

والتره المات ابرطانية

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(H.PI./A.Lo.)

Sinkiang Uighur

Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region (in Pin-yin romanization Xin-jiang-wei-wu-er Zu-zi-chü) occupies the northwestern corner of the People's Republic of China. It is bordered by Mongolia to the northeast, the Soviet Union to the northwest, Afghanistan and the disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir to the southwest, the Tibetan Autonomous Region to the southeast, and the Chinese provinces of Tsinghai and Kansu to the east. China's largest political unit, it covers 635,800 square miles (1,646,700 square kilometres), or one-sixth the national area. The population of about 8,000,000 is composed of numerous ethnic groups, the largest of which is the Uighurs. The Uighurs follow the Islamic religion and work at agriculture and animal husbandry. The capital city of Urumchi is a busy commercial and industrial centre.

The Chinese name Sinkiang, or New Dominion, was applied to the area when it came under Chinese rule in the 3rd century BC. The region was long known to Westerners as Chinese Turkistan to distinguish it from Russian Turkistan.

Sinkiang is an area of lonely, rugged mountains and vast desert basins. Its indigenous population of agriculturalists and pastoralists inhabit oases strung out along the mountain foothills or wander the arid plains in search of pasturage. Since the establishment of firm Chinese control in 1949, serious efforts have been made to integrate the regional economy into that of the nation. Agriculture has been improved, mining increased, power stations built, and industry introduced. Previously isolated from the rest of China, Sinkiang is now connected to neighbouring provinces by road and rail, and transportation to the Soviet Union has been improved. Despite the great increase in the Chinese population, the ethnic groups are officially encouraged to develop their own cultures.

For related physical features, see ALTAI MOUNTAINS; KUNLUN MOUNTAINS; PAMIR MOUNTAIN AREA; TARIM RIVER; TAKLA MAKAN DESERT; and TIEN SHAN (MOUNTAINS). For a more detailed discussion of history, see TURKISTAN, HISTORY OF.

History. Southern Sinkiang was controlled by China during the Han dynasty (206 BC-AD 220). It then passed under the rule of local Uighur rulers until it was conquered by the Mongol leader Genghis Khan in the 13th century and in the 18th century by the Mongolian speaking Kalmucks. Sinkiang again came under Chinese control during the Ch'ing (Manchu) dynasty (1644-1911) and was made a province of China in 1884. Because of the region's remote location, the rule of the central government was nominal; the province was governed by semi-independent warlords, occasionally under pressure from the Soviet Union. Sinkiang came under the rule of the Chinese Communists in 1949 and, in accordance with the government's ethnic policy, became the Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region in 1955.

The landscape. *Relief.* Sinkiang can be divided into five physiographic regions: the Northern Highlands, the Dzungarian Basin, the Tien Shan (Celestial Mountains), the Tarim Basin, and the Kunlun Mountains. These regions run roughly from east to west, the high mountains alternating with large, lower basins.

In the north, the Northern Highlands extend in a semi-circle along the Mongolian border. The major range in this area is the Altai Mountains, with average heights of approximately 4,500 feet above sea level. The slopes of the Altai Mountains on the Chinese (western) side are relatively gentle, with numerous rolling and dome-shaped hills.

The triangular-shaped Dzungarian Basin, or Dzungaria, with an area of 270,000 square miles (700,000 square kilometres), is bordered by the Altai Mountains on the northeast, the Tien Shan on the south, and the Chun-kerh-a-la-t'ao Shan on the northwest. The basin is open on both the east and west. It contains a ring of oases at the foot of the enclosing mountains and a steppe and desert belt in the centre of the depression.

The Tien Shan occupies nearly one-fourth of the area of Sinkiang. The mountains stretch into the region from the Soviet Union and run eastward from the border for about 1,000 miles. They are highest in the west and taper off slightly to the east. The highest peaks are Khan-tengri, which rises to an elevation of 22,949 feet (6,995 metres) on the Sino-Soviet border, and Sheng-li, which attains 24,406 feet (7,439 metres), 13 miles to the south. The Tien Shan is perpetually covered by snow, and numerous long glaciers descend its slopes from extensive snow fields.

The Tarim Basin is surrounded by the Tien Shan to the north, the Pamir Mountains to the west, and the Kunlun Mountains to the south. It occupies about 55 percent of Sinkiang, extending 850 miles from west to east and about 350 miles from north to south. The basin consists of a central desert, alluvial fans at the foot of the mountains, and isolated oases. The desert—the Takla Makan—covers more than 270,000 square miles (700,000 square kilometres) and is absolutely barren. The core of the basin has an elevation ranging from about 4,000 feet (1,200 metres) above sea level in the west to about 2,500 feet (760 metres) in the east. The Turfan Depression at

Economic development

The Tarim Basin

the eastern end of the Takla Makan, however, is 505 feet (154 metres) below sea level.

