (as now) the KMT's chief military ally, in an area which the Kremlin had long considered a predominantly Soviet sphere of influence.¹⁹⁵ No doubt there is some substance to this claim, but it is hardly likely to have played a decisive role in Soviet strategic thinking. Rather, it seems probable that, following the fall of Wusu to the ETR and the advance of the 'Ili National Army' to the banks of the Manass River, the Soviet Union had attained its primary aims in Sinkiang and had no good reason for encouraging further INA advances on Urumchi. By extending its 'all-out

support' to the Ili rebels (and, more discreetly, to 'Uthmān Bātūr's Altai Kazakhs), the Kremlin had effectively re-established its primacy in the traditionally Soviet-influenced border districts of Ili, Chuguchak and Shara Sume. Moreover, in assisting the INA in its advance to Manass, the Soviets had ensured that the important oil-producing region of Tu-shan-tzu passed under rebel control.¹⁹⁶ Nor was oil the sole economic attraction of the ETR-controlled 'Three Regions'. As has already been shown, the region of western Zungharia near the Soviet frontier is rich in tungsten, copper, wolfram and – of singular strategic significance following the explosion of the atom bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 – uranium.¹⁹⁷ Following Sheng Shih-ts'ai's break with the Kremlin in 1942, the Soviet Union had been rigorously excluded from north-western Sinkiang. Shortly after the establishment of the ETR in January 1945, however, Soviet technicians crossed back into the 'Three Regions' and began once again to exploit these resources, along with the gold of the Altai and the considerable livestock resources of the area as a whole.¹⁹⁸

In addition to these economic and strategic advantages, indirect control of the 'Three Regions' of Ili, Chuguchak and Shara Sume through the agency of its ETR clients provided the Soviet Union with an important political card which could be played both in the international theatre (at a time of Soviet expansion in the Far East closely associated with the Yalta Conference and the entry of Soviet forces into the Pacific War),¹⁹⁹ and on the regional stage, where Stalin remained uncertain as to the eventual outcome of the Nationalist–Communist power struggle in China and therefore as to which side to back.²⁰⁰ In retrospect, it seems probable that, so long as Soviet influence remained limited to the north-western third of Sinkiang, the KMT was prepared to treat the issue as a purely local problem in the hope that the Soviet Union would impose a restraining influence on the CCP as an appropriate *quid pro quo*.²⁰¹ In the final extremity, moreover, it was even possible that the Kremlin might be 'bought off' with a direct transfer of the 'Three Regions' to Soviet authority, either as an MPR-style satellite, or as a sixth Soviet Central Asian Republic, or to be directly absorbed within the RSFSR in the manner of the neighbouring 'Tuvian People's Republic' which lost the last vestiges of its autonomy in 1944.²⁰²

An important indication of the fact that the Soviet Union was indeed prepared to use its hold over the 'Three Regions' of north-western Sinkiang as a bargaining card in its wider dealings with the KMT may be found in the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance (signed in Moscow on 14 August 1945 on the very day that Soviet-sponsored negotiations between Chang Chih-chung and the ETR rebels were to begin in far-off Urumchi), as a result of which the Soviet Union regained,

at a very low cost, many of the privileges once enjoyed by Tsarist Russia in China's three north-eastern provinces.²⁰³ The precise role played by the KMT–ETR conflict in Sinkiang during the discussions surrounding the ratification of this treaty remains unclear, but a passage of the final agreement reaffirming Moscow's recognition of China's sovereignty over Manchuria continues: 'As for the recent developments in Sinkiang, the Soviet government confirms that . . . it has no intention of interfering in the internal affairs of China.'²⁰⁴

In this context, the halting of the INA on the banks of the Manass River in September 1945 may be seen as a compromise between the USSR and the KMT; a break in hostilities which was acceptable to both sides pending the outcome of developments elsewhere in China, most notably in Manchuria (which had been overrun by troops of the Red Army Far Eastern Command during the short-lived Russo-Japanese War of August–September, 1945), and in Chungking, which was the setting for important negotiations between the KMT and the CCP during September and October of the same year.²⁰⁵

One further reason for Soviet–ETR compromise at the banks of the Manass River may be found in the changing ethnic and political make-up of the territories overrun by the INA. Specifically, the further that rebel forces pushed from Ili, the weaker Soviet control became over the movement. Whilst within Kulja the authority of 'progressive', pro-Soviet elements was paramount, beyond the narrow confines of the Ili Valley anti-Soviet sentiment was rife amongst the independent Kazakhs of the Altai region, and still more so amongst the traditionally conservative Muslim population of the Tarim Basin. This must also have been an important factor in the willingness of the 'progressive' STPNLC rebels (who, through no coincidence, controlled both the main body of the INA and completely dominated the three-man ETR delegation to the Urumchi talks)²⁰⁶ to acquiesce in the Soviet-sponsored ceasefire with the KMT. That other leading Muslim rebels not associated with the 'progressive' faction within the ETR disagreed with the ceasefire was shortly to become apparent, however.

7 *Sinkiang, 1946–9: the Muslims on the eve of the Communist takeover*

This 'Revolution of the Three Regions' was a constructive part of the Chinese Revolution.

*Mao Tse-tung*¹

Even while they were singing the comradely strains of 'The International', the Russian and Chinese Communists looked at each other with shining eyes, but suspicious hearts.

*Sheng Shih-ts'ai*²

The establishment of 'coalition government' and Muslim factionalism in Shara Sume and the south

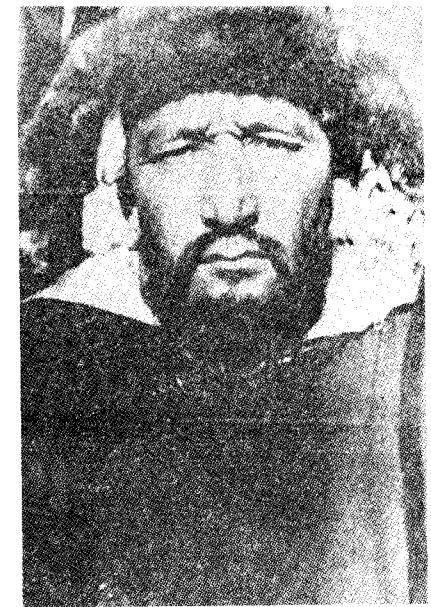
On 1 July 1946 Chang Chih-chung addressed the people of Sinkiang, by radio, from Urumchi. In his speech he announced the peaceful settlement of the Ili dispute, thanked China's 'great and friendly neighbour, the Soviet Union' for acting as mediator, and urged all the peoples of Sinkiang 'to work unitedly for peace'.³ On the same day a new Sinkiang coalition government came into being, with Chang Chih-chung as Provincial Chairman,⁴ and Ahmadijan Qasim as Provincial Vice-Chairman. Other ('ex-') ETR appointees to the coalition government were 'Abd al-Karim Abbâs as Deputy Secretary-General, Rahîmjân Sâbir Khoja as Assistant Commissioner of Civil Affairs and Saif al-Dîn 'Azîz as Commissioner of Education.⁵ All rebel appointees to the coalition were thus closely associated with the 'progressive' STPNLC faction within the rebel alliance, whilst 'bourgeois nationalist' elements such as 'Ali Khan Türe and 'Uthmân Bâtûr were excluded. Other non-Han members of the coalition included the Tatar Burhân Shahîdî (Second Vice-Chairman); the Uighurs Muhammad Amin Bughra (Commissioner for Reconstruction) and İsa Yûsuf Alptekin;⁶ the Kazakhs Jânîm Khan (Commissioner of Finance) and Sâlis (Second Deputy Secretary-General); and the Tungan Wang Tseng-shan (Commissioner of Civil Affairs).⁷ The 'returned' Uighur Ma'sûd Sabri, a politician who enjoyed close links with the KMT, was given the post of Supervisory Commissioner for Sinkiang with direct responsibility to the Nationalist authorities at Nanking).⁸

Despite these apparently promising concessions by the KMT, the Sinkiang political scene was to experience few changes of substance as a result of the formation of the coalition government of 1946. Within the 'Three Regions' authority continued to be wielded by the pro-Soviet STPNLC, whilst in the remaining seven regions of the province real

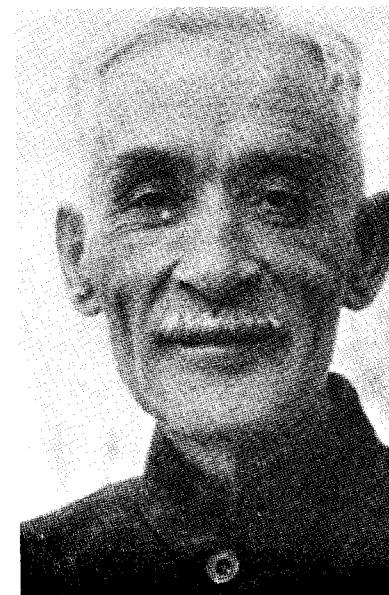
Sinkiang, 1946–9



26. Ahmadijan Qasim



27. 'Uthmân Bâtûr



28. Ma'sûd Sabri



29. Wu Chung-hsin



30. Chang Chih-chung



31. Isā Yūsuf Alptekin (Istanbul c. 1970)



32. Burhān Shahīdī



33. Saif al-Dīn 'Azīz

power remained concentrated in the hands of Han Chinese appointees of the Nanking government, including specifically Chang Chih-chung; his Secretary-General, Liu Meng-hsun; the Social Welfare Commissioner, Chao Chien-feng; the Vice-Commissioner of Reconstruction, Ku Chien-chi; and General Sung Hsi-lien, Commander of the 100,000-strong Sinkiang garrison forces.⁹ Of this group only Chang Chih-chung seems to have been committed to genuine reform; the remainder of his Han colleagues (except Sung), as well as the Tungan Wang Tseng-shan and the Uighur Mas'ud Ṣabri, were all active members of the 'CC Clique', and as such intractably opposed to co-operation with the Ili rebels.¹⁰

Following the formation of this ill-matched and disparate coalition, during the latter half of 1946 Chang Chih-chung introduced a series of reforms designed to reduce communal tensions within the province and to reconcile the predominantly Muslim population to continuing Chinese rule. Even before the formal establishment of the coalition, Chang had given his approval for the release of all political prisoners, the remission of all taxes for a period of six months, and the abolition of the government-controlled Sinkiang Provincial Trading Corporation (set up by Sheng Shih-ts'ai), which had enjoyed a monopoly of all foreign and domestic trade.¹¹ Shortly after the establishment of the coalition, Chang followed up these reforms by passing a series of laws under which provincial officials were forbidden to engage in trade (whilst the right of free foreign and domestic trade was restored to the population in general); private banks were encouraged to increase investment and production; state requisitions in kind were strictly limited; taxes in arrears were cancelled; and a reduction of taxes was promised for 1947.¹² Chang gave proof of his determination to combat official corruption by seizing some 25,000 Chinese ounces of opium (formerly the property of the Sinkiang Provincial Trading Corporation) and having it burned in front of his Urumchi headquarters.¹³ In a move designed to placate Muslim fundamentalist sections of the population, marriages between Muslims and non-Muslims were prohibited,¹⁴ whilst in an apparent gesture of good-will towards the Chinese communists, more than a hundred CCP members imprisoned in Sinkiang since Sheng Shih-ts'ai's break with the Soviet Union were released from jail and sent back to Yenan by a special convoy of lorries.¹⁵

Chang also sought to reach a genuine understanding with the Ili leadership, subsequently declaring (in terms surely never before employed by a Han Chinese official in Sinkiang):

The I-ning (Kulja) Incident, which was said to be a revolutionary movement, featured slogans calling for an anti-Han campaign, the overthrow of despotism and the independence of Eastern Turkistan. From the stand-point of revolution, it cannot be said that it was absolutely wrong. Recently, at a press conference for

Chinese and foreign journalists in Nanking, I said that our former policy in Sinkiang had been unreasonable. We Chinese comprise only 5 per cent of the population of Sinkiang. Why have we not turned over political power to the Uighurs and other racial groups who constitute the other 95 per cent? In many respects, the policies adopted by the Sinkiang government in the past were entirely wrong – no different, in fact, than the policies of imperialist nations towards their colonies. These mistakes we must correct, and we must remove and atone for the many evils and bloodstains left behind by ex-Governor Sheng Shih-ts'ai.¹⁶

As might be expected, these unexpectedly conciliatory gestures found absolutely no sympathy amongst Chang's more orthodox KMT colleagues. Within Sinkiang, the 'asset-stripping' operation by which KMT officialdom survived and profited was dependent upon the corruption which Chang sought to stamp out, whilst in Nanking KMT headquarters can hardly have been overjoyed to receive Chang's request for an annual subsidy of 165,000,000 Chinese dollars to pay for tax reductions in Sinkiang.¹⁷ Thus the appointment of the conciliatory and morally upright Chang Chih-chung was clearly a temporary device, intended both to secure a breathing space for the KMT leadership during its struggle with the CCP in China proper, and to limit the growth of Soviet influence in Sinkiang pending the full restoration of Chinese authority over the area.

Meanwhile, within the 'Three Regions' a serious split was emerging between pro-Soviet and anti-Soviet Muslim rebels. Indications of this development had become apparent as soon as the Soviet Union brought pressure to bear on the rebel leadership in a successful bid to halt the INA on the banks of the Manass River. The nominal President of the ETR, the Uzbek 'Ali Khan Türe, was strongly opposed to compromise with the provincial authorities, and is reported to have wept at the conclusion of the initial peace agreement.¹⁸ He subsequently declined all offers of posts in the new provincial coalition and, according to Graham, 'disappeared none knows whither'.¹⁹ According to anti-Soviet Kazakh sources, however:

On August 16th [1946], four Soviet officers from the border town of Khorgos came across the frontier and paid a polite call on 'Ali Khan Türe at his home in Kulja. At the end of their visit, they cordially invited him to lunch with them at Khorgos. 'Ali Khan Türe accepted and drove off with the officers in their car. He never returned.²⁰

Following this development, political power within the Ili region passed entirely into the hands of the STPNLC and (despite the retention of Hākim Beg Khoja as 'Ali Khan's successor)²¹ Soviet influence within the valley became still more marked. When Graham visited the region during the autumn of 1946, he found 'no outward signs of returning Chinese

control in Kulja itself or along the road'.²² All official notices within Ili were in Turkic and Russian, but never in Chinese;²³ all trade was with the Soviet Union, and all movable property belonging to murdered or refugee Han Chinese had been confiscated and exported to the USSR to pay for arms and other assistance;²⁴ whilst Soviet doctors and nurses administered the local hospital where injured INA soldiers were taken for treatment.²⁵ Moreover, Soviet technicians continued to supervise illegal mining operations on Chinese territory without Chinese permission, and Soviet consular officials in Kulja (as well as in Chuguchak and Shara Sume) were issuing Soviet nationality papers to residents of the 'Three Regions' (particularly to 'White' Russians) at a prodigious rate.²⁶ On the other hand, during the short-lived period of the Sinkiang coalition government, no substantial steps towards land reform or the redistribution of wealth seem to have been undertaken in the Ili region. Chinese forms of regional administration (including the *chou* and the *hsien*) were retained, and no anti-religious campaigns were mounted.²⁷

By the autumn of 1946, therefore, Sinkiang had effectively been partitioned into KMT-controlled and Soviet-controlled zones, whilst within Ili those rebel leaders who sought to oppose both Chinese and Russian hegemony had been ousted from power. Yet, despite the speed with which the Soviet Union and its STPNLC allies had moved to eliminate 'Ali Khan Türe following the KMT-ETR Armistice, it was soon to become apparent that the subordination of rebel interests to Soviet control was unacceptable both to many Kazakhs of the 'Three Regions', and to the 'Turkish-Islamic' separatist guerillas operating in the south-west of the province, in the vicinity of Kashgar.

Kazakh opposition to tightening of Soviet control over the 'Three Regions' of Ili, Chuguchak and Shara Sume was initially manifested after the signing of the initial KMT-ETR Armistice, but before the related 'disappearance' of 'Ali Khan Türe, when two influential Kazakh leaders from the Chuguchak and Shara Sume regions – namely 'Uthmān Bātūr and 'Ali Beg Rahīm – broke away from the Kulja regime and, together with their followers, took to the mountains.²⁸ Doubtless this development can partly be explained as a manifestation of the traditional antipathy felt by Sinkiang Kazakhs towards centralised authority, as well as by a desire on the part of at least 'Uthmān Bātūr's seasoned, semi-bandit forces to go on fighting even after the KMT-ETR Armistice had been signed.²⁹ It is noteworthy, however, that despite the defection of 'Uthmān Bātūr in the Altai and 'Ali Beg Rahīm in the eastern T'ien Shan most Kazakhs within the Ili Valley seem either to have remained loyal to the Kulja regime, or to have maintained a sympathetic neutrality. In part this may be explained by the proximity of Ili to the Soviet Union, and by the pervading influence of the pro-Soviet STPNLC within the valley. A

more important factor, however, seems to have lain in the traditional tribal and social distinctions dividing the Kazakhs of Zungharia from their brethren in the Ili Valley.

Within Sinkiang the Kazakh people may be divided into two main tribal groups, the Naiman and the Kirei. According to Barnett, on the eve of the CCP seizure of power the Naiman were divided into nine further sub-tribes, concentrated chiefly in Ili, whilst the Kirei were divided into twelve further sub-tribes, concentrated chiefly in Shara Sume, but also in the eastern T'ien Shan and at Gez Köl on the Kansu-Tsinghai-Sinkiang frontier.³⁰ Whilst the Naiman Kazakhs of Ili had belonged to the Elder Horde (Tk. *Ulu Jüz*) centred on Lake Balkash, which was severely disrupted by the Zunghars in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries and which subsequently came under considerable Russian influence,³¹ the Kirei Kazakhs of Shara Sume had belonged to the Middle Horde (Tk. *Orta Jüz*) located in the central steppe region, and had escaped strong Russian influence prior to their eastwards movement into Zungharia following the Ch'ing destruction of the Oirot Zunghar Empire in 1757.³² Within Ili (and to a lesser extent Chuguchak), the Naiman were exposed to prolonged commercial and cultural contact with Tsarist Russia during the nineteenth century, whilst the Kirei Kazakhs, isolated in the Ch'ing backwater of Altai, avoided contact with the Russians to a far greater degree.³³ Finally, it was to Ili (and to a lesser extent to Chuguchak) that most Kazakh refugees from the Soviet Union fled during the years of the Civil War and the subsequent *qatl-i 'āmm* (general massacre) associated with Stalin's collectivisation of the steppe.³⁴ Located in the south and west of the 'Three Regions', they remained exposed to considerable Soviet influence under the administrations of Yang Tseng-hsin and Chin Shu-jen, and particularly during the 'progressive' years of Sheng Shih-ts'ai. Though the experiences of the Naiman Kazakhs at the hands of the Russians can hardly have endeared them towards the Soviet Union, constant exposure to successive generations of Russian (and subsequently Soviet) influence had, to a considerable extent, broken down their traditional social structure so that, by the time of the establishment of the ETR, the Kazakhs of the Ili region had no Khans at all.³⁵

In marked contrast, the isolated and culturally traditionalist Kazakhs of Shara Sume and the eastern T'ien Shan were still governed by a complex system of chiefs and Khans (often of aristocratic, or 'white bone' status, whilst commoners were classified as 'black bone'),³⁶ amongst whom may be numbered such leaders as 'Uthmān Bātūr and 'Ali Beg Rahīm'.³⁷ By the mid-twentieth century, moreover, regional distinctions between Kirei and Naiman Kazakh within Sinkiang had become less

marked. Thus those Sinkiang Kazakhs who were attracted by the material advances made in Soviet Kazakhstan tended to gravitate towards Ili, regardless of tribal affiliation, whilst more traditionally minded or anti-Soviet Kazakhs tended to move towards the Altai in a bid to avoid Soviet influence.³⁸ By the mid-1940s this mutually opposed flow of Kazakhs (which included, in particular, members of the small Kazakh upper classes and intelligentsia), had resulted in the emergence of a pro-Soviet elite in Ili, whilst 'traditional Kazakh social ideals found their last refuge . . . in eastern and northern Zungharia'.³⁹

Following the initial signing of the KMT-ETR Armistice in January 1946, this split came into the open, with 'Uthmān Bātūr and his allies in Shara Sume breaking away from the Kulja regime, whilst Ili Kazakh leaders such as 'Abd al-Hayir Türe and Dālīl Khān continued to support its pro-Soviet orientation.⁴⁰ According to Barnett, 'Uthmān broke with the Ili leadership on 1 April 1946, ostensibly because they were Soviet-dominated but in reality because 'they tried to bring him under control and to ensure his obedience to their orders'.⁴¹ 'Uthmān immediately withdrew to the remote Pei-ta-shan range on the Sinkiang-MPR frontier (in the region of his old Tayingkul power base), where he began to organise resistance to the Ili regime whilst entering into secret negotiations with the KMT in Urumchi. He was subsequently joined in this struggle by 'Ali Beg Rahīm in the eastern T'ien Shan, who had formerly been the magistrate of Shawan, near Manass.⁴² Meanwhile the administration of Shara Sume, which remained under the control of the Kulja regime, seems to have passed to the Naiman Kazakh leader Dalil Khan.⁴³ Both Soviet and pro-Soviet sources tend to make light of 'Uthmān's defection,⁴⁴ but in reality the loss of the charismatic Kirei Kazakh Chieftain proved a grievous blow to the Ili authorities. To be sure, there was no place for independent, elitist, semi-bandit leaders such as 'Uthmān in the Soviet-orientated 'popular democracy' emerging within the 'Three Regions', yet 'Uthmān's defection signalled the start of large-scale desertions amongst the Kazakh cavalry which had provided the backbone of the INA during its initial victories in the 'Three Regions' and subsequent advance on Urumchi.⁴⁵ Precise figures are not available, but 'Uthmān's personal followers are reported to have numbered 4,000 yurts and 15,000 Kazakhs,⁴⁶ whilst in November 1946 a further 10,000 Kazakhs who refused to fight against 'Uthmān are reported to have fled from Ili to KMT-dominated territory, reducing the overall percentage of Kazakh troops serving with the rebel forces to no more than 30 per cent (whilst Kazakhs make up more than 60 per cent of the total population of the 'Three Regions').⁴⁷ By any standards, therefore, the defection of 'Uthmān Bātūr, which may be interpreted as an

indication both of Kirei-Naiman differences and of a wider Kazakh-Uighur disjunction of interest,⁴⁸ must be seen as a serious setback to the Kulja regime.

Meanwhile, in south-western Sinkiang, a second area of Muslim factionalism had emerged in the Kashgar region following the establishment of the KMT-ETR Armistice. Here, it will be recalled, a revolt similar in character to, though of smaller dimensions than the Ili rising, had broken out in August 1945.⁴⁹ Within a short time the rebel forces, who were predominantly Kirghiz, succeeded in capturing Tashkurgan and in seizing the entire Sarikol region before advancing to threaten Kashgar.

The origins and nature of this new south-western revolt have long remained uncertain. According to KMT sources, the rising in Sarikol was directly inspired by the ETR and its Soviet backers, and indeed Chang Ta-chün claims the existence of a direct administrative link between the rebel capital at Kulja and 'So-che *chou*, P'u-li *hsien*' (Yarkand Region, Tashkurgan County), whilst identifying the ETR administrative head of this area as one 'K'a-la-wan' (? Qalāwūn).⁵⁰ Yet the areas controlled by the two rebel groups were never contiguous, and regular communication between Ili and Sarikol can only have been possible with direct Soviet connivance. Certainly HMCGK Etherington Smith believed it 'well established' that the southern revolt had been 'engineered and organised by a group which came over the border from the Soviet Union'.⁵¹ and the Soviet historian Kotov refers sympathetically to an 'armed uprising of the working masses of Tashkurgan'.⁵² Yet both the timing of the revolt (which occurred shortly before the initial KMT-ETR ceasefire, and therefore at a time when the Soviet Union had all but achieved its primary objectives within Sinkiang), and its subsequent course, suggest that the Sarikol rising was, in fact, a spontaneous and purely local affair over which the ETR and its Soviet backers promptly but unsuccessfully attempted to assert control. It is at least clear that, by mid-1945, conditions in southern Sinkiang had deteriorated to a point where, independent of any external factors, a new Muslim rising had become a distinct possibility.⁵³

Little information is available regarding the sequence of events surrounding the revolt in the south, but, according to McLean, in mid-August 1945 'rebel bands poured through the passes leading from the Soviet Union to the Pamirs and drove out the Chinese garrison' before advancing on Kashgar and Yarkand.⁵⁴ Similarly Barnett, who travelled extensively in the region, was informed 'by a foreigner that lives in southwest Sinkiang' that 'It was more of an invasion than a revolt . . . the fighting was done almost entirely by troops from the Soviet Republics across the border, and . . . these troops actually antagonised the Tajiks

and Kirghiz in south-western Sinkiang by destroying their crops and flocks'.⁵⁵ Yet the fighting in the south was to continue for more than a year after the KMT-ETR ceasefire of September 1945 by which the INA was halted in its advance on Urumchi, and indeed the Kulja leadership was to disclaim all responsibility for the Sarikoli rebels whom they denounced as 'bandits'.⁵⁶ Thus, in January 1946, even as the initial KMT-ETR Armistice was being signed in Urumchi, the south-western rebels diverted the main thrust of their attack from Kashgar to Yarkand, which they succeeded in investing following the capture of the lesser oases of Posgam and Karghalik.⁵⁷ This advance was subsequently beaten back by KMT garrison troops (a development which, in itself, casts some doubt on claims of direct Soviet involvement), but Muslim rebels continued to control most of the countryside between Khotan and the Soviet frontier until the autumn of 1946 when, following the establishment of the Sinkiang coalition government under Chang Chih-chung, Chinese troops 'cleared the rebel forces from the region of the Pamirs and reopened the routes to India'.⁵⁸

The political identity of the south-western Muslim rebels of 1945-6 has long remained uncertain. British diplomatic sources are contradictory, indicating, on balance, a belief that the Soviet Union was behind the rising.⁵⁹ Yet in a report dated October 1946 (shortly after the reassertion of Chinese authority), HMCGK Etherington Smith informed his superiors that:

The rebels took particular care not to interfere with the native population and made efforts to win their favour by such measures as the distribution of food captured from the Chinese. They also conducted a vigorous propaganda campaign based on (1) a racial appeal for the overthrow of alien rule and the expulsion of the Chinese, and (2) the promise of a return to a traditional Moslem culture and way of life.⁶⁰

Etherington Smith continues by noting that 'this policy was not without effect', and elsewhere states that:

In the south . . . not only are most people indifferent to the Soviet Union, but a considerable section of the population – partly on account of the oppression which they suffered under Sheng Shih-ts'ai, but chiefly for religious reasons – are actively hostile to it; (an interesting illustration of this antipathy is the fact that the word 'communist' is frequently used as a term of opprobrium by the natives).⁶¹

In sum, therefore, it seems probable that KMT misrule in southern Sinkiang led to a spontaneous and purely local rising in the Kashgar region during August 1945. Following the established pattern of Muslim revolts in that region, the rising was 'Turkish-Islamic' in character, being not only anti-Chinese but also anti-Soviet. At this stage the Soviet Union intervened to take control of the rebellion by sending pro-Soviet Kirghiz

(and possibly Tajiks) across the frontier in an action reminiscent of the 'Törtünji' raids of 1933–4. That this move was at least partially successful may be inferred from the southward movement of the main centre of rebel activity, early in 1946, from an area contiguous with the Soviet border to the 'Turkish-Islamic' secessionist region (formerly the domain of the Khotan *Amirs*) between Khotan and Yarkand, as well as by the emergence of an (almost certainly) pro-Soviet organisation known as the 'Partisans of the Red Tents' in the Tashkurgan area.⁶² Little is known of the political objectives of the rebels, but claims that they envisaged the establishment of an authoritarian 'Turkish-Islamic' state would seem to confirm their anti-Soviet identity.⁶³

The administration of Mas'ud Şabri and the 'Pei-ta-shan Incident'

As has been shown, following the advance of the Soviet-backed INA to the banks of the Manass River in September 1945, the KMT, fearing the fall of Urumchi and a consequent extension of Soviet influence over Sinkiang in the north-west paralleling the Red Army's take-over of 'Manchuria' in the north-east, determined to seek a temporary accommodation with the rebel forces. This was acceptable to the Soviet Union, which had attained its primary security and economic goals within Sinkiang, and which needed time to secure its vast post-war gains in territory (extending from Finland and Romania to Japan), pending some indication as to the likely outcome of the KMT-CCP struggle within China proper. In effect, Moscow had to determine whether it was better to lean towards an avowedly anti-communist but politically pragmatic KMT, or to throw its full support behind an increasingly intransigent CCP which the Kremlin had long suspected of heterodoxy and recognised as a possible future rival for supremacy in the world communist movement. There can be little doubt that the political scenario which best suited Moscow in this dilemma was a continuing impasse, as whichever side was to emerge victorious from the Chinese civil war would surely seek to re-establish the security of China's Inner Asian frontiers and to exclude Soviet influence from that region. Moreover, this analysis had not escaped the indigenous Muslim peoples of Sinkiang, who saw only too clearly that in the coming Sino-Soviet struggle, whether waged by the KMT or the CCP for the Chinese side, they would once again be caught between the hammer and the anvil.

By the spring of May 1946, events within China proper and therefore, by extension, within Sinkiang, were rapidly moving to a climax. During March and April, Malinovski's 300,000 Soviet troops withdrew from Manchuria, having failed to wring major economic concessions from Chiang Kai-shek but taking with them US\$900,000,000 in 'war booty'

looted from Chinese territory.⁶⁴ Due to a combination of KMT military inefficiency and contrasting CCP competence, during April, May and June the Chinese communists, acting with tacit Soviet approval, overran the greater part of the territories thus vacated. Within Sinkiang, these developments were to signal the implementation of a more 'robust' KMT policy both towards the Soviet Union and towards the Kremlin's 'separatist' protégés within the 'Three Regions'.

During the autumn and winter of 1946–7 the unfortunate Chang Chih-chung, bereft of power base both amongst his CC Clique-influenced KMT colleagues and amongst the various sections of the Sinkiang Muslim population, strove to please all sides but succeeded in pleasing none by consistently advocating policies of compromise and reconciliation. It is clear that Chang genuinely sought to promote a peaceful settlement to the 'Ili Problem'. Thus he toured Sinkiang (in itself a novel departure from the behaviour of former Han Chinese Governors, who preferred to remain securely in Urumchi), issuing a series of apparently contradictory statements to the effect that he would be prepared to support the independence of Sinkiang if a *genuine* independence could be achieved, but cautioning that, in his opinion, this was impossible. He therefore advocated closer links between Sinkiang and China proper, with rail links and a fully unified national currency.⁶⁵ His conciliatory attitude seems merely to have strengthened the will of much of the Muslim population to resist closer links with China, whilst it certainly infuriated the dominant CC group within the Sinkiang coalition government. In Chang Chih-chung's own words:

Because Provincial Vice-Chairman Ahmadjan and government members from I-ning (Kulja) have constituted a minority and thus could not expect to have their motions passed, I never exercised my right to put their motions to a vote. Whenever I differed with the minority, I settled the difference by negotiation or concession . . . In consequence, a false impression has been created amongst outsiders to the effect that I was too weak to prevent the I-ning group from gaining control of everything.⁶⁶

Meanwhile, within the seven regions of Sinkiang still under Nationalist control, KMT hard-liners were preparing for a second round of hostilities with the Kulja rebels which they saw as being both inevitable and desirable. To this end the CC Clique continued to expand its membership within Sinkiang, both amongst Han Chinese and other non-Han nationalities, throughout the period of Chang Chih-chung's administration.⁶⁷ Muslim factionalism also provided the KMT with a means through which to extend its control. Thus, following the Kulja regime's disclaimer of links with the Sarikoli Muslim rebels, KMT troops moved into the area and successfully re-asserted Nanking's control over Posgam, Karghalik

and Tashkurghan.⁶⁸ Similarly, in the far north of the province, the defection of the Kirei Kazakh Chieftain 'Uthmān Bātūr was followed by negotiations between 'Uthmān and Sung Hsi-lien, Commander-in-Chief of the KMT garrison forces in Sinkiang, as a result of which, on 26 August 1946, 'Uthmān's re-equipped forces were able to mount a large-scale raid against the 'Three Regions', briefly capturing Shara Sume in mid-September, only to be driven out (according to 'Uthmān) following the arrival of 160 Russian trucks bearing troops of the INA.⁶⁹ Following these developments, combined with the implementation of KMT policies in Urumchi which 'often seemed designed to delay and block realisation of joint Chinese-Turki rule rather than to implement the principles agreed upon in January and June of 1946',⁷⁰ large-scale demonstrations and riots broke out at Urumchi early in 1947. Thus, on 19 February:

A 'liberty mass meeting' held in the Uighur Club in Tihwa [Urumchi], drew up a petition to the Provincial Government. Two days later, on February 21, a Uighur demonstration of several hundred men took place in the streets of Tihwa. A second long petition was formulated, followed the next day by a third. The three petitions demanded reduction of provincial taxes by half, rapid reorganisation of the Aksu and Kashgar Peace Preservation Troops, an increase of native personnel in the administration, cessation of 'oppression' by Chinese troops and police, evacuation of the majority of Chinese troops in Sinkiang, prohibition of military purchases of supplies on the open market, and the cessation of military arrests. They also called for re-elections in areas where 'oppression' had occurred, complete judicial reorganisation, including the removal of all 'chiefs' of judicial organs, release of all political prisoners, the end of secret police activities, and organisation of a province-wide Uighur police force.⁷¹

Significantly, these petitions also demanded the dismissal of a number of incompetent or 'collaborationist' Kazakh officials (including, most prominently, Jānūm Khan, the coalition government's allegedly illiterate Commissioner of Finance, and Sālis, the Second Deputy Secretary-General), as well as the arrest and punishment of 'Uthmān Bātūr, now openly aligned with right-wing elements of the KMT.⁷² Two days later, on 24 February, similar lists of grievances and demands were presented to the coalition government by groups of Kazakhs and Tungans – two Muslim minority groups which are reported by Barnett to have been given special consideration and support by the KMT, apparently in an attempt to split the 'coalition nationalism' of the Kulja regime.⁷³ Accordingly, the effect of these latter petitions was 'to counterbalance the Uighur pressure on the government, and place the Chinese provincial authorities in a better bargaining position'.⁷⁴ These developments led to the outbreak of serious rioting in Urumchi on 25 February, during which – according to Chen – a crowd of 'tens of thousands' besieged the

government offices in the centre of the city, whilst attempts were made by *agents provocateurs* of the CC Clique to assassinate both Ahmadjan Qāsim and Burhān Shahīdī.⁷⁵ Another sign of the increasing provincial unrest during this period was the reported outbreak of communalist fighting between Torgut Mongol nomads and Uighur agriculturalists in the region of Kara Shahr.⁷⁶

By now Chang Chih-chung was clearly in some despair. On 13 May 1947 he reiterated his stance that 'if Sinkiang really can achieve independence, I shall be the first to approve, or at least to offer my support when the Central Government discusses the matter', before adding (with considerable foresight) 'On the other hand, our Sinkiang compatriots should ponder whether, if their independence were achieved, it would resemble that of Switzerland . . . or of Poland.' As for the Sinkiang coalition government of which he was head: 'Superficially the government appears to be democratic in spirit, but political discord lies in its marrow.'⁷⁷ These were not sentiments guaranteed to win the support and confidence of the CC Clique, and accordingly on 28 May 1947 it was announced by Nanking that Chang Chih-chung, whilst retaining his position as Commander of Chiang Kai-shek's North-Western Headquarters, was to be replaced by Mas'ūd Şabırı, the first non-Han Governor of Sinkiang, as Chairman of the coalition government.⁷⁸ During the subsequent governmental reorganisation, Mas'ūd's fellow Uighurs, Muhammed Amīn Bughra and İsa Yūsuf Alptekin, were similarly given increased prominence in a clear bid to win the political loyalties of the Uighur people of Sinkiang.

Mas'ūd Şabırı Baykuzu, the new Provincial Chairman, was born in Ili in 1886, the son of a wealthy merchant and landlord who was also a devout *Sunnī* Muslim. After studying at a Muslim college in Kulja, Mas'ūd was sent to Turkey in 1904. Here he studied at military school, and subsequently at the University of Istanbul, where he received his medical degree in 1914. In 1915 he returned to Sinkiang to practise medicine, also devoting much of his time to the improvement of educational facilities for the Uighurs of Sinkiang. These latter activities led him into conflict with the provincial authorities, and brought about his imprisonment by Yang Tseng-hsin in 1924. Following his release after serving a term of 10 months, Mas'ūd took pains to place his schools under the direction of conservative, orthodox Muslims in a bid to avoid further trouble with the authorities. In 1934, however, he is reported to have become involved as a 'political worker' in the forces of the Turfanlik Uighur, Mahmūd Muhiṭī Shih-chang.⁷⁹ In April 1937, following in Mahmūd Shih-chang's footsteps, Mas'ūd fled to India, subsequently returning to China by way of Tientsin. He then travelled to Nanking, where he was reportedly 'welcomed by the city's Sinkiang community [composed primarily of

anti-Soviet refugees from Sheng Shih-ts'ai's 'progressive' regime], and by representatives of the National Government'.⁸⁰ Once in Nanking, Mas'ūd Şabırı became associated with İsa Yūsuf Alptekin,⁸¹ and subsequently with the former Khotan *Amīr* Muḥammad Amīn Bughra,⁸² two prominent Uighur nationalists who co-operated in the publication of the Nanking-based news-sheet *T'ien Shan* (and subsequently, from Chungking, in the publication of the monthly journal *Altai*). Unlike Alptekin and Bughra, however, Mas'ūd became closely associated with the right-wing CC Clique and, possibly through their influence, was elected to the KMT Central Executive Committee. In 1942 he joined the Nationalist government, becoming one of only two Muslim members serving on the KMT's 36-member State Council.⁸³ Yet despite his attainment of this apparently elevated position, Mas'ūd Şabırı does not seem to have been held in any great respect by his Han Chinese KMT colleagues. Thus, when he arrived in Sinkiang during the autumn of 1945, ostensibly to take up the post of Provincial Inspector-General (a post theoretically superior to that of Provincial Chairman), HMCU Graham reported to the India Office that 'Mas'ūd does not seem to be taken, or to take himself, over seriously. There was almost no-one at the aerodrome to meet him on his arrival, and among the large crowd that welcomed General Chang, he took up a most inconspicuous position'.⁸⁴ It seems apparent that Ma'sūd was returning to Sinkiang not as a triumphant Uighur nationalist figure, but as a puppet of the KMT. Thus, according to Lattimore, 'when Masud became Chairman of Sinkiang – the first "native" ever to hold that position – he did not come to the fore as the head of a movement originating in Sinkiang, but as a "tame" Uighur who had long been the pensioner of the powerful CC Clique'.⁸⁵ Yet Mas'ūd was also associated with anti-communist sentiment in Sinkiang and, as such, anathema to the Kremlin, subsequently to be denounced as 'a double-dyed nationalist and pan-Turkist, an agent of imperialist intelligence' who had served Germany, Britain, Japan and the United States *seriatim*.⁸⁶ Moreover, in an illuminating indication of the parochial nature of Turkic nationalist politics in Sinkiang, Mas'ūd was also the uncle and father-in-law of Rahīmjān Sabır Khoja, the strongly pro-Soviet ex-ETR Assistant Commissioner of Civil Affairs in the Sinkiang coalition government.⁸⁷ Mas'ūd's appointment must therefore have been galling to the Ili group on personal, as well as purely political, grounds.

In replacing Chang Chih-chung with Mas'ūd Şabırı, therefore, the KMT was deliberately attempting to exploit the substantive political differences existing between the predominantly pro-Soviet ('Taranchi') Uighurs of the Ili Valley and their anti-Soviet, traditionalist brethren in southern Sinkiang. Doubtless it was intended that this manoeuvre should provoke a split amongst the Uighurs of southern and western Sinkiang

paralleling that which had emerged between the Kazakhs of the north and east of the province. It is clear, however, that the KMT made a serious miscalculation in choosing Mas'ūd Şabırı – a discredited and widely disliked Uighur 'collaborationist' from Ili with no real following south of the T'ien Shan – as their vehicle for winning Uighur nationalist support.⁸⁸ Had they selected a staunchly anti-Soviet Uighur from the south-west who was not too closely associated with the KMT – such as, for example, Muḥammad Amīn Bughra or İsa Yūsuf Alptekin⁸⁹ – then their efforts might possibly have met with more success (though the very nature of Muslim separatism in south-western Sinkiang made its adherents hostile to both China and the Soviet Union in almost equal measure, a fact which did not escape KMT hard-liners).⁹⁰ As it was, however, news of Mas'ūd Şabırı's appointment in late May 1947 led almost immediately to riots in Kashgar,⁹¹ whilst in a meeting of the Provincial Assembly held at Urumchi on 4 June, no fewer than 63 of the 90 members present adopted a resolution opposing Mas'ūd's appointment. Meanwhile, extensive demonstrations took place outside the building, whilst pro-Kulja groups distributed leaflets criticising Mas'ūd throughout the bazaars of the city.⁹²

One month later, on or about 7 July, simultaneous Uighur risings directed against the new Chairman broke out in Turfan, Toksun and Shanshan. These revolts were rapidly and efficiently suppressed by crack KMT forces under Sung Hsi-lien, who announced that he had captured agents of the Ili regime amongst the rebel leadership – a charge specifically rejected by Ahmадҗān Qāsim, who described the risings as 'a spontaneous result of overflowing Muslim anguish'.⁹³ It was clear, however, that the days of the 'coalition government' founded only one year before were drawing to a close. Shortly after Sung Hsi-lien's suppression of the Turfan risings, in late July 1947, a group of 27 members of the Provincial Assembly (including members for Kara Shahr, Turfan, Khotan, and Aksu, as well as from the 'Three Regions'), left Urumchi for Kulja. Within days, this group was followed by a further 22 members from the Kashgar region and finally, on 26 August 1947, by the remainder of the Ili delegates including Ahmадҗān Qāsim.⁹⁴

By the end of August 1947, therefore, the 'coalition government' had collapsed in all but name and Sinkiang was once again split into two mutually hostile zones with no direct communication possible between Urumchi and Kulja. This can scarcely have been Nanking's original aim in replacing Chang Chih-chung with Mas'ūd Şabırı, and indeed it seems likely that, far from isolating the Kulja regime or promoting discord amongst the 'Taranchi' Uighurs of the Ili Valley, the appointment of a Uighur puppet of the KMT had the effect of splitting the population of the Muslim traditionalist south-west, with the peasantry looking increasingly to Kulja, the Begs and conservative landowners looking to Urum-

chi, and the fundamentalist '*Ulamā*' undecided as to which way to turn.⁹⁵ Yet, despite this overall failure of KMT strategy, there can be no doubt that the appointment of anti-Soviet Uighur nationalists to senior posts in the Urumchi administration – coupled with the appearance of KMT-armed and supplied guerillas of Basmachi type owing allegiance to 'Uthmān Bātūr and operating along the Sinkiang-MPR frontier – touched an exposed nerve in Moscow, where the emergence of even the slightest indication of Central Asian Muslim nationalism has always been viewed with a hostility verging on the pathological.

Moscow's response, which was clearly intended to 'destabilise' the Mas'ūd Šabri administration rather than to bring about the overall collapse of KMT authority in Sinkiang, was of a limited nature and aimed directly at 'Uthmān Bātūr's Kazakh partisans in the southern Shara Sume and northern Kumul regions. Here, following his break with the Kulja regime in April 1946, 'Uthmān had set up his headquarters in the remote Baitik Bogdo, known to the Chinese as Pei-ta-shan, a small range of mountains about twenty miles long and ten miles wide, running south-east to north-west along the Sinkiang-MPR border, and rising to 10,000 feet at their highest point (see map 9). Until 1911, Pei-ta-shan had remained a little-known and politically unimportant region set well within the frontiers of Imperial China. With the collapse of the Ch'ing Dynasty and the secession of Outer Mongolia, however, Pei-ta-shan suddenly assumed new geo-political and strategic importance as an adequately watered potential military stronghold set firmly astride the undefined and disputed Sino-MPR frontier zone. Although it was stipulated by the tripartite Sino-Russian-Mongolian agreement of 1915 that the Sino-Mongolian border should be demarcated by mutual agreement, this was never in fact undertaken, and the Pei-ta-shan remained disputed territory, claimed by both China and the MPR, throughout the Chinese Republican era.⁹⁶ Seemingly, from 1911 to 1944, ownership of the Pei-ta-shan remained a purely academic question. Sinkiang was isolated from China proper under a series of military strongmen, whilst Pei-ta-shan was similarly isolated from Urumchi and Ulan Bator both by distance and by poor communications. What is more, China had never acknowledged the *de jure* independence of Outer Mongolia (nor, indeed, of Urianghai/Tannu Tuva), and therefore, from the official Chinese point of view, not only Pei-ta-shan, but also the entire territory of the MPR, lay by right within China. All this was to change as a result of the Sino-Soviet Agreement of August 1945 by which (under Soviet pressure) Chiang Kai-shek was obliged formally to acknowledge the independence of the MPR.⁹⁷ Following the signing of this treaty, Pei-ta-shan ceased to be a neglected backwater and became instead the front-line of KMT-MPR confrontation in the Sinkiang sector.

Considerable disagreement surrounds the origin and subsequent course of the Pei-ta-shan incident, though it is clear that the southward migration from Shara Sume of 'Uthmān Bātūr's Kazakhs provided the spark which led to the outbreak of open hostilities. Under both Ch'ing and Republican administrations, the pastures of the Pei-ta-shan had been shared by Kirei Kazakh and Western Mongol nomads, with the former apparently predominating in the south and west of the region, whilst the latter controlled the north and east. According to Lattimore, it was the custom of the Sinkiang Kazakhs to use the slopes of the Pei-ta-shan for summer pasture, whilst in the winter they would drive their sheep, cattle and camels down into the Zungharian lowlands 'where they were clearly within the jurisdiction of Sinkiang', leaving only their horses, which could paw down through the snow for winter fodder, in the exposed uplands. Lattimore continues:

There was a tendency on the part of the Kazakhs to move clear across the desert and up to the lower slopes of the Bogda Ula near Kuchengtze [Kitai]; but the policy of the Sinkiang authorities was to drive them back towards the Baitik Bogda [Pei-ta-shan] and to keep them out of the jurisdiction of Sinkiang, because they were regarded as cattle thieves and trouble makers. In practice, therefore, the attitude of the Sinkiang authorities was that the Baitik Bogda lay outside of Sinkiang.⁹⁸

It is apparent, however, that whilst from 1911 to 1942 the Sinkiang authorities may well have regarded Pei-ta-shan as lying beyond the pale of provincial control, this pragmatic approach can hardly have been shared by the Chinese national government, which was primarily concerned with the *de jure*, and not the *de facto*, status of the Sinkiang-Mongolian frontier. It was inevitable, therefore, that following the extension of KMT authority to Sinkiang during 1942-4, Chungking should attempt to reassert Chinese control over the strategically significant Pei-ta-shan region. Moreover, it seems probable that this drive would have gained new impetus following Chiang Kai-shek's belated recognition of MPR independence, under Soviet pressure, during August 1945.

The extension of indirect KMT control to the greater part of the Pei-ta-shan may be dated to the late spring of 1946, following 'Uthmān Bātūr's break with the Kulja regime and subsequent realignment with the Chinese authorities. Most sources agree that 'Uthmān and his followers migrated directly from the Shara Sume region to Pei-ta-shan,⁹⁹ where an agreement was reached between 'Uthmān Bātūr and a representative of Sung Hsi-lien, the KMT Garrison Commander in Sinkiang. According to Lattimore, however, 'Uthmān first migrated to the northern foothills of the Bogdo Ula before being 'encouraged' by the Chinese authorities to

move northwards and 'occupy' the Pei-ta-shan 'which were accordingly claimed as Chinese territory'.¹⁰⁰ Precise details of subsequent events in the Pei-ta-shan region remain, apparently, unestablished. It may be that 'Uthmān, acting with tacit KMT approval, attempted to expel the Mongol inhabitants of the area, or that he crossed into the northern foothills of the Pei-ta-shan, into a zone regarded by the MPR as its special preserve'.¹⁰¹ On the other hand, it may be that the MPR, with tacit Soviet backing, sought actively to extend its control over the Pei-ta-shan in preparation for the frontier delimitation negotiations which had, sooner or later, to follow China's formal recognition of Mongolian independence.¹⁰²

Whatever the exact sequence of events surrounding 'Uthmān Bātūr's withdrawal to the Pei-ta-shan, it is clear that forces owing allegiance to the Kirei Kazakh Chieftain clashed both with MPR frontier units and with units of the INA during the summer of 1946.¹⁰³ Initially these hostilities remained low-key, being limited to short exchanges between local militia units. 'Uthmān seems to have been the first to have deviated from this pattern, and it is apparent that his autumn raid deep into northern Shara Sume was viewed with hostility and concern not only in Kulja and Ulan Bator, but also in Moscow. As has been shown, 'Uthmān was driven out of Shara Sume and back to the Pei-ta-shan, where he remained during the winter of 1946–7. Yet despite this setback, he clearly remained a constant irritant both to Soviet interests in Sinkiang and to the frontier security of the MPR. Accordingly, following Chang Chih-chung's replacement by Mas'ūd Şabırı in May 1947, the Soviet Union determined to make its displeasure felt in both Urumchi and Nanking by mounting a major attack on 'Uthmān's mountain stronghold.

