

中国西部
WEST CHINA

Xinjiang



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Preface

The large-scale development of western China is called a "century project." It has captured the world's imagination because the region promises brilliant prospects for development and exceptional opportunities for business.

People are paying close attention to, exploring and studying the west. They want to know everything about it, hence the visitors, reporters and fact-finding groups heading west and the steady stream of letters and E-mails asking for information material. They are anxious because delay means lagging behind and letting a golden opportunity slip away. In order to unveil and display the western region to the world, China Intercontinental Press has compiled the Introduction to Western China Series.

Western China, with its peculiar glamour and profound historic content, has many things that need an introduction.

It is the place where the remains of the earliest primitive people in China were found. Yunnan's Yuanmou Ape Man existed 1.7 million years ago and Shaanxi's Lantian Ape Man existed 800,000 years ago.

It was the political, economic and cultural centre of China prior to the 10th century. Thirteen dynasties spanning more than 1,100 years, including the Zhou, Qin, Han, Sui and Tang, established their capitals in Shaanxi.

It is an area inhabited by a large number of ethnic minorities.

A total of 47 nationalities live in Xinjiang and 25 nationalities live in Yunnan. Each ethnic group has its own distinctive culture and customs.

It is China's treasure house of resources and boasts abundant resources under the ground as well as on the ground. Statistics reveal that 160 minerals have been discovered in the region. Reserves of rare metals account for more than 90 per cent of the national total and hydropower reserves account for over 80 per cent. Furthermore, the western region has a rich variety of biological resources and is praised as a "kingdom of plants," a "kingdom of animals" and a "biological gene bank."

It is an important passageway leading to the outside world. The ancient Silk Road linked China with Central Asia, South Asia and Europe and now the Eurasian Continental Bridge traverses the region. Not only a commercial passageway, western China also was the region where the Yellow River valley culture, the Ganges River valley culture, the ancient Greek culture and the Persian culture underwent exchange and integration.

It is a tourist attraction with countless scenic spots, some of which have been listed by UNESCO as world natural and cultural heritage sites.

And so on and so forth. To present a complete picture of the western region, the compilers have arranged the series according to administrative divisions introducing each province, autonomous region and municipality in the region one by one. Even so, I'm afraid the presentation is incomplete.

Change in the western region is rapid, and the Chinese idiom "changes occur with each passing day" is no exaggeration

when used to describe the present situation in the region. The authors of the books say their biggest headache was dealing with statistical data, especially economic figures. They made sure that every figure in the books has been treated earnestly and verified several times. However, they can't guarantee that the figures will still be true when you read the books. These figures only reflect the situation during a specific period of time. Even so, they are valuable as a reference.

Since the reform and opening drive, the Chinese economy has witnessed many miracles. It is expected that more miracles will take place in the large-scale development of the western region. In a Chinese song entitled "The Story of Spring, there are lyrics that say: "The year 1979 was a spring. An old man drew a circle by the South China Sea. Miraculously, cities mushroomed and gold mountains grew. " Today, western development represents another enormous circle because it covers half of the country.

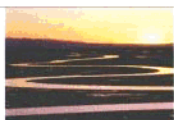
The day victory is declared in western development will be the day when the entire Chinese nation takes off.

Li Bing
October 2000

Contents

Preface

P2



Chapter 1: Xinjiang—China's largest Provincial region

- 1、Vast territory
- 2、Terrain with three mountains and two basins
- 3、Typical arid and semi-arid climate in the temperate continental climate area
- 4、The longest inland river and the deepest lake in China
- 5、Important cities
- 6、Provincial capital—Urumqi

P12



Chapter 2: Regions of national autonomy with Uygur and other ethnic groups

- 1、History of Xinjiang as a provincial part of China
- 2、Xinjiang adopts the policy of regional autonomy of ethnic groups
- 3、Xinjiang pursues the common development of different ethnic groups
- 4、Different languages are used in Xinjiang
- 5、Xinjiang pursues the policy of freedom of religious belief

P24



Chapter 3: Abundant resources

- 1、Mineral resources
- 2、Water and land resources
- 3、Solar energy and geothermal resources
- 4、Biological resources
- 5、Tourism resources

P37



Chapter 4: A Changing and developing Xinjiang

- 1、Comprehensive index
- 2、Basic industry and infrastructure
- 3、Steady development in agriculture and animal husbandry
- 4、Promoted social undertakings
 - a: Ethnic culture
 - b: Science, technology and education
 - c: Medical and health care
 - d: People's lives

P55



Chapter 5: A new chapter in the old Silk Road

- 1、The ancient Silk Road
- 2、Great progress achieved on the old Silk Road
 - a: Trading ports
 - b: Opening up
 - c: Frontier trade
 - d: Utilization of foreign funds
 - e: Co-operation with other provinces in China