The Kunlun Mountains form the northern rampart of the Tibetan Plateau. With elevations up to 24,000 feet, the central part of the range forms an almost impenetrable barrier to movement from north to south. There are passes on the west and east such as the Karakoram in Kashmir and the K'o-erh-kan in Sinkiang. In the east the A-erh-chün Shan-mo turns northeast and eventually merges with the Nan Shan in southern Kansu Province, China.

Drainage and soils. The drainage pattern of Sinkiang is unique. The only stream whose waters reach the sea is the O-erh-ch'i-ssu, which rises in north central Sinkiang, crosses into the U.S.S.R., and joins the Ob, which empties into the Arctic Ocean. Other streams in Sinkiang issue from the mountains and disappear into inland deserts or salt lakes. The principal river is the Tarim, which is fed by largely intermittent streams that rise in both the Kunlun Mountains and the Tien Shan. It flows eastward across the Tarim Basin into the salt lake of Lop Nor and ends in marshes west of the lake.

Climate. Remote from the ocean and enclosed by high mountains, Sinkiang is cut off from marine climatic influences. It therefore has a continental dry climate. The Tien Shan separates the dry south from the slightly less arid north, and the northern slopes of the Tien Shan are more humid than those on the south.

Rainfall is not only small, but it fluctuates widely from year to year. Average January temperatures in the Tarim Basin are about 20° F (-7° C), compared with 5° F (-15° C), in many parts of Dzungaria. In the summer, average temperatures north of the Tien Shan are lower than they are south of the mountains. In Dzungaria, July averages vary from 70° F (21° C) in the north to 75° F (24° C) in the south. In the Tarim Basin, July temperatures average about 80° F (27° C). The hottest part of Sinkiang is the Turfan Depression, where a maximum of 118° F (48° C) and a July mean of 90° F (32° C) have been recorded.

Vegetation and animal life. Because of the great expanses of desert, the plant life of much of Sinkiang is monotonous. There are pine forests in the Tien Shan and turgak woods in many places on the edge of the Takla Makan Desert. Apart from these trees, the most common are varieties of poplars and willows. In the Tien Shan and other mountains, there is a great assortment of wild plants and flowers, many of which have never been classified and of which little is known.

Animal life is of greater interest, and big-game hunting is an attraction of the Tien Shan. These and other mountains are inhabited by antelopes, ibex (wild goats), wapiti (elks), various wild sheep, leopards, wolves, bears, lynx, and marmots (burrowing rodents). There are wild horses in the north, wild camels near Lop Nor, and wild yaks (large, long-haired oxen) and wild asses on the Tibetan frontier. Deer, wild boar, wild cats, foxes, and hares are also found. Bird life is extensive, especially in the Lop Nor district. The few varieties of fish are mostly of the carp family. Snakes are not numerous and appear to be harmless; scorpions and centipedes, however, abound. During the summer, horse flies, mosquitoes, flies, and midges are thick in the woods. A great variety of butterflies are seen in the mountains.

The people. Population groups. Sinkiang is inhabited by 13 different ethnic groups, of which the largest are the Uighurs and the Chinese. Other groups include the Mongolians and Khalkans, Hui (Chinese Muslims), Kazakhs, Uzbeks, Tungusic-speaking Manchus and Sibos, Tadzhiks, Tatars, Russians, and Tahurs. In 1953 the Uighurs accounted for almost 75 percent of the total population of 4,900,000; there were only about 1,000,000 members of non-Chinese groups and about 300,000 Chinese. By the mid-1960s, the Chinese population had increased to 2,600,000, or almost one-third of the total population of 8,000,000; there were 4,000,000 Uighurs.

The Chinese migration altered the pattern of population distribution. In 1953 only 1,300,000 people lived north of the Tien Shan in the Dzungarian Basin, and three-fourths

of the population lived south of the mountains in the Tarim Basin. The Chinese influx was directed mainly to Dzungaria because of its resource potential. By 1970 the population was believed to be evenly divided between the two basins, with a Uighur majority in the south and a majority of Chinese in the north. The Kazakhs, the third largest minority group, are nomadic herdsmen in the steppes of Dzungaria; they are especially concentrated in the Upper Ili Valley.

There are two major language groups in the region. The Mongolians speak languages of the Mongolian branch of the Altaic group, and the Uighurs, Kazakhs, and Uzbeks speak the Turkic branch of the Altaic group. The Tadzhiks, however, belong to the Iranian branch of the Indo-European language group. Mongolian, Uighur, and Kazakh are written languages in everyday use; Mongolian has its own script, while Uighur and Kazakh are written in the Arabic script.