According to KMT sources, the 'Pei-ta-shan Incident' began on 5 June 1947, only five weeks after Mas'ūd Şabırı's appointment as Chairman of the Sinkiang coalition government, when a force estimated at 500 MPR troops, reportedly backed by four or five planes with Soviet markings, moved into the disputed region and attacked 'Uthmān's Kazakh irregulars.¹⁰⁴ The Chinese authorities responded by lodging an official protest with the Soviets through their embassy in Moscow,¹⁰⁵ whilst strengthening their position on the ground through the despatch of elite units of Tsinghai Tungan cavalry to the Pei-ta-shan region.¹⁰⁶ Accounts of the subsequent struggle are uniformly sparse, but differ widely in interpretation. Thus both Clubb and Whiting indicate that Soviet-MPR pressure forced a Chinese withdrawal from the disputed area by mid-1947, and the former authority goes so far as to call the 'Pei-ta-shan Incident' 'a clear victory for the Mongolian People's Republic'.¹⁰⁷ Yet, according to Barnett, more than fifteen months later, in September 1948, the 'northern crests' of the Pei-ta-shan remained securely in the hands of

the KMT 14th Tungan Cavalry Regiment, whilst the closest MPR positions were located 'at the foot of the northern slopes of the mountains'.¹⁰⁸

How may this divergence of accounts be explained? On balance it seems probable that, during late 1946 and early 1947, 'Uthmān Bātūr's Kazakh irregulars had thrust beyond the Pei-ta-shan (which, according to Barnett's KMT informants, had been garrisoned by Chinese troops 'for many years'),¹⁰⁹ out into the sparsely inhabited lowland region to the north of the mountains, which the MPR controlled, but which China claimed (and was to continue to claim until 1962).¹¹⁰ The joint MPR-Soviet attack of June 1947 was thus successful in driving 'Uthmān's Chinese-supported Kazakh irregulars back to the line of actual control before their invasion of 1946, and to this extent, in purely regional terms, the outcome of the so-called 'Pei-ta-shan Incident' may be seen as an MPR victory. Yet both Clubb and Whiting are clearly mistaken in their assumption that the 'Incident' came to an end during the summer of 1947.¹¹¹ According to Barnett, fighting was to continue on a reduced scale for at least another year, with thirteen separate clashes taking place in the Pei-ta-shan region between 5 June 1947 and July 1948.¹¹² No doubt Sino-Mongolian rivalry played an important part in this continuing confrontation – thus Major-General Han Yu-wen, the KMT front-line Commander in the Pei-ta-shan region, informed Barnett 'that he believed the border should be about 40 miles to the north of the mountains'.¹¹³ Yet beyond this purely local dispute, in which the MPR, with Soviet backing, had succeeded in restoring the *status quo ante*, lay the wider Sino-Soviet struggle for control of the Central Asian heartland, in which, at a time of Chinese weakness, the Manass River and the northern slopes of the Pei-ta-shan had become the effective front-line. Thus, by maintaining indirect pressure on China in the Pei-ta-Shan sector of the Sinkiang-MPR frontier long after 'Uthmān Bātūr's Kazakh raiders had been expelled, Moscow undoubtedly sought to hasten the demise of the Mas'ūd Şabırı regime in Sinkiang without, however, openly breaking with the Nationalist authorities in Nanking. In wider international terms, therefore, the true beneficiary of the 'Pei-ta-shan Incident' was the Soviet Union, though its victory was to be purely Pyrrhic, as will be shown.

The victory of the Chinese Communists

Following the disintegration of the Sinkiang coalition government during the summer of 1947, the effective partitioning of Sinkiang into two zones – one administered by nominees of the KMT and the other by nominees of the Soviet Union – became virtually complete. Little or no contact seems to have taken place between the two sides, and no serious fighting

took place to disturb the *status quo*. The Manass River remained the dividing line between the ‘Three Regions’ – where the secessionist ETR was re-established in all but name – and the remainder of the province. Meanwhile, both the Urumchi and Kulja regimes took steps to consolidate their respective positions and to exclude each other’s influence from their particular spheres of control.

Little or no non-partisan information is available concerning events in Sinkiang during this period. According to reports from the insurgent press in Kulja, following Mas‘ūd’s assumption of power in Urumchi, CC Clique hard-liners within the KMT implemented a programme designed to discriminate against ‘progressives’ in particular, and against Muslims in general. Thus, even before Ahmādjān’s return to Kulja, known or suspected supporters of the Ili rebels were excluded from the Provincial Assembly and the Provincial Peace Preservation Corps, whilst the KMT military authorities retained control over locally elected district magistrates and severely limited the appointment of Muslims to the provincial police force, thus:

Out of 421 appointments to the police bureau in Urumchi only 48 were Moslems, with Chinese holding 84% of the posts. Police orders were written only in Chinese, and Moslem members of the force were not allowed to carry arms. Moreover, a secret police force continued to operate, although supposedly abolished under the ‘basic provincial law’ of July, 1946.¹¹⁴

Similarly, the Kulja regime charged that, in the KMT-controlled zone, San Min Chu I (KMT Youth Corps) activists, assisted by members of the provincial police, mounted vicious attacks on local ‘progressive’ politicians and their supporters, whilst ordinary ‘people in the street’ were beaten up and imprisoned simply for reading wall posters critical of the Mas‘ūd regime.¹¹⁵ There is no reason to doubt these charges, and indeed, following the replacement of Chang Chih-chung by Mas‘ūd Şabırı, it is clear that the conciliatory policies associated with the former were completely abandoned.

Partly because of the comparative accessibility of the KMT zone to Western correspondents (as contrasted with the total inaccessibility of the ‘Three Regions’), and partly as a result of the CCP’s subsequent endorsement of the legitimacy of the Kulja regime, much has been made of the brutality and corruption surrounding the last years of KMT power in Sinkiang.¹¹⁶ By contrast, our knowledge of conditions within the Soviet-dominated ‘Three Regions’ remains rudimentary – yet it is apparent that, in many ways, the political repression meted out in the KMT-controlled zone of Sinkiang was mirrored by the domestic activities of the Kulja authorities. Thus, at least on a surface level, the *Min Chu Pao*’s charge that Muslims were discriminated against in the provincial

police force was paralleled in Kulja, where all official notices were in Russian or Turkic (but never in Chinese), and even Han supporters of the regime were excluded from the INA and forbidden to carry arms.¹¹⁷ More significantly, there can be no doubt that a secret police force based on the Soviet model operated throughout the ‘Three Regions’, and that the reported abduction of ‘Ali Khān Türe was followed by the harassment and arrest of many similarly minded conservative Muslim nationalists.¹¹⁸

It is clear that the KMT leadership in Urumchi was aware of the Kulja regime’s persecution of ‘anti-Soviet’ and ‘pan-Turkist’ elements within its sphere of control, and that in this development it perceived a way to counterbalance ETR propaganda and to win the ‘hearts and minds’ of the traditionally conservative Muslim south of the province, now tilting increasingly towards the Kulja regime. Accordingly, in an extraordinary move never before (or since) sanctioned by the Chinese authorities in Sinkiang, the anti-Soviet Uighur nationalists Muhammad Amin Bughra and İsa Yūsuf Alptekin were permitted openly to publish Turkic nationalist literature which, in a direct challenge to the established Soviet (and, by extension, ETR) line, stressed the ethnic and cultural unity of the various Turkic-speaking Muslim peoples of Central Asia. There can be no doubt that this development, which conjured up one of the darkest spectres of official Kremlin demonology, infuriated the Soviet leadership. Thus, according to Mingulov,

Mas‘ud formed his government on 28th May, 1947. The *soi-disant* Champion of the Faith gagged the public press and spoke through two pan-Turk journals called *Yalkyn* (‘Flame’), and *Erk* (‘Freedom’). The people of Sinkiang were told that they were a single Turkic nation, and that the names ‘Uygur’, ‘Kazakh’, ‘Kirgiz’, were mere ethnic abstractions. An organization as powerful as it was bogus, known as the Society for the Defence of Islam, functioned under the supervision of the C-in-C Sinkiang and stretched its tentacles everywhere.¹¹⁹

The precise KMT logic behind this development, which directly contravened the established Han Chinese policy of accentuating splits and divisions between the various Muslim (and non-Muslim) peoples of Sinkiang, remains uncertain. Its immediate effect, however, was clearly beneficial to the Nationalist authorities in that it served to accentuate the already substantive differences between the Soviet-backed Turkic leadership in Kulja and the KMT-backed Turkic leadership in Urumchi, whilst at the same time proffering a tantalising mirage of potential autonomy outside the Soviet orbit to the predominantly anti-communist, ‘Turkic-Islamic’ nationalists of southern Sinkiang.

In response, the Kulja regime and its Soviet sponsors seem to have determined to press ahead with the building of ‘Socialism in Three Regions’ pending the outcome of the KMT-CCP struggle elsewhere in

China. Accordingly, amongst numerous other reforms claimed by both Chen and Mingulov, limited land redistribution was initiated in Ili during this period.¹²⁰ Similarly, in response to the establishment of a 'Society for the Defence of Islam' in Urumchi during 1947, an organisation called the 'Union in Defence of Peace and Democracy in Sinkiang' was set up at Kulja during the first half of 1948.¹²¹ Membership of this party, which was clearly intended as a mass base for the STPNLC, was open to 'whoever sets store by the interest of the people', and its programme was formally based on the 'Kulja Declaration' of 5 January 1944, by which the political programme of the secessionist ETR had been initially proclaimed. This clear indication of Soviet concern with the 'Three Regions' to the exclusion of the remainder of Sinkiang is amply confirmed by Mingulov, who notes that 'The [revolutionary] movement, therefore, had survived in one corner of the country [sic], but it was powerless to capture the remainder . . . The next best thing was to make certain that the fires would go on burning in the Three Districts and to hope that their warmth would eventually reach out to the other corners.'¹²²

Meanwhile, far to the east, the balance of the Chinese Civil War was swinging inexorably in favour of the CCP. During 1946 and early 1947, Chiang Kai-shek's forces succeeded in scoring a series of apparently spectacular successes, including the capture of the communist capital at Yenan. Yet it soon became apparent that the CCP was 'losing the cities, but winning the war'. Thus the Nationalist conscript forces became increasingly bogged down in a debilitating guerilla conflict, whilst popular discontent with the KMT government mounted rapidly throughout south China. During the winter of 1947–8 the PLA went over to the offensive, winning a series of major set-piece battles against the nationalists in the north-east, and advancing towards Peking. In April 1948 Yenan was recaptured, and on 19 June Kaifeng, the capital of Honan, fell to the victorious PLA. By the autumn of 1948 it was clear that Nationalist power within China was crumbling, and that a final CCP victory could not long be delayed.

There can be little doubt that the Soviet Union viewed the advance of the PLA towards Sinkiang with mounting apprehension. Stalin must long have suspected that Mao Tse-tung was a Chinese nationalist first, a communist second, and a loyal disciple of the Comintern scarcely at all. Accordingly, despite the continuing pin-prick pressures of the 'Pei-ta-shan Incident', and under the camouflage of a constant drum-fire of anti-KMT propaganda from Kulja, the Kremlin sought to persuade Chiang Kai-shek to compromise in Sinkiang before it was too late. Chiang, who clearly still believed that the Soviet Union could exercise a restraining influence over the Chinese communists, was quick to respond. Thus, in October 1947, Chang Chih-chung, who had remained in Sinkiang as

Commander of the Nationalist's North-Western Headquarters, travelled to Nanking to begin negotiations with the Soviet Embassy. He was either accompanied or followed shortly after by the Tatar Burhān Shahīdī, who had served as Vice-Chairman in the short-lived coalition government of 1946–7. During the remainder of 1947 and much of 1948, the Uighur-, Russian- and Chinese-speaking Burhān is reported to have acted as an intermediary between the Soviet Embassy and Chang in a prolonged series of negotiations designed to pave the way for a secret KMT-Soviet deal over the future status of Sinkiang.¹²³ That some progress was made in these talks may perhaps be inferred from the cessation of hostilities in the Pei-ta-shan region in the middle of 1948.¹²⁴ It seems clear, however, that Soviet demands for economic and political concessions in the north-west were too extensive for Chiang Kai-shek seriously to consider until some time in December 1948, mid-way through the great and decisive Battle of the Hwai-Hai, during which the imminent collapse of the Nationalist forces must have become apparent even to the most loyal partisans of the KMT.¹²⁵ Accordingly, in a conciliatory gesture clearly aimed at the Soviet Union, on 31 December 1948, Mas'ūd Sabrī was recalled from Sinkiang and, in a move thought to have been negotiated with the Soviet Embassy in Nanking during the previous autumn, replaced by the amenable Burhān Shahīdī.¹²⁶

On 1 January 1949, Chiang Kai-shek made an offer of peace to the CCP in his New Year's message. Shortly thereafter Chang Chih-chung returned to Urumchi with the stated purpose of negotiating a new treaty with the Soviet Union to replace the ten-year agreement which Sheng Shih-ts'ai had signed in 1939 to govern Sino-Soviet economic relations in Sinkiang.¹²⁷ As Clubb has indicated, the advantage to the Soviets of the ratification of any such new agreement was obvious – as with Chiang's recognition of MPR independence during 1945, Moscow would at least be able to confront a CCP successor regime with a valid document which would have to be taken into consideration in the working out of a new and 'fraternal' Sino-Soviet relationship.¹²⁸ Chiang, however, was certainly playing for higher stakes. By reaching an agreement with the Soviets over Sinkiang, he clearly hoped to widen the substantial rift which he already knew to exist between Yenan and Moscow, though whether this was intended to prolong his rule over mainland China or alternatively to facilitate a putative reconquest of the mainland from Taiwan must inevitably remain speculative.¹²⁹

Little is known of the subsequent negotiations, though according to KMT sources Stalin's demands paralleled those made on Sheng Shih-ts'ai by the infamous 'Sin-Tin' Agreement of 1939. Thus, in exchange for unspecified support – which may not have exceeded good will¹³⁰ – the Soviet Union is reported to have sought virtually exclusive control over

the mineral resources of Sinkiang. Similarly, Stalin is reported to have sought full import-export freedom for the USSR without offering any reciprocal benefits to China.¹³¹ Even *in extremis* these terms proved too much for the KMT leadership, and negotiations were abandoned in May, after Nanking and Moscow had failed to reach any agreement beyond the extension of Soviet rights to operate an air service between Urumchi and Alma Ata.¹³²

According to Allen S. Whiting, following the breaking-off of KMT-Soviet talks at Urumchi in May 1949, the Soviet Union made one further, unofficial attempt to confirm their position in Sinkiang before the arrival of the Chinese Communists. Thus, as units of the PLA under P'eng Teh-huai marched into neighbouring Kansu during the summer of 1949, the Soviet Consul-General in Urumchi is reported to have approached General T'ao Chih-yueh, the KMT Garrison Commander in Sinkiang, with a suggestion that he should declare Sinkiang independent 'on the precedent of Outer Mongolia', following which Moscow would 'order' the PLA to halt its advance from Kansu. T'ao is reported to have referred this proposal to Canton (Nationalist headquarters following the fall of Nanking) for deliberation. Once again, however, the Soviet offer is said to have been declined.¹³³

By the end of July 1949, P'eng Teh-huai's PLA forces stood at the very gates of Sinkiang. T'ao Chih-yueh was apparently ordered by the KMT government in Canton – itself in hurried preparation for flight to Taiwan – to continue his stand, and to fight a harrying rear-guard action, apparently with the ultimate objective of retreat across the Himalayas. T'ao was clearly unwilling to follow these instructions. Accordingly, he gave orders granting those of his men who wished to flee to Taiwan permission to do so. Most, however, chose to stay with T'ao, who surrendered peacefully to the PLA on 25 September, at the head of the 80,000 KMT troops still remaining in Sinkiang.¹³⁴ One day later, on 26 September 1949, Burhān Shahidī, in his capacity as Provincial Chairman of Sinkiang, severed relations with the Nationalist authorities at Canton, pledged allegiance to the communist government then being established at Peking, and announced that he would accept peace terms offered by the CCP pending their reorganisation of the Sinkiang provincial administration.

The limitation of Muslim dissidence and the decline of Soviet influence

Throughout their long struggle to win power in the Chinese heartland, not only Sinkiang, but also the greater part of North-West China had remained hostile and largely unknown territory to the CCP. Thus, whilst it is true that in 1937 Chinese Communist forces had advanced to within

300 miles of the Sinkiang frontier, they were unexpectedly defeated and driven back by a coalition of 'Wu Ma' Tungan forces in a series of reverses said to have been regarded by the CCP leadership as 'the most cruel and punishing they had suffered up to that time'.¹³⁵ Similarly, whilst it is true that a team of more than one hundred Chinese communists had served in Sinkiang under Sheng Shih-ts'ai between 1937 and 1942, their power had been strictly circumscribed, and their influence constantly overshadowed by Stalin and the CPSU. Moreover, with their sudden fall from grace in 1942, even this tenuous link between Yenan and Urumchi had been broken, leaving Sinkiang isolated from CCP influence by a wide swathe of hostile Tungan-controlled territory and subject to the exclusive competition of Moscow and Nanking.

Yet it should not be supposed that the CCP leadership remained totally unaware of developments in Sinkiang during this period. Certainly Yenan must have kept a watchful eye on the power struggles centred on Urumchi, and above all on the situation in the 'Three Regions', where the CCP's supposed Soviet ally and 'mentor' continued to expand its influence and power at the expense of China's political and territorial integrity.¹³⁶ Thus, when on 12 October 1949 units of the PLA First Field Army Group under General Wang Chen advanced across the Kansu-Sinkiang frontier to extend CCP power to Sinkiang for the first time, they moved purposefully and with certain predetermined commitments, foremost amongst which – the elimination of Muslim separatism in the former KMT-controlled zone notwithstanding – was the restoration of Chinese political control in the 'Three Regions' and, ultimately, the exclusion of Soviet influence from the province.

In October 1949, however, the CCP was in no position to move hastily against its perceived Soviet rival in Sinkiang. Indeed, the situation in the far north-west was potentially most embarrassing, as the leaders of the Kulja regime, although regarded by Peking as Soviet puppets far more threatening to China's territorial integrity than such minor anti-communist 'bandits' as 'Uthmān Bātūr, actually welcomed – or feigned to welcome – the establishment of CCP power in Sinkiang.¹³⁷ In line with this political stance, the 'progressive' STPNLC faction, which had successfully purged the former ETR administration of anti-Soviet 'Turkish-Islamic' elements during 1946–7, was obliged overtly to acknowledge the revolutionary leadership of Mao Tse-tung in the hope of maintaining, under covert Soviet auspices, a high degree of autonomy in north-western Sinkiang.¹³⁸ Accordingly, on 15 August 1949, by which time the ultimate victory of the PLA over the armed forces of the KMT had become a foregone conclusion, the most prominent members of the Kulja leadership, including the Uighurs Ahmadjān Qāsim and 'Abd al-Karīm 'Abbas, the Kazakh Dālīl Khan, and the Kirghiz Ishāq Beg, left

Kulja for Alma Ata in Soviet Kazakhstan, ostensibly *en route* for Peking, where they were to take part in the First Plenary Session of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.¹³⁹

During the subsequent KMT capitulation and PLA occupation of Sinkiang, nothing more was heard of Ahmādjān Qāsim and his colleagues. Only in late December 1949, just as the CCP was setting up a new political administration in Urumchi, was it retrospectively announced by the Chinese Communist authorities that almost four months previously, on 27 August, the plane carrying Ahmādjān and the other Kulja leaders had crashed into a Manchurian hillside, killing everyone on board.¹⁴⁰ Considerable mystery surrounds the disaster, not least because of Peking's long delay in making it publicly known.¹⁴¹ It cannot be doubted, however, that the death of Ahmādjān Qāsim and his colleagues, whether a genuine accident or deliberately engineered, came at a most opportune moment for the CCP and dealt a considerable blow to Soviet political ambitions in Sinkiang. Thus, with Ahmādjān's death, authority within the 'Three Regions' passed to Saif al-Dīn 'Azīz, the sole surviving senior member of the Kulja regime, a Soviet-educated Uighur and card-carrying member of the CPSU, who spoke Chinese haltingly but was fluent in Russian. Under these circumstances it is hardly surprising that civil power within Sinkiang flowed 'almost automatically' into the hands of the 'durable and amenable' Tatar, Burhān Shahīdī, who was retained in office by the CCP even after the PLA's victorious entry into Urumchi on 20 October.¹⁴²

Meanwhile, at some time during September 1949, a three-man delegation under the leadership of Saif al-Dīn left Kulja for Peking to represent the Ili regime during the celebrations marking the founding of the Chinese People's Republic. Saif al-Dīn, no doubt chastened and apprehensive following the (still officially unannounced) death of his colleagues,¹⁴³ apparently took pains to make it clear to the CCP leadership that, in future, he would be speaking with the voice of Chinese, and not Uighur or Soviet nationalism. As for the 'Three Regions', with the entry into Sinkiang of the PLA, the problem had been 'basically solved', and the area in question would in future be part of 'an independent Sinkiang under the leadership of the Central People's Government'.¹⁴⁴ Meanwhile, Peking clearly needed a pliant representative of the former Kulja regime (in theory an 'heroic ally' in the struggle against the KMT) to participate in the new, unified Sinkiang administration which was being set up in Urumchi. Accordingly, when the first CCP Sinkiang provincial government was inaugurated on 18 December 1949, the Tatar Burhān Shahīdī was appointed Chairman, with the Uighur Saif al-Dīn 'Azīz as his Deputy. Military power within the province, however, remained exclusively in Han Chinese hands, through the agency of the PLA

Commander P'eng Teh-huai, and the rehabilitated ex-KMT Commander Chang Chih-chung.¹⁴⁵

With the problem of the 'left-wing' ETR thus partially defused, Peking was free to turn its attention to the various 'right-wing' Muslim elements still active within Sinkiang. Since the KMT had effectively crushed the last, short-lived 'Turkish-Islamic' nationalist movement in southern Sinkiang during 1946–7,¹⁴⁶ and, since both İsa Yūsuf Alptekin and Muhammad Amin Bughra had succeeded in fleeing the province in October 1949,¹⁴⁷ by the spring of 1950 the sole surviving 'right-wing' Muslim opponents of CCP power in Sinkiang were the ageing but active Kumullik leader Yulbārs Khan and the various Kazakh groups owing allegiance to, or otherwise associated with, the Kirei Kazakh leader 'Uthmān Bātūr.

As has already been shown, following the collapse of the 1937 Muslim rebellion in southern Sinkiang and the related disturbances at Kumul, Yulbārs Khan fled Sinkiang and was given a sinecure in Nanking by the Nationalist authorities. Yulbārs remained with the Nationalists throughout the war years, returning to Sinkiang in 1946 as KMT Special Executive Commissioner for Eastern Sinkiang. He survived the subsequent collapse of Chang Chih-chung's coalition government, being named Executive Supervisory Commissioner and Peace Preservation Commander at Kumul in 1947, as well as 'Strategy Adviser' to Chiang Kai-shek in 1948. Finally, in 1949, he was appointed KMT Deputy Commander of Peace Preservation Forces in Sinkiang.¹⁴⁸ When elements of the PLA First Field Army Group moved into Sinkiang during October 1949, scattered last-ditch resistance in the Kumul area coalesced around Yulbārs, who had refused to accept Burhān's surrender; he was apparently joined in this wild endeavour by units of Tungan cavalry under Ma Chin-shan (a son of Ma Pu-fang, the 'Wu Ma' warlord of Tsinghai) and by various 'diehard White Russian émigrés'.¹⁴⁹ Yulbārs was able to carry on anti-CCP guerilla operations in the Kumul area for several months, as a result of which, in April 1950, he was declared 'Governor of Sinkiang' and 'Commander-in-Chief of Provincial Pacification Forces' by the exiled KMT authorities on Taiwan. Yet, despite this largely symbolic gesture, by July 1950 Yulbārs and his resistance forces were confronted with increasingly severe shortages of grain, fodder and ammunition. Accordingly, they were forced to seek refuge first in the region of Yulbārs' old mountain stronghold at Bardash, then in the Tun-huang region of Kansu, and finally in the sparsely inhabited wastes of Tsinghai. At some stage during the latter part of these wanderings, Ma Chin-shan's Tungan cavalry went over *en bloc* to the Chinese communists, leaving Yulbārs isolated with a group of perhaps ninety followers.¹⁵⁰

Meanwhile, a second focus of 'right-wing' Muslim discontent had

emerged around 'Uthmān Bātūr who, after withdrawing from the Pei-tashan region in early 1948, had set up his headquarters at Kizil Chala Bel, near Kitai, in the northern foothills of the Bogdo Ula.¹⁵¹ Here, at the head of some 15,000 followers, he lived 'like a potentate . . . surrounded by a group of loyal lieutenants'.¹⁵² Moreover, also in 1948, as a reward for his loyal service to the Nationalists following his defection from the ETR, 'Uthmān was appointed Commander of three KMT *pao-an* ('peace preservation') squadrons, also stationed in the Kitai region.¹⁵³ In September 1949, therefore, at the time of Burhān Shahidi's submission to the PLA, 'Uthmān was closely identified with the KMT power structure in Sinkiang and bitterly anti-communist. Accordingly, like Yulbārs Khan, he refused to accept Burhān's surrender, and withdrew to the Barkul Tagh where he was subsequently joined by Jānim Khan, the supposedly illiterate Kazakh ex-Commissioner of Finance in Chang Chih-chung's coalition government.¹⁵⁴ At about the same time, during the summer and early autumn of 1949, a group of 'Uthmān's Kazakh allies under the leadership of 'Ali Beg Rahīm set up their headquarters at Kukuluk, in the eastern T'ien Shan above Kara Shahr, where they were joined by Sālis, Jānim Khan's ex-colleague as Deputy Secretary-General in the 1946–7 coalition government.¹⁵⁵ During the following months, both groups fought a series of hit-and-run engagements with units of the PLA.¹⁵⁶ It was a struggle which they could not hope to win, however, and in late December 1949 'Ali Beg's group was forced to break away from the T'ien Shan and to head for the southern Kazakh stronghold of Gez Köl on the Sinkiang–Tsinghai frontier. Similarly, after more than six months of protracted guerilla warfare in the Barkul region, 'Uthmān Bātūr, like 'Ali Beg before him, was forced to break off contact with the PLA and to strike southwards towards Gez Köl.

After a bitter and hazardous crossing of the Kuruk Tagh and Lop Nor regions, 'Ali Beg Rahīm and his followers arrived at Gez Köl in the spring of 1950, where they made contact with the local Kazakh chieftains Husayn Teyci and Sultān Sharīf.¹⁵⁷ The Kazakhs of Gez Köl had remained almost entirely outside the sphere of Sinkiang politics since their flight from Sheng Shih-ts'ai during 1934–6, but, as 'Ali Beg's arrival presaged, this was soon to end. Some six months later, in September 1950, 'Uthmān Bātūr's Kazakhs arrived in the region after a fighting retreat via Tun-huang and the Tsaidam marshes of Tsinghai. They were accompanied by Yulbārs Khan and his remaining followers, who had apparently joined forces with 'Uthmān *en route*.¹⁵⁸

Almost immediately, Yulbārs and his followers, accompanied by the Kazakh leader Sālis, set out for Tibet with the apparent intention of reaching India and, ultimately, of joining Chiang Kai-shek in exile on Taiwan.¹⁵⁹ The various other Kirei Kazakh Chieftains present at Gez Köl,

however, chose to remain. Four months later, on 1 February 1951, PLA forces launched a major offensive in the region, capturing 'Uthmān Bātūr and Jānim Khan, and obliging the remaining rebel chieftains to flee into Tibet.¹⁶⁰ Both 'Uthmān and Jānim were taken to Urumchi, where they were eventually executed as 'counter-revolutionaries' by the Chinese Communist authorities.¹⁶¹ 'Ali Beg Rahīm, Husayn Teyci and Sultān Sharīf, however, succeeded in evading Chinese pursuit and, together with some hundreds of their followers, reached the frontiers of Ladakh in August 1951, after a six-month retreat across the Tibetan plateau.¹⁶² Meanwhile, Yulbārs Khan and his followers – having, reportedly, shot Sālis in a dispute over food supplies – reached Lhasa in January 1951 after a remarkable crossing of the Tibetan plateau during mid-winter.¹⁶³ Once in Lhasa, most of the refugees were detained by the Dalai Lama, though Yulbārs and five of his companions were permitted to proceed to Darjeeling in India. Yulbārs then travelled overland to Calcutta before flying to Taiwan, where he arrived on 1 May 1951, to take up a comfortable sinecure under the KMT as 'Governor of Sinkiang' in exile.¹⁶⁴

With the capture of 'Uthmān Bātūr and the flight of Yulbārs Khan, serious 'right-wing' Muslim opposition to CCP authority in Sinkiang was brought under control, though for several years more the province was to be 'constantly disturbed by local rebellions which were probably more anti-Chinese than anti-Communist in character'.¹⁶⁵ There still remained, however, the potentially far more serious problem of 'left-wing' Muslim separatism in the 'Three Regions' comprising the former East Turkestan Republic.

Initially, following the death of most of the Kulja leadership in August 1949, the CCP had adopted a relatively circumscribed approach in dealing with the 'Three Regions' question. Thus, although Saif al-Dīn had formally acknowledged Peking's hegemony over the whole of Sinkiang, he was still a member of the CPSU when he took up his post as Provincial Vice-Chairman; similarly, when PLA work teams fanned out across the entire former KMT-controlled zone of Sinkiang in December 1949, they were specifically excluded from the 'Three Regions' on the grounds that 'conditions were as yet unsettled in those areas'.¹⁶⁶ During the same month, Mao Tse-tung travelled to Moscow for prolonged talks (lasting nine weeks) with the Soviet leadership; he was followed in January by Chou En-lai. Yet, in February 1950, even as the CCP's pre-eminent leaders were engaged in negotiations with Stalin, a separate Sinkiang delegation under the leadership of Saif al-Dīn arrived in the Soviet capital,¹⁶⁷ lending credence to US Secretary of State Dean Acheson's charge of 12 January that Moscow was not treating Sinkiang as a Chinese province.¹⁶⁸ Saif al-Dīn's delegation subsequently participated

in the continuing Sino-Soviet negotiations, as a result of which, on 27 March, it was announced that two joint-stock Sino-Soviet companies were to be set up for the exploitation of Sinkiang's oil and non-ferrous metal resources. Capital, control and profits were to be shared equally between the Russians and the Chinese. One side was to provide the Chairman of the board of each company, and the other the General Manager. These positions were to alternate every three years, but the first General Managers were to be Soviet. The agreement was to run for thirty years.¹⁶⁹ At a press conference on 31 March, Dean Acheson described the total effect of these agreements as 'the detachment of Sinkiang from China by Russia by a familiar process'.¹⁷⁰ One month later the Soviet press countered this charge by arguing that 'despite the element of foreign participation, this investment was a constructive and not an exploitative one, and that full respect for Chinese sovereignty had been maintained'.¹⁷¹

Yet both Acheson and Stalin had underestimated the nationalism and determination of Mao Tse-tung, who had long dreamed of restoring China's Imperial frontiers in Inner Asia, and who had no intention of exchanging one set of foreign masters for another.¹⁷² There can be no doubt that the CCP regarded the 1950 agreements with the Soviet Union as a necessary but purely temporary concession, to be re-negotiated or abrogated as soon as was politically expedient. Thus, as an indication of future Chinese Communist intentions in Sinkiang, it was announced from Peking, even as the Moscow talks were in full session, that Saif al-Dīn had resigned from the CPSU and was being admitted to membership of the CCP.¹⁷³

Meanwhile, within Sinkiang, the Chinese authorities took steps to dissolve the effectively still extant 'Ili National Army' – a development which had been bitterly and successfully resisted by the Kulja leadership five years earlier during the coalition government of Chang Chih-chung. In 1950–1, however, this strategically vital advance was achieved by the CCP under the guise of 'integration' and 'promotion'. Thus former INA units were attached to PLA units and despatched to distant corners of Sinkiang far from their home region, whilst former INA Commanders were given commissions (and often promotions) within the PLA.¹⁷⁴ Yet, despite this measure, Soviet political influence within the 'Three Regions' continued to remain paramount, in indication of which, when the organs of local government in Ili, Chuguchak and Shara Sume were reorganised during the autumn of 1950, the administrations remained dominated by pro-Soviet Uighur and Kazakh intellectuals, whilst no less than 17,000 Soviet-orientated cadres of the former ETR were retained in positions of influence.¹⁷⁵ Similarly, following the CCP victory of 1949, the 'Union in Defence of Peace and Democracy in Sinkiang' – effectively

the political arm of the Kulja regime – was not dismantled outright, but remained widely influential in the north-west, with a reported membership of 77,394 by the summer of 1950.¹⁷⁶ This situation was clearly intolerable to the Peking leadership, and during mid-1951 a widespread purge was implemented in north-western Sinkiang 'which liquidated key officials in the three districts, including most of the original revolutionary leaders who had not perished in the airplane crash of 1949'.¹⁷⁷ Steps were also taken to diminish the influence of the Kulja regime's mass-based political arm, which was accordingly re-styled the 'Sinkiang League for Peace and Democracy' in June 1950, under a newly elected executive committee which included five Han Chinese and one Hui. Over the next three years, many new branches of this organisation were established in southern and eastern Sinkiang, effectively completing its transformation from a Soviet-orientated symbol of 'Three Regions' Muslim separatism into CCP-orientated symbol of Sinkiang unity. Once this purpose had been achieved – by the summer of 1953 – the 'Sinkiang League for Peace and Democracy' was allowed to fade quietly away as Sinkiang itself became more closely integrated within China.¹⁷⁸

Meanwhile, in March 1950, Peking gave formal notice of the importance it attached to future Chinese control over Sinkiang by announcing a programme of mass Han emigration to the province.¹⁷⁹ This was followed, in 1950–2, by a campaign for the 'suppression of counter-revolutionaries' (aimed primarily at landlords and Muslim '*ulamā*' in sedentary agricultural areas and at 'feudal' or traditionalist elements amongst the nomadic peoples) and, in 1952–3, at land reform.¹⁸⁰ It is apparent that these campaigns caused widespread local resistance amongst both Uighurs and Kazakhs, though not amongst the Hui, who appear to have played their established role – within Sinkiang – as supporters of Chinese authority.¹⁸¹ By mid-1954, however, after almost five years of CCP rule, the situation had become calm enough for Peking to feel secure in granting some measure of local autonomy to the various peoples of Sinkiang.¹⁸² Accordingly, a system of autonomous districts (*chou*) and counties (*hsien*) was introduced, starting with those nationalities whose loyalty was considered least in question by Peking. Thus, on 15 March 1954 – some two weeks after 30,000 men and units of the PLA in Sinkiang had been awarded 'special merits' for bandit suppression¹⁸³ – the first Hui autonomous county was established at Kara Shahr. This was followed later in the same month by a Sibo autonomous county near Kulja; in June, by a Mongol autonomous district at Bayan Göl; in July, by a Kirghiz autonomous district at Kizil Su in the T'ien Shan, a Mongol autonomous district in the Borotala Valley, and smaller Kazakh and Hui autonomous counties to the north of Barkul and Urumchi; and in September, by a Tajik autonomous county in the Sarikol area, a Hui

autonomous county near Kumul, and a Mongol autonomous county near Chuguchak.¹⁸⁴

Meanwhile, during October 1954, as a result of Sino-Soviet talks held at Peking following the celebrations marking the fifth anniversary of the founding of the CPR, it was announced that the Soviet Union had agreed prematurely to terminate the Sino-Soviet joint-stock companies set up in Sinkiang during 1950. Within days of this striking Chinese diplomatic success – the reasons for which remain uncertain¹⁸⁵ – on 29 November 1954, the Ili Kazakh Autonomous District was set up in the remainder of the ‘Three Regions’ as a concrete expression of the resumption of full Chinese authority over the area. Just under one year later, on 1 October 1955, Sinkiang was formally reconstituted as the ‘Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region’, under the compliant Chairmanship of the formerly pro-Soviet Uighur, Saif al-Dīn ‘Azīz.¹⁸⁶

Conclusions

The history of Republican Sinkiang – like the history of Republican China as a whole – may be divided into two separate and quite distinct periods. Between 1911 and 1928, under the ‘feudal bureaucracy’ of Yang Tseng-hsin, the province remained an island of relative calm in a sea of civil war, secession and rebellion. Yet this was a period of peace without prosperity. Sinkiang’s relative tranquillity was purchased at the price of economic and intellectual stagnation, so that by 1928, in the year of Yang Tseng-hsin’s assassination and the Nationalist seizure of power in China proper, Yang’s personal fief in North-West China had become an anachronism; a relic of China’s Imperial past surviving, through the will of one autocratic mandarin, some seventeen years into the Republican period.

Under Yang’s successors, the pressures which had built up within Sinkiang during the first three decades of the twentieth century were to explode with spectacular and devastating regularity, so that the province – aptly described by Fletcher as the most rebellious territory in the Ch’ing Empire during the nineteenth century¹ – might justifiably claim the same somewhat dubious distinction for the first half of the twentieth century.

The catalyst for this series of Muslim rebellions and invasions was undoubtedly the incompetence and venality of Yang’s immediate successor, Chin Shu-jen. By 1931 Chin had contrived to alienate both the nomadic and sedentary peoples of Sinkiang through a series of ill-judged actions culminating in the annexation and colonisation of the Khanate of Kumul, a politically impotent but previously inviolate symbol of Islamic autonomy held in varying degrees of esteem by Muslims throughout the province. Over the next six years, all Sinkiang (with the exception of the Ili Valley) was to be torn apart by a series of related and almost continuous Muslim rebellions in a period of bitter internecine strife which was to end only as a result of direct Soviet military intervention within the province in 1934 and again in 1937.

In previous studies of Republican Sinkiang (concentrating primarily on great-power competition within the region), there has been a tendency to dismiss the various Muslim risings of the 1930s in a few words, attributing their origins to Han Chinese misrule, and explaining their failure in terms

of Islamic factionalism and lack of leadership.² To some considerable extent this analysis – favoured by Lattimore, Whiting and Nyman alike – is correct. Yet the tendency has been to over-simplify and generalise; thus excessive emphasis has been placed upon ethnic and economic differences between Kazakh and Uighur, nomad and agriculturalist, whilst inadequate attention has been paid to the various regional factors affecting these rebellions. Moreover, the role of the Tungans (or Hui) as loyal supporters of the Chinese polity within Sinkiang has only been partially understood. As a result, an image of Sinkiang as an intrinsically faction-ridden province, inherently incapable of attaining its independence because of Muslim disunity, has attained widespread acceptance. Yet such a conclusion cannot be justified, as it presupposes that the various Muslim rebellions of the 1930s shared a common aim in the establishment of a secessionist Muslim state. It is the finding of the present study that such was manifestly not the case.

A better understanding of developments within North-West China during the Republican period may be gained if, instead of considering the province of 'Sinkiang' as a whole (a relatively new concept, dating from the late nineteenth century), the region in question is considered according to its earlier political divisions – that is, 'Uighuristan' (the Kumul-Turfan area); 'Altishahr' (the Tarim Basin) and Zungharia (including the Ili Valley). These regions were consistently disunited throughout the pre-Ch'ing period, and responded differently to the imposition of Ch'ing rule. Thus 'Uighuristan', the only region subject to some degree of Chinese political control under the Ming, remained generally loyal to the Chinese polity, whilst 'Altishahr' proved to be a source of constant Turkic Muslim rebellion and discontent. Meanwhile the Ili Valley and Zungharia, having been largely depopulated by Ch'ien Lung in 1755, were resettled by Tunguzic and Hui agriculturalists who tended to remain loyal to China, as well as by 'Taranchi' Uighurs from the Tarim Basin who came increasingly under the influence of the expanding Russian Empire.

In retrospect, it is clear that this pattern of political loyalties continued into the Republican era. Thus, following Chin Shu-jen's annexation of the Khanate of Kumul, the Turkic Muslim leadership of the oasis, represented by Khoja Niyās Hājjī and Yulbārs Khan, sent an appeal eastwards, towards Kansu and Nanking, for assistance. The aim of the 1931 Kumullik rebellion, therefore, was the restoration of limited Muslim autonomy in the region, and the replacement of Chin Shu-jen by a more amenable Chinese Governor. Further important distinguishing features of the Kumul rebellion were the active participation of local Kumullik Tungans in the rising, and the preparedness of the Turkic-speaking Muslims of the region to co-operate, at least initially, with the

invading Tungan armies of Ma Chung-ying from neighbouring Kansu.

Clearly this response was dictated by Kumul's proximity to the Chinese province of Kansu; by the centuries-old tributary relationship between its royal house and the rulers of China; and through the long years of autonomous status enjoyed by the Khanate which had precluded – or at least limited – the stationing of occupying Tungan garrison forces in the area. Kumul may have been a predominantly Turkic-speaking, Muslim-inhabited oasis, but its inhabitants had also learned to live with China. Hence Maqsūd Shāh spoke Turki with a Chinese accent and wore Chinese clothes, whilst his Chief Counsellor, Yulbārs Khan, spoke fluent Chinese and ultimately chose exile in Taiwan rather than in Turkey. Even the incompetent Khoja Niyās Hājjī, when forced by circumstance to retreat into the Tarim Basin and to take up an ostensibly separatist stance, was quick to enter into an agreement with Sheng Shih-ts'ai and to assume a sinecure within the Chinese administration. In short, the Kumul rebellion was not secessionist, and did not become anti-Tungan in character until after the oasis had experienced the press-gangs and material exactions of Ma Chung-ying's army.

An entirely different situation pertained in the Tarim Basin – the 'Altishahr' of old – where the rebellions of 1933–4 and 1937 were openly and avowedly secessionist in character. Unlike Kumul, southern Sinkiang lay closer to Afghanistan and the Muslim Middle East than to China. No self-respecting Kashgarlik or Khotanlik Muslim would wear Chinese clothes, and few spoke Chinese at all, let alone Turki with a Chinese accent. Moreover, southern Sinkiang was garrisoned by Tungan forces who were viewed by the local Turkic-speaking Muslims less as co-religionists than as an occupying force of Chinese-speaking Muslim collaborators in the service of successive Han administrations – an attitude which, in Republican times, was certainly reinforced by the barbarous administration of Ma Fu-hsing (1916–24), as well as by the administration of his successor, Ma Shao-wu (1924–33), who, although less tyrannical and arbitrary, ruled with an iron hand, remained unquestionably loyal to the Chinese polity, and was responsible for various military actions against Turkic-speaking Muslim rebels, including the suppression of the Kirghiz leader, Īd Mirāb, during 1932.

Accordingly, when the opportunity for rebellion in southern Sinkiang arose in 1932–3, the local Turkic Muslim leadership at both Kashgar and Khotan was swift to seize the opportunity. The Muslim rising which followed was of a secessionist nature, resulting in the establishment of the short-lived 'Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan' between 1933 and 1934. The TIRET leadership (drawn chiefly from the radical conservative CNR element associated with the Khotan *Amīrs*) was as strongly anti-Tungan as it was anti-Han, and shared some elements of the

Aqtaghlik revolts in the same region during the first half of the nineteenth century, as well as being a direct spiritual successor to the orthodox Islamic Amīrate established by Ya'qūb Beg between 1866 and 1877.³ The TIRET leadership, moreover, was also markedly anti-Soviet, as a direct consequence of Russian Imperialist activities in Central Asia from the original Tsarist conquests of the nineteenth century to the Soviet suppression of the Basmachi Revolt and the forced collectivisation of the Kazakh steppe.

The government of the Khotan *Amīrs*, which dominated the TIRET and which represented the Turkic-speaking Muslim separatist movement in Sinkiang in its most extreme and radically conservative form, was thus at a variance not only with the provincial authorities and the invading Tungan General Ma Chung-ying but also with its erstwhile Uighur ally, the Kumullik leader Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī, who came to be seen as a collaborator with Chinese and Soviet Imperialism following his reconciliation with Sheng Shih-ts'ai.⁴ Given this uncompromising stance, it is scarcely surprising that the TIRET found itself virtually without friends, the victim of Soviet 'destabilisation' during 1933, before being swept away by a succession of Kumullik, Tungan and provincial forces early in 1934. Yet despite this defeat, the secessionist spirit in southern Sinkiang continued to remain strong, giving rise to the short-lived 'Sabil Allāh' Rebellion of 1937; to the 'Sarikoli' Revolt of 1945–6, and, according to Muslim refugee sources, to the Rebellion of 'Abd al-Majīd Damla in the Khotan region as recently as 1954.

As a result of the Soviet interventions of 1934 and 1937, Muslim unrest in both Kumul and the Tarim Basin was brought largely under control. Between 1937 and 1942 Sinkiang was run as a police state along Soviet lines, with the assistance of NKVD officers. During this period, overt Muslim opposition to Sheng's rule was restricted to the Altai region, where small numbers of fiercely independent Kirei Kazakhs mounted guerilla raids in the MPR border area. In 1943, however, following Sheng's break with the Soviets and realignment with the KMT, Muslim discontent erupted in the Ili Valley for the first time since 1871. It seems certain that this development was actively encouraged by the Soviet Union which sought, through its founding and support of the STPNLC, to bring pressure first on Sheng and subsequently on his KMT successors for a restoration of Soviet economic and political privilege within the 'Three Regions' area. Direct Soviet military involvement on the side of the rebels resulted in the establishment of the 'East Turkestan Republic' at Kulja in 1945. Similarly, direct Soviet involvement with the rebel movement forced the INA to halt on the banks of the Manass River later in the same year, whilst pro-Soviet elements within the ETR purged their administration of Muslim 'reactionaries' and consolidated their hold over

Ili, Chuguchak and Shara Sume – the three regions of Sinkiang which were the chief economic and political concern of the Kremlin.

Because of the involvement of local 'progressive' elements in the ETR, and because of the group's political opposition to the KMT, the Ili Rebellion of 1944–9 is generally represented both by the CCP and by its partisans in the West as a true 'war of liberation', untainted (or only partly so) by elements of Islamic fundamentalism and Turkic nationalism, a manifestation less of Turkic-speaking Muslim separatism than of Turkic-speaking Muslim support for the Chinese Communist Revolution. Thus, according to Chen, 'the effect of the liberation struggle in Sinkiang was like a great tributary joining the mother river in the final journey to the open sea'.⁵ Such claims are either mistaken or openly designed to mislead, however, for the Ili Rising was manifestly Soviet-orientated, and almost certainly Soviet-instigated. This was well understood by the KMT, who responded by appointing anti-Soviet Turkic Muslim nationalists such as Muḥammad Amin Bughra and 'Īsa Yūsuf Alptekin to senior posts in the Urumchi administration in a bid to win over the Turkic-speaking Muslims of southern Sinkiang and to provide an alternative focus for the loyalty of Muslim nationalists within the 'Three Regions' contiguous to the Soviet Union. This policy enjoyed some limited success, but suffered overall failure partly because of the repressive and paternalistic tactics generally employed by the KMT throughout the region of Sinkiang under their control, and partly because of the appointment of Mas'ud Şabri, a pro-Chinese Uighur widely viewed by his fellow Turkic-speaking Muslims as a puppet of the KMT, to the post of Chairman of the Sinkiang provincial government.

With the arrival of PLA units on the eastern frontiers of Sinkiang during the autumn of 1949, both the Soviet Union and its Ili protégés were obliged openly to acknowledge the authority of the CCP throughout Sinkiang, probably in the hope of retaining a substantial element of *de facto* Soviet-influenced autonomy in the north-west of the province. The CCP was quite unprepared to tolerate such an arrangement, however, and whilst paying lip-service to the role of the Ili Rebellion in the Chinese Revolution as a whole, took steps not only to crush 'right-wing' Muslim opposition in the south and east of the province, but also to eliminate all traces of Soviet-influenced 'left-wing' Muslim dissidence from the north and west of the province, and to exclude Soviet influence from Sinkiang as a whole.

In retrospect, it is clear that, during the six years between 1949 and the establishment of the Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region in 1955, the Chinese Communists were overwhelmingly successful in these aims. With the subsequent emergence of Islamabad as Peking's main ally on the Indian subcontinent, the handful of surviving 'right-wing' Muslim

separatists in the mountains above Kashgar and Khotan lost their last hope of winning external support for the continuation of their struggle. Similarly, the Sino-Soviet rift of 1960 and the subsequent migration of an estimated 60,000 Kazakhs from Ili to the Kazakh SSR may have provided the Kremlin with a propaganda victory, but was also finally to solve the problem of residual Soviet-ETR influence amongst the Kazakhs of Sinkiang, and to result in the all-but-total closure of the Sinkiang-Soviet frontier.⁶ Meanwhile, Han Chinese migration to Sinkiang has continued at a prodigious rate, so that in the last thirty years the province has experienced a demographic change unparalleled in the modern history of Central Asia.⁷ Today, Sinkiang is more a part of China than it has ever been. Thus, whilst some nostalgia for the 'separatist' regimes of the 1930s and 1940s may well survive amongst sections of the Turkic-speaking Muslim population, it is apparent that the establishment of an independent, Turkic-Islamic state in 'Eastern Turkestan' is no longer feasible. Nothing remains of the short-lived TIRET at Kashgar and Khotan, which is still officially execrated, whilst all that remains of the Soviet-sponsored ETR in Ili is a mausoleum, set in a grove of trees near Kulja, engraved with a requiem panegyric penned by Mao Tse-tung:

May the spirits of Comrades Aḥmadjān Qāsim, Ishāq Beg, 'Abd al-Karīm 'Abbas, Dalil Khan and Lo Tsu live for ever! They perished in the service of national liberation and of the people's democracy!⁸

APPENDIX I

Who Was Who in Republican Sinkiang

(Chinese and Western names are given with the surname first. Muslim names are given as they appear in the text, e.g. Muḥammad Amin Bughra is listed under Muḥammad, not under Bughra.)

'Abd al-Bāqī Ṣābit Dāmullāh (Uighur, ?–1934):

A native of Kulja, Sinkiang, where he served as a school teacher and judge. Reported to have travelled extensively in the Soviet Union, Turkey, Egypt and India. A pan-Turanian nationalist with anti-Soviet leanings, Ṣābit joined the CNR in Khotan in 1933. In 1933–34 he became Prime Minister of the short-lived TIRET. He was hanged at Aksu in 1934 on the orders of Sheng Shih-ts'ai.

'Abd al-Hayir Türe (Kazakh, dates unknown):

'Progressive' member of the ETR administration. No. 15 in the ETR's '17 Man Commission' (see Appendix III).

'Abd al-Karīm 'Abbās ('Abassov'), (Uighur, ?–1949):

'Progressive' Uighur of the Ili Valley. Closely associated with, though not necessarily a member of, the STPNLC. In 1946 became Deputy Secretary-General of the Sinkiang Government under Chang Chih-chung. Killed in air crash *en route* to Peking on 27 August 1949.

'Abd al-Karīm Khan Makhdūm (Uighur, dates unknown):

Native of Kashgar. Education Minister of the TIRET, 1933–34. Magistrate of Kashgar Old City April 1937 to June 1938. Subsequent fate unknown.

'Abd al-Niyās (Uighur, ?–1937):

Senior officer in the command of Mahmūd *shih-chang*, stationed near Yarkand. Became involved with Kichik Akhund in 1937 Muslim rebellion in southern Sinkiang. Captured and killed near Yarkand on 15 September 1937 by troops loyal to Sheng Shih-ts'ai.