P74



Chapter 6: The state strategy to develop Western China makes Xinjiang take an historical turn

- 1、 Basic thoughts and important developing industries
- 2、 Development schedule
- 3、 Improvement and construction in ecological environment (the comprehensive improvement of the Tarim River Valley)
- 4、 Enhancing the construction of transportation and energy infrastructure (The project to convey natural gas from Western China to the east part.)
- 5、 Making efforts to develop tourism
 - a: Natural tourism resources
 - b: Human cultural tourism resources
 - c: National cultural resources
 - d: Special tourism souvenirs
 - e: Folk entertainment
 - f: Local delicacies and flavours
 - g: Tourism scenic spots and tour lines

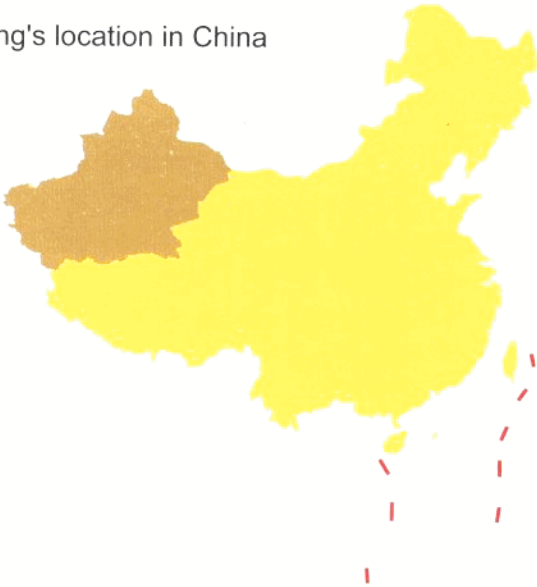
P117

Appendix

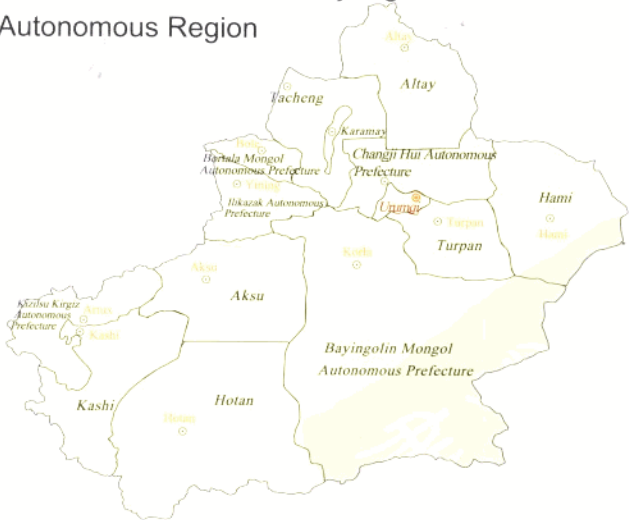
P125

Afterwards

XinJiang's location in China



The administrative division of Xinjiang
uygur Autonomous Region



1

Xinjiang-China's largest provincial regions

Vast territory

Xinjiang is located in Northwest China's frontier area. It borders Mongolia on the northeast, Russia on the north, Kazakhstan, Kirghizstan and Tadzhikistan on the west, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India on the southwest. Its boundary line is 5,600 kilometres long, about one fourth of China's boundary line on

Tianshan Mountain, a symbol of Xinjiang





Xinjiang's border is 5,600 kilometres long, about one fourth of China's total land border. Its total area is 1.6 million square kilometres, making up one sixth of the total land area of China.

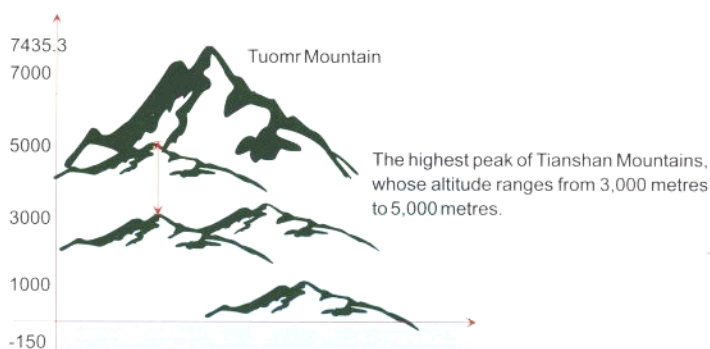
land.

Xinjiang is the provincial region in China with the longest boundary line and is most bounded by other countries. Its domestic neighbours are Gansu Province, Qinghai Province and Tibet Autonomous Region. Its total area is 1.6 million square kilometres, consisting one sixth of China. Its area ranks first in China, compared with other provincial regions.