The largest Muslim groups in China are the Uighurs and the Hui. The Kazakhs and Tadzhiks also follow Islām, and the Mongolians are adherents of Buddhism.

Settlement patterns. There are many differences in rural settlement patterns in the north and south. Oasis agriculture in the Tarim Basin occupies about 40 percent of the population, and only 2 percent are engaged in animal husbandry. North of the Tien Shan, the grasslands support 35 to 40 percent of the population, who are pastoralists.

In the early 1970s, there were four major cities in the province. Urumchi (Chinese Wu-lu-mu-ch'i), the regional capital, had grown from a population of 80,000 in 1949 to about 500,000 by 1970. Formerly an agricultural centre for the Dzungarian Basin, it has undergone considerable industrial development. Karamai, also in Dzungaria, had a population of more than 40,000 in 1958; in the early 1960s it was developed as a centre of the petroleum industry. Kuldja (Chinese I-ning) is located in the Upper Ili Valley near the Soviet border. With a population of 85,000 in 1958, it was an administrative town with a growing food-processing industry. Kashgar is the largest city of the Tarim Basin, with a population in 1960 of 140,000; it is an ancient centre for the manufacture of handicrafts such as textiles, rugs, and tanned leather.

Administration and social conditions. Government. The administrative structure of Sinkiang reflects the governmental policies of recognition of ethnic minorities and self-administration, in which local leaders are appointed to governmental positions. The Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region is divided on the subprovincial level into three types of administrative units. There are two municipalities (*shih*) of Karamai (K'o-la-ma-i) and Urumchi (Wu-lu-mu-ch'i); the area to the southeast of Urumchi—including the towns of Toksun (T'o-k'o-hsün), Turfan (T'u-lu-fan), and Shan-shan—is under direct regional administration. There are five autonomous districts (*tzu-chih-chou*): Bayan Gol Mongol (Pa-yin-kuo-leng-meng-ku), Boro Tala Mongol (Po-erh-t'a-la-meng-ku), Ch'ang-chi Hui (Chang-chi-hui-tsu), Ili Kazakh (I-li-ha-sa-k'o), and Kizil Su Kirghiz (K'o-tzu-lo-su-k'o-erh-k'o-tzu). The six areas (*ti-ch'ü*) include A-k'o-su, Ha-mi, Ho-t'ien, K'a-shih, A-le-t'ai, and T'a-ch'eng, the last two of which are under the administration of the Ili Kazakh Autonomous District.

Below the subprovince level, there are two municipalities of Kuldja and Kashgar, 73 counties (*hsien*), and six autonomous counties (*tzu-chih-hsien*).

Education. Before World War II the educational system was minimal; attendance appeared to be voluntary and the teaching halfhearted. Since 1949, educational facilities have been broadened. Institutions of higher learning, concentrated in Urumchi, include the Sinkiang University; the Sinkiang "August First" Institute of Agriculture, which offers a course on water conservation; the Sinkiang Institute of Minorities, which offers courses in art, Chinese language and literature, history, and science; the Sinkiang Medical College; and the Sinkiang Institute of Languages, which offers instruction in Russian, English, French, and German language and literature. The provincial library and museum are also in Urumchi.

Changing demographic patterns

Urban settlement

Institutions of higher learning

The economy. Sources of income. Because of the dry climate, more than 90 percent of the cultivated land in Sinkiang depends entirely on irrigation. The various nationalities in the region have had rich experience in water-conservancy techniques, of which the Karez system in the Turfan and Ha-mi depressions is a fine example. The present cultivated area can be more than doubled with the further utilization of Sinkiang's mountain glaciers, rivers, and underground water.

About half of the total crop area is sown into winter and spring wheat. Maize (corn), another important crop, is grown more extensively in the south than the north. Rice, kaoliang (Chinese sorghum), and millet are also produced in large quantities. Long-staple cotton is produced in the Turfan Depression and the greater Tarim Basin. Sinkiang is one of China's main fruit-producing regions; its sweet Ha-mi melons, seedless Turfan grapes, and Ili apples are well-known. Livestock includes about 25 percent of China's sheep, which yield about 60 percent of the nation's wool.

Mineral resources

Mineral resources include deposits of lead, zinc, copper, and molybdenum and tungsten (metallic elements used in strengthening steel), none of which are of industrial significance. Gold is produced from placer and lode deposits on the southern slopes of the Altai Mountains, where uranium is also believed to be mined. Significant quantities of petroleum are produced at Karamai, whose Uighur name means Black Soil.