'Abd al-Qadir ('Amīr'), (Uighur, dates unknown):

Local insurgent leader at Chira, southern Sinkiang, in 1933.

'Abd al-Rahīm Bay Bachcha (Uighur, dates unknown):

Rich merchant of Kashgar and pan-Turanian activist. Leading member of YKP. Possibly pro-Soviet sympathies. Left Sinkiang for India in the mid-1930s; finally settled in Istanbul.

'Abdullāh Bughra (alias 'Amīr Abdullāh Khan'), (Uighur, ?–1934):

Native of Khotan, second of the 'Khotan Amīrs'. Anti-Soviet, Muslim

fundamentalist. Member of the CNR. Killed by Tungan troops professing loyalty to Ma Chung-ying at Yarkand 2 April 1934.

'Abdullāh Dāmullāh (? Uighur, dates unknown):

Possibly a native of Turfan. Communications Minister of the TIRET. Fate unknown, though according to IOR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941, one 'Abdullāh Dāmullāh, 'a personal friend of Mahmūd shih-chang', escaped to India in April, 1937. In Toyko, 1940.

'Abdullāh Khan (? Uzbek, ?-1934):

Anti-Soviet refugee, possibly with Basmachi connections. Thought by Hayit to have emigrated to Sinkiang in 1924 (*Turkestan Zwischen Russland und China*, p. 313, fn 19). Subsequently became Health Minister and Chairman of the Independence Society under the TIRET. Died of hardship during flight across the Himalayas during 1934.

Aḥmadjān Qāsim (Uighur, 1912-1949):

Native of Ili, the son of well-to-do family. Father died in 1917. Aḥmadjān was taken to the Soviet Union by his uncle in c. 1929. Here he remained for about 10 years, studying (probably in Moscow), and possibly adopting Soviet nationality. He returned to Sinkiang in 1938, working either as an artisan or a school teacher in Kulja until 1942, when he was imprisoned by Sheng Shih-ts'ai. A 'communist-minded progressive', Aḥmadjān played an important part in the Ili rising of 1944, and was almost certainly the leading member of the STPNLC in Sinkiang. In 1945 he became the most powerful member of the ETR (a position which he retained until his death in 1949), and in 1946 he became Vice-Chairman of the Sinkiang Provincial Government. Killed in an air crash *en route* to Peking on 27 August 1949, Aḥmadjān is still honoured by both Moscow and Peking.

Akbar 'Ali (Turkic, probably Uighur, dates unknown):

Interpreter at Soviet Consulate-General in Kashgar blamed for starting serious riots at Kashgar in March, 1926. Imprisoned by Ma Shao-wu despite Soviet protests. Subsequent fate unknown.

'Ali Akhund Bay (Uighur, dates unknown):

Native of Kashgar. Finance Minister of the TIRET, 1933-34. Fate unknown.

'Ali Beg Rahīm (Kazakh, 1908-?):

Kazakh leader from eastern T'ien Shan, probably of Kirei tribe. Friend of Yūnus Hājjī and ally of 'Uthmān Bātūr. In state of almost constant rebellion against Sheng Shih-ts'ai and KMT. Fled to Kashmir in 1950-51, and was subsequently resettled in Anatolia by the Turkish government. A photograph of 'Ali Beg Rahīm may be found as the frontispiece of Lias' *Kazak Exodus*.

'Ali Khan Türe (Uzbek, dates unknown):

Popular religious leader at Kulja who became titular head of the ETR in 1945. He opposed the September, 1945 cease-fire between the ETR and the KMT, and was reportedly kidnapped by Soviet officials from Khorgos in August 1946. According to Kazakh refugee sources emanating from Turkey (Lias, *op. cit.*, p.

120), 'Ali Khān Türe was accused of pan-Turanianism by the Soviets. His subsequent fate is not known.

Annenkov (Russian, dates uncertain):

'White' Russian Cossack general. Retreated to Sinkiang's Ili Valley in May, 1920, at the head of 1,500 troops. Arrested by Yang Tseng-hsin in January, 1921. Subsequent fate uncertain – either died in custody in Sinkiang, or was handed back to the Soviet Government and executed.

Apresoff, Garegin A. (Russian, ?-1937):

Soviet Consul-General in Urumchi, 1933-37. Specialist on Central Asian affairs. As consul in Mashhad, Iran, Apresoff worked closely with local Persian communists and affiliated minority groups during the 1920s. Executed during Stalinist purges of 1937 as a 'Fascist-Trotskyite' plotter.

Bash Bay (Kazakh, dates unknown):

Native of Ili or Chuguchak, a member of the Naiman tribe. He became administrative head of the Chuguchak region under the ETR.

Burhān Shahīdī (Tatar, 1894-?):

A native of Aksu (either in Semirech'ye or Sinkiang). Thought to have received his early education at Kazan, then to have studied at the University of Berlin. Travelled to Sinkiang before 1918, either to escape Tsarist conscription of Tatars, or Russian Civil War. Became successful trader in Sinkiang, also entered provincial government service under Yang Tseng-hsin. Became Foreign Affairs Commissioner under Chin Shu-jen, and was sent to Germany to 'study political and economic conditions'. Thought to have returned to Sinkiang in 1934 following Chin's fall from power. Served under Sheng Shih-ts'ai as Sinkiang consul in Andijan, Uzbek SSR, and later in Zaysan, Kazakh SSR. Returned to Sinkiang in 1937 but was accused of 'Trotskyism'. Sentenced to nine years imprisonment (surprisingly not to death), and remained in jail until Sheng's fall from power. Served under Wu Chung-hsin, and in 1946 became Second Vice-Chairman of Sinkiang under Chang Chih-chung. In 1949 he replaced Mas'ūd Şabırı as Chairman of Sinkiang, a post he retained under the CCP until 1955. Subsequently a leading official representative of China's Muslim community, Burhān was truly the great survivor of Sinkiang politics. A skilled linguist, he compiled China's first Uighur-Chinese-Russian Dictionary in 1953.

Chang Chih-chung (Han Chinese, 1891-?):

A native of Ch'ao hsien, Anhwei. Participated in the 1911 Revolution, subsequently serving under Sun Yat-sen and later Chiang Kai-shek. In 1945 was appointed C-in-C of Chiang's Northwestern Headquarters at Lanchow and in August, 1945, was ordered to Sinkiang where he succeeded in bringing the ETR leadership to the negotiating table. He served as Chairman of Sinkiang from March, 1946 to May, 1947, earning a reputation as a moderate and tolerant administrator who genuinely sought to ameliorate conditions in the province. Following his replacement by Mas'ūd Şabırı in May, 1947, he continued to serve under Chiang Kai-shek until 1949, when he chose to remain in Peking under the CCP.

Chang Mu (Han Chinese, ?–1931):

A native of Ho-chou region, Kansu, who was employed as a tax collector and chief-of-police in Hsiao-p'u village, Kumul oasis, by Chin Shu-jen. Early in 1931 Chang either raped or attempted to seduce a local Uighur girl in an incident which sparked off the Kumul rising. He was killed on the night of 4 April 1931 by a crowd of infuriated Uighur farmers.

Chang P'ei-yüan (Han Chinese, ?–1933):

Nothing is known of Chang's antecedents. He was military commander of the Ili region until 1931, when he was appointed provincial commander-in-chief in place of Lu Hsiao-tsu by Chin Shu-jen. Under Chang's command, the siege of Kumul was lifted by White Russian forces on or about 1 November 1931. Chang subsequently took part in the looting of the oasis, before returning to Ili where he was appointed Reclamation Commissioner for north-western Sinkiang on 28 March 1933. In 1933–34 he entered into secret negotiations with Ma Chung-ying with a view to ousting Sheng Shih-ts'ai, but his position became untenable following the Soviet intervention of January, 1934. Chang is believed to have tried to flee across the Muzart Pass to southern Sinkiang, but was caught in a snow storm and committed suicide to avoid capture by the Soviets.

Chao Chien-feng (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Social Welfare Commissioner of the 1946–47 Sinkiang coalition government (under Chang Chih-chung). An active member of the KMT's CC Clique.

Ch'en Chung (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Sheng Shih-ts'ai's chief-of-staff (and therefore, almost certainly, a northeasterner). Despatched 'to Nanking' via Moscow in April, 1933. In fact, probably carried Sheng's initial plea for assistance against Ma Chung-ying to Moscow.

Chen Hsiu-ying (Han Chinese, ?–1942):

Wife of Sheng Shih-ch'i, the fourth younger brother of Sheng Shih-ts'ai. Reportedly a member of the CPSU. Accused by Sheng Shih-ts'ai of Sheng Shih-ch'i's assassination, Chen Hsiu-ying was tortured and executed by the former in 1942. Her 'confession' – a frightening document which gives a clear image of the terror imposed by Sheng Shih-ts'ai – is reproduced, in translation, in Appendix C of Whiting and Sheng, *Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?*

Chen T'an-chiu (Han Chinese, ?–1943):

Founding member of the CCP at Shanghai in 1921. Travelled to Sinkiang with Mao Tse-min in 1937. Arrested by Sheng in 1942. Executed 1943.

Chiang Yü-fen (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Initially brigadier and chief-of-staff to Liu Pin, c-in-c Kashgar 1934–37. Subsequently appointed c-in-c Kashgar in place of Liu Pin during the 1937 Muslim rebellion. Succeeded in holding Kashgar New City throughout this rebellion. According to British diplomatic sources: 'an efficient officer, ruthless when the occasion demands' (IOR, L/P & S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941). Subsequent fate unknown.

Chin Shu-chih (Han Chinese, ?–1933):

Brother of Chin Shu-jen, therefore a native of Ho-chou, Kansu. Appointed c-in-c Kashgar, where he died in 1933, either of illness or by committing suicide.

Chin Shu-hsin (Han Chinese, ?–1933):

Younger brother of Chin Shu-jen. Appointed Provincial Commissioner for Military Affairs at Urumchi following latter's seizure of power. Said to have manipulated grain market for personal gain during Ma Chung-ying's siege of Urumchi in 1932–3. Captured and executed by White Russian supporters of Sheng Shih-ts'ai after April 1933 coup.

Chin Shu-jen (Han Chinese, c.1883–?):

Native of Tao-ho hsien, Ho-chou district, Kansu. Graduated from Kansu Provincial Academy. Subsequently served as principal of a normal school. Entered official service in Kansu and gained favour of Yang Tseng-hsin. Followed Yang to Sinkiang in c. 1908. Became Secretary General of the Sinkiang Provincial Government by time of Yang's assassination in 1928. Succeeded Yang as Provincial Governor in 1928. A corrupt and incompetent man, possibly addicted to opium. Like Yang, stripped Sinkiang of assets for personal gain. Responsible for widespread nepotism. Absorbed Khanate of Kumul in 1930. Permitted settlement of Kansu Han on Uighur lands, leading to outbreak of Kumul Rebellion in 1931. Responsible for murder of Tsetsen Puntsag Gegeen in 1932. Overthrown by coup at Urumchi on 12 April 1933 during invasion of Ma Chung-ying. Fled to China proper, where he was sentenced to 3½ years' imprisonment for signing an illegal treaty with the USSR. Released after only 6 months (possibly after payment of bribe), and returned to native Kansu. Subsequent fate not known.

Ch'iu Yü-fang (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Wife of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, daughter of Ch'iu Tsung-chun, a 'trusted subordinate' of the Northeastern warlord Kuo Sung-ling. Described as 'ambitious and intelligent' (Chan, 'The Road to Power'), Ch'iu survived Sheng's years in Sinkiang and followed her husband to Taiwan in 1949.

Chu Jui-ch'ih (Han Chinese, dates unknown):

Tao-yin of Aksu under Chin Shu-jen who successfully defended Kumul Old City against Ma Chung-ying's invading Tungans between 28 June and 1 November 1931.

Chu Jui-hsi (Han Chinese, ?–1934):

Figurehead Chairman of Sinkiang under Sheng Shih-ts'ai between 1933 and 1934, when he died, apparently of natural causes. Replaced by Li Yung.

Chu Shao-liang (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Commander of the KMT Eighth War Area (Headquarters Lanchow) who flew to Urumchi in March 1942 to negotiate Sheng's break with the Soviets and realignment with Chungking. Troops under Chu entered Sinkiang from Kansu in June 1943. In September 1944 Chu was appointed Acting Chairman of the Sinkiang Government (to be replaced by Wu Chung-hsin in October of that

year). According to HMCU Turrall, the CC Clique-influenced Chu was: ‘a splendid chap, with a direct manner, bulldozer jaw, and tommy-gun laugh . . . drinks like a fish and holds it like a British consul’. IOR, L/P&S/12/2405, EXT.271.1945.

Dālīl Khan (Kazakh, ?–1949):

Naiman Kazakh chief who supported the ‘progressive’ faction within the ETR and assumed administrative control over Shara Sume following ‘Uthmān Bātūr’s break with the Kulja regime. Killed in air crash *en route* to Peking on 27 August 1949.

Fan Yao-nan (Han Chinese, ?–1928):

Japanese-educated ‘modernist’ appointed by Chinese national government to post of *tao-yin* of Aksu under Yang Tseng-hsin. Subsequently rose to become *tao-yin* of Urumchi, and then Sinkiang Provincial Commissioner for Foreign Affairs. On 7 July 1928 Yang was assassinated at an official banquet, reportedly at Fan’s instigation. Within a few hours of Yang’s death, Fan Yao-nan, his accomplices and members of their immediate families were put to death on the orders of Chin Shu-jen.

Fucha Afandi (Mongol, dates unknown):

Mongol of the Ili region supposedly associated with the ‘progressive’ faction of the ETR. Fucha Afandi’s name suggests that he may have been an Islamicised Mongol.

Glimkin (Russian, dates unknown):

‘White’ Russian ‘progressive’, according to KMT sources a member of the pro-Soviet STPNLC, and subsequently a member of the ETR central staff in 1945.

Hāfiż (Uighur, ?–1937):

Native of Turfan. Commander of Uighur troops owing allegiance to Temür, Kuchalik leader during 1933 Muslim rebellion. Involved in prolonged dispute with forces of Khotan *Amirs* during siege of Yarkand New City in April–May, 1933. Subsequently advanced into Khotanlik territory as far as Guma. On hearing of Timür’s execution at Kashgar (9 August 1933), Hāfiż withdrew to Yarkand, and subsequently to Kashgar. Served as magistrate at Yangi Hissar from June 1934 to June 1935. Killed by Ma Hu-shan’s Tungans at Yarkand in June 1937.

Hākim Beg Khoja (Uighur, dates unknown):

Native of Ili. An influential landowner, who became deputy president of the ETR (along with the ‘White’ Russian Polinov) in 1945. Following the official disbandment of the ETR and ‘Ali Khān Türe’s abduction in 1946, Hākim Beg Khoja became titular head of the Ili administrative district, though real power was exercised by Aḥmadjān Qāsim. Subsequent fate unknown.

Hsiung Fa-yü (Han Chinese, ?–1933):

Second in command to Chu Jui-ch’ih during Ma Chung-ying’s siege of Kumul (28 June–1 November 1931). Subsequently responsible for mass executions at

Kumul and for destruction of much of the oasis. Killed by the Tungan leader Ma Fu-ming at Turfan during the winter of 1932–33.

Huang Han-chang (Han Chinese, ?–1937):

Secretary-General of Sinkiang Provincial Government (as figurehead) under Sheng Shih-ts’ai. Accused of being a ‘Fascist–Trotskyite’ plotter during the Sinkiang purges of 1937, and thought to have been executed at that time.

Huang Mu-sung (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

KMT ‘Pacification Commissioner’ sent to Sinkiang in June, 1933, ostensibly to halt conflict between Ma Chung-ying and Sheng Shih-ts’ai. Accused by Sheng of conspiring to effect his overthrow, Huang was placed under house arrest and only permitted to leave Sinkiang after wiring a recommendation to Nanking that Sheng be confirmed in his post.

Husayn Teyci (Kazakh, dates unknown):

Thought to have been a Kirei Kazakh, probably a native of the Barkul region. Fought prolonged guerilla struggle against Sheng Shih-ts’ai before emigrating, in 1936, to the Gez Köl region with Sultān Sharif. Fled to Kashmir following CCP victory. Subsequently resettled in Anatolia by Turkish government.

İd Mirāb (Kirghiz, dates unknown):

Leader of 1932 Kirghiz rebellion in central T’ien Shan. Movement suppressed by joint Sino-Soviet military action. Subsequent fate unknown.

İsa Yüsuf Alptekin (Uighur, dates unknown):

Anti-Soviet Uighur nationalist, probably a native of Kashgar. An intellectual. Fled to China proper to escape Sheng Shih-ts’ai, and settled in Nanking (subsequently Chungking), where he collaborated with Muḥammad Amīn Bughra in the publication of *T’ien Shan* and *Altai*. Returned to Sinkiang in 1945. Became Second Provincial Secretary-General under Chang Chih-chung, a post he continued to hold under Mas’ud Şabri. İsa lost this position in January, 1949. Fled to India over the Karakoram Pass in 1949–50, in the company of Muḥammad Amīn Bughra. Later settled in Istanbul, Turkey.

Ishāq Beg (Kirghiz, 1903–49):

Native of Aksu region in southern Sinkiang. Travelled to Soviet Union shortly after 1917 revolution. Said by Chen (*Sinkiang Story*, p. 228) to have returned to southern Sinkiang in 1922, and to have ‘distinguished himself’ in Kirghiz rising against Chin Shu-jen. According to KMT sources and Barnett, however (see n. 156, p. 326), Ishāq re-entered Sinkiang as commander of GPU unit sent to aid Sheng Shih-ts’ai during 1930s. Became c-in-c of Ili National Army in 1945. One of the most important figures attached to the ‘progressive’ faction within the ETR. Reportedly strongly pro-Soviet. Killed in air crash *en route* to Peking on 27 August 1949.

Ismā‘il Beg (Uighur, dates unknown):

Native of Aksu. Thought to have been follower of Khotan *Amirs*. On 31 May 1933 drove Ma Chan-ts’ang’s Tungan forces from Aksu, and became rebel *tao-yin* of that oasis. Subsequent fate not known.

Ismā'il Khān Khoja (Uighur, dates unknown):

Mine-workers' leader from Karakash, southern Sinkiang, who led local miners in 1933 rising. Later believed to have joined the Khotan *Amīrs*. Subsequent fate not known.

Jānib Beg (Kirghiz, dates unknown):

Basmachi leader who fled to Sinkiang and was detained by Ma Shao-wu, apparently at the request of the Soviets. Was banished to Keriya oasis in 1931, but made common cause with the Khotan *Amīrs* during the 1933 rebellion, and returned to Kashgar at the head of 1,000 Khotanlik troops. On 13 July Jānib was arrested by Timūr in a sudden coup, possibly organised and financed by the Soviet Consulate-General. Strongly anti-Soviet, Jānib later succeeded in escaping across the frontier into Afghanistan. Subsequent fate not known.

Janīm Khan (Kazakh, ?–c. 1951):

Kirei Kazakh leader, ally of 'Uthmān Batūr. Described by Barnett as 'illiterate (but) . . . undoubtedly popular' (*op. cit.*, p. 257), became Commissioner of Finance in Chang Chih-chung's coalition government (1946). Captured at Gez Köl by the PLA in 1951, he was taken to Urumchi and shot.

'K'a-la-wan' (? Qalāwūn – presumed Kirghiz or Tajik, dates unknown):

Nothing is known of this Muslim rebel leader who, according to Chang Ta-chün, administered the Sarikol area under the ETR.

Kamāl Kaya Efendi (Osmanli Turk, dates unknown):

Apparently a native of Istanbul. Reported to have entered Sinkiang from the Soviet Union in the company of another Istanbul Turk. Both men apparently exiled opponents of Kemal Atatürk. Kamāl arrived in Urumchi c. 1930, ostensibly as a merchant, but was arrested by Chin Shu-jen, probably as a supposed spy. He was later released – minus his goods – and made his way to Kansu, where he entered into service with Ma Chung-ying. Kamāl had apparently seen service during the first World War, and subsequently during the Russian Civil War. Subsequently he became Ma Chung-ying's chief-of-staff. Kamāl is supposed to have been instrumental in encouraging Ma's invasion of Sinkiang in 1931 – according to Cable and French, in a bid to revenge himself on Chin Shu-jen. Later he served as Ma Chung-ying's chief-of-staff during the second Tungan invasion of 1933–34. According to Georg Vasel (*Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien*, p. 7), Kamāl had served in the German Imperial Army in Elbing before travelling to Paris, where he graduated from the French Military Academy. Later he served under Von Epp in the Caucasus (as a staff officer). If this information is correct, then Kamāl's contribution to Ma Chung-ying's war effort is likely to have been very great indeed. Again according to Vasel (*op. cit.*, p. 15), Kamāl was captured by pro-Soviet forces in Kumul during 1934 and sent to Urumchi. Instead of being imprisoned or executed, however, he is said to have been made Commissar for Road Construction in Sinkiang. He may, therefore, have been a Soviet agent. Subsequent fate unknown.

Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī – see under Niyās Ḥājjī, Khoja.

Kichik Akhund (Uighur, dates unknown):

Subordinate of Mahmūd *shih-chang* and fellow officer of 'Abd al-Niyās, in command of Uighur troops stationed near Yarkand in early 1937. Became involved in 1937 'sabil-illāh' rebellion against Soviet influence and Sheng Shih-ts'ai. Captured Kashgar Old City 30 May 1937. Later advanced towards Aksu, but was routed by provincial forces. Subsequent fate unknown.

Ku Chien-chi (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Vice-Commissioner of Reconstruction in the 1946–47 coalition government of Chang Chih-chung. Member of KMT and partisan CC Clique.

Kuang Lu (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Native of north-western Sinkiang. Deputy General-Secretary of the Sinkiang Government under Chin Shu-jen. Travelled to Nanking in 1929. Instrumental in Sheng Shih-ts'ai's decision to go to Sinkiang. Played a key role in Sheng's negotiations with Consul-General Apresoff in 1934. Subsequently posted to Tashkent as Sinkiang consul. Recalled in 1938 and imprisoned as a 'Trotskyist'. Released in 1942, he served under the KMT as an adviser on Sinkiang affairs, subsequently transferring to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Taiwan. Thought during the 1930s and early 1940s to have been pro-Soviet. According to Whiting (*Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot*, xiv), he was offered a post in the ETR, but declined.

Kung Cheng-han (Han Chinese, c. 1904–?):

Sheng Shih-ts'ai's Pacification Commissioner for southern Sinkiang, 1934–5. Replaced by Liu Pin.

Lan Yen-shou (Hui, dates unknown):

Vice-Commissioner of Sinkiang Provincial Government purged by Sheng Shih-ts'ai for 'conspiracy' in 1939. Subsequent fate not known.

Leskin, F. (Russian, dates unknown):

A 'White' Russian of the Ili Valley. 'Progressive' supporter of the ETR. Became a senior officer in the INA (under Ishāq Beg). Responsible for stemming initial KMT counter-attack at Kensai, near Sairam Nor, in December 1944. Defeated elements of the KMT 29th Army at Sairam Nor on 30 January 1945. Subsequent fate not known.

Li Hai-ju (Han Chinese, dates unknown):

Probably a native of Northeast China. Commander of the provincial forces at Kitai during Ma Chung-ying's second invasion. Kitai fell to the Tungans in late May 1933, but Li's fate is not known.

Li Hsi-ts'eng (Han Chinese, dates unknown):

Probably a native of Ho-chou region, Kansu. Divisional Commander in Sinkiang provincial forces stationed at Kumul in 1930. Suggested to Chin Shu-jen that Khanate should be absorbed following death of Maqsūd Shāh.

Li Yi-ch'ing (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Sheng Shih-ts'ai's chief-of-police in 1943–4, and a trusted political subordinate. Following Sheng's departure from Sinkiang in 1944, Li conducted his own

purge of Sheng's prisons, during which an estimated 400 to 500 prisoners were 'liquidated'. Li was subsequently dismissed and permitted to return to China proper by Wu Chung-hsin.

Li Yung (Han Chinese, ?–1940):

Native of Kansu. Figurehead Provincial Chairman of Sinkiang under Sheng Shih-ts'ai from 1934. Died in the spring of 1940.

Liu Meng-hsun (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Secretary-General of the Sinkiang coalition government under Chang Chih-chung. Member of KMT. Closely associated with CC Clique.

Liu Pin (Han Chinese, c. 1895–?):

Native of Northeast China. Commander of Northeastern troops who arrived in Sinkiang via the Soviet Union in March, 1933. At first Chief-of-Staff to Sheng Shih-ts'ai, then commander in Ili region. Appointed C-in-C Kashgar in August, 1934. Lost favour and transferred as a result of Mahmûd shih-chang's flight to India. Said to have been appointed chief inspector of gold mines, Sinkiang, in 1937. IOR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941, p. 17, concludes: 'his subsequent history is not definitely known, but it is believed that he has been done away with'.

Liu Wen-lung (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Commissioner of Education under Chin Shu-jen. Later became figurehead Provincial Chairman (under Sheng Shih-ts'ai's *Tupan*-ship) in 1933. Liu was confirmed in office by Nanking on 1 August 1933, and forced from that office by Sheng Shih-ts'ai in September, to be replaced by the more pliable Chu Jui-hsi.

Lo Tsu (?Han Chinese, –1949):

Supporter of the ETR who died in plane crash *en route* to Peking on 27 August 1949. Possibly his chief significance to the ETR (and to the mythology constructed around the ETR following its dissolution) lay in his (non-Muslim, non-Russian) ethnic origin.

Lo Wen-kan (Han Chinese, 1888–1941):

Nationalist Foreign Minister. Travelled to Urumchi by air on 2 September 1933 to negotiate between Sheng Shih-ts'ai and Ma Chung-ying. Under his auspices a truce was reached and Ma was appointed Garrison Commander of Eastern Sinkiang. Shortly after Lo's departure in October, this truce broke down.

Lu Hsiao-tsu (Han Chinese, dates unknown):

Chin Shu-jen's chief secretary. A civilian with little or no military experience, he was appointed c-in-c of the provincial forces during Ma Chung-ying's 1931 invasion. Replaced by Chang P'ei-yüan during the same year because of his incompetence.

Lung Hsieh-lin (Han Chinese, dates unknown):

District magistrate at I-ho hsien, Kumul, under Chin Shu-jen. Responsible for expropriation of Uighur land and settlement of Han Chinese settlers from Kansu leading up to Kumul rising in 1931.

Ma Chan-ts'ang (Hui, dates unknown):

Tungan Muslim of Kansu. Emerged as leader of rebel forces in Kara Shahr region during 1932–3. Entered into alliance with local Uighur leader Temûr. Advanced towards Kashgar, capturing Aksu. Reached Kashgar in May, 1933, but fell out with local Turkic leaders and in August, 1933, came under siege in Kashgar New City. Relieved by units of Ma Chung-ying's forces under Ma Fu-yüan in February, 1934. Withdrew to Khotan under Ma Hu-shan in July, 1934. Arrested by Sheng Shih-ts'ai after collapse of Tungan forces in 1937. Subsequent fate not known.

Ma Chin-shan (Hui, dates not certain):

Tungan Muslim. Son of Ma Pu-fang, 'Wu Ma' warlord of Tsinghai from 1938 to 1949. Ma Chin-shan was therefore a scion of the Ma family of Pieh-tsang, near Ho-chou, Kansu. Commander of Tungan cavalry deployed in Sinkiang by KMT after 1944. Reported to have put down Uighur rising at Turfan in 1948. Later joined Yulbârs Khân in opposing PLA entry into Sinkiang. According to Jack Chen, most of Chin-shan's troops surrendered to the Communists, but he escaped with Yulbârs to Tibet, where he joined up with the anti-Communist Tibetan Khamba rebels (*The Sinkiang Story*, p. 271).

Ma Chung-chieh (Hui, c. 1913–1933):

Tungan Muslim of Kansu. Younger brother of Ma Chung-ying. Led 1933 Tungan invasion of Sinkiang. Captured Kumul in May. Killed leading successful attack on Kitai later in same month.

Ma Chung-ying (Hui, c. 1910–c. 1937):

Tungan Muslim of Ho-chou, Kansu. Shared same paternal grandfather as 'Wu Ma' warlords Ma Pu-ch'ing and Ma Pu-fang. Chung-ying, the fifth of the 'Five Ma' warlords, was to achieve perhaps the greatest notoriety of all. Entered military service in 1924. Fought against Kuominchün forces of Feng Yü-hsiang. Travelled to Nanking in 1929, where he enrolled briefly in military academy. Invaded Sinkiang in 1931. Failed to take Kumul, and was wounded in leg. Returned in 1933. Would certainly have seized control of province but for Soviet intervention. Withdrew to Kashgar in April 1933 and to Soviet territory in July of that year. Subsequent fate unknown, though almost certain to have been executed by Stalin.

Ma Fu-hsing (Hui, c. 1851–1924):

'Panthy' Muslim of Yunnan. How Fu-hsing came to be in Sinkiang is not clear. However, at the time of the 1911 Revolution he was appointed head of the Tungan levies raised by the Ch'ing authorities at Urumchi. He remained in Urumchi under Yang Tseng-hsin until 1915, when he was appointed *T'i-t'ai* at Kashgar. Ma *T'i-t'ai*, as he became better known, was responsible for a reign of terror in southern Sinkiang which lasted until 1924, when he was shot.

Ma Fu-ming (Hui, dates unknown):

Tungan garrison commander at Turfan under Chin Shu-jen; went over to Ma Chung-ying in the autumn of 1932. Captured and executed Hsiung Fa-yü, the Han officer in charge of repression at Kumul, during the winter of 1932–33. Subsequent fate not certain, but probably withdrew to southern Sinkiang.

Ma Fu-yüan (Hui, dates unknown):

Tungan Muslim of Kansu. On staff of Ma Chung-ying. According to Yulbärs Khân, participated in fateful dinner at Soochow in June, 1931, when Ma Chung-ying 'decided' to intervene in Sinkiang. Later took part in Ma Chung-ying's invasion, lifting siege of Kashgar New City in February, 1934. Captured Yangi Hissar in March. Responsible for looting and massacres in both Kashgar and Yangi Hissar Old Cities, apparently in revenge for 'Kizil Massacre' of June, 1933. Later withdrew with Ma Hu-shan to Khotan. Later believed to have returned to Kansu.

Ma Hu-shan (Hui, 1910–1954):

Tungan. Brother-in-law (or, possibly, half-brother or cousin) of Ma Chung-ying. Succeeded Chung-ying as c-in-c of KMT 36th Division and as leader of Tungan forces in Sinkiang following latter's flight to Soviet Union. Absolute ruler of 'Tunganistan' between 1934 and 1937. Eventually compelled by mutiny amongst his own troops to escape across the Himalayas to India. Returned to China in 1938. According to Kao Han-jen (*The Imam's Story*, 1960), Hu-shan led a Tungan rebellion against the Chinese Communists in the early 1950s. He was captured in 1954 and executed at Lanchow (*op. cit.*, pp. 93–8, 'Fate of a Hero').

Ma Ju-lung (Hui, dates unknown):

Tungan of Kansu. Commander of Ma Hu-shan's First Brigade (KMT 36th Division), which occupied Kashgar Old City during Muslim rebellion of 1937. According to British diplomatic sources 'an illiterate, but rather a pleasant man to deal with'. Fled to India with Ma Hu-shan in 1937. Subsequent fate not known.

Ma Shao-wu (Hui, 1980–c. 1937):

'Panthalay' Muslim of Yunnan. Trusted lieutenant of Yang Tseng-hsin. Appointed garrison commander at Kucha in 1914; later rose to be *amban* at Uch Turfan. In June 1924 shot Ma Fu-hsing at Kashgar on Yang Tseng-hsin's orders. Became chief civil authority in Kashgar (and, by extension, in all south Sinkiang) from 1927. Besieged in Kashgar New City with Ma Chan-ts'ang's Tungans during period of TIRET. Later reappointed, but victim of attempted assassination (on Sheng Shih-ts'ai's orders?) in October, 1934. A loyal supporter of Nanking, he was probably too anti-Soviet for Sheng's 'progressive' period. Thought to have been executed after failure of 1937 Muslim rebellion—though he was almost certainly not involved.

Ma Sheng-kuei (Hui, c. 1900–?):

Tungan. Childhood spent in Kansu and Shensi 'in bad company'. Later became bandit in Ningsia. 'In the pursuit of his livelihood he was very cruel and tortured his victims' (IOR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910. 1941). He joined Ma Chung-ying in 1933 and travelled to Sinkiang 'to seek his fortune'. Later went to Khotan as commander of Ma Hu-shan's Second Brigade. Participated in fighting surrounding 1937 Muslim rebellion in southern Sinkiang, but mutinied at Fayzabad and joined provincial forces. Later posted to Khotan in subordinate position. Believed to have returned to Kansu.

Ma Shih-ming (Hui, dates unknown):

Tungan of Kansu. On staff of Ma Chung-ying. Participated in Ma Chung-ying's supposed dinner party with Yulbärs Khân at Soochow in June, 1931. Led first Tungan assault on Kumul in 1931. Later remained in Sinkiang to lead Tungan units near Turfan after Ma Chung-ying had been wounded and withdrawn to Kansu. Subsequent fate not known.

Mahmûd Muħītī shih-chang (Uighur, dates unknown):

Native of Turfan. Originally a rich merchant, became chief military commander of Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī's Kumullik forces in 1933–34. After endorsing Khoja Niyās Ḥājjī's agreement with Sheng Shih-ts'ai, became c-in-c Uighur forces in Kashgar area, July, 1934. Hostile to Sheng's increasingly close alliance with Soviet Union. Fled to India in the autumn of 1937 before making his way to Mecca. Later (1940) reported to be in Japan (IOR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910. 1941).

Mahmûd Nadîm Bay (Osmanli Turk, dates unknown):

Companion of Muṣṭafa 'Ali Bay, an anti-Kemalist exile who appeared briefly in Kashgar as 'adviser' to the TIRET in November, 1933.

Mao Tse-min (Han Chinese, 1895–1943):

Brother of Mao Tse-tung. Named Minister of Finance in the Sinkiang government from 1937 to 1942. Arrested and executed by Sheng on charges of plotting against his government.

Maqṣūd Shāh (Uighur, c. 1864–1930):

Khân of Kumul. Acceded to throne in 1908 on death of his father, Muhammad. Maqṣūd ruled over some 25–30,000 Kumulliks, paying a small annual tribute to the Chinese administration in Urumchi. Friendly to the Chinese, he wore Chinese clothes and spoke Turkic with a marked Chinese accent. When Maqṣūd died in 1930 (of old age), he was briefly succeeded by his son Naṣîr, but Chin Shu-jen intervened to seize control of the Kumul oasis, thus creating the conditions for the Kumul rising of 1931.

Mas'ūd Sabrī (Uighur, 1886–1952):

A native of Ili, the son of a wealthy merchant and landlord. Educated in Kulja and Istanbul. Lived in Turkey from 1904 to 1915. Imprisoned by Yang Tseng-hsin in 1924 but released after ten months. Political adviser to Mahmûd shih-chang in 1934–37. Fled to India and thence to Nanking in 1937. Became closely involved with KMT and especially CC Clique during 1938–45. Returned to Sinkiang in 1945 as Provincial Inspector-General. Became first Uighur chairman of Sinkiang in 1947. Offered post of Chinese Ambassador to Iran in 1948, but refused. Arrested by CCP in 1951, died in prison in 1952.

Muhammad Amīn Bughra (Uighur, 1901–65):

A native of Khotan. Muslim scholar and Turkic nationalist. Anti-Chinese, anti-Soviet, anti-Tungan, opposed to Christian missionary activities in Sinkiang. In 1921 became Professor of Islamic Literature at the Yeni Medrese, Karakash, Sinkiang. Became involved in secret separatist activities c.1922. Founding member and leader of Khotanlik CNR, he became the eldest

'Khotan Amir' and real power behind the Khotanlik Muslim rising of 1932–4. Unlike his two younger brothers, Muhammad Amīn remained in his native Khotan throughout the rising. Later escaped advancing Tungans of Ma Hu-shan and fled via India to Afghanistan, where he was granted a pension by the Afghan government. Subsequently may have considered an alliance with pro-Japanese forces before, in 1943–5, returning to China where he 'continued his struggle through legal means' by becoming a member of the Chinese Constituent Assembly in Chungking. During this period he edited the journals *T'ien Shan* and *Altai* together with 'Īsa Yūsuf Alptekin. Returned to Sinkiang to serve as Commissioner of Reconstruction in the 1946 coalition government. Escaped CCP takeover in 1949 and once again fled to India. Five years later he moved to Turkey where he died, of a heart attack, in 1965. His family live today in Ankara and administer the Muhammād Amīn Bughra *waqf* (charitable fund). Muhammād Amīn Bughra was perhaps the most eminent secessionist leader to emerge from southern Sinkiang since Muhammād Ya'qūb Beg, and was the author of a number of books and pamphlets advocating an independent Turkic-Muslim Sinkiang.

Muhammad Niyās A'lām (Uighur, dates unknown):

Qādi of Karakash, near Khotan, in 1932. 'President' of the CNR provisional government formed at Khotan on 20 February 1933 under auspices of 'Khotan Amīrs'.

Muhammad Qāsim Jān Hājjī (Uighur, dates unknown):

Foreign Minister of TIRET in 1933–34. Escaped to Karachi.

Muhammad Sharīf Khan (Afghan, dates unknown):

Head of Afghan mission sent to Yarkand in autumn of 1922. Regarded by Yang Tseng-hsin as head of visiting trade delegation, he styled himself 'Afghan Consul-General in Sinkiang', however, and remained at Yarkand for several years. Responsible for the creation of an Afghan 'cult' at Yarkand.

Muṣṭafa 'Ali Bay (Osmanli Turk, dates unknown):

Companion of Mahmūd Nadīm Bay. Apparently an anti-Kemalist exile (? for pan-Turanian reasons) who appeared briefly as an adviser to the TIRET in Kashgar, November, 1933.

Naṣır (Uighur, dates unknown):

Son of Maqṣūd Shāh, Khān of Kumul. Kept as political hostage in Urumchi following his father's death, and forbidden to return to Kumul. Subsequent fate not known, but probably killed by Chin Shu-jen.

Niyās Hājjī, Khoja (Uighur, ?–1937):

Native of Kumul. Leader of north-western Muslim rebel forces in 1933 (with Yulbārs Khan). At first allied to Ma Chung-ying, but later came to terms with Sheng Shih-ts'ai and was appointed Vice-Chairman of the Sinkiang Government in 1934. 'He was an old man and, in Urumchi, completely powerless . . . killed in Urumchi as a result of the 1937 rebellion'. IOR, L/P & S/20, D.226.

Nür Ahmad Bughra (Uighur, ?–1934):

A native of Khotan. Youngest of the three 'Khotan Amīrs', styled 'Amīr Nür

Aḥmad Jān'. Invested Yarkand on behalf of 'Khotan Islamic Government' in 1933. Forced to withdraw from Yarkand New City by Hāfiẓ on 17 July. Subsequently imprisoned in Yarkand Old City. Freed following execution of Temūr, Nür Ahmad took charge of Yangi-Hissar under the TIRET. Killed by Tungan troops of Ma Chan-ts'ang and Ma Fu-yüan on 12 April 1934.

Pai Tzu-li (Hui, ?–1937?):

Tungan Muslim of Kansu. Trusted adviser of Ma Chung-ying. Later became chief-of-staff to Ma Hu-shan during 'Tunganistan' episode. Said to have been shot by Ma Hu-shan during escape to India in September, 1937. 'He was a very shrewd man' (IOR, L/P & S/20/D.226).

Pappengut (Russian, ?–1933/34):

'White' Russian. Former staff officer of Russian Imperial Army; settled in Ili area after White defeat in Russian Civil War. Placed in command of 'White' Russian force press-ganged to fight Ma Chung-ying during 1931. Responsible for relief of Kumul in November, 1931. Shot by Sheng Shih-ts'ai, probably at Soviet request (via Apresoff) in December 1933 or January 1934.

Pogodin (Russian, dates unknown):

NKVD Brigadier-General in charge of Sheng Shih-ts'ai's secret police organisations (Pao-an-chü and Pao-an-tui) during Sheng's 'progressive' period.

Polinov, A. (Russian, dates unknown):

'White' Russian of Ili. Opponent of Sheng Shih-ts'ai (post-1942), and thought to have been a member of the STPNLC. Became Vice-President of ETR in 1945, and led INA cavalry advance from Sairam Nor towards Chuguchak in July 1945.

Pushkin (Russian, dates unknown):

Soviet Consul-General, Urumchi, at the time of Sheng Shih-ts'ai's break with the USSR (1942).

Qādir Beg (Uighur, dates unknown):

Native of Kashgar. Pro-Soviet chief-of-police in Kashgar at the time of 1937 Muslim rebellion. 'Taken to Moscow in 1938; present whereabouts not known'. (IOR, L/P & S/12/2392.EXT.4910.1941). Not to be confused with Qādir Beg, subordinate officer of Khotan Amir 'Abdullāh.

Rahīmjān Sābir Khoja (Uighur, dates unknown):

Member of 'progressive' wing of ETR. Son-in-law of Mas'ūd Sabri. Assistant Commissioner of Civil Affairs in 1946 (Chang Chih-chung) coalition government. Ultimate fate not known.

Sādiq Beg (ethnic origin and dates unknown):

Trade and Commerce Minister of the secessionist TIRET, Kashgar, 1933–4.

Saif al-Dīn 'Azīz (Uighur, c. 1914–)

Son of a well-to-do merchant from Artush, near Kashgar. Educated in Sinkiang, later in the USSR at the University of Tashkent. Fluent in Russian, he joined the CPSU. Returned to Sinkiang after short spell living in Afghanistan. Member of 'progressive' wing of ETR, he served as Minister of

Education (1945–46), and subsequently as Commissioner of Education for Sinkiang in Chang Chih-chung's coalition government (1946–47). In December, 1949, he became vice-chairman of the (CCP) Sinkiang provincial government, and in 1955 Chairman of the Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region. Fell from power in 1978 after death of Mao Tse-tung – discredited by his survivor's role in the Cultural Revolution. Still alive (1981).

Saifullāh (Uighur, dates unknown):

Native of Turfan, member of ETR administration. Said by Barnett to have controlled the Ili youth group *Yashlar Tashkilati* (*op. cit.*, p. 269), though according to Boorman and Howard (*op. cit.*, III, 87–9), this role was fulfilled by Saif al-Din 'Azīz.

Şāliḥ (Uighur, dates unknown):

Partisan of Khoja Niyas Hājjī. A Kumullik, the father of the Uighur girl whose abduction/seduction/or rape by Chang Mu sparked off the Kumul rising. Fought with Khoja Niyas throughout the 1931–34 troubles. Became brigade commander and remained at Kashgar until appointed administrative commissioner at Aksu in 1936. Subsequent history not known.

Sālis (Kazakh, ?–1950/51):

Deputy Secretary-General to the Sinkiang coalition government of Chang Chih-chung (1946–47); fled to Gez Köl and later towards India, in company of Yulbārs Khan. Reportedly killed in Tibet, during winter of 1950–51, by some of Yulbārs' men in a dispute over supplies.

Sātibaldī Jān (Uzbek, c. 1908–?):

Commander of force of some 300 'Andijani' Uzbeks operating in the Yarkand–Kashgar area at the time of the TIRET (1933–34). Sātibaldī was a native of Margelan, in Soviet Central Asia, and was widely suspected, both by local Sinkiang Muslims and by HMCGK, of being pro-Soviet, or even a Soviet agent.

Shams al-Dīn Turdi Hājjī (?Uighur, dates unknown):

Thought to have been a native of Kashgar. Religious Institutions Minister (in charge of *waqf* endowments) under TIRET (1933–34). Fate unknown.

Sharif Khan (Kazakh, dates uncertain):

Leader of Altai revolt directed against Chin Shu-jen in 1933. Fought against Sheng Shih-ts'ai, but may later have come to terms, as one Sharif Khān – quite probably the same man – was appointed administrator of the Altai region later in Sheng's rule, only to be purged in 1940.

Sharif Qārī (Uighur, ?–1934):

A native of Khotan. Justice Minister of the TIRET. Captured and hanged by provincial authorities at Aksu in July, 1934, together 'Abd al-Bāqī Sābit Dāmullāh.

Sheng Shih-ch'i (Han Chinese, ?–1942):

Fourth younger brother of Sheng Shih-ts'ai. Schooled in Moscow military academies; returned to Sinkiang in the winter of 1941–42 and named coman-

der of motorised brigade in Urumchi. Married to Chen Hsiu-ying (qv). Died under mysterious circumstances in March, 1942. Chen Hsiu-ying was accused of, and later executed for, his murder. More probably, however, he was killed by Sheng Shih-ts'ai because of his close links with Moscow.

Sheng Shih-ts'ai (Han Chinese, 1895–?):

Native of Liaoning in Northeast China. Studied in Japan before participating in May 4th Movement. Entered military service under Kuo Sung-ling. Following latter's failed rebellion and execution, Sheng returned to Japan (Shikan Gakko), where he studied until 1927. In that year fought with Northern Expedition as staff officer attached to Chiang Kai-shek's field headquarters. Travelled to Urumchi at request of Chin Shu-jen in late 1929 or early 1930. Fought against Ma Chung-ying's Tungans in 1931–34. Replaced Chin as *de facto* ruler of Sinkiang in April, 1933. Remained warlord of Sinkiang from 1933 to 1944 (much of that time as a virtual puppet of the Soviet Union). Replaced by KMT in 1944, in 1949 he accompanied the KMT to Taiwan where he lived in comfortable retirement with his wife, Ch'iu Yü-fang, who had borne him a daughter and three sons.

Soong Ching-ling (Mme. Chiang Kai-shek, Han Chinese, 1892–?):

Reported to have carried a letter promising 'not only forgiveness for past deeds, but accepting full responsibility for their consequences' from her husband to Sheng Shih-ts'ai, in Urumchi, in August–September, 1942.

Su Chin-shou (Hui, dates uncertain):

Tungan, probably from Kansu. Ma Chan-ts'ang's chief-of-staff. Appointed joint *tao-yin* of Kashgar (with Yūnus Beg) in May, 1933. Subsequent fate not known.

Şüfi Zāda (Nationality and dates not known):

Secretary of the TIRET National Assembly (Kashgar, 1933–34). Fate unknown.

Sultān Beg Bakhtiar Beg (?Uzbek, dates unknown):

A native of Margelan, (Soviet) Uzbekistan. Presumed to be anti-Soviet, probably with Basmachi connections. Fled to Sinkiang after Bolshevik revolution. Became Defence Minister of TIRET (1933–34). Escaped across Himalayas to India, thence to Arabia, where he lived in Ta'if until 1960.

Sultān Sharīf (Kazakh, dates unknown):

Kirei Kazakh chieftain. Together with Husayn Teyci fled to Gez Köl in 1936. Fled to Kashmir following CCP victory. Thought to have been resettled in Turkey.

Sung Hsi-lien (Han Chinese, 1906–?):

Commander of the Sinkiang garrison forces in 1946–7. KMT senior officer under influence of 'Political Science' group.

Tāhir Beg (Nationality and dates unknown):

President of the TIRET National Assembly (Kashgar, 1933–34). Fate unknown.

Tao Chih-yüeh (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Moderate KMT officer who replaced Sung Ksie-lien as c-in-c Sinkiang in 1948. Responsible for surrender of Sinkiang to CCP in September, 1949.

Tawfiq Bay (Arab, dates unknown):

Styled himself 'Sayyid Ahmād Tawfiq Bay Sharīf Efendi'. A native of Syria who served for a time in Arabia under 'Abd al-Azīz ibn Sa'ūd. First arrived in Kashgar from India during 1932 and was deported by Ma Shao-wu. Returned during 1933 rebellion and was put in command of local (Kashgarlik) Uighur forces. Wounded in stomach and later deported by Ṣābit Dāmullāh for corresponding with Khoja Niyās Hājjī. Reported by 1937 to have made his way to Japan. IOR, L/P & S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941.

Temür (Uighur, ?–1933):

A native of Kucha. Emerged as local rebel leader in February, 1933. Initially an ally of Ma Chan-ts'ang, he later changed sides and was captured and executed by Ma's troops on 9 August 1933 at Kashgar.

Tsetsen Puntsag Gegeen (Mongol, ?–1932):

Regent and 'Living Buddha' of the Kara Shahr Torgut Mongols. Murdered by Chin Shu-jen at Urumchi during May, 1932.

Ts'u Chao-chi (Han Chinese, dates unknown):

Almost certainly a native of Kansu. Chin Shu-jen's orderly and bodyguard, appointed to position of brigade commander, Urumchi, in c. 1928. Together with Chin Shu-jen's younger brother, Chin Shu-hsin, reported to have manipulated grain market for private gain during Ma Chung-ying's winter 1932–33 siege of the provincial capital. Fate unknown.

Tu Chih-kuo (Han Chinese, ?–1931):

Commander of the Sinkiang provincial forces under Chin Shu-jen during initial stages of Ma Chung-ying's first invasion. Reported either to have committed suicide, or to have been killed, as a result of Tungan night attack at Ch'i-chiaoching during the summer of 1931.

Tu Chung-yuan (Han Chinese, 1895–1943):

Childhood friend of Sheng Shih-ts'ai. Politically 'progressive' though not, apparently, a member of the CCP, Tu travelled to Sinkiang in 1937. Author of only firsthand book on Sheng's rule in Sinkiang, he served as director of the Sinkiang College until his execution on Sheng's orders in 1943.

'Umar 'Ali (Kirghiz, ?–1933):

Younger brother of 'Uthmān 'Ali, a native of the southern T'ien Shan. Involved in Kizil Massacre of May, 1933. Killed during Kirghiz seizure of Kashgar Old City from Tungan forces of Ma Chan-ts'ang on 16 August 1933.

'Uthmān 'Ali (Kirghiz, c. 1903–c. 1935):

Leader of Kirghiz faction during Kashgar rebellion, 1933–34. Imprisoned at Kashgar, he was released in 1933 by Ma Shao-wu to command Kirghiz levies which later mutinied. Described by Fitzmaurice as a 'heavy opium smoker', 'Uthman was apparently not associated with either the YKP or the 'Khotan

Amirs'. Rather he was an independent, bandit-like figure. Arrested in Kashgar and taken to Urumchi in 1935, he was, doubtless, executed on Sheng Shih-ts'ai's orders.

