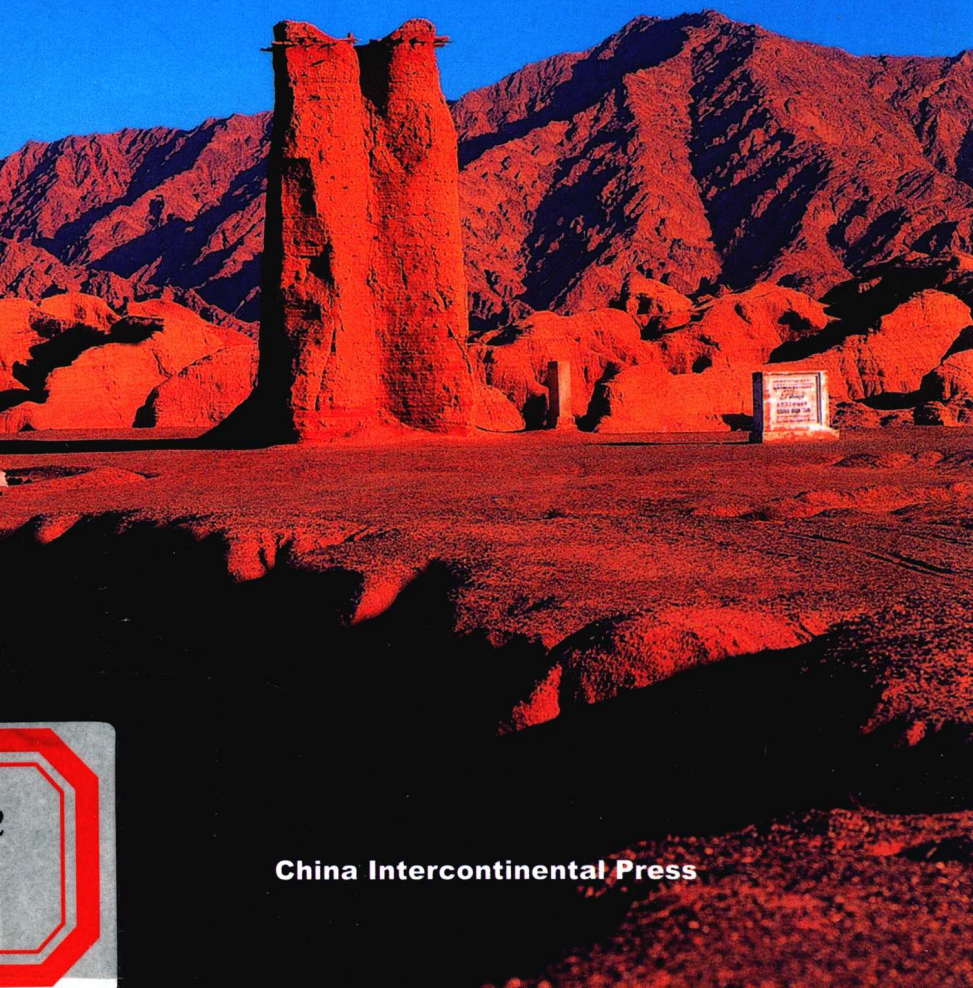


CHINA'S XINJIANG SERIES

Aksu, New Charm of Qiuci

Compiled by
Tian Fang and Fei Na



China Intercontinental Press

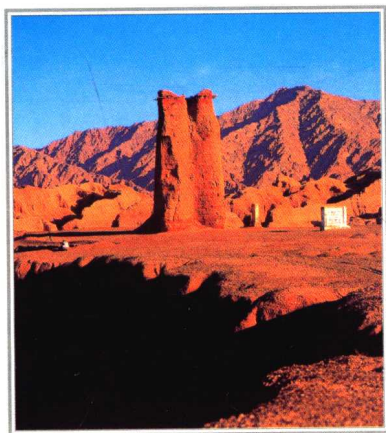


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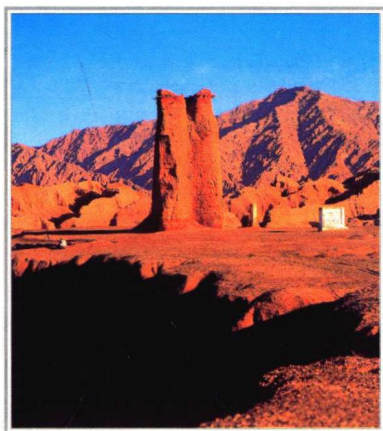