Sinkiang's industry is powered by thermal and hydroelectric stations in the major cities. Heavy industry includes an iron and steel works and a cement factory at Urumchi and a farm-tool plant at Kashgar. Industries processing agricultural products have been established near the sources of raw materials. They include the cotton mill in Kashgar, the silk mill in Khotan in the south, the cotton mill in Shih-ho-tze, the woolen-textile mill in the Kazakh pastoral area of northern Sinkiang, the beet-sugar mill in the Ma-na-ssu reclamation area (northwest of Urumchi), and processing factories for the animal products of the pastoral areas.

Transportation. Roads encircle the Tarim Basin, along the foothills of the surrounding mountains, and run along the northern foothills of the Tien Shan in Dzungaria. The two basins are connected by a road that crosses the Tien Shan near Urumchi. There are roads leading to the Soviet Union in the north through passes in Dzungaria and in the south through the pass at Kashgar, the historic gateway of the silk trade between Asia and Europe. The region is also connected by road to the Chinese provinces of Kansu and Tsinghai in the southeast.

A railway crosses Sinkiang from Kansu Province through Ha-mi, Urumchi, and the Dzungarian Gate (a pass in the Pamir Mountains); it connects with the Soviet railway system at Aktogay, Kazakh S.S.R. Air services radiate from Urumchi east to Ha-mi, south to Khotan, west to Kuldja, and north to A-lo-t'ai.

Cultural life. The various indigenous peoples of Sinkiang exhibit their own cultures. The dominant Uighurs are sedentary farmers whose social organization is centred upon the village. There is little political unity, and the villages are virtually autonomous. The Uzbeks, related to the population of the Uzbek S.S.R., are also agriculturists who exhibit some remnants of their ancient nomadic way of life. Tadzhiks are related to those of the Tadzhik S.S.R. Agriculturalists, they are also skilled in handicrafts and trade.

The Kazakhs are pastoralists related to the people of the Kazakh S.S.R. They migrate seasonally in search of pasturage and live in dome-shaped, portable tents known as yurts. Livestock includes sheep, goats, and some cattle; horses are kept for prestige. The basic social unit is the extended family; political organization extends through a hierarchy of chiefs. Although there is a concept of national origin, the chiefs are seldom united.

Like the Kazakhs, the Mongolians are pastoralists who live in yurts, but their society is more firmly organized. The basic social unit is the nuclear family. There is an established political hierarchy of groups, the smallest of which is a group of several households known as a *bag*.

The average person, or free nomad (*arat*), owes allegiance to nobles (*taiji*) and princes (*noyan* or *wang*). National power, however, is fragmented.

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Sino-Tibetan Languages

In the narrowest sense, the Sino-Tibetan languages include the Chinese and Tibeto-Burman languages. In terms of numbers of speakers, they comprise the world's second largest language family (after Indo-European), including over 300 languages and major dialects. In a wider sense, Sino-Tibetan has been defined as also including the Tai (or Daic), Karen, and Miao-Yao languages and even the Yenisey-Ostyak (or Ket) language in Northern Siberia (the latter affiliation seems rather untenable). Some linguists connect the Austro-Asiatic or Austronesian (Malayo Polynesian) families, or both, with Sino-Tibetan; a suggested term for this most inclusive group, which seems to be based on premature speculations, is Sino-Austrie. Other scholars see a relationship of Sino-Tibetan with the Athapascan and other languages of North America, but proof of this is beyond reach at the present state of knowledge.

Sino-Tibetan languages were known for a long time by the name of Indochinese, which is now restricted to the languages of Indochina. They were also called Tibeto-Chinese until the now universally accepted designation Sino-Tibetan was adopted. The term Sinitic also has been used in the same sense, as well as for the Chinese subfamily exclusively. (In the following discussion of language groups, the ending *-ic*, as in Sinitic, indicates a relatively large group of languages, and *-ish* denotes a smaller grouping.)

Sinitic languages, commonly known as the Chinese dialects, are spoken in China and on Taiwan and by important minorities in all the countries of Southeast Asia (by a majority only in Singapore). In addition, Sinitic is spoken by Chinese immigrants in many parts of the world, notably in Oceania and in North and South America; altogether there are some 600,000,000 speakers of the Chinese dialects. Sinitic is divided into a number of languages, by far the most important of which is Mandarin (or Northern Chinese). Mandarin, which includes Modern Standard Chinese (which is based on the Peking dialect), is not only the most important language of the Sino-Tibetan family but also has the most ancient writing tradition still in use of any modern language. The remaining Sinitic language groups include Wu (including Shanghai dialect), Hsiang (Hunanese), Kan (or Kan-Hakka), Yüeh, or Cantonese (including Canton and Hong Kong dialects), and Min (including Fuchow, Amoy, and Taiwanese).

Tibeto-Burman languages are spoken in Tibet and Burma; in the Himalayas, including Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan; in Assam and in Bangladesh; as well as by hill tribes all over mainland Southeast Asia and West China (Kan-

Areas in which languages are spoken