'Uthmān Bätür (Kazakh, 1899–1951):

Kirei Kazakh, native of the Altai region of northern Sinkiang. Rebelled against Sheng Shih-ts'ai in 1940. Forced to retreat to MPR in 1942, where he received aid from both the MPR and the USSR governments. Temporarily allied with ETR in 1945, he broke with the Kulja regime in 1946 and withdrew to the Peita-shan. Later fought (at least nominally) for the KMT. Refused to accept CCP victory in 1949. Captured and executed by CCP in April 1951.

Wang Tseng-shan (Hui, dates unknown):

Apparently a Tungan (Northwestern Hui). KMT Commissioner of Civil Affairs in the 1946–47 Sinkiang coalition government. Believed to have been associated with the CC Clique.

Wu Ai-chen (Aitchen K. Wu), (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Emissary from Nanking who attempted to mediate between Sheng Shih-ts'ai and Ma Chung-ying in 1933. Author of several books and articles on Sino-Soviet relations and Sinkiang.

Wu Chung-hsin (Han Chinese, 1884–1959):

Native of Anhwei. Military and political associate of Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek. Governor of Anhwei (1932); Kweichow (1935); Chairman of the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission (1936–44). Became Governor of Sinkiang under KMT in 1944–45. Associated with CC Clique.

Wu Tse-hsiang (Chaucer H. Wu), (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

KMT Special Commissioner for Foreign Affairs. Sent to Sinkiang in 1942. Active in negotiations with the Soviet Union during 1942–43.

Yang Tseng-hsin (Han Chinese, 1867–1928):

A native of Meng-tzu, Yunnan. Entered Imperial Civil Service in 1899. Served Ch'ing Administration in Kansu and Ninghsia until his transfer to Sinkiang in 1908. In Sinkiang served as *tao-t'ai* Aksu, then as *tao-t'ai* Urumchi, a post he held in 1911. Assumed *de facto* power from Yüan Ta-hua in March, 1912. Confirmed in this position by Peking later in same year. Yang remained Governor of Sinkiang from 1911 to 1928, when he was assassinated by Fan Yao-nan.

Yang Tsuan-hsü (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Military commandant of Ili region at the time of the 1911 revolution. Served as figurehead leader of the 1911 anti-Ch'ing rising in Ili. Later transferred by Yang Tseng-hsin to Kashgar, where he served as *t'i-t'ai* until August, 1915, at which time he was forced to resign by his own troops (replaced by Ma Fu-hsing, qv).

Yen Yu-shan (Han Chinese, dates unknown):

Sinkiang Commissioner for Reconstruction under Chin Shu-jen. Argued (unsuccessfully) for adoption of conciliatory policy towards Kumullik Muslim rebels.

Yüan Ta-hua (Han Chinese, dates uncertain):

Ch'ing Governor of Sinkiang at time of 1911 revolution. Handed over power to Yang Teng-hsin in March, 1912.

Yulbārs Khan (Uighur, 1888 – believed to have died in mid-1970s):

Native of Yangi Hissar, southern Sinkiang. At the age of 15 entered the service of Muhammad, Khān of Kumul. Later became senior adviser to Muhammad's son, Maqṣūd Shāh (ascended throne in 1908). Gained title 'Khan' in 1922. Fought throughout the 1931 rising against Chin Shu-jen, but was never anti-Chinese nor, apparently, a secessionist. Fled to Nanking in 1937, but returned to Kumul in 1946. Given series of senior appointments by KMT, but, like 'Uthmān Bātūr, refused to accept CCP victory. Fought guerilla action against PLA until winter of 1950–51, when he fled to Tibet. Finally arrived in Taiwan, where he retained the appointment of Governor of Sinkiang in exile, in May, 1951. Yulbārs' wife died during his mid-winter escape across the Tibetan plateau; however, once in Taiwan he married a 19-year-old girl. He had two sons by his first wife, one of whom was called Ya'qūb Beg in honour of the 19th century Sinkiang leader of that name. His other son was called Niyās, possibly in honour of his ally Khoja Niyās Hājjī.

Yūnus Beg (Uighur, ?–c. 1937):

A native of Kumul. Appointed joint *Tao-yin* of Kashgar (with Su Chin-shou) in May, 1933. Later served as Interior Minister of the TIRET in 1933–34. Believed to have been killed by Sheng Shih-ts'ai at Urumchi in 1937. A partisan of Khoja Niyās Hājjī.

Yūnus Hājjī (Kazakh, ?–c. 1940):

Kazakh leader from north-eastern slopes of T'ien Shan. Ally of 'Ali Beg Rahīm. Arrested by Sheng Shih-ts'ai in 1940, and apparently killed.

Yūsuf Jān (? Kirghiz, dates unknown):

Commander of 'Tortunji', pro-Soviet irregulars in Ulugchat–Kashgar region, 1933–34. Reported to have been arrested and taken to Moscow (IOR, L/P & S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941). His subsequent fate is unknown.

APPENDIX II

The constitution and composition of the 'Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan' (TIRET)

According to Fuad Kazak,¹ the draft constitution of the TIRET was drawn up on 3 March 1933, seven months before the founding of the TIRET at Kashgar Old City, but only a few days after the leadership of the Khotanlik Committee for National Revolution (CNR) had met at Khotan Old City to found their provisional administration (the Khotan Islamic government, or 'Government of the Khotan *Amīrs*'). When evaluated together with CNR domination of the TIRET administration, this factor indicates quite clearly that, despite the new and perhaps somewhat grandiose title (*Sharqi Türkistan Türk-Islam Jumhūriyattı*) given to the separatist Turkic administration set up at Kashgar in November 1933, the TIRET was, essentially, the 'Government of the Khotan *Amīrs*' extended to include Kashgar Old City, Maral Bashi and Aksu within its sphere of control.

The full text of the draft constitution was published in the Kashgarlik paper *Istiqlāl* in 1933, and republished in the Berlin- and Paris-based pan-Turanian journal *Yash Türkistan* one year later.² An abridged German translation is given by Baymirza Hayit in his *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*; lists of the senior administrative personnel of the TIRET are provided by Karahoça and Hai, as well as by Hayit.³

Principles of the Constitution

1. The Republic of Eastern Turkestan is based on principles of the *Shari'a* and is ruled by the precepts of the Qur'an which means happiness and dignity to us.
2. The state of Eastern Turkestan, based on the Republic, works for the well-being and peace of the nation. The state takes responsibility for protection against the aggression of others, and regulates the religious, national, cultural and economic affairs of the nation. For the fulfilment of the aspirations of the nation it looks to the government in Nanking and to the League of Nations for the guarantee of its independence.

Central organisation

3. At the head of the state administration is the state President (*Amīr al-mu'minīn*) who rules on the basis of the *Shari'a*.
4. The state is founded on the basis of the nation, consensus, and the legislature. The will and wishes of the nation are expressed through the representatives of the people.

Cabinet

5a. For the administration of the state a Cabinet will be formed in the capital under the chairmanship of the ruler of the faithful (*Amīr al-mu'minīn*). At its head is the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister will have 2 Deputies. In the cabinet are 9 Ministers: Religion & Justice; Defence; Finance; External Affairs; Interior; Trade and Agriculture; Education; Religious Institutions; and Health. The 9 Ministers are divided into 2 groups: the first consists of National Defence and Trade, to which belong the Ministers for Defence, Foreign/External Affairs, Finance and Trade/Agriculture/Industry. This group is led by the First Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet. The second group consists of the Administrative and Cultural Ministries, i.e. Interior, Religious and Justice, Education, Religious Institutions and Health. This group is led by the Second Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet.

Table 3 Ministers of the 'Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan'

<i>Governmental Position</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Ethnic group</i>	<i>Place of origin</i>
1 President and 'Supreme Commander'	Khoja Niyās Hājjī	Uighur	Kumul
2 Prime Minister	'Abd al-Bāqī Sābit Dāmullāh	Uighur	Kulja or Khotan
3 Foreign Minister	Muhammad Qāsim Jān Hājjī	Uighur	Khotan
4 Justice Minister	Sharif Qārī	Uighur	Khotan
5 Interior Minister	Yūnus Beg	Uighur	Kumul
6 Health Minister	'Abdullāh Khan	Uzbek?	Tashkent
7 Defence Minister	Sultān Beg Bakhtiar Beg	Uzbek?	Margelan
8 Education Minister	'Abd al-Karīm Khan	Uighur	Kashgar
	Makhdūm		
9 Finance Minister	'Ali Akhund Bay	Uighur	Kashgar
10 Religious Institutions Minister (<i>waqf</i>)	Shams al-Dīn Turdi Hājjī	Uighur?	Kashgar?
11 Trade and Commerce Minister	Şādiq Beg	?	?
12 Khotan <i>Amīr</i> (with ministerial rights)	Nūr Ahmād Jān Bughra	Uighur	Khotan
13 Communications Minister	'Abdullāh Dāmullāh	?	?
14 President of National Assembly	Tāhir Beg	?	?
15 Secretary of National Assembly	Şūfi Zāda	?	?

The duties of the State President

6b. The State President of the Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan leads the Government and is the Great-Father of the Government (Tk. *Hukumat-ning Büyūk Atası*), Supreme Ruler, Supreme Commander-in-Chief, who is to serve the well-being, order and the future development of the religion, nation and fatherland.

6c. The State President is elected by the National Assembly for four years. But our present President, Khoja Niyās Hājjī, who struggled for the attainment of the freedom of Islam, of the fatherland and of the nation and gained independence, remains President for Life and is finally confirmed in this status by the whole nation and also by the soldiers. The State President nominates the Prime Minister and confirms the Cabinet of the state administration. Note: When the National Assembly convenes, then the State President recommends the Prime Minister and the Ministers to the Assembly for confirmation.

6e. The State President will confirm the decisions of the Cabinet. In cases where he rejects these, he will recommend them to the Cabinet for renewed discussion. If differences arise between the State President and the Prime Minister or the Cabinet, then the Prime Minister resigns. The State President then organises a new Cabinet. The State President will receive foreign embassies, missions and delegations, which are sent to Eastern Turkestan, in the presence of the Foreign Minister.

6h. The State President, as Supreme Commander-in-Chief of all soldiers, will command the army of Eastern Turkestan through the Prime Minister and the Minister of Defence.

6l. The State President, in his decisions confirming or rejecting the resolutions of the Cabinet, will consult the majority, for the Islamic Government of Eastern Turkestan is based on advice and discussion.

Duties of the Prime Minister

7. The Prime Minister is the chief of all Ministers. Because of this he has the right to concern himself with the affairs of each Minister. He is also Chairman of the Cabinet. The Prime Minister calls a meeting/assembly of the Ministers, which is termed the Cabinet, once a week, in extraordinary cases as often as he wishes. All measures of the Government are deliberated at such meetings and resolutions are made concerning them. These are called 'Resolutions of the Cabinet' and are then laid before the National Assembly. If the resolutions are given a majority [vote], they become law. When the National Assembly is not present they are laid before the King (*padishah*).⁴ When the King or Ruler approves the Resolutions of the Cabinet, then they also become law. The Resolutions of the Cabinet are also designated Rules (*nizāmnāma*).

Departments of the National Administration

8. Because the state is based on the highest principles of Islam, a Ministry for Religion and Justice will be formed. The Justice Minister will be counted as *Shaykh al-Islām*. A Religious Department will be formed in the Justice Ministry, which will be termed the 'Department of Announcement' at whose head will be the Mufti. The Ministry of Justice functions as a liaison organ between the Jurisdiction and the Government. The Magistrates of the regions will not be elected. The Minister of Justice (*Shaykh al-Islām*) and the Supreme Magistrate will choose the Chairmen of the courts. The Magistrates will be chosen only by the Justice Minister. The Minister of Justice must take responsibility for the fairness

of the Magistrates through his Inspectors. The Justice Minister is responsible for the conformity of the laws to the *Shari'a*. One of the duties of the Justice Minister is the founding and supervision of prisons, the hygienic and cultural conditions of which must correspond to the moral improvement of the prisoners.

The duties of the Ministry of Defence

9. The first duty of the Ministry of Defence is the organisation of an army, which must be able to defend the territory against foreign armies. For this, a military school will be founded. This military school will be started by highly qualified foreign specialists. It will build military manufacturing plants needed by the army. It will choose military observers to find out the military preparations and objectives of foreign states. An important duty for Eastern Turkestan is the creation of a military college from abroad. This armed-forces college will be made up of teachers specialising in infantry, cavalry, artillery, aeroplanes and tanks. Also, chemical supplies and experts will be brought in and defence armaments procured.⁵

APPENDIX III

Notes on the structure and composition of the 'East Turkestan Republic' (ETR) at Kulja

Comparatively little is known of the ethnic composition and administrative structure of the ETR, though a relatively complex diagram of the latter (which may be open to some question) is appended to Chang Ta-chün's 1964 study, 'Hsin-chiang I-ning shih-pien'.¹ By examining this diagram it is possible to draw certain provisional conclusions concerning the ethnic composition of the ETR. Thus we know that the ETR President (or 'Chairman') was the Uzbek, 'Ali Khan Türe, whilst the two Vice-Presidents were respectively Uighur (Hākim Beg Khoja) and Russian (A. Polinov). Directly responsible to these 3 leading officials were 11 departments (10 ministries and one banking division) and a commission of 17 members which is presumed to be Lee Fu-hsiang's ETR 'National Council'.²

A consistent claim both of the ETR and of its partisans has been that the revolutionary administration set up at Kulja in 1945 represented 'every nationality' within the 'Three Regions'.³ Yet an examination of the names of the Ministers and members of the 'National Council' given by Chang Ta-chün must cast considerable doubt on this proposition. Thus, of the 11 departmental heads identified by Chang (see Table 4), at least 9 were clearly Muslim (though the ethnicity of 7 of these remains problematical), whilst the remaining 2 seem to have been Russian.⁴ Certainly there are no obviously Han Chinese, Mongol or Tunguzic representatives, and the participation of Hui (Tungan) Muslims remains in doubt.⁵

Table 4 *Ministers of the 'East Turkestan Republic' (1946)*

<i>Governmental position</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Ethnic group</i>
1 Minister of War	Polinov	Russian
2 Executive Secretary of the Bank of Ili	Khan Şüfi Hajji	(Muslim)
3 Minister of Propaganda	Manwar Khoja (?)	(Muslim)
4 Minister of Religion	Tse-li (?)	(Muslim)
5 Minister of the Muslim Commission	Se-se-erh Hajji	(Muslim)
6 Minister of Agriculture and Forestry	'Ali Jān Bay	(Muslim)
7 Minister of Education	Saif al-Dīn 'Azīz	(Uighur Muslim)
8 Minister of Foreign Affairs	Aḥmadjān Qāsim	(Uighur Muslim)
9 Minister of Justice	Muhammadjān Makhdūm	(Muslim)
10 Minister of Finance	Anwar Mūsā Bay	(Muslim)
11 Minister of Internal Affairs	Moskelov (?)	(Russian ?)

A similar examination of the 17 members of the 'National Council' reveals the following pattern of religious background and ethnicity:

1. Hākim Beg Khoja	Uighur Muslim
2. A-mu-tou-pu-t'i	Ethnic group not known; 'A-mu-tou' suggests 'Ahmad' – probably Muslim
3. A-li-hai-li-pai-t'i	Perhaps 'Ali Khalifa? Almost certainly Muslim
4. 'Abdullāh Wu-fu-mai	Clearly a Muslim, though the 'Wu-fu-mai' remains problematical
Qāsim	
5. Karīm Hājjī	Muslim
6. Polinov	Russian
7. Mansūr	Muslim. Probably an Uzbek ⁶
8. Ahmādjān Mai	Uighur Muslim. The 'Mai' is probably an error in transliteration
Qāsim	
9. Ssu-a-k'e-pai-ke	Ethnic group and religious background not known; probably Mongol
10. Lai-i-mu-chiang	Probably Rahīmjān, Muslim
11. Sha-li-chiang bai-i	Probably Sharif Jān Bay, Muslim
12. Chu-mai A-hung	Jumay' (or Jam-i') Akhund, Muslim; possibly Hui?
13. Anwar	Muslim
14. Fucha Afandi	Mongol, but probably Muslim ⁷
15. Abu Hayir Türe	Probably 'Abd al-Hayir Türe, Kazakh Muslim
16. Mo-ssu-k'e-lo-fu	Moskelov? – Russian?
17. Waqqāṣ Hājjī	Muslim

It is immediately apparent that there are no Han Chinese names in this list, whilst the presence of Buddhist Mongols and Tunguzic peoples remains very much in doubt. On the other hand, of the 17 Council members, no fewer than 14 are almost certainly Muslim, whilst 2 are Russian. No mention of Lo Tsu, the (presumed) Han Chinese who is reported to have perished in the plane crash which eliminated the entire senior ETR leadership with the exception of Saif al-Dīn 'Azīz, is made in either list.

APPENDIX IV

Soviet intervention in north-western Iran, 1945–6: A West Asian parallel with the 'East Turkestan Republic' in Sinkiang

In any balanced evaluation of Soviet involvement in the establishment and consolidation of the ETR at Kulja in 1945–6, it is appropriate to consider a series of contemporaneous and probably parallel political developments in north-western Iran, where, in December 1945, an 'Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan' (together with a related 'Kurdish Republic of Mahabad') was established through a pattern of subversion similar to (but not identical with) that employed by the Soviet Union in north-western Sinkiang.¹

In August 1941, Iran had been simultaneously invaded by Soviet and British forces, acting in conjunction, in a move designed to exclude German influence from that country. Iran was subsequently divided into British and Soviet zones of influence, with the Red Army assuming control over the northern part of the country, and the British taking over the south, including the entire concession area of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company.² From the very beginning of this enforced partition, there emerged a marked difference between conditions in Soviet and British zones. According to Lenczowski, 'Whereas the British considered their presence in Iran a temporary expedient . . . the Russians gave early signs that they were embarking upon a long-range policy that would effect basic changes in the political, economic and social life of the provinces under their control.'³

As in Sinkiang during Sheng Shih-ts'ai's 'progressive' period, pro-Soviet elements (in this case primarily the Iranian Tudeh Party) were encouraged, pro-Soviet propaganda was widely disseminated, and local attention was drawn to historical and cultural links existing between ethnically akin groups (Azerbaijanis, Kurds, Turkmen) living on either side of the Soviet–Iranian frontier.⁴ In September 1944, only months before the establishment of the secessionist 'East Turkestan Republic' in Sinkiang, the Soviet Assistant Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Sergei Kavtaradze, arrived in Tehran ostensibly to discuss the exploitation of oil reserves at the negligible (and previously unworked) Soviet-held oil concession of Kavir–Khurian, near Semnan.⁵ Shortly after his arrival, however, Kavtaradze dropped all pretence of discussing Kavir–Khurian, and demanded a new Soviet oil concession which would cover all five northern provinces of Iran bordering on the Soviet Union. Not unnaturally, the Iranian Premier Sa'ed demurred, and Kavtaradze left Tehran after denouncing 'the disloyal and unfriendly position taken up by Premier Sa'ed towards the Soviet Union' and appealing to the Iranian people to bring pressure upon their government 'for a favourable solution to the dispute'.⁶

Under the terms of the Anglo-Soviet–Persian treaty of 1942, it had been agreed

that allied forces occupying Iran should be withdrawn from that country within six months of the cessation of the war.⁷ During the summer of 1945, however, shortly after the surrender of Germany, the appearance of an 'Azerbaijan Committee for National Liberation' (cf. STPNLC), was reported in the Soviet-occupied north-western provinces of Iran where the authority of the Tehran government 'had been reduced virtually to zero'.⁸ In August 1945, Tudeh-led disturbances broke out in Tabriz, and an Azerbaijani 'Democratic Party' was established, incorporating both local Tudeh supporters and Soviet Azerbaijanis brought in from across the frontier.⁹ Meanwhile, several new divisions of the Red Army entered Iran (bringing total Soviet strength in the area to between 30,000 and 70,000 men), and large quantities of arms were distributed by the Russians both to local 'progressives' and to sections of the peasantry.¹⁰ Throughout this period, central government officials and troops were excluded from the area, and it must have come as little surprise to Tehran when, on 12 December 1945, an 'Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan' was proclaimed at Tabriz under the leadership of Ja'far Pishavarī, a veteran Comintern agent who had been Commissar of the Interior in the short-lived 'Soviet Republic of Gilan' during 1920–1.¹¹ Three days later, on 15 December 1945, a 'Kurdish People's Republic' was declared at Mahabad, in the presence of Soviet officials, under the leadership of one Qādī Muḥammad.¹²

There can be no doubt that in 1945 (as, indeed, today) the predominantly Turkic population of Iranian Azerbaijan felt considerable antipathy towards the central government in Tehran, partly because of their persecution at the hands of Rizā Shāh, and partly because the central authorities did not permit the official use of the local (Āzārī) dialect of Turkish. (Kurdish hostility towards Tehran has, of course, been a long-established factor in Iranian politics.) Nevertheless, the situation in north-western Iran could not be compared to that in Sinkiang (which had been in a state of almost constant armed rebellion since the Kumul rising of 1931), and the ineffectual Azerbaijani 'People's Army' cobbled together by the Soviets¹³ was in no way comparable to the INA in Ili. The survival of both the 'Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan' and the 'Kurdish Republic of Mahabad' was therefore entirely dependent upon the presence of Soviet troops in northern Iran. Accordingly, the Iranian authorities were obliged to travel to Moscow to seek satisfaction, where they were informed that 'The Soviet government would abandon its demand for an oil concession. Instead it proposed that an Iranian-Russian joint stock company be set up with 51% of the shares owned by the Soviets and 49% by Iran.'¹⁴

The chief reason for Soviet intervention in Iran thus became clear – and indeed parallels with Tu-shan-tzu in Sinkiang are immediately apparent. As Allen S. Whiting has pointed out, several features of the Azerbaijan affair invite comparisons with the Ili Revolt. Both risings occurred in areas adjacent to the Soviet Union, and in both instances the Soviet Union could supply covert support for the rebels from ethnically akin groups resident within its own frontiers.¹⁵ Only in their outcome did the two revolts differ substantially; thus, following initial Iranian acceptance of Soviet demands for oil concessions in the insurgent area, and as a result of strong pressure for Soviet withdrawal from Britain, the USA and the UN, the Red Army pulled back across the Soviet frontier in May 1946. Within six

months, Iranian government troops crossed into Azerbaijan to put down the rebellion. Ja'far Pishavarī succeeded in escaping to Soviet territory, but Qādī Muḥammad was apprehended at Mahabad and hanged.¹⁶ Subsequently all traces of the separatist regimes were effaced by Tehran, and on 22 October 1947 the Iranian Majlis abrogated the oil agreement forced on it by the Soviet Union.¹⁷ In Sinkiang, by contrast, retribution was to be less direct – though no less effective – and was to be postponed for a number of years pending the installation of a strong, centralised government at Peking which might once again extend Chinese authority to the remote frontier regions of Inner Asia.

British Consuls-General at Kashgar, 1909–48¹

November 1909	Sir George Macartney ²
August 1918	Col P. T. Etherton
May 1922	N. Fitzmaurice
July 1922	C. P. Skrine
September 1924	Col Lyall
July 1925	Maj. Gillan
October 1927	F. Williamson
October 1930	G. Sherriff
September 1931	N. Fitzmaurice
November 1933	Col J. W. Thomson-Glover
October 1936	Capt. K. C. Packman
October 1938	Maj. H. H. Johnson
November 1940	E. Shipton
October 1942	M. C. Gillett
March 1945	R. G. Etherington Smith
November 1946	E. Shipton

Notes**Introduction**

1. All population statistics in this section are taken from Lattimore O., *Pivot of Asia: Sinkiang and the Inner Asian Frontiers of China* (Boston, 1950), pp. 106–10.
2. It may be assumed that a Han presence, often extremely small, has existed in the area which is now Sinkiang from the early years of the Western Han Dynasty (BC 206–24 AD); these Han remained an administrative minority, however, and did not put down permanent roots, preferring to return to China whenever possible after their tour of duty. In between their periods of ascendancy the Han 'either remained an alien minority, returned to their homeland, or disappeared in savage massacres which they often invited by their own misrule' (Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 139).
3. Fletcher, J. F., 'Ch'ing Inner Asia, 1800–62', in Fairbank, J. K. (ed.), *The Cambridge History of China, X (Late Ch'ing, 1800–1911)*, Part 1, p. 90.

1 Sinkiang, 1911–28: the administration of Yang Tseng-hsin

1. From a scroll hanging on the gate of the Governor's *yamen* in Urumchi. Wu, Aitchen K. (Wu Ai-chen), *Turkistan Tumult* (London, 1940), p. 32.
2. Boorman, H. L., and Howard, R. C., *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China* (NY, 1967), IV, p. 11. The *chin-shih* was Ch'ing China's highest literary degree.
3. Skrine, C. P., and Nightingale, P. *Macartney at Kashgar* (London, 1973), p. 212.
4. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, IV, p. 11.
5. *Ko-lao-hui* ('Elder Brothers' Society): a powerful anti-Ch'ing secret society introduced to Sinkiang in the latter half of the nineteenth century by soldiers in the army of Tso Tsung-t'ang.
6. Yang, R., 'Sinkiang Under the Administration of Governor Yang Tseng-hsin, 1911–1928', *CAJ*, XI, 1 (1961) pp. 281–2.
7. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, IV, p. 11.
8. *ibid.*
9. Yang, R., 'Sinkiang', pp. 276–7.
10. Skrine and Nightingale, *Macartney at Kashgar*, p. 178; cf. Sykes, E., and Sykes, P., *Through Deserts and Oases of Central Asia* (London, 1920), p. 296.
11. Yang, R., 'Sinkiang', p. 278.

12. Sir George Macartney, British representative and subsequently Consul-General at Kashgar (1890–1918), cited in Skrine and Nightingale, *Macartney at Kashgar*, p. 243.
13. Yang, R., ‘Sinkiang’, p. 284.
14. *ibid.*
15. Ewing, T. E., ‘Revolution on the Chinese Frontier: Outer Mongolia in 1911’, *JAH*, xii, 2 (1978), p. 101.
16. Bawden, C. E., *The Modern History of Mongolia* (London, 1968), pp. 197–8.
17. Yang, R., ‘Sinkiang’, p. 299.
18. MacMurray, J. V. A., *Treaties and Agreements With and Concerning China* (Oxford, 1921), pp. 1066–7.
19. Nyman, L. E., *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian, and Japanese Interests in Sinkiang, 1918–34* (Malmö, 1977), pp. 25–6.
20. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, pp. 46–7.
21. Yang, R., ‘Sinkiang’, p. 271.
22. Yang built up a family hierarchy, posting his relatives from one end of his domain to the other. In 1927 all the district magistrates in southernmost Sinkiang, from Kashgar to Keriya, with two or three exceptions, were related to him either directly or by marriage. Bosshard W., ‘Politics and Trade in Central Asia’, *JRCAS*, xvi, 4 (1929), p. 436.
23. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 39.
24. IOR, L/P & S/12/2342 (*Kashgar Annual Reports, 1922–31*), P.4839. 1924.
25. Davidson, B., *Turkestan Alive* (London, 1957), p. 104.
26. For details of the Ts'ai O Rebellion see Clubb, O. E., *Twentieth Century China* (London and NY, 1965), pp. 56–7.
27. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 43.
28. A Yunnanese official, by name Chang (Wu, *ibid.*).
29. Wu, *ibid.*, pp. 43–4. This story is also related by Hsieh Pin, the Inspector of Education who was present at the dinner party in question, in his *Account of Travels in Sinkiang* (Shanghai, 1925), p. 135 (cited in Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 53). It seems probable that Yang Tseng-hsin deliberately used theatrical effect to create terror amongst his opponents; cf. Roerich, N., *Altai-Himalaya* (London, n.d.), p. 280.
30. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 54.
31. Lattimore, O., ‘The Chinese as a Dominant Race’, *JRCAS*, xv (1928); also in *Studies in Frontier History* (London, 1962), pp. 231–4.
32. Rossabi, M., *China and Inner Asia* (London, 1975), p. 221.
33. Yang, R., ‘Sinkiang’, pp. 289–90.
34. *ibid.*, p. 291.
35. The emergence of a number of powerful, quasi-independent Tungan satrapies to the east, in Kansu, Tsinghai and Ningxia, must have added to Yang's concerns.
36. *Statement made by Muhammad Yussuf Effendi, Late in the Service of the Ameer of Kashgar* (1880, Command Paper 2470, Vol. 78), pp. 95–7.
37. Before the Russian conquest of Khokand, the Ch'ing had been obliged to pay an annual supplement to the Khan of Khokand to prevent his inter-

- ference in Sinkiang. A treaty forced on the Ch'ing by Khokand in 1831 allowed Khokandi extraterritoriality in Sinkiang and permitted Khokandi agents to collect taxes in this Chinese territory. Kuropatkin, A. N., *Kashgaria* (Calcutta, 1882), pp. 143–4.
38. Bennigsen, A., and Lemercier-Quelquejay, C., *Islam in the Soviet Union* (London, 1967), p. 15.
39. Zenkovsky, S. A., *Pan-Turkism and Islam in Russia* (Cambridge, Mass., 1960), pp. 60–1.
40. Hostler, C. W., *Turkism and the Soviets* (London, 1957), pp. 130–2.
41. Nor did Gasprinskiy forget the ‘cameleer of Kashgar’ in his scheme – Bennigsen and Lemercier-Quelquejay, *Islam*, p. 39.
42. *ibid.*, pp. 42, 54–5; Zenkovsky, *Pan-Turkism*, pp. 24–36.
43. Bennigsen and Lemercier-Quelquejay, *Islam*, p. 47.
44. *ibid.*, pp. 46–7.
45. *ibid.*, p. 39.
46. *ibid.*, p. 48.
47. Yang, R., ‘Sinkiang’, p. 287; Skrine and Nightingale, *Macartney at Kashgar*, pp. 184, 203.
48. Yang, R., ‘Sinkiang’, pp. 305–8. According to R. Yang, Yang Tseng-hsin calculated the total number of Kazakh refugees in Sinkiang to be over 300,000 – surely an over-estimate. Jackson, W. A. Douglas (*The Russo-Chinese Borderlands*, Princeton, 1962 p. 51) puts the figure at 100,000, but gives no source reference.
49. IOR, L/P & S/10/976 (*Kashgar Diaries, October 1925*), P.4211. 1925.
50. Macartney, G., ‘Eastern Turkistan: The Chinese as Rulers Over an Alien Race’, *Proceedings of the Central Asian Society*, 10 March 1909, pp. 18–19.
51. Macartney visited Husayn Bay Bachcha at his home in Artush during June, 1908. Skrine and Nightingale, *Macartney at Kashgar*, p. 157.
52. *ibid.*, pp. 248–9.
53. Hostler, *Turkism and the Soviets*, p. 156.
54. Despite this concern, Yang fully appreciated his own weakness *vis-à-vis* the Soviet government, and scrupulously avoided involvement in the Basmachi-Soviet struggle in Western Turkestan. Rossabi, *China and Inner Asia*, p. 227.
55. IOR, L/P & S/12/2342, P.4839. 1924.
56. Wingate, R. O., ‘Education in Chinese Turkestan’, *JRCAS*, xvi, 3 (1929), p. 326.
57. Four years after the Bolshevik Revolution, in 1921, the Mongolian People's Republic was established under Soviet tutelage, on Yang's north-eastern flank. In 1925 Feng Yü-hsiang, ‘Christian General’ and nominal warlord of North-West China, suddenly stopped baptising his troops with fire hoses, formed an alliance with the Soviet Union, and moved into the north-western provinces in force. Yang, at this time almost surrounded by the Soviet Union and its protégés, was obliged to reinforce his eastern garrisons against potential attack from Feng. He also attempted to forge closer links with the British in Kashgar.
58. IOR, L/P & S/12/2342, P.4839. 1924.

59. Bosshard, W., 'Politics and Trade in Central Asia', *JRCAS*, xvi, 4 (1929), p. 438. According to the Scottish missionary G. W. Hunter, who lived in Sinkiang for over 40 years, 'Not one newspaper of any kind, Chinese or Sart [i.e. Turkic], is allowed to be printed or circulated in the whole of Chinese Turkestan, no doubt for political reasons', 'The Chinese Moslems of Turkestan', *MW*, x, (1920), p. 170.
60. Cable, M., and French, F., *Through Jade Gate and Central Asia* (London, 1950), p. 263.
61. IOR, L/P&S/12/2342, P.4839.1924.
62. Roerich, N., *Altai-Himalaya*, p. 280.
63. i.e. 'South Road', from the Ch. *T'ien-Shan nan-lu*, 'the road to the south of the T'ien Shan'.
64. Skrine and Nightingale, *Macartney at Kashgar*, p. 214; 'New Style' troops were supporters of the 1911 Revolution, and had removed their queues.
65. In August 1914, the Ch'ing title *Tao-t'ai* was changed to the Republican designation *Tao-yin*.
66. Yang, R., 'Sinkiang', p. 284.
67. Skrine and Nightingale, *Macartney at Kashgar*, p. 229.
68. *ibid.*, p. 243.
69. Kashgar, like most of the oasis towns of Sinkiang during this period, was divided into two towns, the old Muslim city (Ch. *Shu-fu*) and the new Chinese city (Ch. *Shu-leh*). At Kashgar, which had a population of about 40,000, both cities were surrounded by moats and thick crenellated walls pierced by iron gates which were shut at sunset. Skrine and Nightingale, *Macartney at Kashgar*, p. 19.
70. Bailey, F. M., *Mission to Tashkent* (London, 1946), p. 23.
71. Skrine and Nightingale, *Macartney at Kashgar*, p. 243.
72. *ibid.*, pp. 253–4.
73. *ibid.*, p. 247.
74. *ibid.*, p. 246.
75. See Appendix V, 'British Consuls-General at Kashgar, 1909–48'.
76. Skrine, C. P., *Chinese Central Asia* (London, 1926), pp. 86–8; see also Blacker, L. V. S., *On Secret Patrol in High Asia* (London, 1922), pp. 15–16.
77. Skrine, *Chinese Central Asia*, p. 86.
78. *ibid.*, p. 85.
79. IOR, L/P&G/12/2342, P.4839.1924; Skrine, *Chinese Central Asia*, p. 261; Etherton, P. T., 'Chinese Turkestan', *The Asiatic Quarterly Review*, xx (1924), pp. 247–8.
80. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story* (NY, 1977), p. 173; cf. Etherton, 'Chinese Turkestan', p. 249.
81. Skrine, *Chinese Central Asia*, p. 262.
82. Skrine, *Chinese Central Asia*, p. 85; Nazaroff, P. S., *Moved On! From Kashgar to Kashmir* (London, 1935), p. 78; see also Etherton, P. T., *In the Heart of Asia* (London, 1925), pp. 66–7; also *idem.*, pp. 105–6, for an account of the singularly brutal excesses of Ma Fu-hsing's son.
83. Nazaroff, *Moved On!*, p. 75.
84. *ibid.*, pp. 78–9.

85. Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 28.
86. Skrine, *Chinese Central Asia*, p. 262.
87. *ibid.*, p. 263.
88. Skrine, *Chinese Central Asia*, p. 264. Uch Turfan (Tk. 'Crooked Turfan'), so called 'because of its long, straggling rows of houses, to distinguish it from the larger and more famous Turfan' about 300 miles further to the east: Schomberg, R. C. F., *A Turkestan Diary, 1926–29*, p. 44.
89. Skrine, *Chinese Central Asia*, p. 265.
90. Various unsavoury details surround the execution of Ma Fu-hsing. According to Nicholas Roerich (*Altai-Himalaya*, p. 163), Ma Shao-wu personally shot the *T'i-t'ai* after the latter had been crucified for two days; Skrine suggests that his hands and feet were packed in a box and sent to Yang Tseng-hsin at Kashgar (*Chinese Central Asia*, p. 269). The official report of the British Consulate (IOR, L/P&S/12/2342, P.4839.1924, also written by Skrine) simply states that he was shot on 2 June.
91. For a contemporary photograph of Ma Shao-wu, taken shortly after the execution of Ma Fu-hsing, see Roerich, G. N., *Trails to Inmost Asia* (New Haven, 1931), p. 66.
92. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 59.
93. Kuropatkin, A. N., *Kashgaria*, pp. 60–88.
94. For detailed figures of Sinkiang–Russian trade in 1913 see Mu Ning, 'Su-lien yü Hsin-chiang sheng ti shang-yeh kuan-hsi' (Trade Relations Between the Soviet Union and Sinkiang), *Hsin Ya-hsi-ya* (Nanking), vi, 5 (Nov. 1933), pp. 42–3.
95. *ibid.*, p. 43.
96. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 59.
97. According to Russian statistics, only 300 tons of goods were exported to Sinkiang in 1920. Mu Ning, 'Su-lien yü Hsin-chiang', p. 44.
98. That is, by weight; by value the proportion must have been still higher. (Based on figures in Mu Ning, 'Su-lien yü Hsin-chiang', p. 43.)
99. Mu Ning, 'Su-lien yü Hsin-chiang', p. 44.
100. See section on mineral resources (especially jade, gold, copper, oil and coal) of southern Sinkiang, *The China Year Book*, 1924–5 (Tientsin, 1924), pp. 601–2.
101. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, pp. 56–8.
102. Rossabi, *China and Inner Asia*, p. 221.
103. Lattimore, 'The Chinese as a Dominant Race', p. 209.
104. *ibid.*
105. *ibid.*, cf. Lattimore, O., 'Chinese Turkistan', in *Studies in Frontier History* (London, 1962), p. 193.
106. Lattimore, 'The Chinese as a Dominant Race', p. 209.
107. Nyman, *Great Britain and Russian, Chinese and Japanese Interests*, p. 30.
108. Lattimore, 'The Chinese as a Dominant Race', p. 210. In this 1928 article Lattimore fails to make clear the important role played by tax on cultivated land (almost all of which was Uighur-owned). However, in his *Pivot of Asia* (p. 59) it is established that land tax was, in fact, the major source of provincial revenue.

109. *The China Year Book*, 1924–5, p. 605.
110. Yang was effectively compelled to sign the Ili Trade Agreement of 1920 under the unspoken threat of Soviet occupation of the Ili Valley (Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 36). Similarly it seems likely that Yang extended further trade facilities to the Soviets, including the right to establish a motor service from Kazakhstan to Urumchi, in return for Soviet restraint being placed upon their protégé in Kansu, the 'Christian General' Feng Yü-hsiang (Lattimore, 'The Chinese as a Dominant Race', p. 216).
111. Roerich, G. N., *Trails to Inmost Asia*, p. 118; cf. Roerich, N., *Altai-Himalaya*, p. 280.
112. Nyman (*Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 31), says that the provincial authorities were unwilling to introduce modern methods of gold-mining because they 'feared the political consequences of a goldrush'. According to C. P. Skrine, however, the Turkic peoples often knew of gold deposits, but 'kept them secret to prevent the Chinese starting mines and forcing the local people to work in them' (*The China Year Book*, 1924–5, p. 602).
113. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 58. Bosshard, 'Politics and Trade in Central Asia', p. 436.
114. Hedin, S., *Across the Gobi Desert* (London, 1931), p. 348.
115. Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 26.
116. Bosshard, 'Politics and Trade in Central Asia', p. 437.
117. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 52.
118. Lattimore, O., *Inner Asian Frontiers of China* (Boston, 1962), p. 189.
119. See, in particular, Fletcher, 'Ch'ing Inner Asia', pp. 87–90; also Schwarz, H. G., 'The Khwājas of Eastern Turkestan', *CAJ*, xx, 4 (1976), pp. 266–95; Forbes, A. D. W., 'Muslim Separatism in Northwest China During the Republican Period, 1911–1949', Ph.D. thesis (University of Leeds, 1981), pp. 61–9.
120. *sayyid* (Ar.), a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad through the line of his grandson, Hussein.
121. IOR, L/P&S/12/2356, P.1349.1930.
122. Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 30.
123. *ibid.*
124. Schomberg, R. C. F., 'A Second Turkestan Diary, 1930–31' (unpublished ms in the library of the Royal Society for Asian Affairs, London), p. 82.
125. See, for example, Vasel, G., 'Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien', *Berichte des Asiens Arbeitkreises* (Vienna), 1 (Feb. 1939), p. 15.
126. Castagné, Joseph, 'Le problème du Turkestan chinois (Sinkiang)', *REI*, VII, 2 (1933), p. 159.
127. Bergman, Folke, in Hedin et al., *History of the Expedition in Asia, 1927–1935* (4 vols., Stockholm, 1934–45), 1, p. 246, fn.
128. Roerich, G. N., *Trails to Inmost Asia*, pp. 115–19. According to Roerich, Yang's mistrust of the Tungans dated from his execution of Ma Fu-hsing, *T'i-t'ai* of Kashgar, in 1924. Roerich claims that Ma Fu-hsing was a cousin of Ma Ch'i of Hsi-ning, and that the latter was preparing an invasion of

- Sinkiang at the time of the Roerich Expedition's visit. Whilst this account may be factual, it should be noted that Ma Ch'i was a genuine 'Tungan' – i.e. a Hui Muslim of the north-west – whilst Ma Fu-hsing was a Hui Muslim of Yunnan. This does not preclude the possibility of the two men having been cousins, but it diminishes its likelihood.
129. Roerich, *ibid.*, pp. 116–17 (traditional Chinese window panes are, of course, made of oiled paper – but Roerich must have been aware of this).
130. Anon., 'His Excellency Yang Tseng-hsin', *JRCAS*, XVI, 1 (1929), p. 89.
131. *ibid.*
132. Bosshard, 'Politics and Trade in Central Asia', p. 436; cf. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 58.
133. Cable, M., and French, F., *The Gobi Desert*, 2nd edition (London, 1943), pp. 232–3.
134. Roerich, N., *Altai-Himalaya*, p. 280; Hedin et al., *History of the Expedition in Asia*, 1, p. 252.
135. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, IV, p. 13.
136. Nyman, *Great Britain, Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 73; there is an excellent photograph of Fan in Filchner, W., *Om Mani Padme Hum* (Leipzig, 1939), facing p. 17.
137. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 46.
138. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, VI, p. 13.
139. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 47. Yen remarked to Yang that 'tigers were awkward beasts to handle'; Yang replied 'not to a tiger trainer'.
140. In his conversation with Filchner, Fan criticised Yang bitterly, and pointed meaningfully at his head. Filchner, *Om Mani Padme Hum*, pp. 40–1.
141. Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 74; cf. Nemchemko M., 'Kolonial'nyi rezhim i agrarnye otnosheniya v Sin'tsyane' (The Colonial Regime and Agrarian Relations in Sinkiang), *Problemy Kitaya*, VIII–IX, 3–4 (1931), pp. 182–3.
142. Anon., 'His Excellency Yang Teng-hsin', p. 87.
143. From the eye-witness account of Yen Ting-shan ('the trusted Yen'); Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 49. See also the detailed account of Yang's assassination, together with a photograph of Yang, Fan, Yen and the other main protagonists, in Sven Hedin's *Riddles of the Gobi Desert* (London, 1933), pp. 60–70.
144. Hedin, *ibid.*
145. According to G. N. Roerich (*Trails to Inmost Asia*, p. 119), 'Fan Yao-han [sic] and his daughter were condemned to the *ling-chi*, a torture of being cut alive into 10,000 pieces. Fan was made to witness the horrible death of his daughter.' See also the lurid account of Fan's execution in Hedin et al., *History of the Expedition in Asia*, 11, p. 4.
146. See, for example, the works of Hedin, Lattimore, Rossabi, Wu and (especially) Yang, cited in the present chapter.
147. Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 28.

2 Sinkiang, 1928-31: the rebellion at Kumul and the first Tungan invasion

1. Wu Ai-chen (Aitchen K. Wu), 'Will China Lose its Far West', *Asia* XXXIX (1939), p. 675.
2. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, I, p. 381. In later years Chin was to claim that he never wished to go to Sinkiang: 'when Governor Yang of Sinkiang first sent for me to join him . . . I twice refused to go. On the third occasion he added the taunt that I was afraid to leave my quiet country life for that dangerous region, and I could refuse him no longer.' Hogg, G., *I See a New China* (London, 1945), p. 118.
3. Two sources which indict Chin as an opium addict are: Cable and French, *The Gobi Desert*, p. 219; Nyman, *Great Britain and Russian, Chinese and Japanese Interests*, p. 80. Georges Le Fèvre, who met Chin during the Citroën Expedition's stay in Urumchi (in 1931), does not mention opium, but describes a dinner party at which Chin, 'sunk deep in his chair, eyes half-closed, preserved his habitual mask, turning his head towards a speaker without listening, looking without seeing, nodding without understanding, and smoking innumerable cigarettes, which were lit and inserted into his long jade cigarette holder by one of his guards'. *An Eastern Odyssey* (London, 1935), pp. 260-1.
4. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, I, p. 381.
5. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 65.
6. IOR, L/P & S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933. (*Report of R. P. Watts, British Vice-Consul Kashgar, dated 21 October 1932*).
7. Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight* p. 3; IOR, L/P & S/12/2342, PZ.5695.1931. (*Kashgar Annual Report, 1930-31*).
8. In another change of terminology under the new KMT system the eight *Tao-yin* (Circuit Intendants) became known as *Hsiang-chung ch'ang-kuan* (Executive Chief Officials). For ease of reference the term *Tao-yin* will be retained in the present study.
9. A lampoon current in Urumchi during Chin's rule ended with the couplet, 'In the morning learn the Hochow dialect, and you'll get a fat job in the evening.' Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, p. 171.
10. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, I, p. 381; Chan, Fook-lam Gilbert, 'The Road to Power: Sheng Shih-ts'ai's Early Years in Sinkiang (1930-34)', *Journal of Oriental Studies*, VII (1969), p. 230; cf. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 65.
11. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, I, p. 381.
12. IOR, L/P & S/12/2331, PZ.5443.1932. According to members of the Citroën Expedition, who were detained by Chin in Urumchi for some months during 1931, the Provincial Chairman maintained an incinerator at his *yamen* where all imported printed matter was burned. Le Fèvre, *An Eastern Odyssey*, p. 173. For other details of censorship, see Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, p. 3; Hedin et al., *History of the Expedition in Asia*, II, p. 202; Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 80.
13. Hedin et al., *History of the Expedition in Asia*, II, p. 202.

14. Le Fèvre, *An Eastern Odyssey*, p. 261; Hedin et al., *History of the Expedition in Asia*, II, p. 25.
15. Chin almost certainly realised that, in contrast to Yang Tseng-hsin's time, contemporary political conditions militated against a prolonged period of personal power; for this reason he was probably anxious to amass a personal fortune and to return to China proper as soon as possible.
16. Chiang Chün-chang, *Hsin-chiang chin-yin lun* (Chungking, 1939), p. 136. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 66; cf. IOR, L/P & S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933.
17. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 66; Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 81. According to an anonymous article published in the Tashkent edition of *Pravda* for 8 August 1930, 'It is not possible to define accurately the limits of the taxes paid by the Tien Shan peasants, since they are collected not only in the form of a land tax (5 to 10 per cent of the crop), but also by means of forced work, by the collection of money for the use of officials, by the surrender of a fixed number of days' work to the priest [sic], by the rural administration, etc.' (Translation from the Russian in IOR, L/P & S/12/2331, PZ.477.1931, 'Tien Shan on the Verge of a Crisis').
18. IOR, L/P & S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933; Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 66; Hedin et al., *History of the Expedition in Asia*, II, p. 202.
19. Nemchenko, 'Kolonial'nyi rezhim i agrarnye otnosheniya v Sin'tsyane', p. 187.
20. Hedin et al., *History of the Expedition in Asia*, II, p. 202; cf. Nyman's suggestion that 'even Governor Chin indulged in gold export by air to China proper' (implying widespread bullion export by Chin's subordinates), *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 85. According to Nemchenko ('Kolonial'nyi rezhim', p. 182), between two and three million dollars' worth of gold and Mexican silver dollars were exported annually from Sinkiang during the administration of Chin Shu-jen.
21. Vasel, the author of two travel books on North-West China, is clearly author of the anonymous, but overtly National Socialist article 'Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien', *Berichte des Asiens Arbeitkreises*, I (1939), pp. 5-30. I am obliged to David Gordon for pointing this out to me.
22. Vasel, G., *My Russian Jailers in China* (London, 1937), p. 97.
23. PRO, FO 371/16214 - F 3035/340/10. Schomberg, R.F.C., *Report on Sinkiang, 1930-31*, esp. pp. 2, 4; see also IOR, L/P & S/12/2331, PZ.5443.32 (*Information supplied by Revd H. French Ridley, China Inland Mission, recently returned from Urumchi*).
24. Hedin, *Across the Gobi Desert*, p. 348.
25. Le Fèvre, *An Eastern Odyssey*, p. 263. The rate demanded by the avaricious Chin Shu-jen was 250 per cent that asked by the Urumchi representatives of the various Tientsin firms operating in Sinkiang.
26. Chin forbade the British Consul General at Kashgar to visit Urumchi; IOR, L/P & S/20/976, P.3679.1929 (*Kashgar Monthly Diaries, Feb. 1929*); he made considerable difficulties for the Citroën Expedition (Le Fèvre, *An Eastern Odyssey*, pp. 253-68, 'In the Trap of Urumchi'), and for Hedin's Sino-Swedish Expedition (*History of the Expedition in Asia*, II, pp. 25-31).

27. Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, p. 3. See, however, Lattimore, O., *High Tartary* (Boston, 1930), pp. 304–6, for an alternative view.
28. Most notably Lt Col. R. F. C. Schomberg and Georg Vasel, both of whom have already been cited. Hedin, the leader of the Sino-Swedish Expedition, was later (in 1933) employed by the Nanking government to study the possibility of improved road links with Sinkiang. (Hedin, S., *The Silk Road* (London, 1938), pp. 9–14). Nyman characterises Chin's period of rule as a time when 'Sinkiang became the target of political influence from Great Britain, the Kuomintang, Japan, Germany and Turkey' (*Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 79). Chin's reaction was to exclude as many foreigners as possible.
29. Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, p. 3.
30. cf. Chapter 1, p. 32 above.
31. Camel caravans travelling from Sinkiang to China proper left Ku-ch'eng-tzu (Kitai) for the railhead in Sui-yuan via Inner Mongolia, a distance of over 1,200 miles; alternatively carts left Kumul for the railhead in Shensi via Kansu, travelling an even greater distance. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 172.
32. Barber, A., and Hanwell, N. D. 'The Emergence of China's Far West', *FES*, viii, 9 (26 April 1939), p. 103.
33. See above, p. 31; also Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, pp. 35–8. IOR, L/P&S/2/2336. PZ.3394.1932 (Soviet Trade with Sinkiang) contains a detailed report on 'Sovsintorg', the Soviet–Sinkiang Trading Company.
34. Khalatov, A., *O Turkestano-Sibirskoi Zheleznoi Doroge* (Moscow, 1927), pp. 29–31, cited in Dallin, D. J., *Soviet Russia and the Far East* (New Haven, 1948), p. 91; cf. Cheng Tien-fong, *A History of Sino-Russian Relations* (Westport, Conn., 1975), p. 168.
35. Chan, Fook-lam Gilbert, 'The Road to Power', p. 231; Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, pp. 66–7. Ts'eng Wen-wu, 'Su-o tui Hsin-chiang chih ching-chi ch'in-lüeh' (Soviet Russia's Economic Aggression Against Sinkiang), *Hsin Yashi-ya* (Nanking), vii, 2 (Feb. 1934) p. 50.
36. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 172.
37. *ibid.*, pp. 66–7. According to the anonymous article 'Tien Shan on the Verge of a Crisis' (*Pravda*, 8 August 1930), trade between the USSR and Sinkiang increased eightfold between 1925 and 1930. (IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.477.1931).
38. Beloff, M., *The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia, 1929–41* (London, 1966), i, pp. 231–2.
39. Wu Ai-chen travelled to Sinkiang on behalf of the Nanking government during 1932 by this route. *Turkistan Tumult*, pp. 5–20.
40. Beloff, *Foreign Policy*, i, p. 231; cf. Cheng Tien-fong, *A History of Sino-Soviet Relations*, p. 169.
41. Cable and French, *The Gobi Desert* (London, 1943), p. 220.
42. Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 80.
43. IOR, L/P&S/12/2342, PZ.5695.1931 (*Kashgar Annual Report, 1930–31*).
44. IOR, L/P&S/2/2336 (*Lt Col. Schomberg's Report on Sinkiang, 1930–31*), p. 21.

45. *ibid.*, p. 9 ('Action Against the Nomads').
46. Lin Tung-hai 'Impressions of Sinkiang', *People's Tribune*, ns, v, 10, (16 Dec. 1933), p. 534.
47. PRO, FO 371/14270 – F 2031/416/10 (Schomberg, 'Memo on Chinese Turkestan'), p. 3.
48. *ibid.*
49. Matsumura Jun, 'Mindai Hami oke no kigen' (On the Origin of the Royal Family of Kumul [Ha-mi] during the Ming Period), *Toyo Gakuho*, xxxix, 4 (March 1957), pp. 32–48. Less important 'princely states' existed in Sinkiang at Lukchun, Aksu and Kucha (Hedin et al., *History of the Expedition in Asia*, i, p. 225). According to Von le Coq, who visited Kumul in 1906, only the rulers of Kumul and Lukchun were *mamlakat wang*, or 'Kings of the realm', whilst the ruler of Aksu was merely a *khizmat-kar-wang*, or 'titular king'. Von le Coq, A., *Buried Treasures of Chinese Turkestan* (London, 1928), p. 150.
50. Schomberg, R. F. C., 'Hami or Komol', *JRCAS*, xvi, 1 (1929), p. 91. The Bai referred to lies to the north-east of the Karlik Tagh, at approximately 94°55' east, 43°30' north, and should not be confused with the much larger Bai in the central T'ien Shan foothills.
51. Schomberg, R. F. C., *A Turkestan Diary, 1926–29* (unpublished ms in the library of the Royal Society for Asian Affairs), p. 45.
52. Mannerheim, C. G., *Across Asia* (Oosterhout, 1969), p. 382.
53. Schomberg, 'Hami or Komul', p. 91; also *idem.*, *Peaks and Plains of Central Asia* (London, 1933), p. 82.
54. See map 4, based on a map in Mannerheim, *Across Asia*, p. 386.
55. Schomberg, 'Hami or Komul', p. 92.
56. *ibid.*
57. Yang did experience some slight troubles at Kumul during the first year of his rule (Yang, R., 'Sinkiang Under the Administration of Yang Tseng-hsin', pp. 289–90).
58. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933 ('Khanate of Hami'), p. 3.
59. *ibid.* Note, however, that both Mannerheim, *Across Asia*, pp. 380–5, and Cable and French, *The Gobi Desert*, pp. 220–1, state that the Khan sometimes overtaxed his subjects.
60. Cable and French, *The Gobi Desert*, p. 220.
61. Schomberg, 'Hami or Komul', p. 92.
62. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, pp. 67–8; Hai, Badruddin Wee-liang, 'Muslim Minority in China' (unpublished MA thesis, Columbia University, NY, 1956), p. 100. Hai's information, at least, must be treated with caution, as he calls Maqṣūd Khan's successor 'Shakir'.
63. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933 (Watts), p. 3; Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 62; Cable and French, *The Gobi Desert*, p. 220; Cheng Tien-fong, *History of Sino-Soviet Relations*, p. 169; Chan, *The Road to Power*, p. 234.
64. It is, unfortunately, almost impossible to establish the true course of events, since no account is entirely reliable. All Western sources are secondary. Chinese and Turkic sources are strictly limited and equally strictly unreliable. Even when retrospective first-hand accounts of events taking place in

- Republican Sinkiang are available – *viz.* works by Sheng Shih-ts'ai and Yulbārs Khan in the bibliography – they invariably attempt to whitewash the activities of their respective authors.
65. Chan, *The Road to Power*, p. 234.
 66. Schomberg, 'Hami or Komul', p. 93.
 67. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 62. The names I-ho and I-wu date from the Han dynasty, and were presumably adopted by Chin Shu-jen in an attempt to provide historical legitimacy for his actions. Fu Tung-hsien, *Chung-kuo Hui-chiao shih* (A History of Islam in China) (Changsha, 1940), p. 174.
 68. Chan, *The Road to Power*, p. 234; Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 62.
 69. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933 ('Khanate of Hami'), p. 3. Tu Chung-yüan, *Sheng Shih-ts'ai yü hsin Hsin-chiang* (Sheng Shih-ts'ai and the New Sinkiang), (Shanghai, 1938), p. 65, states that Naṣīr bribed Chen to avoid harm.
 70. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 62; Cable and French, *The Gobi Desert*, p. 220.
 71. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 68.
 72. See, for example, Cable and French, *The Gobi Desert*, pp. 220-1.
 73. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 63.
 74. *ibid.*
 75. *ibid.*
 76. Chan, *The Road to Power*, p. 234.
 77. For accounts of conditions in contemporary Kansu see Harris, G. K., 'The Rebellion in Kansu', *MW*, xix, 3 (1929), pp. 291-8; Ekvall, R. B., 'Revolt of the Crescent in Western China', *Asia*, xxix (1929), pp. 994-7; 1004-7; also Sheridan, J. E., *Chinese Warlord: The Career of Feng Yü-hsiang* (Stanford, 1966), pp. 193-7 ('The Kuominchün in Kansu').
 78. Bonlin, B., 'Palaeontological and Geological Researches in Mongolia and Kansu, 1929-33', in Hedin *et al.*, *History of the Expedition in Asia*, iv, p. 285. See also Bohlin's plate 7a, *op. cit.*, p. 284.
 79. According to one contemporary Russian source, the fertile acreage of Sinkiang amounted to between 750,000 and 850,000 hectares, but only 5 per cent of this was under cotton or 'scientific' cultivation; failure to develop agriculture was blamed on excessive land tax. The same source indicates that famine threatened large parts of Sinkiang in 1930, with the mass of the peasantry subsisting on maize cake. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.447.1931.
 80. Chan, *The Road to Power*, p. 234; Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 68.
 81. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, pp. 63-4.
 82. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 68. According to Badruddin Wee-liang Hai ('Muslim Minority', p. 181), expropriated Uighur land was also given to Han officers in Chin's army.
 83. According to two Chinese sources, Lung Hsieh-lin withheld the petition from Chin Shu-jen. Chan, *The Road to Power*, pp. 234-5; Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 64.
 84. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933, p. 3. According to Lattimore the Kumulliks were further angered by a decree issued by the new administration requiring every citizen to purchase a set quota of salt daily from the

- Kumul Salt Bureau; alternatively they might pay cash for a 'salt certificate'. *Pivot of Asia*, p. 68.
85. Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, p. 3.
 86. According to Gilbert Fook-lam Chan, 'Sinkiang Under Sheng Shih-ts'ai, 1933-44' (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Hong Kong, 1965, p. 87, fn. 15), the full name of 'tax collector Chang' is not given in any source; in the recently published memoirs of Yulbārs Khan, however, Chang's name is given in full as Chang Mu; Yao-lo-po-shih (Yulbārs), *Yao-lo-po-shih hui-i lu* (A Record of the Memoirs of Yulbārs), (Taipei, 1969), p. 78.
 87. Hai, 'Muslim Minority', has 'Shiao-pu', whilst Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, has 'Siao-pu'. Romanisations of place-names at Kumul used in the present study are taken from the Chinese forms used in Wu's Chinese work, *Hsin-chiang chi-yu fu Su-lien yu-chi* (Shanghai, 1935), pp. 173-9, hence Hsiao-p'u, etc.
 88. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 65.
 89. IOR, L/P&S/12/2392, Ext. 4910.1941 ('Who's Who in Sinkiang to 15th April 1940'), p. 19 (Saleh Lu Cheng). Hai, 'Muslim Minority', pp. 101-2, calls the girl's father 'Abdullāh. The two names are not mutually exclusive.
 90. The story of Chang's attempted marriage to a Muslim girl grew almost out of recognisable proportions as it spread westwards from Kumul across the Muslim world. In 1933 the British Consul-General at Kashgar heard that Turkic girls were demanded as wives by all the Chinese officials at Kumul (IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933, p. 3), whilst, according to an Iranian source dated Teheran 1960, 'Thousands of Chinese were moved *en masse* into Turkestan, and the people of Turkestan were forced to give their daughters in marriage under the threat of prison and torture', Ismā'il, M. S. and Ismā'il, M. A., *Moslems in the Soviet Union and China* (JPRS, 3936, 1960), p. 8.
 91. Hai, 'Muslim Minority', *op. cit.*, pp. 101-2.
 92. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 66. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 69, confirms that the settlers from Kansu were killed. For an account of the 'Hsiao-p'u incident' in Arabic, see Hai, Badruddin Wee-Liang, *Ta'rīkh al-Muslimīn fi al-Sin* (Tripoli, Lebanon, 1974), pp. 122-3.
 93. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 66.
 94. *ibid.* According to R. P. Watts, the British Vice-Consul at Kashgar, many Chinese soldiers in outlying districts were amongst those killed. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933, p. 3.
 95. According to Mannerheim, who visited Kumul in 1907, the walls of the New City were small and neglected, being pierced in two places by gateways without gates (*Across Asia*, p. 386). Repairs may, of course, have been made during the twenty-four years intervening between his visit and the 1931 rising, but the Chinese authorities were probably more concerned with maintaining their fortress at Kumul Old City.
 96. Cable and French, *The Gobi Desert*, p. 223; the two missionaries go on to describe how they met a party of gun-runners at Ara Tam, and how the gun-runners took flour from them to feed their exhausted camels; cf. Cable and French, *A Desert Journal* (London, 1934), p. 137. The Khans of Kumul

- maintained three palaces, one at Kumul Muslim City, one at Ara Tam, and one at the natural fortress of Bardash set high in the Karlik Tagh.
97. Yao-lo-po-shih, *Yao-lo-po-shih hui-i lu*, p. 78.
 98. ‘Having gone thus far, the revolt had to run its course, led by the excitable, turbulent, bloodthirsty Turkis and backed by the wealthy, astute, calculating Tungans.’ Cable and French, *The Gobi Desert*, p. 221.
 99. According to Cable and French, Wang, ‘like all Tungans . . . was made for revolt and was deeply conscious of racial and religious inadaptability to Chinese rule’, *The Gobi Desert*, p. 247.
 100. See above p. 42.
 101. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, pp. 66–7.
 102. Chan, ‘The Road to Power’, p. 235.
 103. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 66.
 104. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933, p. 3. Watts is the only source to mention this battle; there is therefore the possibility that he has made a chronological error in placing it before the Tungan invasion and is referring to Ma Chung-ying’s defeat of Chin’s troops at Ch’i-chiao-ching later in the year.
 105. IOR, L/P&S/12/2336, Coll. 12/5, (*Col Schomberg’s Report of 1930–31*). A kang is a mud bed warmed by flues from a stove. The system is widely used throughout North China.
 106. Chan, ‘The Road to Power’, p. 235.
 107. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 67.
 108. *ibid.*, pp. 66–7.
 109. Yao-lo-po-shih, *Yao-lo-po-shih hui-i lu*, p. 87. Yulbārs ‘does not remember clearly’ on which day he set out. Yulbārs was unusual for a Uighur Turk in being fluent in Chinese; Folke Bergmann of the Sino-Swedish Expedition even suggests that he may have been half Chinese. Hedin *et al.*, *History of the Expedition in Asia*, 1, p. 227, fn 1.
 110. According to Cable and French, Chung-ying’s father was ‘a certain general Ma’. *The Gobi Desert*, p. 222. See also Andrew, G. F., ‘Islam in Northwest China Today’, *JRCA S*, xix, 1 (1932), p. 95, where Ma’s father is called ‘Ma Tong’.
 111. Mei, Y. P., ‘Stronghold of Muslim China’, *Asia*, xl (1940), p. 660.
 112. Forbes, A. D. W., ‘Ma Chung-ying’, *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, NE, continuing, v, (1984), pp. 844–7.
 113. Ekwall, R., ‘Revolt of the Crescent in Western China’, *Asia and the Americas*, xxix (1929), pp. 946–7.
 114. Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord*, p. 252.
 115. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, 11, p. 463. See also Andrew, ‘Islam in North-West China’, p. 98. Andrew informed Ma of his father’s execution.
 116. Andrew, ‘Islam in North-West China’, pp. 87–8.
 117. Petro, W., ‘Mongolia, Kansu and Sinkiang as Seen by a Member of the Haardt–Citroën Expedition’, *JRCA S*, xx, 2 (1933), p. 210; cf. Chan, ‘The Road to Power’, p. 238, where it is stated that Ma Chung-ying joined the KMT.

118. According to Petro (‘Mongolia, Kansu and Sinkiang’, p. 211), Ma ‘laid siege to Ningsia’ en route for Kansu and only withdrew after receiving a substantial ransom. This is not mentioned elsewhere.
119. Yao-lo-po-shih, *Yao-lo-po-shih hui-i lu*, pp. 87–8. Yulbārs calls Ma’s army the ‘KMT 36th Division’, but in fact it did not receive this designation until 1932, whilst Yulbārs’ meeting with Ma at Soochow took place in 1931.
120. *ibid.*, pp. 88–91.
121. According to Cable and French (*The Gobi Desert*, p. 234), a group of six Kumulliks was sent to appeal to Ma Chung-ying for aid (the missionaries watched their departure); moreover the deputation is said to have met Ma Chung-ying in Kan-chou, not Soochow (*op. cit.*, pp. 223–4). By June 1931, when Yulbārs claims to have set out for Kansu, Ma had already vacated Kan-chou which had subsequently been occupied by the troops of his uncle, Ma Pu-fang (Le Févre, *An Eastern Odyssey*, pp. 140–1). Perhaps two separate appeals were sent by the Kumullik insurgents, one to Ma Chung-ying, led by the six riders mentioned by Cable and French, and the other (that of Yulbārs) to Nanking? In such a case would not Yulbārs, one of the two most prominent Kumullik leaders, have been aware of the earlier mission to Ma Chung-ying?
122. Yulbārs’ memoirs were published in Taiwan in 1969, at a time when he held the post of Governor-in-Exile of Sinkiang in the KMT government. It is therefore unlikely that he would have admitted to conspiracy with the Tungan warlord Ma Chung-ying, albeit in a scheme to oust the widely-discredited Chin Shu-jen.
123. Yao-lo-po-shih, *Yao-lo-po-shih hui-i lu*, p. 87.
124. According to Cable and French these men had travelled to Urumchi with a view to going into business there; however, they were arrested by Chin Shu-jen and imprisoned, presumably on suspicion of spying. When they were eventually released from prison they had lost their caravan of trade goods and were bankrupt. They subsequently fled from Sinkiang to Kansu, where they are said to have approached Ma Chung-ying with the offer of their military services. (*The Gobi Desert*, pp. 224–5). Cable and French seem to have been unaware that both Turks entered Sinkiang from the Soviet Union. (Vasel, G.), ‘Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien’, *Berichte des Asiatischen Arbeitkreises*, 1 (Vienna), February 1939, p. 7.
125. Kamāl Kaya Efendi seems to have had considerable military experience, both during the First World War, and later during the Russian Civil War. See Appendix I, p. 242, for further details.
126. Cable and French, *The Gobi Desert*, p. 246.
127. *ibid.*, pp. 222–3.
128. According to Hedin, Ma had an army of 10,000 men in north-western Kansu. (*Big Horse’s Flight*, p. 5). In view of the fact that Ma’s initial invasion force thrown against Kumul numbered no more than 500 cavalry, Hedin’s figure is likely to be grossly exaggerated. It is difficult if not impossible to provide accurate estimates of military strength for the remote north-west, but according to the *China Year Book* for 1935 (Shanghai, 1935), p. 430, the combined military forces for Kokonor (Tsinghai) totalled 5,000. No doubt

Ma's forces attracted large numbers of camp-followers and hangers-on; this may have misled Hedin, whose colleague, Gerhard Bexell, was attacked by stray members of a group of Ma's 'troops', said to be 1,500 strong in April 1931. *History of the Expedition in Asia*, VI, pp. 220–1.

129. Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, pp. 223–4.
130. Cable and French, *The Gobi Desert*, pp. 235–6. Little or no actual fighting seems to have taken place. One possible explanation, advanced by a member of the Citroën Expedition who knew Ma Chung-ying personally, is that Chung-ying had reached a secret agreement with Pu-fang by which the latter would stage a mock attack on Soochow and Kan-chou, occupy the towns during Ma's attack on Sinkiang, and incidentally provide a pretext for Chung-ying's move against Chin Shu-jen. Petro, 'Mongolia, Kansu and Sinkiang', p. 211. See also Le Fèvre, *An Eastern Odyssey*, pp. 140–1.
131. According to Wang Wen-hsuan, 'I-yüeh-lai chih hsi-pei' (A Month in the North-West), *K'ai-fa hsi-pei* (Nanking) I, 4 (April 1934), p. 84, Ma actually restrained Yulbārs to prevent his travelling to Nanking.
132. Cable and French, *The Gobi Desert*, p. 225.
133. According to Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, p. 5, and Cable and French, *The Gobi Desert*, p. 225, Ma's initial invasion force consisted of 500 Tungan cavalry. According to Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 69, and Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 235, the size of the initial invasion force was nearer 400. Le Fèvre's figure of 4,000 (*An Eastern Odyssey*, p. 158) is certainly exaggerated, and probably includes the insurgent Kumullik forces. Cf. Heissig, W., *Das gelbe Vorfeld: Die Mobilisierung der chinesischen Aussenländer* (Heidelberg, Berlin and Magdeburg, 1941), p. 62.
134. All sources cited agree that this was a remarkable feat; it is interesting to note that preparations for the desert crossing had been made when Ma's army was billeted at Soochow, where 'every small artisan was busy making tin mugs, kettles and water-bottles out of disused oil tins, or goatskin bellows for blowing up camp fires for his army', Cable and French, *The Gobi Desert*, p. 224.
135. Le Fèvre, *An Eastern Odyssey*, pp. 154–5.
136. Le Fèvre, *An Eastern Odyssey*, p. 156.
137. See Le Fèvre, *An Eastern Odyssey*, pp. 240–52 ('Petro's Story'); also Petro, 'Mongolia, Kansu and Sinkiang', pp. 205–19; *idem.*, *Triple Commission* (London, 1968), pp. 124–42. According to Petro (*Triple Commission*, p. 126), Yulbārs Khan was briefly in Kumul Old City at this time, but disappeared shortly after the arrival of the Citroën Expedition. Petro was billeted in Yulbārs' house on the borders of Chu Jui-ch'ih.
138. Petro, 'Mongolia, Kansu and Sinkiang', p. 215.
139. *ibid.*
140. Mannerheim, *Across Asia*, pp. 386–7.
141. Le Fèvre, *An Eastern Odyssey*, pp. 241–2.
142. Ch. 'Tsei wa-tzu'. Le Fèvre, *An Eastern Odyssey*, p. 244, Petro, *Triple Commission*, p. 129.
143. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933, p. 11; Petro's figure of 6,000 regular

- troops comprising the Kumul *Lao-ch'eng* garrison is almost certainly exaggerated. Le Fèvre, *An Eastern Odyssey*, p. 242.
144. Le Fèvre, *An Eastern Odyssey*, p. 242.
 145. Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, p. 5. According to Petro, Ma killed most of the Chinese garrison at Barkul, ('Mongolia, Kansu and Sinkiang', p. 217).
 146. According to Lattimore (writing in 1935), Ma Chung-ying took Barkul on his return journey to Kansu, and not at the beginning of the invasion; 'Chinese Turkestan or Sinkiang', *The China Year Book*, 1935 (Shanghai, 1935), p. 44. This does not agree with the accounts of Hedin (*Big Horse's Flight*, p. 5), Cable and French (*The Gobi Desert*, p. 225), Wu (*Turkistan Tumult*, p. 67), and Petro ('Mongolia, Kansu and Sinkiang', p. 217), all of which agree that Ma took Barkul soon after invading Sinkiang.
 147. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 67.
 148. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 236.
 149. According to Sheng Shih-ts'ai, many of these troops were 'incapable of even firing a rifle'. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 69.
 150. The reinforcements may have been deliberately delayed by Chin Shu-hsin in a (successful) attempt to isolate his rival, Tu Chih-kuo. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 236.
 151. According to Wu (*Turkistan Tumult*, p. 69), only the advance guard of Tu's troops were attacked by Ma's Tungans, causing the others to retreat in disarray. Le Fèvre's claim that 10,000 provincial troops were mustered at Ch'i-chiao-ching is clearly a gross exaggeration (*An Eastern Odyssey*, p. 163; cf. Petro, 'Mongolia, Kansu and Sinkiang', p. 217); similarly Le Fèvre's claim that 8,000 provincial troops died as a result of the engagement (*An Eastern Odyssey*, p. 189).
 152. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 236; Petro, 'Mongolia, Kansu and Sinkiang', p. 217. Elsewhere Chan states that Tu was killed in battle (*Sinkiang under Sheng Shih-ts'ai*, p. 66). Le Fèvre, *An Eastern Odyssey*, p. 189, states that the Commanding Officer, 'General Kiu', committed suicide.
 153. Petro, 'Mongolia, Kansu and Sinkiang', p. 217 (in conversation with Kamāl Kaya Efendi); cf. Le Fèvre, *An Eastern Odyssey*, p. 189. Ma may have been aided by local Kazakh or Kirghiz insurgents in his crossing of the mountains to attack Tu's forces at Ch'i-chiao-ching.
 154. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 69. Wu also suggests that Ma was surprised by the number of troops opposing him at Ch'i-chiao-ching, but considering the overwhelming nature of his victory over Tu Chih-kuo this must be viewed with some scepticism.
 155. Petro, 'Mongolia, Kansu and Sinkiang', p. 217; *idem.*, *Triple Commission*, p. 128.
 156. Petro was captured by the Tungans (*Triple Commission*, pp. 127–9), and was subsequently employed as a messenger by both sides. He was thus able to visit the Tungan HQ, where he conversed with both Ma Chung-ying and Kamāl Kaya Efendi; he later returned to the besieged Old City.
 157. For Petro's description of the siege, see his 'Mongolia, Kansu and Sinkiang', pp. 217–8; also Le Fèvre, *An Eastern Odyssey*, pp. 242–9. See also Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, pp. 67–8.

Haslund, H., *Men and Gods in Mongolia* (London, 1935), pp. 208, 212, 243; see also pp. 240–7, 'The Strong Man of the Torguts', for a detailed description of Tsetsen Puntsag Gegeen.

IOR, L/P&S/2/2336 (*Schomberg's Report on Sinkiang, 1930–31*), p. 9.

IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933, p. 6; Anon, 'Recent Events in Sinkiang', *JRCAS*, xxI, 1 (1934), pp. 82–3.

IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933, p. 13; Schomberg, R. C. F., 'The Ili District', *JRCAS*, xvi, 4 (1929), p. 457.

IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933, p. 13; cf. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 236.

IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933, p. 4.

Cable and French, *The Gobi Desert*, p. 226.

Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, II, p. 464.

IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933, p. 4; according to Cable and French, however, the provincial forces sustained a crushing defeat and were almost wiped out during this engagement (*The Gobi Desert*, p. 226). All sources, including Cable and French, agree that Ma Chung-ying was wounded and subsequently withdrew to Kansu.

IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.1232.1932. HMCGK Fitzmaurice–Govt of India, 11 Nov. 1931; cf. Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 106.

Cable and French, *The Gobi Desert*, p. 241.

See, however, Wu Ai-chen's suggestion that Ma Pu-fang was forced to make a deal with Ma Chung-ying because of 'other troubles' (*Turkistan Tumult*, p. 70).

Le Fèvre, *An Eastern Odyssey*, p. 286. Chan dates the raising of the siege in September 1931 ('The Road to Power', p. 236), but Petro's record of the siege shows that this is a chronological impossibility.

IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933, p. 4.

Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 71; Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, pp. 23–4; 34–6.

Cable and French, *The Gobi Desert*, p. 226.

Sinkiang, 1931–3: the rebellion of the Turkic-speaking Muslims of the south

Extract from Şäbit Dämullâh's Declaration of Independence of the TIRET: Chang Ta-chün, *Ssu-shih-nien tung-luan Hsin-chiang* (Forty Years of Turmoil in Sinkiang), Hong Kong, 1956, pp. 52–3.

IOR, L/P&S/12/2342, P. 4839. 1924; Skrine, *Chinese Central Asia*, pp. 264–5; Roerich, *Altai-Himalaya*, pp. 162–4.

Skrine and Nightingale, *Macartney*, pp. 258–9.

Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 63; also Etherton, *In the Heart of Asia*, *passim*.

Support for a strong Chinese government in Sinkiang is a recurrent theme in the British Foreign Office's *Secret and Political Files* throughout the period of maintenance of a British Consulate-General at Kashgar *without exception*—indeed, this policy was clearly the primary concern of every British Consul-General at Kashgar from Macartney to Shipton (1908–48).

6. Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, pp. 135–6.
7. Wu Ai-chen, *China and the Soviet Union* (London, 1950), p. 252.
8. In exchange the Sinkiang authorities were permitted to establish consulates at Semipalatinsk, Alma Ata, Andijan and Zaysan.
9. This was graphically stated by Schomberg in a letter to the FO from Gilgit dated 27 June 1933: 'The loss of the southern part means the loss of all revenue, as Kashgaria is the tail that wags the dog.' IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4690.33.
10. IOR, L/P&S/10/976, P.403.1926 (*Kashgar Diaries, November 1925*).
11. IOR, L/P&S/10/976, P.960.1926 (*Kashgar Diaries, December, 1925*). The Chinese were also offended by the Soviets' May Day party in Kashgar during 1926 at which a call was made for the people of Turkestan to unite. Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 67; cf. Suydam Cutting's personal recollections of the occasion in his *The Fire Ox and Other Years* (London, 1947), pp. 57–8.
12. IOR, L/P&S/10/976, P.1730.1926 (*Kashgar Diaries, March 1926*).
13. IOR, L/P&S/12/2342, P.6188.1928 (*Kashgar Annual Report, 1927–28*), p. 3.
14. See, for example, Jackson, W. A., *The Russo-Chinese Borderlands*, p. 51.
15. In 1926 Yang Tseng-hsin asked the British to sell him 2,000 rifles and 1 million rounds of ammunition. The Government of India and the India Office in London approved the sale (PRO, FO/371/11696, F.4632.4632.10), but it was eventually decided by the Foreign Office that this course of action would contravene the China Arms Embargo Agreement of 1919; the proposed sale was accordingly barred. (PRO, FO/371/12442, F.819.100.10; Foreign Office to India Office, 8 February 1927).
16. Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 68.
17. PRO, FO/371/12485, F.6067.1752.10; F.6708.1572.10 (*Kashgar Diary, April, May 1927*).
18. IOR, L/P&S/10/976, P.2428.1928; P.5434.1928 (*Kashgar Diaries, Jan.–Feb.–May–June 1928*). Cf. Bosshard, 'Politics and Trade in Central Asia', pp. 441–2.
19. Persson, C., note in *Missionsförbundet* (Stockholm), xxviii (1928), p. 434, cited in Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 68.
20. For anti-Soviet feeling in Kashgar, see 'Central Asia from Within', *JRCAS*, XXII, 1 (1935), p. 109; for the rise of Soviet influence in Ili, see Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, pp. 69–72.
21. Caroe, O., *Soviet Empire* (NY, 1967), p. 128; see also 'The Rebellion in Chinese Turkestan', *JRCAS*, XXII, 1 (1935), p. 101.
22. Han Chinese employment of Tungan troops in southern Sinkiang dated back (at least) as far as Yang Tseng-hsin's transfer from Ho-chou to Aksu in 1907 (see above, p. 11). See also Kazakh, F., *Osttürkistan zwischen den Grossmächten* (Königsberg, 1937), p. 19.
23. Boulger, D. C., *The Life of Yakoob Beg* (London, 1878).
24. See above, p. 18.

25. In this context note the poem addressed to Turkey by the Kazakh nationalist Maghjan Jumabay at the end of the First World War:

My brother, far away, so greatly suffering,
My brother, like a tulip broken,
Is not Altai our common mother?

- (for a full translation see Caroe, *Soviet Empire*, p. 228.) Although Maghjan Jumabay came from the Issik Köl region, his sentiments were echoed by many Turkic Muslims in Sinkiang – hence the leaders of the conservative nationalist movement at Kashgar during the early 1930s were to turn to Turkey for moral support, as will be shown.
26. As a result of the 1928 revolution Amān Allāh was forced into abdication and exile. Wilber, D. N. (ed.), *Afghanistan*, (New Haven, 1956), p. 74.
27. *ibid.*; cf. Griffiths, J. C., *Afghanistan* (London, 1967), p. 31.
28. Caroe, *Soviet Empire*, pp. 118, 124–5, 127; Macmunn, Sir G., *Afghanistan: From Darius to Amanullah* (London, 1929), pp. 286–8 ('Pan-Turk and Basmach').
29. Swinson, A., *North-West Frontier* (London, 1967), p. 314.
30. Skrine and Nightingale, *Macartney at Kashgar*, pp. 250–3; cf. Dabbs, J. S., *History of the Discovery and Exploration of Chinese Turkestan* (The Hague, 1963), p. 152.
31. Macmunn, *Afghanistan*, p. 288.
32. Caroe, *Soviet Empire*, p. 123.
33. Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 58.
34. PRO, FO/371/9209, F.2933.278.10 (*Kashgar Diary, July 1923*).
35. IOR, L/P&S/12/2355, Coll. 12/23 (*Chinese Turkestan: Afghanistan*), P.794.1928 (British Legation, Kabul, to Government of India, letter dated 6/1/1928); cf. *Auswärtiges Amt* (Bonn), IV, Chi.1475/8. Juni 1927: *Deutsche Gesandtschaft, Kabul, den 29 April, 1927* (the latter cited in Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 52).
36. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331 (*Chinese Turkestan, Internal Situation Sept. 1930–Nov. 1933*), PZ.6313.31 (HMCGK–FPD India, 4/8/1931); cf. L/P&S/12/2332 (*Kashgar Diaries, Jan. 1931–Dec. 1938*), PZ.416.1932 (Sept., Oct. 1931), para. 147; PZ.7339.1932 (Sept. 1932), para. 348.
37. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.1232.1932 (HMCGK–FPD India, 11/11/1931).
38. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.2331 (Report of HMVCGK Watts, 21/10/32), p. 7.
39. In 1929 the Government of British India, disturbed by Chin Shu-jen's slipping hold on Sinkiang and by the rapid expansion of Soviet influence in the province, raised the ban on arms sales to China which had existed (by international agreement) since 1919. Lattimore, 'Chinese Turkestan or Sinkiang', *The China Yearbook*, 1935, p. 43; IOR, L/P&S/12/2342 (*Kashgar Annual Reports, 1922–31*), PZ.5695.1931.
40. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 238. According to Wu Ai-chen, Ma Shih-ming led an abortive mission to Turfan without Ma Chung-ying's permission in 1930. The resulting 'revolt' is said by Wu to have 'petered out', although Ma Fu-ming is also said to have been implicated; (*Turkistan Tumult*, pp. 58–

- 9). Wu's 1930 revolt does not seem to be mentioned in any other source, and probably rests on chronological confusion with the 1932 revolt in his account. Certainly Ma Shih-ming is reported by Yulbārs to have been in Kansu during the summer of 1931, apparently on good terms with Ma Chung-ying. See above, p. 53.
41. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, pp. 71–2; cf. Chan, 'Sinkiang Under Sheng Shih-ts'ai', pp. 68–9.
42. See above, pp. 60–1.
43. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.2331 (*Watts' Report*), 7. Cf. accounts of the Torgut Regent's murder in IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5443.32 (*Account of the Revd H. French Ridley of the China Inland Mission*); Anon., 'Recent Events in Sinkiang', *JRCAS*, xx1, 1 (1934), 82–4; Haslund, *Men and Gods in Mongolia*, p. 325.
44. According to the anonymous author of 'Recent Events in Sinkiang', the Torgut Mongols 'feel they have more in common with their Chinese rulers than with their Moslem fellow-nomads', *JRCAS*, xx1, 1, p. 83. It is interesting to note, however, that even the Buddhist Regent of the Torguts was deeply interested in the activities of Amān Allāh of Afghanistan. Haslund, *Men and Gods in Mongolia*, p. 246.
45. Collectivisation of Kazakhstan began in 1929. For Soviet policies towards the Kazakh and Kirghiz nomads at this time, see Caroe, *Soviet Empire*, pp. 180–8. For the initial impact on Sinkiang, see IOR, L/P&S/12/2332 (*Kashgar Diaries*), PZ.2867.1932 (February 1932).
46. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.3451.1932 (*Kashgar Diaries, March 1932*).
47. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.5241.1932 (*Kashgar Diaries, June 1932*); L/P&S/12/2332, (*Chinese Turkestan, Internal Situation September 1930–November 1933*), PZ.1979.1933 (HMCGK–GOI, 9/2/1933).
48. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.6134.1932 (*Kashgar Diaries, July 1932*).
49. For Chin's increasing dependence on Soviet military and financial aid, see above, p. 98.
50. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 71.
51. *ibid.*
52. *ibid.*
53. *ibid.*, p. 72; cf. Chan's account ('Sinkiang Under Sheng Shih-ts'ai', pp. 68–9), which holds that Hsiung was murdered by Uighurs and his body mutilated by forces owing allegiance to Ma Shih-ming; the varying accounts of Hsiung's death would at least seem to confirm the reported co-operation between Ma Fu-ming and Ma Shih-ming during the troubles at Turfan in late 1932.
54. Chang P'ei-yüan's struggle with Chin Shu-jen is described above, p. 98.
55. Chang Ta-chün, *Ssu-shih-nien tung-luan Hsin-chiang*, pp. 33ff; cf. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 240.
56. According to Wu (*Turkistan Tumult*, p. 240), Ma Chan-ts'ang was a Tungan from Kashgar; according to the GOI, however, he originally came from Kansu (IOR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT. 4910.1941: *Who's Who in Sinkiang Corrected up to 15th April*, p. 17).
57. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, pp. 240–1.

58. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.2693.1933 (*Kashgar Diaries, February 1933*), para. 17; cf. IOR, L/P&S/12/2356, PZ.8042.1933 (F4845/456/10, No. 1), *Memorandum Respecting Sinkiang Rebellion*, 1933, pp. 1–2.
59. See above, p. 270, n. 112. For a detailed study of the gold industry in Sinkiang at this time, see Kazak, *Osttürkistan zwischen den Grossmächten*, pp. 37–44. According to Kazak, gold-mining was carried out in extremely primitive conditions in mines which were often surprisingly deep – he cites a figure of eighty metres for Surghak; elsewhere gold was panned for on the surface. Working conditions were reportedly so hard that ‘the whole business of mining extraction [became] a kind of forced labour or punishment’, with miners heavily in debt to local usurers. In 1873 the Surghak gold mines employed c. 3,000 men; Kazak gives no employment figures for the 1930s, but states that working conditions were even worse than they had been under Ya’qub Beg, when workers had been driven to work in the mines to finance wars against the Tungans and Chinese.
60. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331 (*Chinese Turkestan, Internal Situation, September 1930–November 1933*), PZ.2652.1933 (HMCGK-GOI, 9/3/1933).
61. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.2794.1933 (HMCGK-GOI, 23/3/1933).
62. *ibid.*
63. Anonymous notice issued at Kara Shahr, 28 Shawwāl 1351 (26 February 1933), translated in IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.1794.1933. HMCGK comments that similar notices were reportedly sent to Maral Bashi by the Muslim rebels at Aksu.
64. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 241; IOR, L/P&S/12/2356, PZ.8042.1933 (*Memorandum Respecting Sinkiang Rebellion*, 1933).
65. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.1797.1933 (HMCGK-GOI, 9/2/1933).
66. *ibid.*; according to Wu Ai-chen (*Turkistan Tumult*, p. 241), Chin Shu-chih committed suicide.
67. Figures given by Fitzmaurice, HMCGK, in IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.1797.1933.
68. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.2336.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 23/2/1933).
69. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.2653.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 2/3/1933).
70. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.2336.1933.
71. *ibid.*
72. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.1647.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 2/2/1933).
73. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3108.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 6/4/1933); cf. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.3109.1933 (*Kashgar Diaries, March 1933*), para. 33.
74. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3108.1933.
75. Ambolt, N., *Karavan* (London and Glasgow, 1939), p.169; IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4045.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 25/5/1933).
76. According to the Khotanlik rebel leader Muhammad Amīn Bughra, Khotan Old City was attacked on 28 February and fell to the insurgents the same day; by contrast, Khotan New City surrendered only ‘after 22 days of continuous fighting’ (Buğra [sic], M. E., *Doğu Türkistan*, Istanbul, 1952, p. 31). British consular sources, however, report the fall of Khotan New City on 16 March. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4045.1933.

77. *ibid.*, Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 31.
78. Ambolt, *Karavan*, pp. 170–2; IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4045.1933.
79. Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 32.
80. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4045.1933; cf. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5370.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 13/7/1933). According to Muhammed Amin Bughra, however, both Charchan and Charkhlik were taken by rebel forces from Khotan (Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 32).
81. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.2652.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 9/3/1933); PZ.2336.1933; PZ.2794.1933.
82. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.1322.1933 (telegram, HMCGK-GOI, 25/2/1933). The British Indian Government declined to send troops to put down ‘an internal revolutionary movement’ (PZ.1395.1933, *Note by Political Department on Situation in Chinese Turkestan*), but offered to consider requests for munitions on receipt of payment (PZ.1398.1933, telegram, GOI-HMCGK, 10/3/1933).
83. IOR, L/P&S/12/12/2331, PZ.2794.1933; Le Fèvre, *An Eastern Odyssey*, p. 263.
84. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.2336.1933.
85. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.2653.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 2/3/1933); L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.2794.1933.
86. According to Fitzmaurice, the provincial troops of Col Chin killed ‘between 150 and 410, including one British Hindu’ (IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3398.1933, letter, HMCK-GOI, 20/4/1933); for the route of Chin’s retreat, see IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3245.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 13/4/1933).
87. For details of the ‘Karghalik Outrage’ – where nine British Indian Hindus were massacred, and their bodies thrown into a well – see IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3108.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 6/4/1933); cf. ‘Rising in Chinese Turkestan’, *The Times*, 20 April, 1933; ‘Reign of Terror and Destruction in Chinese Turkestan’, *The Daily Herald* (Lahore), 26 July 1933. Nearly all the Hindu money-lenders resident in Republican Sinkiang were from Shikarpur in Sind.
88. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3108.1933; these provincial troops may have been the remnants of a force reportedly defeated by the rebels at Kum Rabat, some thirty miles to the west of Khotan, in late March (Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 31).
89. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.2794.1933.
90. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3398.1933; cf. ‘A Turkestan Massacre’, *The Times*, 3 May 1933.
91. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3398.1933.
92. Fitzmaurice wrote to Ma Chan-ts’ang from Kashgar on 21 March, 1933. For the text of his letter (which urged compromise in the name of Islamic brotherhood, and stressed that both Ma Chen-ts’ang and Ma Shao-wu were Muslims), see IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.2794.1933. This letter undoubtedly paved the way for the alliance which was subsequently to develop between the two Chinese Muslim leaders.
93. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3245.1933; see above, pp. 71–2.

94. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.3834.1933 (*Kashgar Diaries, April 1933*), para. 54; IOR, L/P&S/12/2356, PZ.8042.1933 (*Memorandum Respecting Sinkiang Rebellion, 1933*), p. 2.
95. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3398.1933.
96. Brigadier Yang was subsequently converted to Islam, and his daughter married Ma Chan-ts'ang. Numbers of his officers from the Maralbashi front were later seen in the green uniforms of the Tungan forces serving under Ma Chan-ts'ang during his occupation of Kashgar. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.3834.1933.
97. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3245.1933. According to the British political agent stationed at Gilgit, insurgents (presumably Kirghiz and not Tajiks) captured Tashkurghan, the capital of Sarikol, on 19 May, killing all the Chinese in the town. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3054.1933 (British Political Agent Gilgit – GOI, 22/5/2331, 22/5/1933). See also: ‘Moslem Revolt in Turkestan’, *The Times*, 27 April 1933.
98. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3559.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 27/4/1933).
99. It must be remembered that, in contrast to the situation at Kumul, Tungan forces in southern Sinkiang were associated with the Han Chinese administration. Ma Chan-ts'ang must have become increasingly aware of Turkic Muslim hostility to his forces as he advanced ever deeper into the Tarim Basin. There is every reason to believe that the Uighur rebels on the Khotan front were in fact attempting to pre-empt a Tungan advance into their region; Kazak, *Osttürkistan*, p. 19.
100. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3398.1933 (includes text of letter from Ma Chan-ts'ang to Fitzmaurice, dated Aksu, 10/4/1933).
101. At this stage of the rebellion Temür, a man described by Fitzmaurice as ‘easily swayed’ (IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3715.1933; letter, HMCGK-GOI, 11/5/33), seems to have had no clear political purpose, and probably accompanied Ma Chan-ts'ang’s forces without realising that in so doing he was aiding the Tungans against his own Uighur people. At Kashgar he came under the influence of the Turkic nationalist Young Kashgar Party, and rapidly dissociated himself from Ma Chan-ts'ang with disastrous consequences for his own future (as will be shown).
102. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3715.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 11/5/1933).
103. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3558.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 4/5/1933).
104. *ibid.*; letter cited in full in Forbes ‘Muslim Separatism’, p. 197.
105. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4602.1933 (*Kashgar Diaries, May 1933*); IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3558.1933.
106. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4602.1933. For a more accessible account of the arrival of Ma Chan-ts'ang’s forces at Kashgar, see ‘The Rising in Chinese Turkestan’, *The Times*, 25 May 1933.
107. The status of Yangi Hissar is not clear at this time, but it may have been occupied by Khotanlik forces (IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4045.1933). Certainly its Chinese inhabitants had been forcibly converted to Islam, and on 6 May a group of Uighur irregulars owing allegiance to Temür are reported to have looted the town and to have left the ‘converts’ with nothing but ‘their turbans and their lives’ (IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3715.1933).
108. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3715.1933.

109. *ibid.*
110. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3883.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 18/5/1933); IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4602.1933.
111. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3715.1933.
112. *ibid.*
113. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3883.1933. See also ‘Turkestan Muslims Capture Strategic Cities’, *Star of India* (Calcutta), 3 June 1933.
114. *ibid.*
115. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4602.1933.
116. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4045.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 25/5/1933); IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4602.1933.
117. *ibid.*
118. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3715.1933; PZ.3883.1933.
119. *ibid.*
120. Fitzmaurice describes Bughra as a *tâlib al-Islâm* of about 35 years of age. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3398.1933; cf. Appendix I, pp. 247–8.
121. Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 30; cf. Hayit, B., *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China* (Amsterdam, 1971), p. 301. Nyman (*Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 105), would appear to be mistaken in asserting that there were only two Bughra brothers; cf. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.6273.1933.
122. Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 30; cf. IOR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941 (*Who's Who in Sinkiang, April 1940*).
123. Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, pp. 30–1.
124. Khoja Niyâs is reported by the Swedish missionary Arell to have stopped in Khotan on his way back to Kumul after completing the *hâjj* in 1927. Here he is said to have held discussions with the local Islamic leadership amongst whom the Bughra brothers ‘played a key role’. The basic planning and co-ordination for the coming rebellion was allegedly discussed at this meeting (Arell, G. A., et al., *Din broders blod ropar* (Your Brother’s Blood is Calling), Stockholm, 1935, pp. 16–17); according to Muhammad Amin Bughra, however, it proved ‘impossible to co-operate with compatriots living at a distance of fifty days’ journey by horse’ (Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 30).
125. Hayit, *Turkestan*, p. 301. According to Bughra (*Doğu Türkistan*, p. 30), the CNR provisional government was formed on the evening of 20 February 1933, two days before the rising at Kara Kash.
126. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3398.1933; PZ.3558.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 27/7/1933). Similarly, the rebel leader at Chira styled himself ‘Amîr ‘Abd al-Qâdir’ (Ambolt, *Karavan*, p. 170). For Muhammad Amîn Bughra’s political pre-eminence, see Ambolt, p. 175 (as well as the subsequent course of events).
127. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4125.1933 (*Chinese Turkestan: Internal Situation*).
128. For notes on the fighting at Khotan – during which a wide swathe of housing was destroyed by the spraying of ignited paraffin from the city walls – see Ambolt, *Karavan*, pp. 181–2.
129. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3558.1933; for an account of the travails of the

- Swedish mission in southern Sinkiang during this period which is based on first-hand sources, see Hultvall, J., 'Missionen i stormen', in *Mission och revolution i Centralasien* (Stockholm, 1981), pp. 178–82.
130. Ambolt, *Karavan*, pp. 169–70.
131. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4418.1933 (letter, HMCGK–GOI, 1/6/1933). The report of Jānib Beg's execution contained in the *Kashgar Diary* of Nov. 1931 is incorrect (IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.3384.1933).
132. See above, pp. 76–7.
133. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5408.1933.
134. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.3834.1933 (*Kashgar Diaries*, April 1933).
135. Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 31; IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3558.1933.
136. IOR, *ibid.*; cf. Ambolt, *Karavan*, pp. 175–6.
137. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3558.1933.
138. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4964.1933 (*Information on the Yarkand Situation From the Swedish Mission*, Yarkand, 6 June 1933); cf. Arell et al., *Din broders blod ropar*, pp. 34–5, 78–81; Ambolt, *Karavan*, pp. 117–20. Aqsaqal (Tk. 'white beard') – 'native' (non-European) representatives maintained on a relatively informal basis by the British in many oases of southern Sinkiang.
139. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3558.1933.
140. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4602.1933.
141. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.3883.1933.
142. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4602.1933.
143. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4418.1933.
144. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4602.1933.
145. *ibid.*
146. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4602.1933. This development led to increased friction between the rival Uighur commanders.
147. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4418.1933; L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.5508.1933 (*Kashgar Diaries*, June 1933); L/P&S/12/2356, PZ.8042.1933, p. 3; cf. Ambolt, *Karavan*, p. 182; 'War in Chinese Turkestan: Refugees Killed in Desert', *The Times*, 22 June, 1933. Khotanlik forces under the command of the Amir Nūr Ahmad Jān also participated in the Kizil Massacre.
148. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4418.1933.
149. *ibid.*
150. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4604.1933 (letter, HMCGK–GOI, 15/6/1933).
151. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5156.1933 (letter, HMCGK–GOI, 6/7/1933).
152. Kazakh, *Osttürkistan zwischen den Grossmächten*, p. 20.
153. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4064.1933.
154. *ibid.* The Dulanis are a group of Uighurs who live largely by animal husbandry along the banks of the Yarkand and Tarim Rivers; Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 127; Forbes, 'Muslim Separatism', p. 20.
155. 'Chinese Turkestan Revolt: New Rebel Leader's Intervention', *The Times*, 8 July 1933; cf. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.5508.1933 (*Kashgar Diaries*, June 1933). For a contemporary account by an Afghan admirer of Jānib Beg, providing an exaggerated evaluation of the latter's significance in southern Sinkiang, see Shah, Iqbal Ali, 'The Crescent in Chinese Turkestan', *The New Statesman and Nation*, viii (5 May 1934), pp. 671–2.

156. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5370.1933 (letter, HMCGK–GOI, 13/7/1933); PZ.4418.1933.
157. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.5508.1933. According to Fitzmaurice, 'Uthmān Ali, who was about thirty years of age, was a heavy opium smoker. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4045.1933.
158. 'Another Rebel Leader in Turkestan: Glut of Armies at Kashgar', *The Times*, 24 July 1933; cf. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.6273.1933 (*Kashgar Diaries*, July 1933). Although 'Abdullah left Yarkand at the head of a column of 2,000 troops, he left more than half of these to garrison Yangi Hissar. When he arrived in Kashgar, he had no more than 600 troops under his own command, together with some 300 under the command of a subordinate officer, Qādir Beg.
159. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5156.1933; cf. Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 40.
160. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5156.1933.
161. *ibid.*
162. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.5508.1933.
163. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5408.1933.
164. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5370.1933.
165. *ibid.*
166. Fitzmaurice notes that Temür seemed 'not to have wished to humiliate them too greatly' (IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5370.1933). Clearly, Temür may have perceived the Khotanliks as potential *subordinate* allies in the struggle for control of Kashgar New City.
167. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4472.1933; PZ.5370.1933.
168. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5408.1933.
169. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5573.1933 (letter, HMCGK–GOI, 27/7/1933).
170. It should be noted that Hāfiẓ received reinforcements under the command of Īsa Hājjī, sent by Temür from Kashgar on 7 July, which doubtless contributed to the success of his moves against the Amīrs. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5370.1933.
171. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5370.1933; PZ.4045.1933.
172. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4689.1933. Details of Khoja Niyās Hājjī's agreement with the provincial authorities are given above, pp. 110–11.
173. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4689.1933. For details of Kirghiz activities in Sarikol during this period, see Forbes, 'Muslim Separatism', p. 218, fn. 179; IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5281.1933: letter of Aga Sultan Sir Muhammad Shah (Aga Khan) to India Office, 17/8/1933.
174. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.7339.1933 (*Kashgar Diaries*, Aug. 1933).
175. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.7339.1933.
176. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5258.1933 (letter, HMCGK–GOI, 10/8/1933); PZ.6106.1933 (letter, HMCGK–GOI, 10/8/1933). For a contemporary account of Temür's fate, see 'Turki Chief Beheaded', *The Times*, 25 Aug. 1933.
177. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6106.1933. Jānib Beg played no further part in the politics of southern Sinkiang; being actively sought by both the Tungans and the Soviets, he fled across the frontier into the safety of neighbouring Afghanistan. IOR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941 (*Who's Who in Sinkiang*), p. 6.

178. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6106.1933. Ma Shao-wu informed HMCGK that he had kept Ma Chan-ts'ang informed of Temür's movements, and was a party to the Tungan coup.
179. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5431.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 17/8/1933).
180. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6634.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 31/8/1933); IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.7339.1933.
181. IOR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941.
182. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5907.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 3/8/1933). The Kumullik representatives, identified by Fitzmaurice as 'Ali Akhund and Hājjī Muhammad Niyās A'lām Akhund, were sent to Kashgar from Kucha. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.7339.1933.
183. *ibid.*
184. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6582.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 14/9/1933).
185. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6711.1933 (telegram, HMCGK-GOI, 5/10/1933).
186. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6582.1933.
187. *ibid.*; cf. Forbes, 'Muslim Separatism', p. 225; for Muhammad Amin Bughra's activities at Khotan, see Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 40.
188. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6583.1933; for details of a similar Tungan sortie against Kashgar Old City on 21 September, see IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.7224.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 28/9/1933).
189. Hayit, *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, p. 313; IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6634.1933; L/P&S/12/2364 (*Sinkiang Internal Situation (Mail Reports)*, Nov. 1933–Nov. 1936), PZ.7903.1033 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 26/10/1933).
190. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6634.1933; PZ.7031.1933.
191. *ibid.*; cf. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.7224.1933.
192. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.7031.1933.
193. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6711.1933 – *Minute Paper (Secret, Political Dept)*, *Sinkiang Rebellion: Latest Reports*; IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6711.1933 (Telegram, HMCGK-GOI, 5/10/1933).
194. The other members of the triumvirate being, of course, the besieged Ma Chan-ts'ang and the deceased Temür. Uthmān 'Ali was subsequently to reappear at Kashgar as a Kirghiz leader, but he never again participated in the administration of the lowland oases.

4 Sinkiang, 1933–4: Tungan invasion, Turkic secession and Soviet intervention

1. Hedin, S., *Big Horse's Flight* (London, 1936), p. 17.
2. Davidson, *Turkestan Alive*, p. 109. Rewi Alley is a New Zealander, who has lived in China for over forty years, and who knew Ma Chung-ying personally.
3. Cable and French, *The Gobi Desert*, pp. 238–9.
4. *ibid.*, p. 239.
5. *ibid.*, p. 241.
6. Dallin, D. J., *Soviet Russia and the Far East* (New Haven, 1948), pp. 94–5.
7. The biplanes were of Soviet manufacture, but were powered by American-

- made 'Liberty' radial engines. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.181.1933 (HMVCGK Watts-GOI, 21/10/32), p. 9.
8. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 67; Cheng Tien-fong, *A History of Sino-Russian Relations*, p. 170.
9. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 67; Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, pp. 81–2.
10. Cheng Tien-fong, *A History of Sino-Russian Relations*, p. 170; Wu, *China and the Soviet Union*, pp. 254–6. The text of the treaty together with four annexes is given in Wu's Appendix B.
11. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.5443.32 (information supplied by H. French Ridley of the China Inland Mission, Urumchi).
12. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 236.
13. Sheng was to claim in an interview with Allen S. Whiting during 1954 that he had become a Marxist in 1919. This claim must be treated with reservation, as he failed to join the Chinese Communist Party which was founded in the same year. He later declined to join the Kuomintang, although a serving member of Chiang Kai-shek's staff, a decision he explained to Whiting in terms of his 'Marxist beliefs'. Whiting, A. S. and Sheng Shih-ts'ai, *Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?* (East Lansing, 1958), part I, p. 15. A study of Sheng's *Red Failure in Sinkiang* (*op. cit.*, part II), suggests that Sheng was, in fact, a shrewd political opportunist much influenced by progressive concepts emanating from the Soviet Union after 1917, but who was too cautious (and probably too cynical) to commit himself absolutely to any one party.
14. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 227.
15. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, pp. 120–1. Lattimore's explanation of Sheng's resignation – that following Chang Hsüeh-liang's adherence to the Nationalist cause Chiang Kai-shek had no further need of a young north-eastern warlord – is very plausible (*Pivot of Asia*, p. 70).
16. See, however, Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 229. esp. fnn 19 and 20.
17. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 121.
18. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 233.
19. See above, p. 70.
20. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 121.
21. Cheng Tieng-fong, *A History of Sino-Russian Relations*, p. 170; cf. Beloff, M., *The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia*, I, p. 232. According to Beloff, the White Russian troops were sent from Kulja to Urumchi under the command of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, but this is at variance with Howard and Boorman's *Biographical Dictionary*, which states that Sheng remained at Turfan after his capture of that city in the winter of 1932 (III, p. 121). The dictates of geography make Howard and Boorman's version of events the more credible of the two alternatives.
22. Vakar, N., 'The Annexation of Chinese Turkestan', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, XIV, 40 (1935), p. 121.
23. For a detailed map of the Chai-wu-pao corridor and the area around Urumchi, see Wiens, H. J., 'The Historical and Geographical Role of Urumchi, Capital of Chinese Central Asia', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, LII, 4 (Dec. 1963), pp. 444–5.

24. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 80; Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, pp. 6–7.
25. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 81. In fact, despite the enigmatic words of the oracle, Chin was born both for disaster and escape, as will be shown.
26. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 82. For a photograph of the city walls protecting Urumchi at this time, see Clark, J. L., 'Chinese Turkestan: "Sinkiang", the Land that Lies at the Back of China', *Natural History*, XXXIV (July 1934), p. 355.
27. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 82; cf. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.4641.1933 (*Report of R. H. Joyce, China Inland Mission, Urumchi*, dated 18 April 1933).
28. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 83.
29. Wu notes that the White Russians ambushed and killed nearly 600 'Turban-heads' (the Chinese colonial idiom for Uighurs) in a defile outside the city during one such sortie; *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 83.
30. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 88. See also Wu's chapter 7, 'We Gather Our Dead', and his plate facing p. 82.
31. Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, p. 7.
32. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 83–4, 89.
33. *ibid.*, p. 84.
34. Hayit, *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, p. 301; Karahoça, Amac, *Doğu Türkistan*, 'Çin Müstemlekesi' (Eastern Turkestan, 'A Colony of China'), Istanbul, 1960, p. 13.
35. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 92.
36. *ibid.*, p. 89–90.
37. Beloff, *The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia*, I, pp. 232–3; cf. Chen, 'The Road to Power', p. 238. (Beloff is mistaken in putting the size of the forces transferred from Heilungkiang to Sinkiang at 7,000; cf. Chan, *op. cit.*, p. 238, fn 42. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 69, puts the total number of north-eastern troops at 'over 1,000').
38. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 238; cf. Teichmann, Sir Eric, *Journey to Turkistan* (London, 1937), pp. 20, 187.
39. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 238.
40. *ibid.*
41. As Lattimore pointed out in his *Pivot of Asia* (p. 70): 'Ever since the regime of China's first modern warlord, Yuan Shih-k'ai, a provincial governor who does not control his own troops has usually been over-shadowed by the commander of the military forces.' This was increasingly the case in Sinkiang in 1932, even before the arrival of some 2,000 of Sheng's fellow-provincials in March 1933.
42. Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, pp. 8–9.
43. *ibid.*, p. 8. Howard and Boorman, *Biographical Dictionary*, I, p. 382.
44. For a detailed first-hand description of the coup, see Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, pp. 100–18.
45. Following his arrival in China Chin Shu-jen was arrested by the Nationalist government and charged with illegally signing the 1931 treaty with Soviet Russia. In April 1935, he was sentenced to three-and-a-half years' imprisonment, but was subsequently pardoned on 10 October of the same year. He was later visited, when living in retirement near Lanchow in his native Kansu, by George Hogg who describes him as 'a scholarly old gentleman

- named Chin Shu-jen, who began and is ending his life as a gardener'. (Hogg, *I See a New China*, pp. 118–19). Chin may well have bought his pardon with the large sums of money transferred illegally from Sinkiang to his personal bank account in Tientsin. Certainly he paid a light penalty for his years of misrule in Sinkiang.
46. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 117; Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, p. 9.
 47. Sheng Shih-ts'ai, *Red Failure in Sinkiang* (Part II of Whiting and Sheng, *Sinkiang, Pawn or Pivot?*), p. 159; cf. Sheng Shih-ts'ai, 'Hsin-chiang shih-nien hui-i lu', *Tzu-li wan-pao*, 6 October 1952 (cited in Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 240).
 48. Ch'iu Yü-fang's father was Ch'iu Tsung-chun. His connections with the north-eastern militarist leadership must have strengthened Sheng's hand during negotiations with the North-East National Salvation Army during 1933. See Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 242.
 49. *ibid.* Chan implies that Ch'iu Tsung-chun was also in Sinkiang at this time, and negotiated with the North-East National Salvation Army on behalf of his son-in-law.
 50. In his memoirs Sheng states that the message was brought from Urumchi to Uruba by Li-Hsiao-t'ien aboard a plane. Although possible, it should be noted that Uruba is no more than seven miles from Urumchi, and in Wu's account of the coup mention is made of sending a junior Kuomintang Commissioner, Pei, on horseback to Sheng at Uruba. (cf. Sheng Shih-ts'ai, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, pp. 159–60, and Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, pp. 107–8). This discrepancy casts further doubt on Sheng's version of events and reinforces the theory that he was a party to the coup.
 51. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 109; Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 241.
 52. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 118.
 53. Wu, *Hsin-chiang chi-yu fu Su-lien yu-chi*, p. 78.
 54. According to Chang Ta-chün, Sheng surrounded the assembly hall where negotiations were being held with soldiers brought back with him from Uruba, and thus engineered the result he desired. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 242.
 55. According to Wu (*Turkistan Tumult*, p. 136) Ma Chung-ying did not learn of the successful coup against Chin Shu-jen until after he had launched his new invasion.
 56. Cable and French, *The Gobi Desert*, p. 227; Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, p. 6; Kazak, *Osttürkistan zwischen den Grossmächten*, p. 18, fn 47. As Wu points out in his *Turkistan Tumult* (p. 70), following this appointment Ma Chung-ying would have been able to draw on central government funds to pay for his army.
 57. Vasel, G., *My Russian Jailors in China*, pp. 52–5.
 58. Bexell, G., 'Geological and Palaeontological Investigations in Mongolia and Kansu, 1929–34', in Hedin *et al.*, *History of the Expedition in Asia*, IV, pp. 239, 244.
 59. Vasel, *My Russian Jailors in China*, pp. 101–2. For details of troop movements in north-western Kansu following Ma's renewed invasion of Sinkiang, see Bexell, 'Geological and Palaeontological Investigations', pp. 245–6.
 60. According to Hedin, who was briefly held captive by the 36th Division, Ma's

troops were 'several thousand strong' (*Big Horse's Flight*, p. 12). According to Cable and French (*The Gobi Desert*, p. 228) Ma's forces totalled 3,000 men, a figure also given in Boorman and Howard's *Biographical Dictionary*, II, p. 464. The anonymous article 'Recent Events in Sinkiang', *JRCAS*, XXI, I (1934), p. 85, states that Ma had 4,000 men at his command, all of whom were poorly armed, and only 1,000 of whom were Tungans. In fact it seems probable that Ma had at least 2,000 Tungan cavalry at his disposal, in addition to the cavalry already in Sinkiang under Ma Shih-ming's command. Together with infantry his initial invasion force can hardly have numbered less than 4,000. According to Kazak, *Osttürkistan zwischen den Grossmächten*, p. 19, by the summer of 1933 the strength of Ma's army had reached 10,000.

61. See, for example, Wu's *Turkistan Tumult*, pp. 136, 152–6.

62. *ibid.*, p. 137; Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, p. 11.

63. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 138.

64. According to Wu, Tungan losses during the capture of Kitai were 1,000 killed or wounded. Ma Chung-chieh was reportedly killed in a moment of 'inspired but utterly reckless bravery' when attempting to scale the walls in the face of machine-gun fire. (*Turkistan Tumult*, pp. 138–9, 152). There would appear to be no substance in the claims made by the *JRCAS* that Ma's troops were largely unarmed before their attack on Kitai, or that they were subsequently defeated by provincial forces to the west of Kitai on 29 May ('Recent Events in Sinkiang', *JRCAS*, XXI, I, 1934, p. 85).

65. Sheng can have been in little doubt that Nanking welcomed the overthrow of Chin Shu-jen, but must have feared that Chiang Kai-shek had chosen Ma Chung-ying, recently promoted to the command of the KMT 36th Division and (unlike Sheng) said to have been a KMT member, as Nanking's protégé in Sinkiang. This uncertainty doubtless played at least some part in Sheng's decision to turn to the Soviet Union rather than to Nanking for assistance.

66. Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, p. 12; Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 246.

67. *ibid.*, p. 244.

68. For details of Wu's mission, in which he encouraged Ma Chung-ying to seize control of southern Sinkiang, whilst leaving Zungharia to Sheng Shih-ts'ai, see *Turkistan Tumult*, pp. 148–60.

69. *ibid.*, pp. 174–6. According to Wu, the provincial forces seized 1,000 rifles and four machine guns from the retreating Tungans; cf. Cable and French, *The Gobi Desert*, p. 280.

70. Kuang Lu, 'Hsin-chiang li-shih' (Sinkiang History), in Ling Shun-sheng (ed.), *Pien-chiang wen-hua lun-chi* (Cultural Essays on the Frontier Region, Taipei, 1954), III, pp. 330–3.

71. Doubtless Sheng still retained feelings of bitterness towards Nanking dating from the time of his resignation from Chiang Kai-shek's staff in 1928.

72. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, pp. 181–3; cf. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang* (Part I of *Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot*), p. 24. The three leading officials of the Sinkiang Government executed by Sheng Shih-ts'ai were T'ao Ming-yueh, Ch'en Chung and Li Hsiao-t'ien.

73. See above, pp. 116–21.

74. According to Wu Ai-chen, Shara Sume fell to the rebel Kazakhs on 18 April when the local *Tao-yin*, having received news of Chin Shu-jen's overthrow, erroneously assumed that Urumchi had fallen to the rebels. He accordingly destroyed his records, set fire to the administrative buildings, and fled to Soviet territory with the other Chinese residents of Shara Sume, leaving the town undefended (Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, pp. 132–3).

75. Hayit, *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, p. 302.

76. In fact a sense of war-weariness was spreading throughout the Turkic-speaking population of north-eastern Sinkiang. During Wu Ai-chen's peace mission to Ma Chung-ying in May 1933, Khoja Niyās Hājjī, his Military Commander Mahmud, and a group of Muslim Akhunds met with him at Santai. They expressed their desire to avoid a wide-scale conflict in Sinkiang and, in marked contrast to the Uighur secessionists of south-western Sinkiang, stated that they would be prepared to support the new administration at Urumchi now that Chin Shu-jen, the oppressor of Kumul, had been overthrown. (*Turkistan Tumult*, p. 146).

77. Wiens, 'The Historical and Geographical Role of Urumchi', p. 242. According to Hayit, *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, p. 303, Khoja Niyās Hājjī reached an agreement with Sheng on 9 June 1933 (i.e. before the battle of Tzu-ni-ch'üan); however this is at a variance with the primary account of Wu Ai-chen (*Turkistan Tumult*, pp. 146, 234), which suggests that Khoja Niyās may have changed sides in late June or early July 1933.

78. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 234.

79. It was as a result of his defeat and withdrawal to Kucha that Khoja Niyās Hājjī sent representatives to Kashgar and Yarkand advocating a policy which was 'bitterly anti-Tungan but conciliatory towards the Chinese' (see above, p. 94). According to HMC GK these representatives left Kucha for Kashgar on 29 July. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.6634.1933 (letter, HMC GK-GOI, 31/8/1933). Yulbārs Khan, the other prominent Kumullik leader, seems to have dropped out of the fighting and to have remained in the Kumul region during this period. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, IV, p. 59.

80. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 245; cf. Fleming, P., *News From Tartary* (London, 1936), p. 250.

81. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 122; IOR, L/P&S/12/2356, PZ.4894.1934 (*Notes Respecting the Sinkiang Rebellion*), p. 1; Burton, W., 'Tug-of-War in Central Asia', *Asia*, XXXV (1935), pp. 518–19.

82. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 122; when Chu died early in 1934, he was replaced by another figurehead Provincial Chairman, Li Yung.

83. According to Wu Ai-chen (*Turkistan Tumult*, p. 234), Ma 'advanced again to the pass at Dawan Ch'eng . . . working his way through the hills he evaded the forces sent to check him'. In fact, Ma already held Dawan Ch'eng, and had repelled a provincial attack on his positions in September 1933. Kuang Lu, 'Hsin-chiang li-shih' (Sinkiang History), in Ling Shun-sheng (ed.), *Pien-chiang wen-hua lun-chi* (Cultural Essays on the Frontier Region, Taipei, 1954), III, p. 333. In October 1933, Wu Ai-chen left Sinkiang via the Soviet

Union. From this time his account ceases to be an invaluable primary source, and although still useful becomes less reliable. Kuang lu, however, remained in Sinkiang on Sheng's staff at this time, and is therefore a more reliable primary source.

84. Kuang Lu, 'Hsin-chiang li-shih', pp. 333–4; Heissig, W., *Das gelbe Vorfeld*, p. 76.
85. Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, p. 196; Vasel, *My Russian Jailers in China*, pp. 164–5; Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 108; Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 233.
86. Vasel, *My Russian Jailers in China*, pp. 172–3.
87. Khoja Niyās Hājjī was later to commit himself, albeit briefly, to the separatist cause. Yulbārs Khan appears to have remained loyal to the Nationalist authorities at Nanking (and later on Taiwan) until his death in the mid-1970s.
88. The Khoja's army, although no match for the regular troops of Sheng Shih-ts'ai or Ma Chung-ying, was nevertheless large. According to Hedin (*Big Horse's Flight*, p. 152), the Khoja's army consisted of 15,000 men, 60,000 sheep and 40,000 cows.
89. Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 43; Hayit, *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, pp. 303–4.
90. Hayit, *ibid.*
91. *ibid.*, cf. Karahoça, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 16; Hai, 'Muslim Minority in China', pp. 105–6.
92. The writings of Arell (*Din broders blod ropar*, pp. 34–6, 78–82), Thomson-Glover (IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.98.1934 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 23/11/1933), Fleming (*News From Tartary*, pp. 252–3), and especially Ambolt (*Karavan*, pp. 165–80), tend to stress those aspects of TIRET policy frequently associated in the minds of non-Muslim Westerners with the zealous ('fanatical') application of Islamic *Shari'a* law. This is not borne out, however, in the constitution of the TIRET (see Appendix II to the present study), nor in the writings of Muhammed Amin Buğra (*Doğu Türkistan, passim*, but especially p. 40, 'Internal Policy and Foreign Relations of the Khotan Government'; cf. *idem.*, *Doğu Türkistan'in Hürriyet*, Istanbul, 1954, pp. 31–47), nor again in the actions of the Khotanlik Amīr following the collapse of the TIRET, when Bughra co-operated with the KMT government of Chiang Kai-shek during the 1940s, and subsequently took refuge in 'reformist' Turkey rather than in – for example – 'fundamentalist' Arabia following the CCP seizure of power in 1949.
93. Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 40, and (briefly), Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 112; Aubin, F., 'Islam et sinocentrisme: la Chine, terre d'Islam', in *L'Islam de la seconde expansion* (Paris, 1981), p. 9; cf. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.98.1934.
94. Chang Ta-chün, *Ssu-shih-nien tung-luan Hsin-chiang*, pp. 52–3; Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 40.
95. According to HMCGK, the TIRET was probably established at Kashgar without Khoja Niyās Hājjī's knowledge (IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.98.1934, supplement: *Comments on the Local Situation at Kashgar*).

96. Hayit, *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, p. 302, fn 6; cf. *idem.*, 'Ost Turkistan: Machtkampf zwischen China und Russland', *Das Parlament*, xxviii (1963), p. 341; IOR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.8033.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, n.d.).
97. Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 40; cf. Ambolt, *Karavan*, p. 175.
98. See Appendix II.
99. IOR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.8339.133 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 16/11/1933). According to The Flag Institute at Chester, England, the flag of the TIRET was triangular, of sky blue, with a border of red tongues (cf. the flag of the Khotan Islamic government in figure 18 above); in the upper hoist was a crescent and star. *Notes on the Vexillology of Chinese Turkestan* (Ts., The Flag Institute, Chester, 1980).
100. IOR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.98.1934; Aubin, 'Islam et sinocentrisme', p. 9.
101. IOR, L/P&S/12/2331, PZ.98.1934.
102. *ibid.*
103. IOR, L/P&S/12/2356, PZ.8340.1933 (telegram, GOI-HMCGK, 11/12/1933).
104. 'Chinese Turkestan and Autonomy', *The Times* (London), 7 February 1934; cf. 'Chinese Turkestan', *The Times* (London), 22 February 1934. The Amīr Muhammed Amin Bughra confirms this development, noting that: 'India, at that time under the British, whilst happy to continue normal trade relations, preferred to remain neutral in the face of our revolution, and would not provide arms' (Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 40).
105. According to Beloff, these Turks were 'anti-Kemalist exiles', *The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia*, 1, p. 234.
106. Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 114; IOR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.1390.1933, British Ambassador at Ankara (Ankara) to FO, 12/2/1934.
107. Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 40.
108. Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 115.
109. Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 40.
110. *ibid.*
111. Sheng, *Red Failure*, in Whiting and Sheng, *Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot*, Part II, p. 163.
112. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, pp. 119–20.
113. *ibid.*, p. 141.
114. This theory is strengthened by the subsequent fate of Ch'en Chung, who, within a few days of his return from Moscow and the almost simultaneous arrival of Huang Mu-sung in Urumchi, was arrested by Sheng and executed, together with two other prominent officials, by firing squad (see above, p. 110). At the time Ch'en was accused by Sheng of plotting, together with Nanking, Ma Chung-ying and Chang P'ei-yüan, to effect his overthrow (Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, pp. 181–3). In his reminiscences Sheng neatly reverses the charge to one of conspiring with Moscow to effect his overthrow (Sheng, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, pp. 160–1).
115. Although Nanking's Foreign Minister, Lo Wen-kan, officially installed Sheng as *Tupan* of Sinkiang on 7 September 1933, this action represented

Nanking's reluctant acceptance of the *status quo* rather than overt approval of Sheng's position. In a word, Sheng forced Nanking's hand by detaining Huang Mu-sung in Urumchi. Besides, as has already been indicated, Nanking was in no position to offer Sheng assistance even if it had wished to do so.

116. See above, p. 98.

117. Tadashi was apparently using a Chinese name, Yu Hua-heng, as a pseudonym. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 239; An Ning, *Hsin-chiang nei-mu* (Behind the Scenes in Sinkiang) (Singapore, 1952), p. 48.

118. *Miscellaneous Documents Relating to the Political and General Situation in Sinkiang* (in Japanese), A.6.1.3:4, II, June 1930–Dec. 1933, Japanese Foreign Office Archives. Ariyoshi to Hirota, 20 Nov. 1933 (cited in Whiting and Sheng, *Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot*, Part 1, p. 40). According to Lattimore (*Pivot of Asia*, p. 72), 'There is . . . no doubt that Ma Chung-ying had Japanese agents at his headquarters – agents who can be described as adventurous forerunners rather than acknowledged representatives of Japanese policy.'

119. *Pravda*, 8 Dec. 1933. Cited in Whiting and Sheng, *Sinkiang Pawn or Pivot*, Part 1, p. 40.

120. Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 116; Beloff, *The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia*, I, p. 234; cf. *Izvestiya*, 17 March 1934 (translation in L/P & S/12/2364, PZ.2076.1934).

121. Anon., 'Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien', pp. 5–6; The Soviets were disturbed by the presence in Toyko of Prince 'Abd al-Karim, the grandson of the late Sultan 'Abd al-Hamid of Turkey, whom they feared as a possible future Japanese puppet ruler of Sinkiang (much as the ex-Emperor Pu-yi served Japanese interests in Manchukuo). According to British diplomatic sources, the Prince was a French passport holder, born in Constantinople but domiciled in Beirut. Between 1930 and 1933 he travelled through India, Ceylon and Malaya attempting to raise money from local Muslim rulers (he was reported by the Colombo CID to be 'slightly insane'). His arrival at Tokyo in 1933 provoked strong Soviet protests. IOR, L/P & S/12/2364, PZ.1681.1934 (*Passport Dept. Warning Control Circular S24424*).

122. The German Minister in Kabul is known to have received visits from TIRET envoys (Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 155); moreover the Soviet Union accused a German national resident in Kabul of planning to send munitions to the TIRET at Kashgar. The German Foreign Office denied this accusation. AA IV Chi 270/10.2.1934; Deutsche Botschaft, Moskau, 8.2.34. Cited in Nyman, p. 155, fn 27.

123. According to Dallin (*Soviet Russia and the Far East*, p. 95), Moscow 'backed Ma's opponents from the very beginning'. Note, however, Ella Maillart's contemporary report that whilst *Izvestiya* was inveighing against Ma Chung-ying as a puppet of the Japanese, *Pravda Vostoka*, the Tashkent organ of the CPSU, represented him in 1932 as a peasant leader in revolt against the militarist feudal system of Sinkiang (Maillart, *Forbidden Journey*, London, 1937, p. 217).

124. White, T., 'Report from Turkestan', *Time*, 25 October 1943, p. 27.

125. Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, p. 236.

126. 'There can be no doubt that Sheng Shih-ts'ai . . . was genuinely opposed to Japanese imperialism – which, like many Chinese who had studied in Japan, he thoroughly understood.' Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 72.

127. Whiting, A. S., *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 25. G. A. Apresoff was a Soviet specialist in Central Asian affairs who had formerly served as Soviet Consul in Mashhad, and who had worked with the Tudeh (Iranian Communist Party).

128. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 122; cf. Beloff, *The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia*, I, pp. 234–5.

129. Serebrennikov, J., *Veliki Otkhod* (The Great Exodus) (Harbin, 1930), p. 262; Cheng Tien-fong, *A History of Sino-Soviet Relations*, pp. 171–2; Beloff, *The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia*, pp. 234–5.

130. Dallin, *Soviet Russia and the Far East*, pp. 97–8.

131. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 247. The Soviet official was called Pogodin; both he and the Pao-an Chü are believed to have had links with the GPU, which was also active in Sinkiang at this time (Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 124).

132. Cheng Tien-fong, *A History of Sino-Soviet Relations*, p. 171; Fleming, P., *News from Tartary*, p. 251; Dallin, *Soviet Russia and the Far East*, pp. 97–8.

133. This was in addition to Sheng's 'Eight Points' (promulgated shortly after Chin Shu-jen's overthrow in the summer of 1933), viz. (1) national equality, (2) religious freedom, (3) immediate rural relief, (4) financial reforms, (5) administrative reforms, (6) extension of education, (7) realisation of self-government, and (8) judicial reform (Sheng, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, p. 165). As can be seen, the 'Eight Points' and the 'Six Basic Policies' are essentially similar, and indeed overlap at some points.

134. Beloff, *The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia*, p. 235.

135. Barmine, A., *One Who Survived*, (NY, 1945), p. 231.

136. According to Wu (*Turkistan Tumult*, p. 235), Chang committed suicide in Zungharia after sustaining a crushing defeat near Wusu. Hedin's account of Chang's defeat, which is both more detailed and more plausible, indicates that the defeated Commander returned to Ili, and was attempting to flee across the Muzart Pass to Aksu when caught by a violent snowstorm. When he realised that there was no escape, he committed suicide (*Big Horse's Flight*, p. 14). Certainly a number of Tungans in the Ili area managed to flee across the T'ien Shan to Nan-lu. Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Soviet Interest*, p. 108.

137. Barmine, *One Who Survived*, p. 231.

138. 'Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien', p. 10.

139. Fleming, *News From Tartary*, p. 252. Beloff, (*The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia*, p. 235) is mistaken in claiming that: 'Fleming's assertion that the Soviet troops used gas is unconfirmed by any other source.' Possible primary sources for the Soviet employment of gas are to be found in Kuang Lu, 'Hsin-chiang li-shih', pp. 333–4; IOR, L/P & S/12/2332, PZ.4216.1934 (*Kashgar Diary, April 1934*); IOR, L/P & S/12/2364, PZ.3418.1934 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 12/4/1934). Use of gas is also mentioned in 'Durch-

dringungspolitik in Zentralasien', p. 10, and by a Tatar interpreter of the Tungans in conversation with the American Ahmad Kamal (*Land Without Laughter*, NY, 1940, pp. 163-4).

140. Tungan losses were estimated by Wu at 2,000 (*Turkistan Tumult*, p. 237). Soviet losses were naturally unpublicised, but Bosworth Goldman, a reporter on the staff of the *Evening Standard*, happened to chance on a 'hospital for the injured from the Manchurian war' when in Novosibirsk shortly after the Soviet intervention. His curiosity naturally aroused, he entered the building:

Men were sitting about in a gloomy hall, many of them with some part of their body hidden in bandages; they ranged in nationality from Laplanders to pure Mongols . . . I asked some of them where they had been, and they replied that they had been fighting in the southern Altai, in co-operation with some Chinese, against 'anti-social elements' disturbing the advance of the class warfare banner into Sinkiang . . . Later, other men with whom I spoke about this struggle often told me that they had never heard of a hospital at Novosibirsk. On the other hand, an occupant of the one I visited told me it was 'the best of the three'. (Goldman, B., *Red Road Through Asia*, London, 1934, pp. 132-3)

141. The Soviet GPU troops did not wear Red Army uniform, but 'discreetly garbed in uniforms without insignia or identifying markings, the Red forces mixed with White Russian units already in Sinkiang as "the Altai Volunteers"' (Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 26).

142. 'Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien', p. 10; Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, p. 15.

143. IOR, D.226 (Confidential), *Who's Who in Sinkiang* (corrected up to 26 July 1938), p. 15, No. 156; cf. Roberntz, G., *En ekumenisk nattvardshögtid i Centralasien* (Stockholm, 1944), p. 251 (cited in Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 155).

144. According to Yulbārs Khan (Yao-lo-po-shih, *Yao-lo-po-shih hui-i lu*, pp. 115-21), the Soviets first approached Khoja Niyās Hājjī at Kumul in 1931, as a result of which the Kumullik rebels received 500 rifles, 100,000 rounds of ammunition, and 40,000 silver taels. It is difficult to understand why the Soviets should have offered backing to the Khoja at this early stage, and Yulbārs' account must be treated with due caution. Cf. Lee Fu-hsiang, *The Turkic-Moslem Problem in Sinkiang*, pp. 60-1; Hayit, *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, p. 310.

145. According to Thomson-Glover, the Khoja received 'nearly 2,000 rifles with ammunition, a few hundred bombs and three machine guns'. IOR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.1627.1933 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 18/1/1934).

146. When Şabit Dāmullāh heard of the Khoja's deal with the Soviets, he informed Thomson-Glover that Khoja Niyas Hājjī was 'no longer a champion of Islam, but a tool in the hands of the Russians and over-friendly to the Chinese'. IOR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.1772.1934 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 21/12/1933).

147. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.2850.1934 (*Kashgar Diary, January 1934*).

148. IOR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.1627.1833 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 18/1/1934).

149. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.3045.1934 (*Kashgar Diary, February 1934*).
 150. Thomson-Glover, J., 'Present-Day Kashgaria', *JRCAS*, xxiv, 3 (1937), p. 445.
 151. IOR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.2136.1934 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 15/2/1934).
 152. Hayit, Baymirza (pseud. Jarçek), 'Şarqı-Türkistan ve Rusya' (Eastern Turkestan and Russia) *Milli Türkistan*, LXVIII (1950), p. 26; cf. *idem.*, *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, p. 310; English translation in Forbes, 'Muslim Separatism', Appendix v, 'Selected Documents Relating to the Turkish Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan' (pp. 553-9).
 153. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.3045.1934 (*Kashgar Diary, February 1934*). During the Tungan counter-attack on the morning of 14 February, the British Consulate-General at Chini Bagh came under attack, resulting in several casualties, including the wife of Col Thomson-Glover who was shot through the lung but subsequently recovered. Thomson-Glover, 'Present-Day Kashgaria', p. 444.
 154. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.3045.1934. According to Buğra (*Doğu Türkistan*, p. 43), the Tungans killed more than 7,000 people during this massacre.
 155. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4216.1934 (*Kashgar Diary, April 1934*).
 156. *ibid.*; cf. Thomson-Glover, 'Present-Day Kashgaria', p. 446; also IOR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.3589.1934: 'Those who remained longest with him [‘Abdullah] and who were the last to be killed with him were Afghans'. See also Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 45.
 157. IOR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.3418.1934 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 12/4/1934); cf. Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 45; 'General Nür Ahmed, with a force of 3,000 men . . . fought with a heroism unparalleled in the history of Eastern Turkestan.'
158. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4216.1934; Thomson-Glover, 'Present-Day Kashgaria', p. 446; Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 45 ('On 16 April Hero Nür Ahmed and 2,500 soldiers, who were struggling against an enemy force of 10,000, were killed'). Ahmad Kamal (*Land Without Laughter*, pp. 130-1) reports that Nür Ahmed Jān's head was sent to the local parade ground 'to be used as a football'.
159. 'Şarqı Türkistan milli fağı'asıga dair: Qarār raqam 30' (On the National Tragedy of Eastern Turkestan: Protocol No. 30), *Yash Türkistan*, LXXI (1935), pp. 19-25; cf. Hayit, *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, pp. 310-12, Forbes, 'Muslim Separatism', pp. 556-9 (English translation).
160. Hayit, *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, p. 313; IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4216.1934; cf. Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 45.
161. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4791.1934 (*Kashgar Diary, May 1934*).
162. Hayit, *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, p. 313; Vakar, 'The Annexation of Chinese Turkestan', p. 122 (according to Vakar the two TIRET leaders were shot).
163. According to Hayit (*Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, p. 313, fn 19), amongst those TIRET leaders who managed to escape were: the Foreign Minister, Muhammed Qāsim Jān Hājjī (fled to Karachi) and the Defence

- Minister, Sultān Beg Bakhtiar Beg (lived until 1960 in Ta'if, Saudi Arabia). The Health Minister, 'Abdullāh Khān, died in his flight across the Himalayas.
164. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4216.1934; Thomson-Glover, 'Present-Day Kashgaria', p. 445; Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, p. 228; Whiting and Sheng, *Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot*, Part 1, p. 26.
165. Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, pp. 145–53.
166. IOR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.4815.1934 (letter, HMCGK–GOI, 7/6/1934).
167. Sarikol was occupied by the Tungans on 7 May 1934. IOR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.4253.1934 (letter, HMCGK–GOI, 5/7/1934).
168. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PA.4791.1694.
169. IOR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.5269.1934 (letter, HMCGK–GOI, 5/7/1934).
170. IOR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.5557.1934 (letter, HMCGK–GOI, 19/7/1934); L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.7370.1934 (*Kashgar Diary, August 1934*). Muhammed Amīn subsequently travelled to Kabul, and ultimately to Nanking in support of East Turkestan independence (or, as a secondary aim, autonomy). He published a nationalist history of Eastern Turkestan at Srinagar in 1940 (see bibliography), and returned to Sinkiang politics in 1946, as a member of the KMT-ETR Coalition Government (see above, p. 196).
171. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4216.1934.
172. *ibid.*
173. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.4791.1934. L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.5269.1934.
174. The GOI went so far as to suggest to the FO that 'we should explain the circumstances at Kashgar to the Nanking government and suggest that they should (1) accord recognition and support to Ma Shao-wu, particularly as he is their old *Tao-yin* and (2) restrain the Urumchi forces from further attacking Ma Chung-ying'. An 'oral communication' was subsequently made to Nanking, IOR, L/P&S/12/2356 (*Chinese Turkestan: Internal Situation and Affairs, December 1933 to 1936*), unnumbered minute paper, dated 14/6/1934.
175. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.5997.1934.
176. *ibid.*; also PZ.4216.1934.
177. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.5997.1934.
178. *ibid.* Ma Chung-ying was accompanied by M. Konstantinov, the Secretary of the Soviet Consulate at Kashgar, as far as Ming Yol, the first stage on the road to Irkeshtam (IOR, L/P&S/12/2364, PZ.5557.1934).
179. Nonetheless, M. C. Gillett, HMVCGK who travelled extensively in 'Tunganistan' in 1937 and who interviewed Ma Hu-shan, reported that Ma Chung-ying went to the Soviet Union 'as a hostage to prevent the further punishment of his troops'. IOR, L/P&S/12/2336, PZ.4094.37 (*Report by Vice-Consul M. C. Gillett, Kashgar, on his Tour to Keria*), p. 6.
180. In this context it is pertinent to note that, following Ma's flight to Soviet territory, Sheng pressed for his extradition through Apresoff, but 'the Soviet Government, acting in the spirit of the Soviet constitution, did not find it possible to accede to the request of the Sinkiang provincial government'. *Izvestiya*, 14 July 1934 (cited in Degas, J., *Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, 1917–1941*, London, 1953, III, p. 85).

181. Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, pp. 240–1.
182. *ibid.*
183. Anon, 'The Rebellion in Chinese Turkestan', *JRCAS*, xxii, 1 (1935), p. 102.
184. Fleming, *News From Tartary*, p. 301; cf. Maillart, E. K., *Forbidden Journey* (London, 1937), p. 232: 'The photograph of Ma Chung-ying in Soviet cavalry uniform was under our eyes. He was a tall, well-built man, and contrary to Tungan custom, wore his hair long.'
185. Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, p. 247.
186. IOR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941 (*Who's Who in Sinkiang*, corrected up to 15 April 1940), p. 7, No. 41.
187. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, II, p. 464; Forbes, 'Ma Chung-ying'. Writing of Ma Chung-ying, Georg Vasel – who knew the Tungan warlord personally – commented:
- Ma Chung-ying was one of those types of Inner Asian ruler who are wont to appear every hundred years or so and of whom Chinggis Khan and Temur are the most famous. He was one of those types – half field-marshal and half gangster – who, when successful, are historic heroes, and when unsuccessful end their lives in some dungeon.
- (‘Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien’, *Berichte des Asiens Arbeitkreises*, 1 (1939), p. 6); certainly Ma's political and military ambitions ended in failure.
188. Karahoça, *Doğu Türkistan*, pp. 15–17; IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.5997.1934 (Ch. *Shih-chang* Divisional Commander).
189. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.6835.1934 (*Kashgar Diary, August 1934*).
190. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.7370.1934 (*Kashgar Diary, September 1934*).

5 Sinkiang, 1933–44: the Muslims under Sheng Shih-ts'ai

1. Sheng Shih-ts'ai, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, pp. 200–1.
2. Heissig, W., *Das gelbe Vorfeld*, p. 130 (map); both Filchner (*A Scientist in Tartary*, London, 1939) and Maillart (*Forbidden Journey*) style the region under Ma Hu-shan's control 'Tungania'.
3. The remote south-eastern oasis of Charkhlik was originally in Tungan hands, permitting access to Tsinghai and Kansu (IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.6835.1934; Fleming, *News From Tartary*, p. 263). By mid-1936, however, Charkhlik had passed into provincial hands (Filchner, *A Scientist in Tartary*, p. 222). A sketch map drawn by HMCGK Packman 'to illustrate political situation in Sinkiang up to 1st September, 1937' (IOR, L/P&S/12/2357, *Chinese Turkestan: Internal Situation, 1937–1938*), marks the allegiance of Charkhlik with a question mark, but the oasis was almost certainly in provincial hands at this time.
4. i.e. Fleming, *News From Tartary*; Maillart, *Forbidden Journey*; and Filchner, *A Scientist in Tartary*.
5. IOR, L/P&S/12/2336, PZ.4094.1937 (*Report by Vice-Consul M. C. Gillett, Kashgar, on his Tour to Keria*); cf. *idem.*, 'Hill Trips' or Excursions in China (Lahore, printed for private circulation, 1937), pp. 141, 151.

6. Fleming, *News from Tartary*, p. 263; Ahmad Kamal, *Land Without Laughter*, p. 130.
7. Nyman's statement that 'the isolated Tunganistan preserved a spirit of *jihād* through an unparalleled reign of terror' – *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests*, p. 109; cf. Aubin, 'Islam et sinocentrisme', p. 10 ('un esprit de *djihād* militant') – cannot be permitted to pass unchallenged. The Tungan 'reign of terror' was directed exclusively at their Turkic-speaking Muslim subjects, whilst non-Muslim Han Chinese and White Russians are known to have served in KMT 36th Division ranks in southern Sinkiang at this time; moreover, Ma Hu-shan's civil administration favoured Han Chinese appointees over Turkic-speaking Muslims (IOR, L/P&S/12/2336, PZ.4094.1937, pp. 4–5). In fact the 'reign of terror' in 'Tunganistan' was of typical contemporary warlord type, and was quite unrelated to Islam or the concept of *jihād*.
8. Fleming, *News from Tartary*, p. 263.
9. IOR, L/P&S/12/2336, PZ.4094.1937, p. 4.
10. *ibid.*
11. Filchner, *A Scientist in Tartary*, pp. 254–5; Filchner puts the sums involved into perspective by indicating that, at the time of his visit to Charchan, 1 lot of gold (or 180 silver dollars) was adequate to buy 'a fine farmstead, with cattle, gardens and vineyards'.
12. Fleming, *News From Tartary*, p. 288.
13. IOR, L/P&S/12/2336, PZ.4094.1937, p. 5; cf. Fleming's estimation of troop strength in 'Tunganistan' in 1935:

their effective strength is probably in the neighbourhood of 15,000 rifles, but they could put into the field a very much larger force of auxiliaries armed with swords. About 80% of the troops are cavalry, extremely well mounted; there are several machine guns and a few light cannon. The units are officered by Tungans, but in some the majority of the rank and file are Turkis. The Tungans, who are born fighters, keep their troops intensively trained and undoubtedly constitute the most formidable fighting force in the province. (*News from Tartary*, p. 263)

14. IOR, L/P&S/12/2336, PZ.4094.1937, p. 4; cf. Maillart, *Forbidden Journey*, p. 226. The carpet industry had not fully recovered by the time of Krishna Menon's visit to Khotan in 1944 (*Delhi-Chungking*, Bombay, 1947), p. 105.
15. cf. Ma Chung-ying's occupation of north-western Kansu (Cable and French, *The Gobi Desert*, pp. 222–3).
16. Fleming, *News From Tartary*, p. 264; Maillart, *Forbidden Journey*, p. 232.
17. Fleming, *News From Tartary*, p. 291.
18. *ibid.*, p. 302.
19. *ibid.*, p. 300; cf. Maillart, 'Dictature doungane: Réarmement à Khotan', *L'Illustration*, No. 200 (27 August 1938), pp. 553–6.
20. Fleming, *News From Tartary*, p. 264.
21. IOR, L/P&S/12/2336, PZ.4094.1937, p. 6.
22. When Fleming visited Charchan in June 1935, 'a kind of independence movement had just been suppressed at Charkhlik and more than a hundred

- people executed; the family of the Turki leader had been sent to Khotan as hostages' (*News from Tartary*, p. 267; cf. Maillart, *Forbidden Journey*, p. 194).
23. Fleming, *News From Tartary*, pp. 284–5; cf. Maillart, *Forbidden Journey*, plate facing p. 194.
 24. Filchner, *A Scientist in Tartary*, p. 300.
 25. Maillart, *Forbidden Journey*, pp. 227–8; 'Dictature doungane', pp. 555–6; cf. Fleming, *News From Tartary*, p. 302; Kamal, *Land Without Laughter*, p. 161.
 26. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.6835.1934.
 27. According to Gillett the Tungans referred disparagingly to their Turkic fellow Muslims as *ch'an-t'ou* ('turban heads') and *nao-tzu chien-tan* ('simple minded'). By this time Sheng Shih-ts'ai had forbidden the use of the insulting epithet *ch'an-t'ou* in the remainder of Sinkiang, where the Turkic-speaking Muslims were known by their national groupings (Uighur, Kazakh, etc.). See also Fleming's description of Tungan insensitivity towards leading Uighur citizens (*News From Tartary*, p. 308) and Ahmad Kamal's account of Uighur unrest at Khotan itself (*Land Without Laughter*, pp. 123, 171).
 28. Fleming, *News From Tartary*, p. 294.
 29. Filchner, *Scientist in Tartary*, p. 315; cf. Ahmad Kamal's translation of an anti-Tungan political graffito painted by dissident Uighurs on the main gate of Khotan:

Revolution is an edifice built of many bricks
Each brick is an injustice
Blood is mortar
Each wall is a mountain of sorrow
The foundation is most important
Alone, it must sustain the structure
Martyrdom is the Excellent Foundation!