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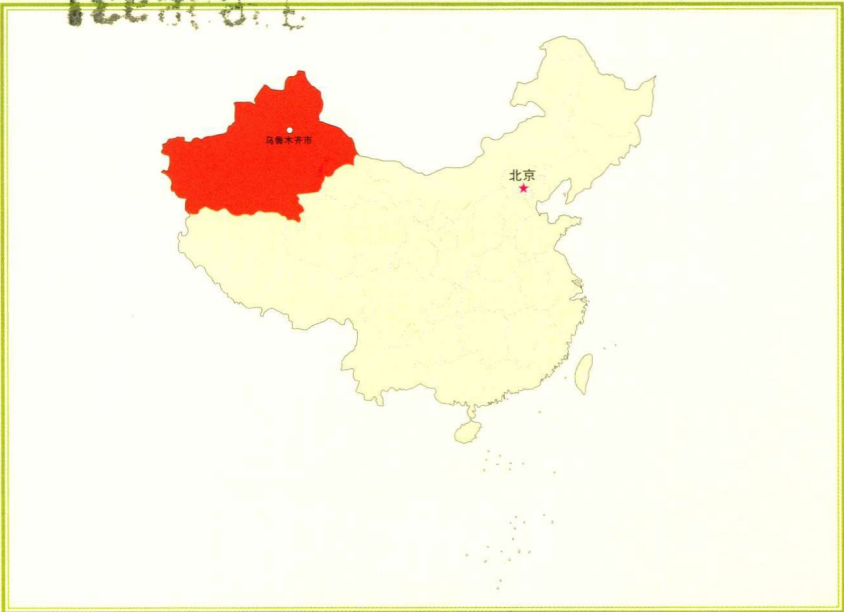
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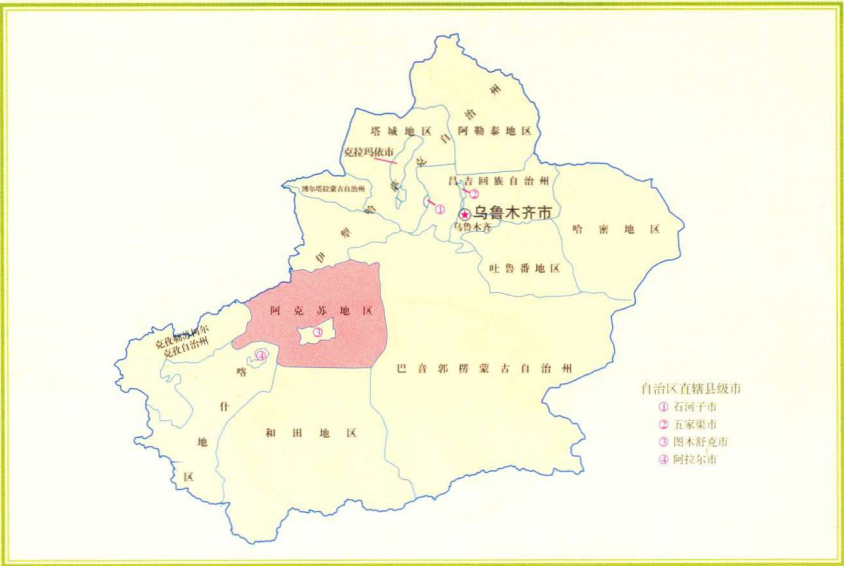


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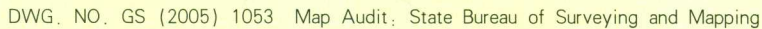
The location of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in China



The location of Aksu Administrative Offices in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region



The administrative map of Aksu Administrative Offices



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I Ancient and Vigorous Qiuci with Charm

Aksu is located along the north route of the ancient Silk Road, which has three routes. Through the Silk Road, civilizations from the east and the west gathered here and left behind rich cultural relics. In the long-standing history of wars among various states in the Western Regions, Aksu once played an important role. For a time its Qiuci civilization flourished to the utmost. Afterwards, it disappeared secretly. This glorious ancient Qiuci civilization hid itself mysteriously for more than 10 centuries until it was investigated and discovered by adventurers and archeologists in 19th Century. A charming mysterious ancient state that had been buried for over a thousand years thus was presented to the world once again. As a result, discovery and research of ancient Qiuci civilization started an upsurge in studying Qiuci across the world.

Situated at the south foot of Tianshan Mountains and north edge of Tarim Basin, Aksu has an area of 132,500 sq. km. It borders Bayangol Mongol Autonomous Prefecture to the east; to the south, it overlooks Hotan across Taklamakan Desert; it neighbors Kashgar and Kizilsu Kirgiz Autonomous Prefecture to the southwest and adjoin Ili Kazak Autonomous Prefecture