Terrain with three mountains and two basins

Xinjiang shares a clear topography contour. It includes three mountain ranges: Altay Mountains in the north, Kunlun Mountains and Altun Mountains in the south and two basins: Junggar Basin and Tarim Basin. With Tianshan Mountains as the divide, its south part is named Nanjiang and north part is Beijiang. Traditionally, the area of Turpan Depression and Kumul is called Dongjiang. Tianshan mountainous area includes several east-to-west paralleled mountains, basins and valleys. The altitude of these mountains range from 3,000 metres to 5,000 metres, with snow and glacier on the top area all year round. The highest peak of Tianshan Mountains is the Tuomer Peak, with an altitude of 7,435 metres. Turpan basin is situated in the east of Tianshan Mountain and its lowest altitude is 155 metres below sea level--the lowest point in the land area of China.

Located in the north part of Xinjiang, Altay Mountains have an altitude



ranging from 2,000 metres to 3,000 metres with a run of range from northwest to southeast. The grass land and forest area in the mountains are in a belt-shape.

Xinjiang's south part is Karakorum Mountain, Kunlun Mountain, Altun Mountain and Pamirs, all ranging from 5,000 metres to 6,000 metres. These high mountains are snow-capped all year. The Qogir Peak of Karakorum Mountains is 8,611 metres high and is the second highest peak in the world. Kunlun Mountains have active volcanoes and hot springs.

Junggar Basin is located between Tianshan Mountains and Altay Mountains and has an area of 200,000 square kilometres, with an average altitude of 500 metres. In the west of Junggar basin is Alataw Mountain Pass and Ertix River. It has been an important line of communications since ancient times. In the centre of the basin is Gurbantunggut Desert, with an area of 45,000 square kilometres. It is the second largest desert in China. There are many static and semi-static dunes, which are suitable to be winter pastureland.

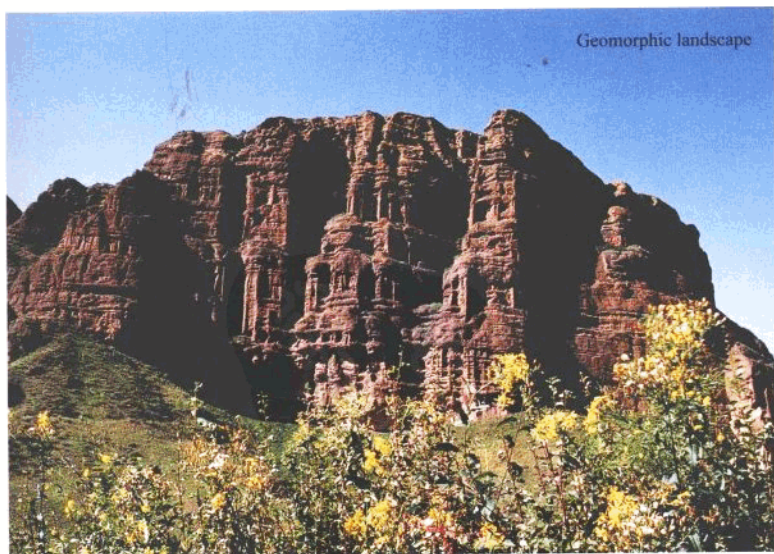
In the south of the basin is the vast area of alluvial plains that has become the oasis agricultural area. To the south of Tianshan Mountain, Junggar Basin is an inland basin surrounded by high mountains.

There is only a mountain pass connecting with Hexi Corridor in the east. In the wake of the arid climate, the centre of Junggar Basin is a desert named Taklamakan Desert with an area of 320,000 square kilometres. It is the largest and hottest desert in China. The alluvial plains at the verge of Junggar Basin are irrigated by the water from the snow-capped mountains and have become a flourishing place with rich agricultural products and pastureland.

The high ice peaks and the vast area of desert are the two typical features of Xinjiang's terrain.

The typical arid and semi-arid climate

With Tianshan Mountain as the divide, north Xinjiang features temperate continental arid and semi-arid climate and its south is temperate continental arid climate. Located inland and surrounded by high mountains, the warm and wet air current from oceans cannot reach Xinjiang, except Junggar Basin



and the wind slope of southwest of Altay Mountain. With striking characteristics of the continental climate in the temperate zone, Xinjiang has small rainfall and great variations in daily and yearly temperature. The yearly temperature difference in Beijiāng ranges from 4 degrees below zero to 9 degrees and from 7 degrees to 14 degrees in Nānjiāng. In January, the temperature difference in Beijiāng ranges from 20 degrees below zero to 15 degrees below zero and from 10 degrees below zero to 5 degrees below zero in Nānjiāng. In July, the temperature difference varies from 22 degrees to 26 degrees and up to 33 degrees in Turban Depression.