(*Land Without Laughter*, p. 171)

30. Filchner, *Scientist in Tartary*, pp. 292, 310.
31. Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 255.
32. cf. clause 2 ('kinship to Sovietism') of Sheng's 'Six Basic Policies' (p. 120 above).
33. Unlike his predecessor Chin Shu-jen, Sheng did inform Nanking of his negotiations with the Soviets. However, despite repeated requests from the Chinese authorities, Sheng failed to submit a draft of the contract for their inspection. In fact the loan was at 4 per cent p.a. interest, repayable in local Sinkiang produce. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, pp. 28–9; Cheng Tien-fong, *A History of Sino-Soviet Relations*, pp. 173–4; Chan, 'The Road to Power', p. 251. According to Oguchi Goro there were no other conditions attached to this loan ('Seihoku ni okeru Kan-Kai no tairitsu jijo', *Moko*, 1x, 9, 1942, pp. 17–18; similarly Tu Chung-yüan, *Sheng Shih-ts'ai yu hsin Hsin-chiang* (Hankow, 1938), pp. 93–4).
34. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, pp. 55–6.
35. Barmine, *One Who Survived*, pp. 231–2. Svanidze makes no reference to his

- supposed role in Sinkiang in his memoirs, *My Uncle, Joseph Stalin* (NY, 1953).
36. Anon., 'Russian Penetration into Sinkiang', *MW*, xxvi, 4 (1936), pp. 414–15.
 37. Dallin, *Soviet Russia and the Far East*, p. 100; Cheng Tien-fong, *A History of Sino-Soviet Relations*, pp. 174–5; Cable, M., 'The New "New Dominion"', *JRCAS*, xxxv, 1 (1938), p. 16.
 38. McLean, N. L. D., 'Sinkiang Today', *International Affairs*, xxiv, 3 (July 1948), pp. 380–1.
 39. Hedin, *The Silk Road*, p. 166.
 40. Sheng Shih-ts'ai, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, p. 178.
 41. 'Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien', p. 13; Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, iv, p. 59; IOR, D.226 (*Who's Who in Sinkiang: Corrected up to 26th July, 1938*).
 42. IOR, L/P&S/12/2357 (*Chinese Turkestan: Annual Confidential Report, June 1937–8*), p. 9.
 43. Thomson-Glover, 'Present-Day Kashgaria', p. 442.
 44. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.6835.1934. Sheng may have suspected Mahmūd of separatist tendencies; in marked contrast, he certainly feared Ma Shao-wu's loyalty to Nanking and well-known antipathy towards the Soviet Union.
 45. IOR, L/P&S/12/2369 (*General Liu Pin, Defence Commissioner, Kashgar*), *passim*. For an excellent photograph of Liu, see Hultvall, *Mission och revolution*, plate facing p. 153.
 46. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.6835.1934.
 47. IOR, L/P&S/12/2357 (*Annual Confidential Report, 1937–8*), p. 5; Maillart, *Forbidden Journey*, pp. 254–5; Fleming, *News From Tartary*, pp. 326–7.
 48. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.6833.1934.
 49. IOR, L/P&S/12/2367 (*Chinese Turkestan: Reuter's Special News Correspondent in Kashgar*), PZ.5875.1935. Part 2.
 50. IOR, L/P&S/12/2357, PZ.4740.1937 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 3/6/1937).
 51. IOR, L/P&S/12/2332, PZ.7370.1934 (*Kashgar Diary, September 1934*), cf. IOR, L/P&S/12/2367, PZ.5875.1935, Part 1.
 52. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 35.
 53. *ibid.*
 54. *Miscellaneous Documents Relating to the Political and General Situation in Sinkiang* (in Japanese), iv, 'Interview with Tewfik Sherif Pasha reported by Kitada to Hirota, May 7th, 1935'. Cited in Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, pp. 35–6.
 55. IOR, L/P&S/12/2386 (*Chinese Turkestan: Activities of the ex-Amirs of Khotan and the Tungans, 1935–43*), PZ.523.1937; also IOR, EXT.495 (1942).
 56. *Miscellaneous Documents, etc.*, (in Japanese), iv, 'Kitada to Hirota, undated', cited in Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 36. In his fn 42 Whiting speculates that Kitada's visitor, who styled himself 'Amīr of Khotan', was Šābit Dāmullāh. In fact, Šābit was probably dead by this time – according to Hayit (*Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, p. 313) he was

- hanged in Aksu in July 1934; British diplomatic sources simply note that he was 'removed to Urumchi in 1934, subsequent fate not known' (IOR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1942). It is clear, therefore, that Kitada's visitor must have been Muhammad Amīn Bughra.
57. Hedin, *The Silk Road*, p. 300.
 58. IOR, L/P&S/12/2357 (*Annual Confidential Report, 1937–8*), p. 10.
 59. *ibid.*
 60. *ibid.*, pp. 10–11; Anon, 'Islam in Kashgar', *JRCAS*, xxiv, 4 (1937), p. 729. Mahmūd travelled from India to Arabia, where he visited Mecca; he was subsequently reported (1940) to be in Japan (IOR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941).
 61. IOR, L/P&S/12/2357 (*Annual Confidential Report, 1937–8*), p. 11; Ismā'il, M. S. and Ismā'il, M. A., *Moslems in the Soviet Union and China* (Translation of *Al-Muslīmīn fi al-ittiḥad al-Soviēti wa'l Ṣin al-sha'bīyya*), *JPRS*, 3936 (19 Sep. 1960), pp. 12–13; Hayit, *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, p. 314.
 62. IOR, L/P&S/12/2357 (*Annual Confidential Report, 1937–8*), p. 13.
 63. IOR, L/P&S/12/2357 (*Confidential Memorandum of Events Connected with the 1937 Rebellion in Sinkiang*, n.d.), p. 2.
 64. *ibid.*; IOR, L/P&S/12/2357, PZ.4740.1937, p. 2.
 65. IOR, L/P&S/12/2357, PZ.4740.1937 (letter, HMCGK-GOI, 3/6/1937), p. 1.
 66. IOR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941, p. 5.
 67. IOR, L/P&S/12/2357, PZ.4740.1937, p. 1.
 68. IOR, L/P&S/12/2357 (*Annual Confidential Report, 1937–8*), pp. 15, 19.
 69. *ibid.*; cf. 'Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien', pp. 14–15.
 70. IOR, L/P&S/12/2357 (*Annual Confidential Report, 1937–8*), p. 13. It is interesting to note that in his report on 'Tunganistan' HMVCGK Gillett recorded that Ma Hu-shan 'relies much upon the opinions of his Chief-of-Staff Pai Tzu-li, an intelligent, rusé man of about 40 who was formerly secretary to Ma Chung-ying'. IOR, L/P&S/12/2336, PZ.4994.37, p. 5.
 71. IOR, L/P&S/12/2357 (*Annual Confidential Report, 1937–8*), p. 14.
 72. *ibid.*
 73. *ibid.*, p. 15.
 74. *ibid.*
 75. Statement of Sheng Shih-ts'ai in interview with Allen S. Whiting, May 1954. Cited in Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 51. For a Turkish account of the renewed Soviet intervention (giving grossly exaggerated figures both for Soviet troops and for Turkic casualties), see Karahoça, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 16.
 76. IOR, L/P&S/12/2357 (*Annual Confidential Report, 1937–8*), p. 16.
 77. *ibid.*, p. 16; 'Rebellion in Sinkiang: The Tungans lose Kashgar', *The Times* (London), 5 January 1938.
 78. British diplomatic sources also suggest that Ma Sheng-kuei may have been bribed by Sheng Shih-ts'ai. IOR, L/P&S/12/2357 (*Annual Confidential Report, 1937–8*), p. 16.
 79. *ibid.*; IOR, L/P&S/12/2357, (*Confidential Memorandum of Events Connec-*

- ted with the 1937 Rebellion in Sinkiang, n.d.), p. 3. According to IOR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941 (*Who's Who in Sinkiang to 15th April, 1940*), Pai Tzu-li was 'said to have been shot on the road by Ma Hu-shan', and did not reach India. May Hu-shan and Ma Ju-lung arrived at Leh on 26 September 1937. Ma Hu-shan left India for China in February 1938 and subsequently resumed his career as a petty militarist in the Kansu-Tsinghai area. After the communist victory in 1949 Ma Hu-shan led an anti-communist guerilla group in the hills around T'ao-chou in southern Kansu. He was captured and executed at Lanchow in 1954. Kao Han-jen, *The Imam's Story* (Hong Kong, 1960), pp. 93–8; Khan, M. Rafiq, *Islam in China* (Delhi, 1963), pp. 63–7.
80. IOR, L/P&S/12/2357 (*Annual Confidential Report, 1937–8*), p. 17.
81. *ibid.*, pp. 16–17.
82. *ibid.*, p. 17; Hayit, *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, p. 314.
83. 'Rebellion in Sinkiang: The Tungans lose Kashgar', *The Times* (London), 5 January 1938.
84. IOR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941 (*Who's Who in Sinkiang to 15th April, 1940*). The same source records that 'an unconfirmed report states that he [Ma Sheng-kuei] has found his way to Kansu'.
85. IOR, L/P&S/12/2357 (*Annual Confidential Report, 1937–8*), p. 17; Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, iv, p. 59. Yulbārs succeeded in evading his pursuers, and shortly afterwards was seen by Georg Vasel 'sitting on a straw mat on the bug-ridden *kang* of a caravanserai in Suchow – instead of on the valuable Khotan carpet of his seraglio in Hami' ('Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien', p. 23). Yulbārs subsequently made his way to Nanking, where he was given the rank of Lieutenant General in the Nationalist forces and appointed to a sinecure by Chiang Kai-shek pending the reassertion of KMT authority in Sinkiang.
86. IOR, L/P&S/12/2357 (*Annual Confidential Report, 1937–8*), p. 19.
87. Khoja Niyās Hājjī, who had been reduced to a powerless figurehead in Urumchi and took no part in the 1937 rebellion, was nevertheless arrested and executed by Sheng in the winter of 1937–8. IOR, L/P&S/12/2392, EXT.4910.1941; Karahoça, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 16.
88. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang, 1933–49*, p. 51; cf. Cheng Tien-fong, *A History of Sino-Russian Relations*, p. 176; also Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 80.
89. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 80; cf. Lattimore, O., 'The Kimono and the Turban', *Asia*, XXXVIII (May, 1938), pp. 274–5; also 'Sinkiang's Place in the Future of China' (introduction to Norins, M. R., *Gateway to Asia*, N.Y., 1944), pp. 16–17. A similar argument is advanced in Eleanor Lattimore, 'Behind the Sinkiang Incident', 3 May 1944, pp. 80–1.
90. Clubb, O. E., *Twentieth Century China* (London and N.Y., 1965), pp. 172–3.
91. The Nationalist government eventually lodged a protest (from Chungking, in 1940), against the continued presence of 'uninvited' Soviet troops in Sinkiang. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 51; cf. Chiang Kai-shek, *Soviet Russia in China: A Summing-up at Seventy* (N.Y., 1957), pp. 99–103.

92. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 51.
93. Sheng Shih-ts'ai, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, p. 168.
94. This point was clearly made by the Soviet Consul-General Pushkin during an altercation with Sheng in 1942. According to Sheng, Pushkin stormed into his office, protesting in an angry voice: 'Why do you demand the withdrawal of the Russians? . . . The Red Army is here to help you quell rebellion'. *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, p. 256.
95. The Soviet Union provided credits worth \$100 million in 1938, followed by a further \$150 million in 1939. These credits were to be paid for by exports of Chinese tungsten, wool and tea, to be transported to the Soviet Union overland, via Sinkiang. Clubb, *Twentieth Century China*, pp. 219–20.
96. *ibid.*, p. 220.
97. Wu, *China and the Soviet Union*, pp. 257–8, 269; Lattimore, O., 'China's Turkestan-Siberia Supply Road', *Pacific Affairs*, xiii (Dec. 1940), pp. 393–412 *passim*; Strong, A. L., 'Airplane from the USSR', *Asia*, LXII, 1 (Jan. 1942), pp. 28–31.
98. Liu, F. F., *A Military History of Modern China, 1924–49* (Princeton, 1956), p. 168.
99. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 62.
100. Sheng, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, p. 258.
101. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 62; cf. Sheng, *Red Failure*, p. 258.
102. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 62. Very few Westerners were permitted to visit Sinkiang during this period, and Ili remained particularly cut off from (non-Soviet) outsiders. One exception, however, was the Norwegian refugee Wilfred Skrede, and it seems very likely that the 'frisky, strapping' Russian girls whom he saw playing basket-ball at an aerodrome near Kulja were attached to this establishment. Skrede, W., *Across the Roof of the World* (trans. from the Norwegian *Øver Verdens Tak*), London, 1954, pp. 48–9.
103. British diplomatic sources in the archives of the India Office at London uniformly indicate that this basic policy never varied; cf. Teichman, *Journey to Turkistan*, pp. 191–2. Accusations of British involvement in support of the TIRET (e.g. Burton, 'Tug-of-War', *passim*; Davidson, *Turkestan Alive*, pp. 110–11; Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 184) remain uniformly unsubstantiated and are apparently without foundation.
104. Wu, *China and the Soviet Union*, p. 258.
105. IOR, L/P&S/12/2357 (*Annual Confidential Report, June 1937–8*) p. 5.
106. *The Times* (London), 25 March 1939.
107. *The Times* (London), 1 June 1939.
108. IOR, L/P&S/12/2357, Section 8 ('Relations with Sweden'); cf. Hultvall, *Mission och revolution*, pp. 207–11.
109. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 65.
110. IOR, L/P&S/12/2357, pp. 4–5.
111. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 65.
112. *Su-lien tui Hsin-chiang ti ching-chi ch'in-lüeh* (Soviet Economic Aggression Against Sinkiang), Taipei, 1950), pp. 78 ff.

113. *ibid.*, p. 82; cf. Huang, T. K. et al., *Report on Geological Investigation of Some Oil Fields in Sinkiang* (Nanking, 1947), cited in Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 66.
114. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 66.
115. *ibid.*
116. Clubb, O. E., *China and Russia: The Great Game* (NY and London, 1971), p. 320.
117. Whiting and Sheng, *Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?* Appendix B ('Agreement of Concessions Signed by the Representatives of the Government of USSR and Governor of Sinkiang'), p. 280.
118. *ibid.*, pp. 282–3.
119. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 67.
120. After five years, payment for land was to rise to 6 per cent, still in kind, and still to be sold to the Soviet Union at prevailing world prices. *Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?* Appendix B, p. 283.
121. *ibid.*, pp. 284–5.
122. Sheng, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, pp. 219–21.
123. According to Sheng, Bakulin implicitly stated that not only the future of Sinkiang but also Sheng's personal future would be at risk if the Tin Mines Agreement were not signed (*Red Failure in Sinkiang*, p. 224). Sheng argues unconvincingly that by signing the agreement, but by failing to affix the seals of the Sinkiang Provincial Government and of the Border Defence Commissioner's Office, he succeeded in tricking the Soviet Government and invalidating all its clauses.
124. Neither Sheng's subsequent claim to have become a Marxist in 1919 (Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 15) nor the presence of his arch-rival Ma Chung-ying in Moscow (Sheng, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, p. 193) can fully explain Sheng's unrestrained support for contemporaneous Soviet policies. It may be that both these factors, taken together with Sheng's 'Chameleon' political nature (Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, pp. 69–81) combined to bring about, at least for a few years, a sycophancy towards the Kremlin unmatched almost anywhere outside the frontiers of the Soviet Union.
125. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 122.
126. Clubb, *China and Russia: The Great Game*, p. 286.
127. Dallin, *Soviet Russia and the Far East*, p. 102.
128. According to Clubb, Pogodin was assisted by one Tseng Hsiu-fu, 'the alias of the communist Wang Li-hsiang, who had long served in Outer Mongolia'. Similarly, the Pao-an-chü was placed under the control of one Chang I-wu 'with an able deputy in the person of Chang Hsien-ch'ang, who had been Borodin's interpreter at the time of the Northern Expedition'. Clubb, *China and Russia: The Great Game*, pp. 289–90.
129. *ibid.*, p. 290; cf. Teichman, Sir E., 'Chinese Turkistan', *JRCAS*, xxiii, 4 (Oct. 1936), p. 570.
130. Cable, M., 'The New "New Dominion"', p. 13; IOR, L/P&S/12/2357, section 4.
131. The Great Purge (known in Russia as the *yeshovshchina* after N. I. Yezhov,

- the contemporary Head of the NKVD) was extended to Soviet Central Asia in 1937 following the 'discovery' of a 'nationalist plot' in Uzbekistan. Wheeler, G., *The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia* (London, 1964), pp. 140–2.
132. Sheng Shih-ts'ai, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, p. 176.
133. *ibid.*, p. 177. Apresoff was subsequently executed for 'Trotskyite plotting'. *Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?*, p. 277.
134. Sheng, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, p. 178.
135. *ibid.*, pp. 179–80. One of the accused was the Tatar Burhān Shahīdī, a great political 'survivor' in Sinkiang politics, who was subsequently to become, in direct succession, both the last KMT and the first CCP head of the Sinkiang provincial government.
136. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 52; Sheng, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, pp. 179–80.
137. cf. Stalin's trial and execution of 'Rightists and Trotskyites' in Uzbekistan during 1937 and 1938. Wheeler, 'The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia' (London, 1964), p. 142; similarly, Bennigsen and Lemercier-Quelquejay, *Islam in the Soviet Union*, p. 151.
138. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 53.
139. According to Sheng Shih-ts'ai (*Red Failure in Sinkiang*, p. 186), the two senior-ranking members of the CCP, by name K'ang Sheng and Chen Shao-yu (alias Wang Ming), stopped over in Urumchi at an unspecified time during 1937. According to Allen Whiting, this has been corroborated by Chiang Kai-shek during an interview (*Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 60, fn 21). A letter sent by Sheng to Chiang in July 1942 states that K'ang Sheng and Ch'en Shao-yu passed through Urumchi 'as early as the beginning of our war of resistance', i.e. in July 1937; *Su-lien tui Hsin-chiang ti ching-chi ch'in-lüeh* (Taipei, 1950), pp. 67–8.
140. Sheng, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, pp. 186–8; Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 68.
141. *ibid.*, Whiting.
142. Clubb, *China and Russia: The Great Game*, pp. 313–15.
143. Sheng notes in his memoirs that 'my visit escaped general notice, and even the Chinese ambassador to Russia apparently did not learn of my pilgrimage to the Kremlin' (*Red Failure in Sinkiang*, p. 197).
144. Sheng, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, p. 201.
145. Party membership card no. 1859118. *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, p. 206.
146. In his apologia, *Red Failure in Sinkiang* (pp. 206–7), Sheng offers various excuses and justifications in an attempt to explain 'mechanical details' concerning his party membership, most notably: 'By enrolling . . . in the Russian Communist Party, I could flatly and honestly deny to questioners any connection with the Chinese Communists in Yenan'(!).
147. Sheng, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, p. 206.
148. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 69.
149. Japanese losses at Nomonhan are put at 55,000, compared with an estimated 10,000 for the joint Soviet–MPR forces. The significance of this crushing Soviet victory on the political situation in Sinkiang, and more particularly on

- the psyche of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, can hardly be over-estimated. Garthoff, R. L., *Sino-Soviet Military Relations* (NY, 1966), pp. 36-9; cf. Coox, A., 'High Command and Field Army: The Kwantung Army and the Nomonhan Incident, 1939', *Military Affairs*, XXXIII, 2 (Oct., 1969), pp. 302-11; Young, K. H., 'The Nomonhan Incident: Imperial Japan and the Soviet Union', *Monumenta Nipponica* XXII (1967), pp. 82-101.
150. Sheng Shih-ts'ai, *Liu ta-cheng ti chiao-ch'eng* (The Six Great Policies Study Manual, Urumchi, 1942), I, p. 48 (cited in Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 72).
151. In his *Mestnaya Natsional'nya Avtonomiya v Kitayskoy Narodnoy Respublike* (*Na Preimere Sin'tsyan-Uygurskoy Avtonomoy Oblasti*), (Moscow, 1959), a synopsis of which appeared under the title 'Sinkiang, 1928-59', in *CAR*, VIII, 4 (1960), pp. 441-57, K. F. Kotov describes Sheng's ostensible support for national equality and democracy as a 'demagogic screen' for the real (reactionary) nature of his regime (*op. cit.*, p. 442). Similarly Rossabi, in his *China and Inner Asia*, would appear to give little credence to Sheng's 'progressive' policies.
152. Tu was a childhood friend of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, who visited Sinkiang during the early years of Sheng's rule before returning to Hankow to publish his *Sheng Shih-ts'ai yü hsin Hsin-chiang* (1938). He subsequently returned to Sinkiang (? in 1938), when he was appointed Chancellor of Sinkiang College. In 1943 he was accused by Sheng of being an agent of the CCP. A written 'confession' was subsequently extracted under torture (reproduced in Appendix E of Whiting and Sheng, *Sinkiang; Pawn or Pivot?*), and Tu was executed. Writing of Tu's book in his memoirs, Sheng (no doubt hypocritically) comments: 'While the statistical data and the facts [Tu] included were accurate, he carefully refrained from a single word of criticism, although I would have been the first to admit shortcomings in my own regime.' (*Red Failure in Sinkiang*, pp. 210-11).
153. Norins, M. R., *Gateway to Asia*, p. 101. Norins quotes very extensively from Tu Chung-yüan throughout this study; cf. *idem*, 'The New Sinkiang: China's Link with the Middle East', *Pacific Affairs*, XV, 4 (Dec. 1942), pp. 457-70.
154. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, pp. 72-3 (citing Tu Chung-yüan, *Sheng Shih-ts'ai yü hsin Hsin-chiang*, pp. 80-4).
155. Davidson, *Turkestan Alive*, pp. 112-17; Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, pp. 186-92.
156. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, pp. 127, 137.
157. *ibid.*, p. 137.
158. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 73; Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 185; Norins, 'The New Sinkiang: China's Link With the Middle East', p. 463; *idem*, *Gateway to Asia*, p. 93; Barber, A., and Hanwell, N. D., 'The Emergence of China's Far West', *FES*, VIII, 9 (26 April 1939), p. 103; Lee Fu-hsiang, 'The Turkic-Moslem Problem in Sinkiang: A Case Study of the Chinese Communists' Nationality Policy' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Rutgers University, 1973), p. 65; Chan, 'Sinkiang Under Sheng Shih-ts'ai, 1933-44', p. 165, etc.
159. Hayit, B., *Turkestan im XX Jahrhundert* (Darmstadt, 1956), cited in Wheeler, *The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia*, p. 143.
160. *ibid.*, pp. 142-3; Caroe, *Soviet Empire: The Turks of Central Asia and*

- Stalinism*, p. 160; Maillart, E., *Turkestan Solo* (London, 1938), pp. 193-9.
161. Wheeler, *The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia*, p. 142.
162. Whiting, *Soviet Policy in Sinkiang*, p. 53; cf. Sheng, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, pp. 179-80.
163. Even Martin Norins, probably the most enthusiastic Western partisan of Sheng's 'New Sinkiang', notes that 'the Tungan question may not even yet have been solved in Sinkiang, and that in this respect the policy of "racial equality" as practised in the province may possibly be vulnerable to criticism' (*Gateway to Asia*, p. 93).
164. Exceptions to this general rule were the Uighurs 'Abutu' (presumably 'Abduh), (Reconstruction Affairs Commissioner) and 'Kuerpan' (presumably Qurban) Niýas (Vice-Director of the Police Department); the Kazakhs 'Sarifuhan' (i.e. Sharif Khan, Administrator of the Altai Region) and Buhart, a tribal Prince; and the Tungan Lan Yen-shou, a Vice-Commissioner of the provincial government. All were accused of conspiracy in September 1940, and subsequently purged. (Sheng Shih-ts'ai, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, pp. 216-17).
165. Skrede, *Across the Roof of the World*, p. 57.
166. McLean, N. L. D., 'Sinkiang Today', *International Affairs*, XXIV, 3 (July 1948), p. 382; cf. IOR, L/P & S/12/2358, PZ.1236.1940 (*Report of HM CGK Johnson on his visit to Urumchi, July-September, 1939*), p. 4.
167. IOR, L/P & S/12/2358, PZ.1236.1940, p. 3.
168. *ibid.*; cf. McLean, 'Sinkiang Today', p. 381.
169. IOR, L/P & S/12/2358, PZ.1236.1940, p. 3.
170. Vasel, 'Durchdringungspolitik in Zentralasien', p. 14.
171. IOR, L/P & S/12/2358, PZ.1236.1940, p. 3.
172. Sheng Shih-ts'ai, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, p. 181; Hayit, *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, p. 301.
173. See, for example, Caroe, *Soviet Empire*, pp. 162-72; Wheeler, *The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia*, pp. 130-6.
174. Caroe, *Soviet Empire*, pp. 166-72, citing Soviet census statistics for 1926 and 1939, and Lorimer, F., *The Population of the Soviet Union* (Geneva, 1946).
175. Holdsworth, M., 'Soviet Central Asia, 1917-1940', *Soviet Studies*, III, 3 (Jan. 1952), p. 266.
176. Caroe, *Soviet Empire*, p. 172.
177. Wheeler, *The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia*, p. 131; cf. Lias, G., *Kazak Exodus* (London, 1956), pp. 61-2. Similarly, many Kirghiz fled from Soviet Kirghizia to the Pamirs and the T'ien Shan (see above, pp. 71-2). Photographs of the fleeing Kirghiz and of the pursuing Red Army may be found in Krist, G., *Alone Through the Forbidden Land* (London, 1939), pp. 139-63, plates 19, 21-2.
178. McLean, 'Sinkiang Today', p. 381.
179. Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, pp. 71-2; Ismā'il, M. S., and Ismā'il, M. A., *Moslems in the Soviet Union and China*, p. 12 ('The Revolution of 1936'); Karahoça, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 18.
180. Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, pp. 72-3, 76-7, 91-2; Karahoça, *Doğu Türkistan*, pp. 16-18; Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, pp. 46-7.
181. Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, pp. 81-5.

182. Many Kazakhs (possibly between four and five thousand) eventually left Gez Köl and continued their trek out of Sheng's sphere of influence. An estimated three thousand of these refugees eventually managed to reach Kashmir, apparently by way of western Tibet (Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, p. 73; Ismā'il, M. S., and Ismā'il, M. A., *Moslems in the Soviet Union and China*, p. 12). According to McLean ('Sinkiang Today', p. 382), by 1948 the remnants of this Altai Kazakh band had scattered throughout many of the towns of North India, where they made their living by selling lambskin caps. For a rather fanciful description of events in the T'ien Shan and Manass region, see Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, pp. 76–8.
183. Sheng, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, pp. 178–9.
184. *ibid.*, pp. 215–16; cf. Karahoça, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 18.
185. Sheng, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, p. 218.
186. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 75 (apparently derived from Tu Chung-yüan). It is clear, however, that the Sinkiang road-building project was not intended specifically to benefit the people of Sinkiang. Rather it was undertaken, with Soviet funds and Turkic labour, to improve links between the USSR and the Sino-Japanese war front. Thus, to many Sinkiang Muslims, Sheng's road-building projects represented little more than forced labour in a Soviet or Chinese cause; cf. Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, p. 78.
187. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, pp. 74–5, fn 46.
188. There is no doubt that Sheng and his Soviet sponsors did institute a sweeping literacy programme between 1934 and 1942, though very much for their own purposes. In this context, see Cable and French, 'The New "New Dominion"', pp. 13–14; Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, pp. 74–5; cf. Bacon, E., *Central Asians under Russian Rule: A Study in Cultural Change* (Ithaca, NY, 1966), p. 191; Emiloglu, A., 'Changes in the Uighur Script During the Past Fifty Years', *CAJ*, xvii, 1 (1973), pp. 128–9; Winner, T. G., *The Oral Art and Literature of the Kazakhs of Central Asia* (Durham, NC, 1958), pp. 14–42.
189. Clubb, *China and Russia: The Great Game*, p. 321.
190. *ibid.*, p. 323; Sheng, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, pp. 232–3.
191. According to Sheng, during the negotiations over the 'Sin-Tin' agreement, he was informed by the Soviet delegation that he was a member of the All Union Communist Party (CPSU), and that he should therefore obey the orders of the party (i.e. sign the agreement). *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, p. 222.
192. Stalin is reported to have embraced Matsuoka, the Japanese Foreign Minister, and to have said: 'We are Asiatics, too, and we've got to stick together.' Werth, A., *Russia At War, 1941–45* (London, 1964), p. 121.
193. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 72.
194. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, pp. 80–1. It is relevant to note that in April 1941 Sheng was officially appointed Governor of Sinkiang by the Nationalist authorities (Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 123).
195. North, R. C., *Moscow and Chinese Communists* (Stanford, 1953), p. 188.
196. Jackson, *The Russo-Chinese Borderlands*, p. 53; Ismā'il, M. S., and Ismā'il, M. A., *Moslems in the Soviet Union and China*, p. 14; Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, pp. 102–3; Karahoça, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 18.

197. Chiang Kai-shek, *Soviet Russia in China*, p. 103; Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 82.
198. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 82. A similar course of action was, of course, taken by the CCP; North, R. C., *Chinese Communism* (London, 1966), pp. 167–8.
199. Wei, H., *China and Soviet Russia* (Princeton, 1956), citing a despatch by Theodore White in *Time*, 25 Oct. 1943. According to Allen S. Whiting (*Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 94, fn 10), White's information has been corroborated 'by an American, well informed on events of this period through eyewitness contacts'. See also Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 323. According to Lattimore (*Pivot of Asia*, p. 79), Sheng Shih-ts'ai had once been a subordinate of Chu Shao-liang.
200. Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 323. See also Esposito, B. J., 'China's West in the 20th Century', *Military Review*, LIV, 1 (1974), p. 72.
201. Chan, *Sinkiang Under Sheng Shih-ts'ai*, p. 163; Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 83.
202. *Sinkiang Jih-pao* (Sinkiang Daily), 3 June 1953, cited in Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 94, fn 12. According to Stuart Schram, however, Mao Tse-min was arrested some five months later, in September 1942; *Mao Tse-tung* (Harmondsworth, 1966), p. 209.
203. Considerable mystery surrounds the death of Sheng Shih-ch'i. According to Sheng Shih-ts'ai (*Red Failure in Sinkiang*, p. 240), Shih-ch'i was murdered by his wife, Chen Hsiu-ying, who was acting on Soviet and CCP instructions. A 'written confession' to this effect was extracted from Chen Hsiu-ying, who was subsequently executed (Whiting and Sheng, *Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?*, pp. 293–301). According to Chang Ta-chün, however, the unfortunate Chen Hsiu-ying was tried *in camera* and held incommunicado until the time of her execution (*Ssu-shih-nien tung-luan Hsin-chiang*, pp. 118–21). Allen Whiting has reviewed the available information surrounding the death of Sheng Shih-ch'i (*Soviet Strategy*, pp. 85–6), and concludes that, in all probability, Sheng Shih-ts'ai ordered his brother's execution because of the latter's pro-Moscow sympathies and hostility to the KMT. In this context, see also the pro-Soviet version recounted in 'The Story of Sinkiang', *Amerasia*, 15 Dec. 1944, pp. 357–60.
204. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 84; Clubb, *China and Russia*, pp. 324–5.
205. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy*, p. 85; Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 325; Chiang Kai-shek, *Soviet Russia in China*, p. 101. Lattimore, however, states that Mme Chiang and General Chu were accompanied by Wu Chung-hsin and not by Chaucer H. Wu (Wu Tse-hsiang). *Pivot of Asia*, p. 79.
206. Sheng, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, pp. 255–8; Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 326.
207. Werth, *Russia at War*, p. 474; cf. Norins, *Gateway to Asia*, p. 113, where the Tu-shan-tzu oil is described as 'quality oil comparable to the Baku product'.
208. Clubb, *Russia and China*, p. 327; Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, pp. 86–9.
209. According to G. Kessel, Sheng sent photographs of the dead bodies of Mao Tse-min and other prominent CCP members to Chiang Kai-shek in order to prove that the executions really had taken place. Myrdal, J., and Kessel, G.,

- The Silk Road* (London, 1980), p. 212. For a transcript of Mao Tse-min's 'confession', see Whiting and Sheng, *Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?*, pp. 287–90.
210. Tu Chung-yüan does not appear to have been a member of either the CCP or the CPSU. For details surrounding Tu's activities in Sinkiang and his death at the hands of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, see two articles by Sa Kung-liao (an associate of Tu who fled Sinkiang in 1940) in *Kuo Hsin* (Hong Kong), NS, 1, 3 (11 Nov. 1947) and 4 (25 Nov. 1947), cited in Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 78. For a transcript of Tu's 'confession', see Whiting and Sheng, *Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?*, pp. 291–2. For Sheng's rather unconvincing denial of Tu's murder, see Whiting, *Soviet Strategy*, p. 94, fn 13.
211. Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 327.
212. Chiang Kai-shek, *Soviet Russia in China*, p. 101.
213. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy*, p. 89; Clubb, *China and Russia*, pp. 327–8.
214. Chiang Kai-shek, *Soviet Russia in China*, p. 102; Sheng, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, pp. 264–6; Whiting, *Soviet Strategy*, pp. 86–91.
215. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 80; Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 328.
216. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy*, p. 100.
217. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 79; Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, II, p. 474. For a general study of Chiang's policies towards the 'Wu Ma' clique during this period, see Nohara Shiro, 'Chugoku ni okeru kaikyo seisaku' (China's Muslim Policy), *Kindai Chugoku Kenkyū* (Studies in Modern China), May 1948, pp. 299–323.
218. Within China, pitched battles were being fought between the KMT and the CCP as the latter rapidly extended the areas under their control. Internationally, Soviet comment had become increasingly critical of the KMT war effort, whilst on the Sinkiang–MPR frontier small-scale fighting had developed between KMT and MPR forces. In April 1944, the Soviet Union declared its support for the MPR in this border dispute. See Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 92.
219. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 80.
220. *ibid.*, cf. Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 329.
221. Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 329; Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, pp. 80–1; Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 91.
222. Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 329.
223. According to Chang Ta-chün (*Ssu-shi-nien tung-luan Hsin-chiang*, pp. 138–9), Sheng offered the Soviet Union concessionary rights in the Altai gold mines and at the Tu-shan-tzu oil-fields, together with 450,000 sheep, as an inducement to intervene in Sinkiang. According to Christopher Rand, however, Sheng went so far as to ask Stalin to incorporate Sinkiang into the Soviet Union (*New York Herald Tribune*, 23 Sept. 1947, cited in Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 81).
224. Bearing in mind Stalin's dictum that 'military diplomacy should know how to use for war aims . . . even the devil and his grandmother' (Werth, *Russia at War*, p. 492), it seems unlikely that Stalin was chiefly motivated by his distaste for Sheng (cf. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 81; Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 330), though this may well have proved a secondary factor in the Kremlin's refusal to assist Sheng in 1944.

225. Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 330; Chiang Kai-shek, *Soviet Russia in China*, p. 102; Bridges, F., 'Dynamite in Sinkiang', *Current History*, IX (July 1945), p. 45.
226. According to Sa Kung-liao, 'Talks about Sinkiang', *Wen Tsia*, XXII, 21 March 1946 (cited in Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 74), Sheng paid the KMT a massive bribe of 500,000 Chinese ounces of gold to buy his sinecure and subsequent immunity (see also Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 201; Davidson, *Turkestan Alive*, p. 118).
227. According to Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 78, Sheng imprisoned 'about 80,000 people'; Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 330, gives a figure of 100,000; Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 199, claims 200,000. According to Anna Louise Strong, unpublished CCP sources put the number of prisoners held by Sheng after his break with the USSR at 50,000 (cited in Whiting, *Soviet Strategy*, p. 94), whilst Kotov claims that during Sheng's rule (which he mistakenly refers to as KMT rule) 'over 12,000 of the best fighters in the people's cause' were executed or died in gaol (*Kotov Mestnaya Natsional'nya Avtonomiya*, p. 443).
- ## 6 Sinkiang, 1944–6: Muslim 'Separatism' under the Kuomintang
1. Sheng Shih-ts'ai, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, p. 168.
 2. According to Lattimore, the CC Clique was the 'Tammany' of the KMT, controlling more political machinery and more key appointments than any other faction . . . known for its impatient policy of direct repression, and its preference for the use of force in extirpating any challenge to its supremacy. Its strength came from the brothers Ch'en Kuofu and Ch'en Li-fu, nephews of an early political patron of Chiang Kai-shek and confidential secretaries to the Generalissimo who helped to engineer his original rise to power. (*Pivot of Asia*, pp. 81–2).
 3. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 86.
 4. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 85.
 5. IOR, L/P & S/12/2359, EXT.2314.1945 (*Sinkiang Situation: The First Months of the New Regime*), p. 3; Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan in Hürriyet*, p. 41. For a statement of 'Great Han' policies in Sinkiang, see Li Tung-fang, 'Are the People of Sinkiang Turki?' (in Chinese), *Altai* (Chungking), I, 2 (25 April 1945); cf. Chiang Kai-shek, *China's Destiny*, pp. 12–13.
 6. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 86; cf. Wu Ai-chen, 'Will China Lose its Far West?', p. 675.
 7. IOR, L/P & S/12/2359, EXT.2314.1945, p. 2.
 8. *ibid.*, Li was subsequently dismissed and permitted to leave Sinkiang.
 9. *ibid.*; cf. Ahmad Kamal, *Land Without Laughter* (NY, 1940).
 10. Following Sheng's realignment with the KMT, American and British Consulates were set up in Urumchi (in April and September 1943, respect-

- ively) at KMT request. Lattimore, E., ‘Behind the Sinkiang Incident’, p. 81.
11. IOR, L/P&S/12/2359, EXT.2314.1945, p. 2; cf. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 86.
12. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 86.
13. IOR, L/P&S/12/2359, EXT.2314.1945, p. 7; cf., however, Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 104.
14. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 86.
15. *ibid.*, pp. 175–6.
16. According to Wang Wen-hao, the Nationalist Minister of Economics, during mid-1942 some 90 per cent of Sinkiang’s exports went to the USSR (cited in Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 99); in marked contrast, according to Chen (*The Sinkiang Story*, p. 204), by early 1943 trade with the USSR provided no more than 3.5 per cent of the provincial revenue.
17. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 203; cf. Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan’ın Hürriyet*, p. 41.
18. Clubb, *Russia and China*, p. 327.
19. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 179.
20. *ibid.*
21. *ibid.*
22. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 204.
23. Barnett, A. Doak, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover* (London, 1963), p. 240.
24. Yu Han, ‘Sinkiang Memoir’, *Tu-chih wen-chai* (Shanghai), 1, 6 (16 July 1946), cited in Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 86, fn 65.
25. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 204.
26. IOR, L/P&S/12/2359, EXT.2314.1945, p. 4.
27. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 204.
28. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 179.
29. Clubb, *Russia and China*, p. 328.
30. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 84.
31. *ibid.*; Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 262.
32. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 263.
33. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, pp. 85, 178–9; Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, pp. 204–6.
34. Lattimore, Eleanor, ‘Report on Sinkiang’, *FES*, XIV, 7 (11 April 1945), p. 79.
35. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, pp. 99–100; Cheng Tien-fong, *A History of Sino-Russian Relations*, p. 178.
36. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 79; Dallin, *Soviet Russia and the Far East*, p. 362.
37. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, pp. 179–80.
38. *ibid.*, p. 79.
39. Clubb, *Russia and China*, pp. 364–5.
40. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 156.
41. *ibid.*, p. 84, citing an article by Mas’ud Şabırı entitled ‘Regarding Politics in

- the Northwest’, published in *Altai* (Chungking), 25 April 1945 (in Chinese).
42. Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan’ın Hürriyet*, pp. 41–2.
43. Gayretullah, Hızır Bek, *Osman Batur* (İstanbul, 1966), p. 4; Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 46; Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, pp. 23–4.
44. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 46; Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, *passim*.
45. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 47.
46. *ibid.*; cf. Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, pp. 103–11.
47. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 47; cf. Chiang Kai-shek, *Soviet Russia in China*, p. 102.
48. Hayit, *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, p. 318.
49. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 47.
50. *ibid.*
51. Clubb, *Russia and China*, p. 366; Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 102; Gayretullah, *Osman Batur*, p. 5; cf. ‘Kazakh Rebellion in Sinkiang’, *Amerasia*, VIII (29 Dec. 1944), p. 371.
52. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 102; according to Cheng Tien-fong (a former KMT Minister of Education), ‘Under Soviet air cover and with the help of Outer Mongolian troops . . . [‘Uthmān] . . . succeeded in wiping out the entire Chinese garrison at Huihoko consisting of three regiments’ (*A History of Sino-Russian Relations*, p. 281).
53. Clubb, *Russia and China*, p. 366.
54. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 102.
55. McLean, N., ‘The Much-Courted Kazakhs’, *The Geographical Magazine*, XXI (1948), pp. 256–63.
56. Kotov, *Mestnaya Natsional’nya Avtonomiya*, p. 443; cf. Moseley, G., *A Sino-Soviet Cultural Frontier: The Ili-Kazakh Autonomous Chou* (Cambridge, Mass., 1966), p. 12 (also a reference to Kotov, but in the *JPRS*, rather than the *CAR*, version).
57. Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, pp. 57, 116.
58. The Uighur Muslims of Ili had last rebelled against Chinese authority in 1864–6; Chinese authority was ultimately restored in 1882. At the time of the Ili Revolt in 1944, therefore, Ili had remained untroubled by a major Muslim rebellion for over sixty-two years – much longer than any other part of Sinkiang. See Hsü, L. Shih-lien, *The Ili Crisis: A Study of Sino-Russian Diplomacy* (Oxford, 1965), *passim*.
59. The term ‘Revolt of the Three Regions’ is, in fact, somewhat misleading, as it tends to obscure the fact that two separate and distinct revolts occurred in northern Sinkiang during this period – one in Ili, the other in Shara Sumé. Although nominal unity was achieved for a short time, political differences inherent between the two rebel groups were to prevent their effective unification into a single movement, as will be shown.
60. Hsü, *The Ili Crisis*, pp. 153–88.
61. Mingulov, N. N., ‘The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang, 1944–49’ (an abridged version of Mingulov’s ‘The National Liberation Movement in Sinkiang as part of the Chinese Revolution, 1944–49’, originally published in

- Voprosy Istorii Kazakhstana i Vostochnogo Turkestana*, Alma Ata, 1962), CAR, II, 2 (1963), p. 183.
62. Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', p. 183; Kotov, *Mestnaya Natsional'nya Avtonomia*, p. 443.
 63. Chang Ta-chün, *Ssu-shih-nien tung-luan Hsin-chiang*, p. 175; Lee Fu-hsiang, 'The Turkic–Moslem Problem', p. 67.
 64. Davidson, *Turkestan Alive*, p. 122.
 65. IOR, L/P & S/12/2359, EXT.2314.1945, p. 1.
 66. Cheng Tien-fong, *A History of Sino-Soviet Relations* p. 281; cf. Lee Fu-hsiang, 'The Turkic–Moslem Problem', p. 66; Chen, J., *The Sinkiang Story*, pp. 208–10; Dallin, *Soviet Russia and the Far East*, p. 364.
 67. Moore, H. L., *Soviet Far Eastern Policy, 1931–45* (Princeton, 1945), p. 276; Beloff, M., *Soviet Policy in the Far East, 1944–51* (London, 1953), p. 97.
 68. Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', p. 183.
 69. *ibid.*; cf. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 211.
 70. *ibid.*, Chen; IOR, L/P & S/12/2359, EXT.2314.1945, p. 3.
 71. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 221.
 72. Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', p. 184.
 73. Clubb, *Russia and China*, p. 366; cf. Lee Fu-hsiang, 'The Turkic–Moslem Problem', p. 67; cf. Karahoça (*Doğu Türkistan*, p. 25) who simply states: 'The way that . . . Ahmadjan Qāsim, who was head of the Ili rebels, arose, is still a secret which has not been fully revealed.'
 74. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, pp. 246–7.
 75. Beloff, *Soviet Policy in the Far East*, p. 98; McMillen, D. H., *Chinese Communist Power and Policy in Xinjiang, 1949–1977* (Boulder, Colorado, and Folkestone, England, 1979), p. 22.
 76. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 111; cf. Myrdal and Kessele, *The Silk Road*, pp. 217–18.
 77. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 247; Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', p. 184.
 78. Beloff, *Soviet Policy in the Far East*, p. 98.
 79. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 247. Chen further states specifically that Ahmadjan 'was not a member of the underground organization but immediately volunteered for and threw himself into any work the revolutionary leadership gave him to do'.
 80. *ibid.*, p. 212.
 81. *ibid.*, p. 212.
 82. *ibid.*
 83. IOR, L/P & S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10 (British Consulate Urumchi to Sir R. Stevenson, British Ambassador Nanking, 24/9/46), p. 1.
 84. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 212.
 85. *ibid.*, p. 213.
 86. The main Chinese sources are: Chang Ta-chün, *Ssu-shih-nien tung-luan Hsin-chiang*, pp. 145–76, and Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, pp. 203–75 (in English, but based upon numerous interviews with participants in the Ili Rising, including the widow of Ahmadjan Qāsim). The main Russian source consulted by the present author has been N. N. Mingulov's *Voprosy Istorii*

- Kazakhstana I Vostochnogo Turkestana*, an abridged translation of which appeared in CAR, II, 2 (1963), pp. 181–95. The most detailed English account of the actual fighting for Kulja is certainly the report of HMC Urumchi Walter G. Graham to Sir R. Stevenson, the British Ambassador to Nanking (IOR, L/P & S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10).
87. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 213.
 88. IOR, L/P & S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 2.
 89. *ibid.*; Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, pp. 213–14; Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', p. 184.
 90. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 214; Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', p. 184 (citing the ETR organ *Inqilabi Sharqi Türkistan*, 7 Oct. 1947).
 91. Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', p. 184; IOR, L/P & S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 3.
 92. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, pp. 104–5; Wheeler, G., 'On the Frontiers: Sinkiang and the Soviet Union', *The China Quarterly*, xlv (Oct.–Dec., 1963), p. 58; Chiang Kai-shek, *Soviet Russia in China*, pp. 102–3.
 93. Moore, *Soviet Far Eastern Policy*, p. 276; Wheeler, 'Sinkiang and the Soviet Union', p. 58.
 94. Lattimore cites (with apparent concurrence) the reports of Frank Robertson, 'an American correspondent who reached the region [of the ETR] somewhat later', *Pivot of Asia*, p. 87. In this context, see also Robertson's report in the New York Times of 1 February 1948, which states clearly that 'there has been no evidence to support Chinese charges that Ili troops are armed with modern Russian equipment' (cited in Lee Fu-hsiang, 'The Turkic–Moslem Problem', p. 76).
 95. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 105.
 96. See Appendix IV.
 97. Copy of telegram from Special Commissioner Wu to Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 8 Nov 1944 (*Wai-chiao-pu* Archives, Taiwan), cited in Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, pp. 104–5.
 98. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 214.
 99. IOR, L/P & S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 2.
 100. Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', p. 184; cf. Bruk, S. I., *Naseleniye Kitaya, MNR i Korei* (Peoples of China, MPR and Korea) (Moscow, 1959; English translation *JPRS*, 3710, 16 August 1960), p. 44.
 101. Hedin, *Big Horse's Flight*, p. 184.
 102. IOR, L/P & S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 2.
 103. IOR, L/P & S/12/2359, EXT.2314.1945, p. 3.
 104. IOR, L/P & S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 2.
 105. A-ho-mai-ti-ch'ang (Ahmadjan Qāsim), 'Wo-men tsai min-ts'u wen-t'i chung ti i-hsieh ts'o-wu' (Some of Our Mistakes With Regard to the Nationalities Question), *Hsin-Hua Yüeh-Pao*, 1, 4 (Feb. 1950), p. 883.
 106. Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-Western Sinkiang', p. 184.
 107. It is interesting to note that following the 'Saur' (April) Revolution of 1978 in Afghanistan, the *Khalq* (People's) faction of the Afghan communist movement substituted a red flag for the former Afghan national flag which

had contained green – the prophet Muhammad's favourite colour – for Islam. Following the Soviet invasion in late 1979 and the installation of a puppet government drawn from the *Parcham* (Banner) faction of the Afghan communist movement, this decision was reversed, and green was reintroduced into the Afghan national flag.

108. Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', p. 184; Lee Fu-hsiang, *The Turkic-Moslem Problem*, p. 73; Kotov, *Mestnaya Natsional'nya Avtonomiya*, pp. 443–4; Ismā'il and Ismā'il, *Moslems in the Soviet Union and China*, p. 28; Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 87; Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 241; McLean, 'Sinkiang Today', p. 385. Of the various 'progressive' figures attached to the ETR Central Staff, the 'Mongol' Fucha-Afandi (described by Mingulov as a 'distinguished patriot') is perhaps the hardest to place. The first element of his name might possibly be a Russification of the Mongol *khuch* (= strong), which is indeed used as a name by Mongols. 'Afendi', however, is certainly not Mongol, but may well be a distorted transcription of the Turkic Muslim title *efendi*; this suggests that Fucha-Afandi was probably an Islamicised Mongol, and as such may not have been truly representative of the Lamaist-Buddhist population of Ili.
109. Boorman and Howard, *op. cit.*, III, pp. 87–9. According to Barnett, however, the Yashlär Tashkilati was led by a Uighur of Turfan called Saifullah who, like Saif al-Din had been educated in the Soviet Union (*China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 269). For an alternative bibliography of Saif al-Din, based primarily on sources dating from the current communist era, see McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power*, pp. 34–7. According to McMillen, Saif al-Din was born at Chuguchak and studied at the Central Asia University in Moscow. Despite these discrepancies, however, it seems to be agreed that Saif al-Din received his higher education in the Soviet Union, and became a member of the CPSU.
110. Chang Ta-chün, 'Hsin-chiang I-ning shih-pien yü wei Tung Tu-erh-szu-tan Kung-ho-kuo ch'eng-li chi ch'i hui-mieh' (Sinkiang's I-ning Affair: The Establishment and Subsequent Collapse of the 'East Turkestan Republic'), in Kuang Lu (ed.), *Hsin-chiang yen-chiu* (Studies on Sinkiang, Taipei, 1964), p. 324; similarly Hsü Po-ta, 'Su-o tui Hsin-chiang chih ch'in-lüeh' (Soviet Aggression Against Sinkiang) in the same compilation, pp. 304–5. See also Lee Fu-hsiang, *The Turkic-Moslem Problem*, pp. 72–3.
111. Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', p. 185.
112. *ibid.*
113. *ibid.*
114. IOR, L/P & S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 2.
115. For Chen's lengthy account of the struggle at Airambek (written throughout in the tedious 'black and white' style of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution), see his *Sinkiang Story*, pp. 222–6.
116. IOR, L/P & S/12/2405, Coll. 12/62, EXT.2733.1945 (HMCU Turrall-IO, 5/2/1945).
117. Lee Fu-hsiang, *The Turkic-Moslem Problem*, p. 74.
118. IOR, L/P & S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 2; cf. Whiting, who states:

men as well as material support appear to have been provided by the Soviet Union. Reserves for rebel forces were readily available from ethnically akin groups across the border. Participants in the revolt later testified that key leaders, as well as many followers, crossed from Russian territory during the winter of 1944–45. (*Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 105)

119. Mingulov 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', p. 185.
120. IOR, L/P & S/12/2359, EXT.2314.1945, p. 3.
121. IOR, L/P & S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 2.
122. IOR, L/P & S/12/2405, Coll.12/62, EXT.2733.1945.
123. Hayit, *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, p. 318.
124. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 47; IOR, L/P & S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 2.
125. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 47.
126. IOR, L/P & S/12/2359, EXT.2314.1945, p. 5; cf. Dönmez, Ramazan, 'Türkistanlılar Türkiye'ye Nasıl Geldi?', in Gayretullah, *Osman Batur*, p. 13.
127. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 230.
128. IOR, L/P & S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 3.
129. IOR, L/P & S/12/2359, EXT.2314.1945, p. 5.
130. *ibid.*, p. 4. The armaments shown to Turrall by the KMT bore no markings, but he was informed that 'miscellaneous rifles of Polish, Finnish, German and Romanian manufacture' had been captured from the rebels. Such arms would, of course, have been widely available to the Soviets following their major advances in the European theatre during 1943 and 1944. In this context see Werth, *Russia at War*, pp. 74–9, 493–508, 519.
131. Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', p. 185; cf. Kotov, *Mestnaya Natsional'nya Avtonomiya*, pp. 443–4.
132. *ibid.*, Mingulov.
133. Lee Fu-hsiang, *The Turkic-Moslem Problem*, pp. 67–8.
134. Chang Ta-chün, *Ssu-shih-nien tung-luan Hsin-chiang*, p. 176.
135. This has also been acknowledged by CCP sources since 1949; see, for example, *China News Analysis*, 103 (7 Oct. 1955), p. 2.
136. According to Lee Fu-hsiang (*The Turkic-Moslem Problem*, p. 68, citing Chang Ta-chün), at least seven 'Moslem clergymen' held cabinet level posts in the ETR. However, 'they had little or nothing to do with the real power, which was in the hands of modern-educated young men who were more or less associated with the Soviet Union'.
137. When Graham visited the ETR zone in 1946, he asked a junior officer of the revolutionary army whether there were many Han Chinese in Kulja. The officer replied: 'There used to be, but [with gusto] we killed a lot of them in the war' (IOR, L/P & S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 1).
138. Even some KMT sources support this evaluation. See Lee Fu-hsiang, *The Turkic-Moslem Problem*, p. 68; Chang Ta-chün, *Ssu-shih-nien tung-luan Hsin-chiang*, pp. 175–6; Chang Chih-chung, 'Dilemma in Sinkiang', *Pacific Affairs*, xx (1947), p. 428.

139. Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', p. 186.
140. *ibid.*
141. Chang Ta-chün, *Ssu-shih-nien tung-luan Hsin-chiang*, p. 175; cf. *idem*, 'Hsin-chiang I-ning shih-pien', p. 327; Lee Fu-hsiang, *The Turkic-Moslem Problem*, p. 67. The eleven departments (ten ministries and one banking dept) are listed in Appendix III.
142. Lee Fu-hsiang, *The Turkic-Moslem Problem*, p. 69. In fact, the ETR's seventeen-man council (presumed to be Lee's 'National Council') appears to have lacked Han Chinese representation and to have been dominated by Muslim nationalities (see Appendix III).
143. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, pp. 87, 148–9.
144. *ibid.*, p. 114 (but cf. Chen's unsubstantiated report of an exclusively Tungan cavalry regiment fighting as an integral part of the INA during 1945, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 228). See also Appendix III at the end of the present study.
145. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 241; Lee Fu-hsiang, *The Turkic-Moslem Problem*, p. 68.
146. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 241.
147. Mingulov, 'The uprising in North-West Sinkiang', p. 186.
148. *ibid.*, citing a report in *Azad Sharqî Türkistan* to the effect that the ETR: 'guaranteed the [Han] Chinese community the right to productive work or to employment in public institutions or in trade, and allowed papers to come out in Chinese'.
149. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 87.
150. According to Dallin (*Soviet Russia and the Far East*, p. 364), citing the *New York Times* of 3 June 1946), one such leaflet stated: 'Our nearest blood relations are the Kazakhs, Kirghiz, Uzbeks and Tatars. In the Soviet Union each of these races has organised its own government and its members are living free and joyful lives.'
151. McLean, 'Sinkiang Today', p. 383.
152. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy*, p. 106. This (paper) currency was certainly locally printed, and not imported from the USSR as, according to Graham, 'the local [ETR] notes, though still in circulation [1946], are printed on such shocking paper that they will soon all have disintegrated entirely' (IOR, L/P & S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 4).
153. Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', p. 186.
154. Kotov, *Mestnaya Natsional'nya Avtonomiya*, p. 443; Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 228; Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 264. In the present study the term 'Ili National Army' will be preferred for its comparative accuracy.
155. Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', p. 186; Kotov, *Mestnaya Natsional'nya Avtonomiya*, p. 443.
156. Lee Fu-hsiang, *The Turkic-Moslem Problem*, p. 73; Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 264. According to Chen, Ishāq Beg fought as a partisan in his native southern Sinkiang during the struggle against Chin Shu-jen (*The Sinkiang Story*, p. 228).
157. Lee Fu-hsiang, *The Turkic-Moslem Problem*, p. 73.
158. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 264.