The Cultural Square
in Baicheng County,
Aksu

Street scene of
Aksu City

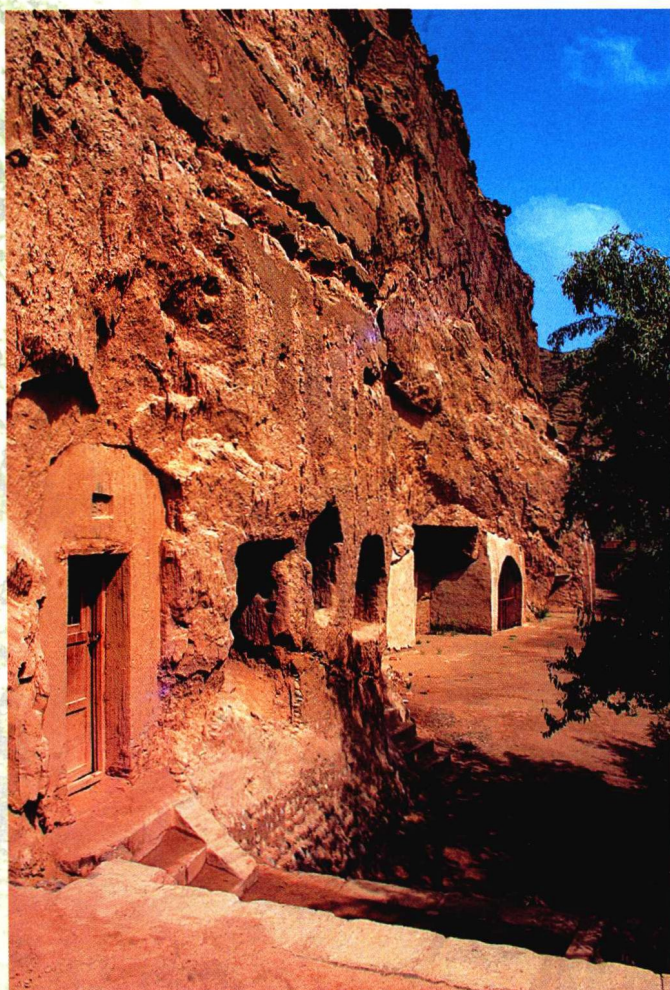


Commercial street
in Aksu City



to the southwest, with Tianshan Mountains as divide; and to the northwest, it borders on the Republic of Kyrgyzstan and the Republic of Kazakhstan by a border line totaling 232 km.

Aksu Prefecture exercise control over Aksu City and 8 counties of Kuqa County, Toksu County, Xayar County, Bay County, Onsu County, Awat County, Uqturpan County and Kalpin County, with 82 villages and towns and 46 state-owned farms, forest farms and pastures. Aral City and 16 farm and land reclamation sub-divisions that subordinated to the No.1 Division of Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC)



Kumtura Thousand-Buddha Grottoes has more than 1,700 years history

are also located within this area. The population is 2.30 millions, consisting of 38 ethnic groups. Aksu is a melting-pot of different nationalities, with Uyghur playing a dominant role. Uyghur people and Han people account for 73% and 26% of the population respectively. Aksu City is the heart of the region politically, economically and culturally, where locates leading administrative

organs of the Party, the Government and the Army, and those of the No. 1 Division of XPCC.

Aksu enjoys a long history. As early as between 7,000 BC and 6,000 BC there lived human beings. Primeval remains of human activities in the Neolithic Age have been discovered within Aksu's territory in Kuqa County, Onsu County and Kalpin County.

In history, Aksu once served as a major post-house along the ancient Silk Road that linked together the Central Plains, Central Asia and Western Asia. In addition, it was a political, economic, military and trade center along the world known Silk Road that famous for connecting the Central Plains of China to various birthplaces of human civilizations such as India, Babylon, Egypt, Greece and Rome. Through the long-standing process, Aksu left behind a great number of cultural relics and historical sites and created the ancient Qiuci civilization that was entirely different from those of the west and the Central plains. It was also the only place in the world gathering all the four great ancient civilizations. Qiuci was located at the critical section of the north route of the Silk Road, the crossroad of the Western Regions at the south foot of the Tianshan Mountains. It backed

Jingling camel
bells





Roast Whole Lamb, a sculpture in the street of Aksu

on the mountains to the north and bordered the Taklamakan Desert to the south. Within its territory, there were several openings along the Tianshan Mountains, connecting Qiuci to the north route. To the west and east, it might reach Shule and Yanqi respectively. In addition, through seasonal arroyos, it might get to the Kingdom of Khotan by directly going through the Taklamakan Desert.