The lowest temperature was recorded 51.15 degrees below zero on January 26, 1969 and the highest was 49.6 degrees recorded on July 24, 1956. The daily temperature range is generally above 12 degrees. The frost-free period throughout a year ranges from 120 days to 180 days in Beijiāng and 180 days to 240 days in Nānjiāng. The average rainfall is 150 millimetres. In Altay



Gongers Pastureland



Winding river

and the Heaven Pond of Tianshan mountain, it is 600 millimetres. In Nanjiang, the rainfall is very low. The rainfall in Qiemo and Ruqiang is just 10 millimetres. In winter, Beijing has more snow days, with the thickest snow record of 89 centimetres in February 1962. In spring and autumn, Xinjiang has more windstorm days. When cold airflow enters Xinjiang through valleys and mountain passes, the wind force usually reaches 12 on the Beaufort scale. In spring, the cold temperature usually brings about a spring drought.

The longest inland river and lowest lake

Most rivers in Xinjiang are inland rivers with snow-broth from high mountains as the water source. These rivers disappear in the desert or flow into an inland lake. Tarim River is 2,137 kilometres long and is the longest inland river in China. It flows along the north part of the Tarim Basin. It originates from the Pamirs and Kunlun Mountain and its lower reach is Kongque River which flows into Lop Nor. Part of the river water flows south to Taitema Lake. Ili River flows along the Ili Valley and is the lake with the largest waterflow in Xinjiang. It flows out of Xinjinag and into Balchas Lake. Bosten



Lake in the basin among Tianshan Mountains is the largest freshwater lake in Xinjiang. Aydingkol Lake in Turpan Basin is the lake in China with the lowest altitude. Situated at northeast Urumqi, Tianshan's Tianci (Heaven Pond) boasts wonderful scenery. It is a good summer resort and a natural skiing site in winter.

Important cities

According to the constitution of the People's Republic Of China and the law of regional autonomy of ethnic groups, Xinjiang Province was disestablished on October 1, 1955 and Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region was established. Its former provincial capital Dihua City was renamed Urumqi.

Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region includes 13 prefectures, 19 municipalities, 68 counties and 849 towns. Among the 13 prefectures, five are autonomous prefectures: Ili Kazak Autonomous Prefecture, Bortala Monggol Autonomous Prefecture, Changji Hui Autonomous Prefecture, Bayingolin Monggol Autonomous Prefecture and Kizilsu Kirgiz Autonomous Prefecture. The other seven prefectures are Turpan, Hami, Hetan, Kashi, Aksu, Altay and

Tacheng.

Of the 19 municipalities, three are municipalities under the government of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. They are Urumqi, Karamay and Shihezi. Another 9 municipalities are Hami, Turpan, Aksu, Kashi,



Shanshan City

Hetan, Gulja, Tacheng, Altay and Wusu. Seven municipalities under the prefecture government are Kuytun, Bole, Changji, Fukang, Miquan, Korla and Artux. Among the 68 counties, six are autonomous counties: Hoboksar Monggol, Mori Kazak, Barkol Kazak, Aksay Kazakzu, Yanqi Hui Autonomous County, Qapqal Xibe Autonomous County. Of the 849 towns, 42 are autonomous.

Provincial capital--Urumqi

Urumqi is the capital of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and the centre of Xinjiang's economy, politics, culture and transportation network. The planned area of Urumqi is 1,600 square kilometres. Urumqi has a population of 1.51 million, with ethnic groups such as Uygur, Han, Hui, Kazak, Man, Mongolian, Xibe and another six nationalities.

Urumqi is rich in resources. It is called the "city on a coal field" thanks to its 9 billion tons of coal deposit. In agriculture production, Urumqi attached importance to the establishment of a vegetable and fruit base, milk and egg production base and meat and aquatic products base. There are more than 3,000 industrial enterprises with a complete industrial system based mainly on petroleum processing, textiles, mechanics, food, iron and steel,

building materials, electricity and chemical industry. There are hundreds of joint ventures in Urumqi, which are cooperating with foreign counterparts from more than 20 countries in Asia, Europe and North America. Urumqi has state-grade economic development zones and high-tech industry zones. In recent years, infrastructure construction including urban transportation facilities, water supply and drainage works were launched.

Urban function was enhanced and investment and living conditions were improved. Today's Urumqi presents an outlook featuring high buildings, busy transportation links and the combinations of folk traditions and a modern metropolis. Cultural and educational undertakings developed quickly. Xinjiang University, Xinjiang Agriculture University and a dozen other universities play an important role in Xinjiang's educational undertaking. Scientific research fruits achieved by the Xinjiang-based branch institute of the Chinese Science Academy lead in China. Xinjiang Song and Dance Troupe and Xinjiang Acrobatic Troupe are famous thanks to their high-skill performers. Urumqi has already become an important gateway in Western China and a window to the world in economy and culture.

Urumqi has eight most famous historical and cul-