159. IOR, L/P & S/12/2359, PZ.2314.1945, pp. 1, 5.
160. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, pp. 262–3; cf. p. 168 above.
161. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, pp. 228, 236.
162. *ibid.*, p. 229.
163. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 105.
164. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 265.
165. IOR, L/P & S/12/2405, EXT.2671, 1946 (letter, HMCU Turrall-IO, 1/11/1945).
166. IOR, L/P & S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 3.
167. BBC Summary of World Broadcasts: The USSR, No. SU 2475 (26 May 1967), p. A3/2.
168. Yamamoto Mitsuru, 'Henkyo no Chugoku o yuku: Shinzian Uiguru Tabi Nikki shō' (A visit to the Chinese Frontier: Diary of Travels in the Sinkiang-Uighur Autonomous Region), *Chuo-koron* (Tokyo), Nov. 1977, p. 167.
169. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, pp. 230–1.
170. *ibid.*, pp. 231–2.
171. McLean, 'Sinkiang Today', p. 384.
172. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 233.
173. *ibid.*
174. Wo-men ti ti-kuo (Taipei, 1952), II, pp. 254 ff (cited in Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 106).
175. *ibid.*
176. Lattimore, O., *Pivot of Asia*, p. 87; cf. Lattimore, E., 'Report on Sinkiang', p. 78.
177. Personal communication from W. G. Graham, CBE, to the author, dated 1 January 1983. Graham further notes that the British Consular staff in Urumchi had made preparations to split: 'Turrall was to remain in Urumchi to observe the entry of the INA, and I would follow the Government and set up an improvised office wherever it might settle. Fortunately the truce came just in time to save us from this move.' He adds as a postscript that 'it must have been predominantly the Han Chinese who fled from Urumchi in August, 1945'.
178. IOR, L/P & S/12/2405, EXT.5980.1945 (letter, HMCU Turrall-IO, 2/9/1945); Kotov, *Mestnaya Natsional'nya Avtonomiya*, p. 443.
179. IOR, L/P & S/12/2360, EXT.5299.1946 (letter, HMCGK Etherington Smith-GOI, 3/10/1946), p. 2; Kotov, *Mestnaya Natsional'nya Avtonomiya*, p. 443), describes the incident (most implausibly) as 'an armed uprising of the working masses of Tashkurgan'.
180. Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 367; Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, I, p. 43.
181. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 106; Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 367, citing US Department of State, *United States Relations With China With Special Reference to the Period 1944–49* (Washington, 1949), p. 125.
182. Clubb, *ibid.*
183. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, I, pp. 41–3.
184. During the years 1940–5, Chang served the KMT as Director of the political

department of the Military Affairs Commission at Chungking and (concurrently) as Secretary-General of the executive board of the San Min Chu I Youth Corps. Boorman and Howard, *ibid.*

185. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 88; Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 247.
186. IOR, L/P&S/12/2405, EXT.2671.1946; IOR, L/P&S/12/2359, EXT.3270. 1946 (letter, HMCU Graham-British Embassy, Chungking, 6/4/1946); Karahoça, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 25; Aubin, 'Islam et sinocentrisme', p. 11; cf. Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, pp. 57–8.
187. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, iv, p. 60.
188. IOR, L/P&S/12/2405, EXT.2671.1946.
189. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, pp. 88–9.
190. *ibid.*, p. 89; IOR, L/P&S/12/2360, EXT.5299.1946, p. 3; Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 107.
191. Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 367.
192. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, pp. 89–90; Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, pp. 248–9.
193. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 249.
194. *ibid.*, pp. 249–50; Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 110.
195. Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 367.
196. According to Chen (*The Sinkiang Story*, p. 235), almost the first action of the INA command following the capture of Wusu was to send troops 'to occupy the oil wells and refinery south of the main road'.
197. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, pp. 65–6; Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 270; Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 320; Lahiri, A., 'Communist New Deal in Sinkiang', *United Asia*, III (1950), p. 143.
198. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, pp. 109–10; Cheng Tien-fong, *A History of Sino-Russian Relations*, p. 282; Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 270; Moseley, G., *A Sino-Soviet Cultural Frontier: The Ili-Kazakh Autonomous Chou* (Cambridge, Mass., 1966), p. 25; Wheeler, 'Sinkiang and the Soviet Union', p. 58; McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power*, p. 23.
199. At the Yalta Conference (4–11 February 1945), Stalin demanded as a price for Soviet entry into the Pacific War:

First, the maintenance of the status quo in Mongolia; second, the restoration of Russia's former rights violated by Japan in 1904 – the return of southern Sakhalin; the restoration (subject to an early agreement with Chiang Kai-shek) of Russian interests in respect of Dairen, Port Arthur and the Chinese Eastern and South Manchurian Railways, to be operated jointly by a Soviet-Chinese Company, with China retaining full sovereignty in Manchuria; and third, the handing over of the Kurile Islands to the Soviet Union. (Werth, *Russia at War*, p. 997)

(See also Lensen, G. A., 'Yalta and the Far East', in Snell, J. L. (ed.), *The Meaning of Yalta* (Baton Rouge, 1956), pp. 150 ff.)

200. Moscow remained uncertain as to the outcome of the CCP–KMT struggle until well into 1949, and had long held serious reservations concerning the

desirability of a CCP victory. In this context it is interesting to note that in August 1944, when Roosevelt's special envoy Major General Patrick Hurley stopped off in Moscow *en route* for Chungking, he was informed by Molotov that the Soviet Union 'was not interested in the Chinese Communists: they weren't really communists anyway' (Stettinius, E. R., *Roosevelt and the Russians: The Yalta Conference*, London, 1950, p. 28). Hurley, doubtless as intended by the Kremlin, conveyed this message to Chiang Kai-shek. He later reported back to the State Department that:

- At the time I came here Chiang Kai-shek believed that the Communist Party in China was an instrument of the Communist Party in Russia. He is now convinced that the Russian Government does not recognise the CCP as communist at all and that (1) Russia is not supporting the communist party in China (2) Russia does not want dissensions or civil war in China, and (3) Russia desires more harmonious relations with China. (Clubb, *Russia and China*, p. 334)
201. According to Chiang Ching-kuo, Chiang Kai-shek's son, his father certainly believed that Stalin would be prepared to exercise (and indeed would be able to exercise) such restraint. Ts'ao Chü-jen, *Chiang Ching-kuo lun* (Talks with Chiang Ching-kuo, Singapore and Hong Kong, 1954), p. 61.
 202. The KMT was later reported to have considered the idea of abandoning the whole of Sinkiang to the Soviets in a bid to 'save the Chinese heartland'. Lieberman, H. R., 'Nanking is Seeking a Deal With the Soviets', *NYT* (1 Feb. 1949); Sullivan, W., 'China's Northwest Veering to Russia', *ibid.*, (30 March 1949). See also Whiting's account of 'interview with a firsthand source', *Soviet strategy in Sinkiang*, pp. 117–19.
 203. For details see Clubb, *China and Russia*, pp. 344–7.
 204. *ibid.*, p. 364. The implication that Stalin pressured the KMT through the advance of the INA on Urumchi (as well as through his suggestion to T. V. Soong, the chief KMT negotiator, that the Nationalists 'had better reach an agreement quickly, or the Chinese Communists would enter Manchuria') is apparent.
 205. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 109.
 206. The INA was dominated by İshāq Beg, Leskin and Polinov, whilst the three-man negotiating team comprised Ahmedjan Qāsim, Rahimjan Sabır, and Abd al-Hayir Türe. As has already been indicated, all six individuals were clearly associated with the 'progressive', pro-Soviet faction within the ETR.
- ### 7 Sinkiang, 1946–9: the Muslims on the eve of the Communist takeover
1. Mao Tse-tung, in conversation with Yamamoto Mitsuru, towards the end of the former's life. Yamamoto Mitsuru, 'Henkyō no Chugoku o yuku', p. 167.
 2. Sheng Shih-ts'ai, *Red Failure in Sinkiang*, p. 186.
 3. IOR, L/P&S/12/2360, EXT.6613.1946 (*Speech by Chang Chih-chung to the People of Sinkiang*, 1/7/1946).
 4. According to Boorman and Howard (*Biographical Dictionary*, i, p. 44), Chang Chih-chung replaced Wu Chung-hsin as Governor of Sinkiang on 29

- March 1946; Lattimore, however, gives the date as 'July, 1946' (*Pivot of Asia*, p. 90). In this context it should be noted that Wu Chung-hsin was elected to the State Council of the national government when the latter was reorganised in April 1947. (Boorman and Howard, III, p. 424).
5. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 250; Hayit, *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, p. 320; Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 368; Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 246; Karahoça, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 22.
 6. According to Barnett (*China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 250), 'İsa Yūsuf Alptekin held the post of Provincial Secretary-General; cf. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 90, where Liu Meng-hsun is named in this role. According to Barnett (*China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 251), Liu Meng-ch'un [sic] was 'Chang Chih-chung's Secretary General'.
 7. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, pp. 90–1; Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, pp. 250–1. Photographs of 'İsa Yūsuf Alptekin and Jānīm Khan may be found in Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan*, pp. 69 and 90 respectively.
 8. IOR, L/P&S/12/2359, EXT.2370.1946 (letter, HMCU Graham-British Embassy, Chungking, 6/4/1946), p. 1: Karahoça, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 22.
 9. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, pp. 90–1.
 10. *ibid.*; Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 250. Sung Hsi-lien was apparently associated with the CC Clique's main rival, the 'Political Science Group'. This, however, did not make him any the more favourably disposed towards the Ili group, and he is reported to have told his supporters: 'Our first enemy is the Ili party' (NYT, 1 Feb. 1948, cited in Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 250).
 11. IOR, L/P&S/12/2360, EXT.5299.1946, p. 8.
 12. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 91.
 13. *ibid.*; Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, I, p. 44.
 14. IOR, L/P&S/12/2360, EXT.6245.1946; cf. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 245.
 15. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 91, citing *Han-hai Ch'ao* (Desert Tides), Shanghai edition, Jan. 1947.
 16. Chang Chih-chung, *Hsin-chiang Jih-pao* (Sinkiang Daily), Urumchi, 14 August 1947. An English summary may be found in Chang Chih-chung, 'Dilemma in Sinkiang', *Pacific Affairs*, xx, 4 (Dec. 1947), pp. 422–9.
 17. *Hsin-chiang Jih-pao*, 11 April 1947 (cited by Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 91, fn 77).
 18. IOR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 3.
 19. *ibid.*; cf. Hayit, *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, p. 320.
 20. Lias, *Kazakh Exodus*, p. 120; cf. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 269.
 21. IOR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 3; Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 269. It should be noted that, since the ETR had officially ceased to exist, Hakim Beg became District Officer of Ili under the coalition government rather than 'President' of the ETR.
 22. IOR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 3.

23. *ibid.* (Graham comments that this was in direct contravention of the June 1976 peace agreement).
24. *ibid.*, pp. 3–4; cf. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, pp. 269–70.
25. IOR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/234/10, p. 4.
26. *ibid.*, p. 3. According to Graham, 'The very large majority of the Russian population took advantage of the offer of Soviet papers . . . and of those who did not wish to do so, nearly all intend to leave for Urumchi or further east as soon as possible. They look on Ili as lost to China and doomed to become part of the Soviet Union.' According to Barnett (*China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, pp. 268–9), as many as 20,000 residents of Ili took out Soviet nationality papers during this period. See also Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, pp. 146–7.
27. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 269.
28. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, IV, p. 47; Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 276. Lias, however, dates 'Uthman's defection to 7 September 1946 (*Kazakh Exodus*, p. 122).
29. See, for example, Barnett's statement that 'Uthmān's Kazakhs 'admit they like to fight' (*China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 275); cf. IOR, L/P&S/12/2359, EXT. 2314.1945, p. 3.
30. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 274.
31. Hambly, G., et. al., *Central Asia* (London, 1969), pp. 145–6; Moseley (*A Sino-Soviet Cultural Frontier*, p. 16), would appear to be mistaken in assigning the Naiman Kazakhs to the Elder Horde and subsequently to Shara Sume.
32. Hambly, *Central Asia*, p. 146; cf. Moseley, *A Sino-Soviet Cultural Frontier*, p. 16.
33. *ibid.*, p. 18.
34. See above, p. 156.
35. According to Moseley (*A Sino-Soviet Cultural Frontier*, p. 18), the hereditary aristocracy of the Ili Kazakhs had disappeared completely by the end of the nineteenth century.
36. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 274; Moseley, *A Sino-Soviet Cultural Frontier*, p. 19. See also Krader, L., *Social Organization of the Mongol-Turkic Pastoral Nomads* (The Hague, 1963), and Hudson, E., *Kazakh Social Structure* (New Haven, 1938), for general studies of traditional Kazakh social organisation.
37. The official tribal chief of the Kirei Kazakhs at this time, however, was 'Ailin Wang [Ch. 'king'], an ineffective, hen-pecked little man who is overshadowed by his wife, the 250 pound Hatewan'. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 274.
38. Moseley, *A Sino-Soviet Cultural Frontier*, p. 20.
39. *ibid.* See also Wang Chih-lai, 'Shih-lun chieh-fang ch'ien wo-kuo Ha-sa-k'o tsu ti she-hui hsing-chih' (A Preliminary Discussion of the Nature of Kazakh Society in Our Country Before the Liberation), *Min-tsu t'uan-chieh* (Peking), 1 (1963), pp. 30–3.

40. 'Abd al-Hayir Türe's tribal affiliations remain unclear, but, according to Barnett, Dalil Khân was one of several leading Naiman chiefs who supported the Kulja regime (*China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 275; cf. Karahoça, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 22).
41. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 276.
42. *ibid.*, p. 268; Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, p. 125; Ismā'il and Ismā'il, *Moslems in the Soviet Union and China*, p. 29; Hayit, *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, p. 320.
43. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 261. Dālīl Khân's 'progressive' stance is confirmed in Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', p. 188.
44. Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', p. 189; Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, pp. 260–1.
45. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, pp. 264–5, 275; Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, pp. 129–30; Dreyer, J. T., 'The Kazakhs in China', in Astri, Suhre and Noble (eds.), *Ethnic Conflict in International Relations* (NY, 1977), p. 154.
46. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 276; Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, IV, p. 47; cf. Kotov, *Mestnaya Natsional'nya Avtonomiya*, p. 189.
47. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 265; Moseley, *A Sino-Soviet Cultural Frontier*, p. 17, citing Wang Wei-ping and Hu Yingmei, *Hsin-chiang Wei-wu-erh tzu-chih ch'ü* (The Sinkiang–Uighur Autonomous Region, Peking, 1959), p. 46.
48. Following the Kazakh desertions of 1946, the percentage of Uighurs within the armed forces of the 'Three Regions' rose to 60 per cent (compared with 30 per cent Kazakhs and 10 per cent Mongols), whereas in 1944–5 the majority of 'INA' troops had been Kazakh. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, pp. 264–5.
49. IOR, L/P&S/12/2360, EXT.5299.1946 (letter, HMCGK Etherington Smith–GOI, 3/10/1946), p. 2.
50. Chang Ta-chün, 'Hsin-chiang I-ning shih-pien yü wei Tung Tu-erh-szu-tan Kung-ho-kuo ch'eng-li chi ch'i hui-mieh', pp. 327–8.
51. IOR, L/P&S/12/2360, EXT.5299.1946, section 14.
52. Kotov, *Mestnaya Natsional'nya Avtonomiya*, p. 443; cf. p. 190 above.
53. Etherington Smith provides a detailed description of contemporary economic collapse, official corruption, military abuse and growing Uighur resentment in IOR, L/P&S/12/2360, EXT.5299.1946, p. 6; cf. Forbes, 'Muslim Separatism' (1981), p. 458.
54. McLean, 'Sinkiang Today', p. 384.
55. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 266.
56. IOR, L/P&S/12/2360, EXT.5299.1946, p. 4.
57. *ibid.*, pp. 4–5.
58. Beloff, *Soviet Policy in the Far East, 1944–51*, p. 98.
59. IOR, L/P&S/12/2360, EXT.5299.1946, *passim*.
60. *ibid.*, p. 5.
61. *ibid.*, section 18.
62. Lattimore (*Pivot of Asia*, p. 139) notes that the political orientation of this

- organisation remains uncertain; cf., however, Bacon, E., 'Soviet Policy in Turkestan', *MEJ*, 1, 4 (Oct. 1947), p. 397, where mention is made of 'Red Tents' (Soviet educational centres) being established amongst Muslim nomads in neighbouring Kazakhstan.
63. Jackson, *The Russo-Chinese Borderlands*, pp. 62–3.
64. Clubb, *China and Russia*, pp. 355–6.
65. Chang Chih-chung, 'Dilemma in Sinkiang', p. 427; cf. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 96.
66. Chang Chih-chung, 'Dilemma in Sinkiang', p. 425.
67. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, pp. 92–3.
68. IOR, L/P&S/12/2360, EXT.5299.1946, p. 5.
69. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 276; Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, p. 128.
70. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, I, p. 44.
71. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 251.
72. *ibid.*, pp. 251, 257. According to Lias (*Kazak Exodus*, p. 128), both Jānim Khan and Sālis were involved in Sung Hsi-lien's negotiations with 'Uthmān Batur leading to the latter's attack on Shara Sume in August 1946.
73. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, pp. 251, 259.
74. *ibid.*, p. 251.
75. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 254.
76. *ibid.*, p. 255.
77. Chang, 'Dilemma in Sinkiang', pp. 425–6.
78. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, I, p. 44; Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 252.
79. See above, pp. 137–41.
80. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 23.
81. According to Karahoça (*Doğu Türkistan*, p. 25), Isa Yūsuf Alptekin – a Kashgarlik Uighur – had travelled to China proper in 1932 and was unable to return to his country when Eastern Turkestan fell to the Russians. He did not abandon the political struggle for a moment throughout the eleven years that he was forced to spend in China between 1932 and 1945 [sic], and indeed he worked under the most difficult circumstances to promote the East Turkestan cause in general opinion by publishing Turkish and Chinese journals under the titles *Türkistan Avazi*, *T'ien Shan* and *Altai*.
82. Following the overthrow of the TIRET and his flight to Kashmir, the oldest and only surviving Khotan *Amīr* is known to have made his way to Afghanistan, where he was granted a pension by the Afghan government and intrigued with the Japanese Ambassador at Kabul with the apparent object of establishing a Japanese-backed 'independent' Eastern Turkestan (see above, p. 140). According to Karahoça (*Doğu Türkistan*, p. 25), having taken refuge in Afghanistan, Muhammed Amin Bughra 'only came to China in 1943'. His politics seem to have undergone a substantial change during the intervening decade, for his activities in Nanking, and subsequently in Sinkiang as Commissioner for Reconstruction in the 1946 coalition government, were directed towards attaining as high a degree of autonomy for the Turkic-speaking peoples of Sinkiang as was possible under a Nationalist

- Chinese government. With the failure of this policy and the CCP takeover of Sinkiang in 1949, he once again advocated the complete independence of 'Eastern Turkestan' from his base in exile at Ankara. *Bağra, Doğu Türkistan'ın Hürriyet*, p. 43.
83. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 23. The other Muslim member was the Tungan former Governor of Tsinghai, Ma Lin (a great-uncle of Ma Chung-ying).
 84. IOR, L/P&S/12/2359, EXT.3270.1946 (letter, HMCU Graham-IO 6/4 1946), p. 1.
 85. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 97.
 86. Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', pp. 188–9; cf. Kotov's denunciation of 'the Uighur nationalist and agent of Anglo-American Imperialism, Masud' (*Mestnaya Natsional'nya Avtonomiya*, p. 444).
 87. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 286.
 88. According to Barnett (*China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 257), Mas'ūd was 'far from popular' amongst Uighurs generally.
 89. Muhammed Amin Bughra and 'Isa Yüsuf Alptekin were both genuine Uighur nationalists and not (as alleged by Soviet sources) simply puppets of the KMT. Both men, however, recognised that the attainment of Sinkiang's independence was increasingly unlikely, and therefore preferred to work for autonomy within China rather than within the Soviet Union (Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, pp. 256–7, 272–3). They are acknowledged as Uighur patriots by pan-Turanian writers such as Hayit (*Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, p. 320) and Ismā'il (*Moslems in the Soviet Union and China*, p. 29) and condemned as 'Pan-Turkic nationalists . . . demanding self-government for themselves' by Lattimore (*Pivot of Asia*, pp. 112–14). Even the slavishly Maoist Jack Chen allows that Muhammed Amin Bughra had 'a bigger popular following [than Mas'ūd Şabırı] because of his long-continued activities in the region' (*The Sinkiang Story*, p. 251).
 90. In this context, note Sung Hsi-lien's warning that 'if our first enemy is the Kulja party, our second is the Nationalist group [i.e. Muhammed Amin Bughra and 'Isa Yüsuf Alptekin]. The Nationalists had better forget their slogan "Turkistan First", or there will be trouble.' Despatch of F. Robertson, *NYT*, 1 Feb. 1948.
 91. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 253.
 92. *Min-chu Pao* (Kulja), 24 June and 3 July 1947 (cited in Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 97).
 93. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, pp. 252–3.
 94. 'Hsin-chiang Jih-pao' (*Sinkiang Daily*, Urumchi), 11 and 14 July 1947; cited in Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 98. Françoise Aubin is mistaken in making Muhammed Amin Bughra a Minister of the Kulja group ('Islam et sino-centrisme', p. 11); although he was indeed 'chef du Parti nationaliste', he fulfilled this function as a KMT- and not an ETR-appointee; as such he remained in Urumchi following the disintegration of the 'coalition government'.
 95. cf. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 97.

96. Lamb, *Asian Frontiers* (London, 1968), pp. 198–204; cf. Underdown, M., 'Frontier and Defence in the Altai', paper read to the 4th National Conference of the Asian Studies Association of Australia, Monash University, 10–14 May 1982, pp. 4–6.
97. Clubb, *China and Russia*, pp. 344–7.
98. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 100.
99. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 47; Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 276; Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, p. 122; Cheng Tien-fong, *A History of Sino-Soviet Relations*, p. 282.
100. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 100.
101. In this context, note Lias' statement (based on extensive interviews with 'Uthmān's Kirei Kazakh supporters) that 'The northern slopes of the Baitik Bogdo are well-wooded and watered and with good pasture, though the southern slopes are almost waterless and barren' (*Kazak Exodus*, p. 122).
102. Frontier delimitation between China and the MPR was, in fact, delayed until 1962, when Peking abandoned claims to large areas of the frontier region including a tract of land extending northwards from Pei-ta-shan towards Khovd. By this agreement, the Sino-Mongolian frontier was agreed to run along the watershed of the Pei-ta-shan, establishing the greater part of the disputed range as Chinese territory, but confirming the more fertile northern slopes as lying within the MPR. Lamb, *Asian Frontiers*, p. 200; *Chung-kuo ti-t'u chi* (An Atlas of China, Hong Kong, 1972), p. 28.
103. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 47; Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 100.
104. Clubb, *China and Russia*, pp. 368–9 (citing a report from the *China News Agency*, dated 5 June 1947); Calvocoressi, P., et al., *Survey of International Affairs, 1940–50* (London, 1953), pp. 359–60; cf. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 267, Whiting's suggestion that 'it is possible that Outer Mongolian aircraft were mistakenly identified as Russian' (*Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 115), is scarcely relevant, as the idea of Mongolian aircraft operating in Chinese airspace without direct Soviet connivance was as improbable in 1947 as it is today.
105. Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 368; Whiting, *Soviet Strategy*, p. 115.
106. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 236.
107. Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 369; Whiting, *Soviet Strategy*, p. 115.
108. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, pp. 236, 267.
109. *ibid.*, p. 266.
110. In this context, see Lias' statement that: 'Tired of abortive attack and counter-attack between the Altai and Baitik Bogdo, the Russians built a road from Mongolia across the wild country on Osman's western flanks . . .' (*Kazak Exodus*, pp. 128–9), which would seem to confirm that 'Uthmān had indeed struck northwards from the Pei-ta-shan towards Tayingkul (see map 9).
111. Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 369. Whiting (*Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 115) similarly claims that fighting ended in June 1947, but allows that 'the situation remained tense in early 1948'.
112. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 267.

113. *ibid.*, p. 266.
114. *Min-chu Pao* (Kulja), 24 and 29 June 1947 (cited in Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, pp. 97–8).
115. *Min-chu Pao* (Kulja), 9 July 1947 (cited in Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, p. 98), cf. Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', p. 189.
116. See, for example, Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, pp. 97–10; Davidson, *Turkestan Alive*, pp. 120–33; Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, pp. 242–66.
117. IOR, L/P&S/12/2360, F/15550/324/10, p. 3; Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 228.
118. Ismā'il and Ismā'il, *Moslems in the Soviet Union and China*, p. 28; cf. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 270.
119. Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', p. 189; cf. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, pp. 251, 254, 259; Kotov, *Mestnaya Natsional'nya Avtonomiya*, p. 444.
120. Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', p. 189; cf. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 258. Mingulov also claims that during this period: 'loans of money and seed were advanced [whilst] taxation was reduced by 50 per cent. The area under cultivation was increased from 251,000 hectares in 1941 to 375,000 hectares in 1948, and the gross grain harvest from 212,000 tons to 295,000 tons. Towards popular education there was a literacy drive; health measures included a medical school, dispensaries, and maternity homes.'
121. According to Mingulov, this union was set up in July–August, 1948 ('The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', p. 190). Kotov, however, gives the date as January 1948 (*Mestnaya Natsional'nya Avtonomiya*, p. 444).
122. Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', pp. 189–90.
123. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, I, p. 4.
124. It is interesting to note that Sung Hsi-lien, the right-wing KMT Garrison Commander of Sinkiang who was responsible for provoking the initial 'Peita-shan Incident', was recalled at this time, apparently at the suggestion of Burhān Shahīdī. He was replaced by the more moderate T'ao Chih-yueh. Boorman and Howard, *ibid.*
125. The Battle of the Hwai-Hai, which delivered the *coup de grâce* to KMT aspirations in mainland China, was fought for 65 days between 7 November 1948 and 12 January 1949 across a battlefield extending from the Hwai River to the Lunhai Railway. By the end of the battle the Nationalists had lost five army groups, seven other full divisions, the Armoured Corps, and miscellaneous other units – in all, approximately 550,000 men. Clubb, *Twentieth Century China*, p. 291.
126. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, I, p. 4. According to Hayit (*Turkistan zwischen Russland und China*, p. 321), Mas'ūd was offered the post of Chinese Ambassador to Iran, but he refused and chose to stay in China. He was arrested by the Communist authorities on 5 April 1951, and died in prison during March 1952.
127. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, I, p. 4.
128. Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 370.
129. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, pp. 101–2 (citing numerous contemporary *NYT* despatches from H. R. Lieberman and Walter Sullivan); Whiting, *Soviet*

- Strategy in Sinkiang*, pp. 116–17; Moseley, *A Sino-Soviet Cultural Frontier*, p. 14. According to the Royal Institute of International Affairs, the KMT may also have considered establishing Sinkiang as an alternative western bastion to Taiwan, 'possibly even with Russian support'. Calvocoressi *et al.*, *Survey of International Affairs*, p. 360.
130. Most sources remain unspecific on this point. June Dreyer, however, believes that the Soviet Union was 'clearly offering Chiang Kai-shek's government arms . . . in return for some form of control over Sinkiang'. 'The Kazakhs in China', p. 155.
131. *Su-lien tui Hsin-chiang ti ching-chi ch'in-lüeh*, pp. 142 ff, cited in Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 117. Paralleling demands made to Sheng in 1939 and to Chungking negotiators in 1942–3, General Managers of all proposed companies to be set up under joint Sino-Soviet auspices in Sinkiang were to be Soviet citizens.
132. *ibid.*; Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 370. Sceptics of Chiang's refusal to compromise the territorial integrity of China in the Sinkiang region should note his subsequent refusal to condemn the CCP takeover of Tibet, even under strong US pressure to do so.
133. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, pp. 117–18; McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power*, p. 24. Note that in June 1949, at the time of this supposed Soviet approach to T'ao Chih-yueh, the Soviet Ambassador was the sole foreign diplomatic representative to accompany the Nationalist government in its flight from Nanking to Canton (Calvocoressi *et al.*, *Survey of International Affairs*, p. 360).
134. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, pp. 117–18; McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power*, p. 24.
135. Lindbeck, J. M. H., 'Communism, Islam and Nationalism in China', *The Review of Politics* (Indiana), XII, 4 (Oct., 1950), pp. 477–8; Wales, Nym, *Inside Red China* (NY, 1935), p. 154; Chang Chao-li (Häjjī Yüsuf Chang), 'Islam and Communism in China', *Islamic Literature* (Lahore), XIII, 12 (1967), p. 8.
136. Besides the certain presence of covert CCP sympathisers and informants in Sinkiang during the period 1942–9, the CCP leadership had been in regular and intimate contact with Chang Chih-chung in his capacity as KMT negotiator. Chang was probably better acquainted with Soviet machinations and the course of Muslim nationalism in Sinkiang than any other senior KMT official. He was also a Chinese patriot who, between 1945 and 1949, became increasingly sympathetic towards the CCP.
137. On 11 May 1949, 'Abd al-Karīm 'Abbas is reported to have announced at a meeting in Kulja: 'We categorically assert that the success of the Chinese People's Army of Liberation alone rendered possible the victory of our own movement . . . Only the victory of the national liberation struggle of the entire Chinese people can lead to the full freedom of the people of Sinkiang; only then will the correct solution of the national question in Sinkiang be reached' (*Sinkiang Gazette*, 30 Sept. 1949, cited in Mingulov, 'The Uprising in North-West Sinkiang', pp. 192–3). It should be noted that this speech, which would appear to be the first direct statement of Kulja support for the

CCP (as opposed to renunciation of separatism), was not published until more than one month after its author's death, and four days after the formal submission of the Sinkiang provincial authorities to the PLA. Its authenticity may therefore be open to some legitimate doubt.

138. The Soviet authorities almost certainly encouraged the rebel leadership in this course of action – however, 'in the end, everyone was to be disappointed, except the Chinese Communists. As the non-Han peoples of the Three Districts were to discover, no autonomy was any longer possible between Russia and China in the Middle of Asia' (Moseley, *A Sino-Soviet Cultural Frontier*, p. 22).
139. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 143; Hayit, *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, p. 12.
140. *ibid.*; cf. Davidson, *Turkestan Alive*, pp. 132–3; McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power*, p. 24; Dreyer, 'The Kazakhs in China', p. 155; Clubb, *China and Russia*, p. 371; Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 275; Karahoça, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 25.
141. Chen, characteristically, makes no mention of this delay, whilst Soviet sources (Mingulov, Kotov, and Yakolev, A. G., 'The National Liberation Movement of the Peoples of Sinkiang, 1944–49', *Uchenyye Zapiski Instituta Vostokovedeniya*, x1 (*Kitayskiy Sbornik*), 1955) choose to ignore the crash completely. Many Western sources have made indirect allusions as to the possibility of CCP complicity in the crash, but only recently, in September 1979, has an anonymous source ('Former Peking Student'), supposedly citing Ahmedjan Qāsim's granddaughter, openly claimed that the plane was 'deliberately sabotaged' by the CCP ('A Strained Type of Unity', *FEER*, 14 Sept. 1979, pp. 8–9).
142. McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power*, p. 24; Dreyer, 'The Kazakhs in Sinkiang', p. 155; Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, I, p. 5.
143. According to the supposed statement of Ahmedjan Qāsim's granddaughter, Saif al-Dīn did not trust the CCP leadership. Thus, at the time of the original flight to Peking:

Saifudin had expressed his doubts about the aircraft reaching its destination and had pleaded illness as an excuse for not joining the ill-fated party.

Ahmedjan overruled Saifudin on the ground that a Chinese [Lo Tzi, sic] would accompany them on the aircraft, and the communists would surely not knock off one of their own number. [But] Saifudin remained unconvinced. (*FEER*, 14 Sept. 1979, p. 8)

144. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, IV, p. 88.
145. Clubb, *Russia and China*, pp. 371–2.
146. See above, p. 205. Note also that Jack Chen mentions a rising at Turfan in 1948 which was put down with 3,000 deaths by units of Tsinghai Tungan cavalry under Ma Chin-shan (*The Sinkiang Story*, pp. 259–60).
147. İsa Yusuf Alptekin and Muhammad Amīn Bughra arrived at Leh, in Ladakh, on 12 December 1949, apparently at the head of several hundred refugees. They had endured a very severe crossing of the Himalayas, during which İsa's own daughter had died. Later they were flown to Srinagar by military transport, where they were 'given sanctuary and treated with

kindness' by Shaykh 'Abdullāh of Kashmir (*Ismā'il and Ismā'il, Moslems in the Soviet Union and China*, p. 36). Both Alptekin and Bughra subsequently settled in Turkey where they continued to work towards their vision of an independent Eastern Turkestan through organisations such as the Doğu Türkistan Göçmenler Cemiyeti, or 'East Turkestan Exiles Association' (which published Amaç Karahoça's *Doğu Türkistan: 'Çin müstemlekesi'*); Bughra, in particular, remained the father figure behind the East Turkestan separatist movement in exile until his death in 1965 (*CAR*, xiiii, 3, (1965), p. 281); an East Turkestan 'Government in Exile' continued its activities after Bughra's death until at least 1969 (Aubin, 'Islam et sinocentrisme', p. 16).

148. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, IV, p. 60.
149. *ibid.*; cf. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 269. Ma Pu-fang, the former warlord of Tsinghai, fled China in 1949, subsequently travelling to Egypt and then to Saudi Arabia, where he became Nationalist Chinese Ambassador to the Saudi Kingdom. See Forbes 'Muslim Separatism', Appendix III, 'The 'Wu-Ma Warlord Cliques' (pp. 543–6).
150. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, IV, p. 60.
151. Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, p. 129.
152. Barnett, *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, p. 276.
153. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 47.
154. Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, p. 152.
155. *ibid.*, pp. 151–2. Sālis was apparently accompanied by a number of 'White' Russian émigrés.
156. *ibid.*, pp. 154–9, 172–4; Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 47.
157. Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, pp. 160–7; Clark, M. J., 'How the Kazakhs Fled to Freedom', *The National Geographic Magazine*, cvi, 5 (Nov. 1954), pp. 625–6.
158. Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, p. 174; Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 47; IV, p. 60.
159. Lias, *ibid.*; Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, IV, p. 60.
160. Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, pp. 180–2, 187–90; Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary* III p. 47.
161. According to Jack Chen (*The Sinkiang Story*, p. 270), 'Uthmān was shot and killed during a skirmish. Other sources agree that he was captured and executed, however, Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, pp. 180–4; Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 47; Dreyer, 'The Kazakhs in China', p. 156; Yang I-fan, *Islam in China* (Hong Kong, 1969), pp. 75–9 ('The Kazakh Revolt'); Bush, R. C., *Religion in Communist China* (NY, 1970), pp. 269–70; Gayretullah, *Osman Batur*, p. 3.
162. 'Ali Beg and his colleagues reached the Ladakh frontier, in the region of Lake Pangong, on 18 August 1951. They were permitted to enter India on 10 October and travelled to Srinagar by road and air. Many were subsequently resettled in Turkish Anatolia.
163. Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, pp. 219–22; Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, IV, p. 60.
164. Boorman and Howard, *ibid.*

165. Anon., *Moslem Unrest in China* (Hong Kong, 1958), pp. 51–2; Fedyshyn, O. S., 'Soviet Retreat in Sinkiang', *American Slavonic and East European Review*, XVI, 2 (April 1957), p. 129.
166. Dreyer, 'The Kazakhs in China', p. 156; McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power*, p. 37.
167. Beloff, *Soviet Policy in the Far East*, 1944–51, p. 100; Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 89.
168. Calvocoressi *et al.*, *Survey of International Affairs*, pp. 356, 361.
169. *Soviet News*, 29 March 1950, cited in Calvocoressi, *Survey of International Affairs*, p. 361; *The Times* (London), 31 March 1950; Beloff, *Soviet Policy in the Far East*, p. 100. A similar joint-stock Sino-Soviet company was set up at the same time to run aviation in Sinkiang, the agreement to last for ten years.
170. *NYT*, 1 April 1950, cited in Calvocoressi, *et al.*, *Survey of International Affairs*, p. 361.
171. *New Times*, 26 April 1950, cited in Beloff, *Soviet Policy in the Far East*, p. 100.
172. Schram, *Mao Tse-tung*, p. 256; Lee Fu-hsiang, 'The Turkic–Moslem Problem', pp. 128–30; cf. Amar Lahiri, 'Communist New Deal in Sinkiang', p. 144: 'It is unthinkable that China has welcomed Soviet intervention in Sinkiang; she is temporarily putting up with the situation, and when the proper time comes will not hesitate to tell Russia to quit Sinkiang.'
173. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, p. 89; McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power*, p. 35.
174. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 143; Lee Fu-hsiang, 'The Turkic–Moslem Problem', pp. 162–3; Sai-fu-ting (Saif al-Dīn 'Azīz), 'Wu-chün (ch'ien Min-tsü-chün) ti tsu-cheng chi-chi ko-ming shih' (The Composition and Revolutionary History of the Fifth Army/Former National Army), *Hsin-Hua yüeh-pao*, II, 4 (15 Aug. 1950), p. 767.
175. Moseley, *A Sino-Soviet Cultural Frontier*, pp. 25–6; Dreyer, 'The Kazakhs in China', p. 156; McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power*, p. 39.
176. Sai-fu-ting (Saif al-Dīn 'Azīz), 'The History of the Sinkiang League and its Tasks in the Future', *Jen-min jih-pao*, 19 June 1950, p. 1.
177. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 143; cf. Dreyer, 'The Kazakhs in China', p. 156.
178. Lee Fu-hsiang, 'The Turkic–Moslem Problem', pp. 165–6.
179. Jackson, *The Russo-Chinese Borderlands*, pp. 67–8.
180. Lee Fu-hsiang, 'The Turkic–Moslem Problem', p. 167; İsa Yūsuf Alptekin, 'Temir parda arqasındağı Şarqı Türkistan' (East Turkestan Behind the Iron Curtain), *Millî Türkistan*, LXXIV (1951), pp. 23–7.
181. Significantly, one of the last centres of conservative resistance to CCP reforms in southern Sinkiang was the Khotan region, where a Uighur called 'Abd al-Majid Damla (? Dāmullāh), a reported follower of the exiled Muhammad Amīn Bughra, is reported to have staged a major rebellion during 1954 (*Ismā'il and Ismā'il, Moslems in the Soviet Union and China*, p. 43). Generally speaking, most Naiman Kazakhs, as well as the majority of the Kirei, seem to have accepted CCP rule. Sherdirmān, the son of 'Uthmān Bātūr, is known to have led a small band of Kazakh rebels in the south-east

- of Sinkiang until 1953, when he surrendered to the authorities and was 're-educated' to become 'a responsible official in the people's administration' (Lias, *Kazak Exodus*, p. 184; Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 270).
182. Sai-fu-ting (Saif al-Dīn 'Azīz), 'Sai-fu-ting ti fa-yen', (A Speech of Saif al-Dīn), in *Chung-kuo kung-chang-tang ti pa-tsi chuan-kuo tai-piao ta-hui wen-chiai* (Documents From the Eighth National Congress of the CCP, Peking, 1957), II, pp. 520–1.
 183. *Hsin-chiang jih-pao* (Sinkiang Daily), 4 March 1954, cited in *Survey of China Mainland Press*, No. 973 (25 April 1954), pp. 4–5.
 184. 'The Evolution of Minority Nationality Regional Autonomy in Sinkiang', *CAR*, xv, 3 (1967), pp. 232–7.
 185. Dreyer ('The Kazakhs in China', p. 157) believes that Krushchev withdrew from Sinkiang 'hoping to obtain Chinese support in his bid to succeed Stalin'. See, however, Clubb, *Russia and China*, pp. 403–5, for a full discussion of the factors surrounding this development.
 186. Saif al-Dīn 'Azīz – appropriately characterised by Aubin as 'le plus bel opportuniste' ('Islam et sinocentrisme', p. 13) – was to remain Chairman of the Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region's Revolutionary Committee and 1st Secretary of the SUAR CCP Committee until his eventual removal from these posts as part of the campaign against the 'Gang of Four' in January 1978. Bonavia, D., 'Axe Falls on a Survivalist', *FEER*, 10 Feb. 1978, p. 24; cf. McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power*, pp. 300–7.
- ### Conclusions
1. Fletcher, 'Ch'ing Inner Asia, 1800–62', *The Cambridge History of China*, x, I, p. 90.
 2. See, for example, Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, pp. 184–5; Fleming, *News From Tartary*, pp. 252–3.
 3. In this context it is interesting to note that Yarkand – a Karataghlik centre during the nineteenth century which failed to emerge as a major centre of separatist activity in Ch'ing times – was similarly overshadowed by Kashgar and Khotan during the 1933–4 rebellion.
 4. See, for example: 'Şarqi Türkistan milli fâgi'asiga dâir: Qarâr raqam 30' (On the National Tragedy of Eastern Turkestan, Protocol No. 30), *Yash Türkistan*, LXXI (1935), pp. 19–25 (letter of Sultan Beg Bakhtiar Beg).
 5. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 275.
 6. Moseley, *A Sino-Soviet Cultural Frontier*, pp. 107–15.
 7. At the time of the CCP seizure of power in 1949, non-Han nationalities comprised in excess of 95 per cent of the total population of Sinkiang. According to D. H. McMillen, by mid-1981 Han migration to Sinkiang 'had resulted in a dramatic increase in the Han component to about 5.1 million of the estimated 12.8 million population' ('The Urumqi Military Region: Defence and Security in China's West', paper read to the 4th National Conference of the Asian Studies Association of Australia, Monash University, 1982, p. 3). Despite widespread Han unhappiness at the prospect of resettlement in the 'Far West', this process is apparently irreversible.

8. Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, p. 275. The hapless Lo Tsu, apparently a Han Chinese representative of the ETR who wielded little or no authority within the rebel administration, appears to have been included both in the fateful mission to Peking and in Mao Tse-tung's eulogy simply because of his ethnic identity.

Appendix II The constitution and composition of the 'Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan' (TIRET)

1. Kazak, *Osttürkistan zwischen den Grossmächten* (Königsberg, 1937), p. 20.
2. *Istiqlâl*, 1, 2 (1933), reproduced in *Yash Türkistan*, LIII (1934), pp. 31–6; LV (1934), pp. 32–5; LV (1934), pp. 29–32.
3. Hayit, *op. cit.*, pp. 304–7; Karahoça, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 15; Hai, *Târikh al-Muslimin fi al-Sîn*, pp. 125–6.
4. Note that the office of 'State President' is here confused with Kingship.
5. In the original constitution, paragraphs 10–16 describe the duties and responsibilities of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Interior, Religious Institutions, Finance, Trade and Agriculture, Education and Health. Paragraphs 17–29 describe the administrative structure of the regions, districts, towns and village communities. Paragraph 30 deals with the arrangement of the Control Organs of the Government which have the right to appoint, dismiss and veto all state positions.

Appendix III Notes on the structure and composition of the 'East Turkestan Republic' (ETR) at Kulja

1. Chang Ta-chün, 'Hsin-chiang I-ning shih-pien', pp. 327–8; cf. Karahoça, *Doğu Türkistan*, p. 21.
2. Lee Fu-hsiang, 'The Turkic-Moslem Problem', p. 69.
3. *ibid.*; see above, p. 184.
4. Table 4, Nos. 4 and 5 might perhaps have been Hui Muslims; the remaining 5 whose ethnicity remains in doubt (Nos. 2, 3, 6, 9 and 10) were almost certainly Turkic-speaking Muslims. Chang identifies the Minister of War as 'Chih-li-no-fu' (cf. Po-li-no-fu, or Polinov, as ETR Vice-Chairman), but this is almost certainly an erroneous transliteration.
5. Chang Ta-chün names a 7-man committee attached to the 'Minister of the Muslim Commission' ('Hsin-chiang I-ning shih-pien', pp. 327–8); 2 members of this committee, by name Ma San-ta-jen and Ma Liang-pao, were almost certainly Hui Muslims.
6. Lee Fu-hsiang, 'The Turkic-Moslem Problem', p. 73.
7. See above, p. 180.

Appendix IV Soviet intervention in north-western Iran, 1945–6: a West Asian parallel with the 'East Turkestan Republic' in Sinkiang

1. Lahiri, 'Communist New Deal in Sinkiang', pp. 142–3; cf. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, pp. 128–30.

2. Pounds, J. G., and Kingsbury, R. C., *An Atlas of Middle Eastern Affairs* (London, 1966), pp. 48–9.
3. Lenczowski, G. L., *Russia and the West in Iran, 1918–1948* (Ithaca, 1949), p. 194.
4. *ibid.*, pp. 212–13, 249.
5. *ibid.*, pp. 85, 171–2, 216–17.
6. *ibid.*, p. 219.
7. Kirk, G., *The Middle East, 1945–50* (London, 1954), p. 57.
8. *ibid.*, pp. 57–8.
9. *ibid.*, pp. 58–9.
10. *ibid.*, p. 60; Lenczowski, *Russia and the West*, pp. 287–8.
11. Kirk, *The Middle East*, p. 59.
12. Roosevelt, A., Jr, 'The Kurdish Republic of Mahabad', *MEJ*, 1, 3 (July 1947), p. 257.
13. Lenczowski, *Russia and the West*, p. 308.
14. Lenczowski, *Russia and the West*, p. 296. Moscow also demanded that Soviet troops should be permitted 'to stay in some parts of Iran for an indefinite period'. This was rejected outright by Tehran.
15. Whiting, *Soviet Strategy in Sinkiang*, p. 129; Lenczowski, G. L., 'The Communist Movement in Iran', *MEJ*, 1, 1 (Jan. 1947), p. 42. As with the INA, besides covertly supplying arms, the Soviet Union supplied both the 'People's Army of Azerbaijan' and the officers of the Kurdish militia of Mahabad with Red Army uniforms bearing local insignia. Lenczowski, *Russia and the West*, p. 290; Roosevelt, 'The Kurdish Republic of Mahabad', pp. 257, 261.
16. Kirk, *The Middle East*, p. 82; Roosevelt, 'The Kurdish Republic of Mahabad', p. 267.
17. Lenczowski, *Russia and the West*, p. 312.

Appendix V British Consuls-General at Kashgar, 1909–48

1. Sources: Skrine and Nightingale, *Macartney at Kashgar*; IOR, L/P & S/12/2345; IOR, L/P & S/12/2349; IOR, L/P & S/12/2350; Graham, W. G., personal communication dated 1 Jan. 1983.
2. Sir George Macartney had served as British representative in Kashgar since 1890. The Kashgar Consulate was officially established in August 1908 when he was on leave in Britain.

Schemes of Romanisation

Chinese: Chinese place names have been romanised according to the principles set forth by G. William Skinner in his *Modern Chinese Society* (Stanford, California, 1973). They are given in either of two forms: 'in Post Office spelling, which never involves hyphenation, or in Wade-Giles transcription, which never combines syllables into an unhyphenated word'. Post Office spelling is used only in cases where that form has been 'securely established as a scholarly idiom' (e.g. Soochow rather than Su-chou); in all other cases Wade-Giles is used.

Arabic: Arabic words (and Muslim personal names) have been transliterated according to the system followed by D. Cowan in his *Modern Literary Arabic* (Cambridge, CUP, 1958), with the exception that the letter 'ayn is written thus: '.

Turkic: In so far as has been possible, words and place names in the Turkic dialects of Sinkiang have been transliterated according to the new Turkish alphabet employed in Turkey (Moran, *Türkçe-İngilizce Sözlük*, Istanbul, 1945). Muslim personal names, however, have been transliterated in the Arabic fashion, thus 'Uthmān not Osman, etc. Russianised Muslim personal names have been presented in their original forms (e.g. omitting the Russian patronymic —ov and the use of dzh for the Arabic j, thus Ahmadjān Qāsim, not Akhmedzhan Kasimov), except where established custom dictates otherwise (Sultan Galiyev, Faizulla Khodzhayev, etc.). Within Sinkiang, Turkic place names (Kumul, Kulja, etc.), have been preferred to their Chinese alternatives (Ha-mi, I-ning); wherever possible, spellings of these Turkic place names have been based on the romanised forms given in Farquhar, D. M., Jarring, G., and Norin, E., *Sven Hedin Central Asia Atlas: Index of Geographical Names* (Stockholm, 1967). For a list of 'Some Sinkiang Place Names and their Alternatives', see Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, Appendix VIII (p. 280).

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Arranged alphabetically by author under the following categories:

- Western languages: books and pamphlets
- Western languages: articles
- Western languages: theses, unpublished manuscripts, etc.
- Chinese and Japanese: books
- Chinese and Japanese: articles
- Works in Turkish, Arabic and Pushtu
- Official archives and records
- General reference works, etc.

The following abbreviations are used in the bibliography

CAJ	<i>Central Asiatic Journal</i> (Wiesbaden)
CAR	<i>Central Asian Review</i> (London)
FEER	<i>Far Eastern Economic Review</i> (Hong Kong)
FES	<i>Far Eastern Survey</i> (New York)
GJ	<i>Geographical Journal</i> (London)
HRAF	<i>Human Relations Area Files</i> (New Haven)
IOR	<i>India Office Library and Records</i> (London)
JAH	<i>Journal of Asian History</i> (Wiesbaden)
JPRS	<i>Joint Publications Research Service</i> (New York)
JRCAS	<i>Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society</i> (London)
MEJ	<i>Middle East Journal</i> (Washington DC)
MW	<i>Moslem World</i> (now <i>The Muslim World</i> , Hartford, Conn.)
NYT	<i>New York Times</i>
PRO	<i>Public Record Office</i> (London)
REI	<i>Revue des Études Islamiques</i> (Paris)
RMM	<i>Revue du Monde Musulman</i> (Paris)

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