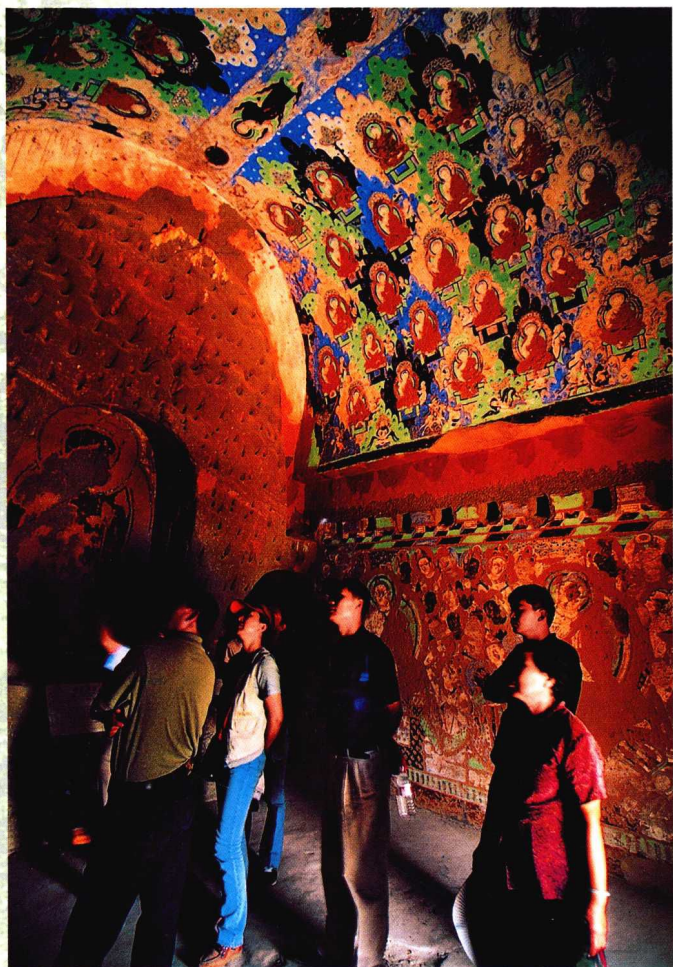
During the Qin (221 BC – 206 BC) and Han (206 BC – 220 AD) Dynasties, there had been various states divided by their outer walls. Among 36 states in the Western Regions, Qiuci, Kumo and Onsu were all within today's Aksu's territory. In early Western Han Dynasty (206 BC – 25 AD), Kumo State, the then Aksu, administered today's Aksu City, Bay County and Onsu County. In 2nd year of Shenjue Reign (60 BC) of Han Dynasty, Kumo was administered by Protectorate the Western Regions. During the Wei, Jin and Northern & Southern Dynasties (220 – 589), Kumo was under administrative control of Qiuci. In Sui Dynasty (581 – 618), as the Western Regions was controlled by west Turkic, this territory was put under administration of Xiaowei (a middle level military title). When in Tang Dynasty (618 – 907), Kumo State was administered by Qiuci Dudu Fu. From late Tang Dynasty to Northern Song Dynasty (960 – 1127), this region belonged to the Uighur Khaganate. In Yuan Dynasty

(1271 – 1368), here became manor of Chagatai Khan, son of Genghis Khan. During Ming Dynasty, it was within territory of King Turpan, descendant of Chagatai Khan. After putting down Junggar Tribe's rebellion in the Qing Dynasty (1644 – 1911), Aksu Minister was set up, followed by Aksu Sheriff. Aksu Road was established in the 8th year of Guangxu Period (1882), and Aksu Town began its construction in 1884. In 17th year of the Republic of China (1928), Aksu Road was replaced by Aksu District, which was renamed as No.4 District along with the establishment of the Office of Chief Executive in 22nd year of ROC (1933). The office was replaced by the Office of Commissioner for Administrative Supervision of No.4 District in 32nd year of ROC (1943). After the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, Aksu Regional Revolutionary Commission was established in 1950. It was replaced by Aksu Regional Administrative Office in Nov. 1978, which was located in Aksu County. In 1983, Aksu County was upgraded as Aksu City.

Primary school students on an outing in Heiying Shan Township



Qiuci, an ancient state in the Western Regions once located its center at today's Kuqa oasis within Aksu Prefecture. Its territory also included various counties and cities under present administrative control of Aksu Prefecture. With glorious and mysterious history and ancient civilization, Qiuci still charms today. This place enjoys favorable weather, abundant output and profound historical and cultural deposit. It has long been crowned as "country of melons and fruits" and "country of song and dance".



Visitors are appreciating the fresco in the Kizil Thousand-Buddha Caves



Endless stream of visitors come to the Kizil Thousand-Buddha Caves every year

In addition to beautiful natural sceneries, Aksu region also features cultural relics and historical sites. There are in Kuqa County ruins of ancient Qiuci State, one of 36 states in the Western Regions, also grottoes such as Kizil Thousand-Buddha Grottoes, one of top four Grottoes in China that was build since Jin Dynasty (265 – 420) and Kumtura Thousand-Buddha Grotto. Besides, famous Zhaohuli Grand Temple, beacon towers of Han Dynasty, ruins of ancient smelter, Kuqa Mosque and so on are also located in Aksu region.