

INTRODUCTION

New Developments in Xinjiang Historical Sources

In recent years, historical study of Central Asia has progressed rapidly, particularly in regard to historical sources and materials. Underlying these advances is greatly improved access to pertinent materials in this region, made possible by reform policies in China, the break-up of the former Soviet Union and the establishment of new independent Central Asian republics.

Xinjiang is one Central Asian region whose historiography has developed rapidly of late, thanks to the utilization of newly available manuscripts, broader knowledge of existing manuscript collections, and improved access to government archives. Although in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of China (also known as Chinese Central Asia, Chinese Turkistan or East Turkistan) private collections and government archives remain only partially accessible and knowledge about them is still inadequately systematized, researchers have discovered and consulted many sources housed in Europe, Russia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and China, and are producing path-breaking new research on the basis of these materials.

New types of sources

There are four main types of new sources for Xinjiang historical research. First are the Chaghatay Turkic manuscript collections held in libraries and research institutes in the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Russia, Sweden and elsewhere, the full extent of which is only now becoming clear. Work based on these records has shed much light, particularly on the political and cultural circumstances of Xinjiang in the nineteenth century. Information about and cataloging of manuscript collections in the former Soviet Union is less complete, but these too have informed some unique studies.

Second, there have been remarkable advances regarding local written records of the eighteenth through mid-twentieth centuries, including both newly discovered sources and imaginative new ways to use such documents in writing history. Such records include documents on land sale and purchase, inheritance and *waqf*, as well as religious and local legal matters. They comprise the most fundamental resources on the actual circumstances of Uyghur society from the Qing through the Republican eras. Although there remain serious impediments to document collection and access in Xinjiang, some of these local records are available in collections in other countries; moreover, other local documents have emerged from private collecting

activities. While the study of Xinjiang local documents remains in its infancy, they represent a promising resource for future research.

Third, great advances have been made based on Qing and Chinese government records. In particular, the Qing period *dang'an* (檔案) records have allowed studies that probe new dimensions of Qing military affairs and administration, as well as Xinjiang society and economics under the Qing. Nevertheless, while these materials, primarily in Chinese and Manchu, have greatly enhanced our understanding of imperial policies in Xinjiang, such research has tended to be state-centered; studies using Qing *dang'an* and those using local Turkic records for the study of Xinjiang history remain somewhat at a divergence. Greater exchanges of research are clearly needed.

A full synthetic study of Qing Dynasty Xinjiang has not yet been written; nor, indeed, is it yet common when writing about the region's history to integrate information from the voluminous Qing archives with what may be learned about Uyghur society, culture, religious activities, mentality, and so on from histories written by Uyghurs and from local documents. Ultimately, such a joint approach will help bridge the gap between the perspective of the imperial center and that of local society. Of course, such an integrated history would entail working with sources in Chaghatay, Uyghur and Manchu as well as in Chinese, and would draw on scholarship from the quite different historiographical styles of China, Japan, Central Eurasia, Europe and America. It thus remains a lofty goal—though not an unattainable one.

The fourth type of new source is data gained through fieldwork. One approach is the collection of oral histories, which provide perspectives on recent history that are quite different from those of written records. Another method is geographical, economic, sociological and other sorts of surveys, followed by comparison of contemporary data with what is known about historical conditions. For example, an onsite survey of an Islamic saint's mausoleum can provide valuable data supplementing written records. By integrating information from various kinds of fieldwork with that of the written records, it will be possible to draw more robust conclusions regarding the historical transitions experienced by Uyghur society.

Local surveys in Xinjiang are often accompanied by serious physical hardships and are often subject to political restrictions. It is not unusual for permission for a survey to be denied outright, or for scholars to be harassed even after being granted permission. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the situation is improving, and one may anticipate major results from fieldwork in the future.

The International Workshop on Xinjiang Historical Sources and the present volume

Given the importance and promise for Xinjiang history of these new types of sources, an international symposium on this subject was convened in December 2004 at

the Matsuzakaya Honten, a mountain inn in Hakone, Japan. Generous sponsorship for the meeting was provided by the ORIAS Project, headed by Prof. Nakami Tatsuo with assistance from Sugawara Jun; and by a JSPS Grant-in-aid for Scientific Research to support “Investigative Study regarding Transformations in Uyghur Communities and Ethnic Identities in Central Asia,” under the direction of Prof. Shinmen Yasushi. Participants from around the world convened at this lovely setting high above Lake Ashi, enjoying the crisp air and views of Mt. Fuji. They shared tatami rooms and dined, drank and bathed in the hot springs together. They also presented and discussed papers. The chapters in this volume comprise the revised product of that interaction.

The research presented here covers a long time period and wide range of subjects, demonstrating the exciting new directions historical work on the Xinjiang region has taken in recent years, thanks both to the discovery of new sources and deepening sophistication of work with existing materials. It is hoped that the chapters here will inform other scholars of what is being done and what is possible in the field of Xinjiang history, and thus stimulate further and better work. In particular, younger scholars just starting out will find in this volume valuable surveys of manuscripts, catalogues of texts, entrées into archives, and hints about methodology that will clarify the contours of the field and lower “barriers to entry.” Finally, publication in English by the Toyo Bunko will, we hope, alert a broader readership to the fine work done in this field by East Asian, Central Asian and European scholars.

Summaries of the chapters

The sources discussed in the chapters below shed light on political, economic, legal, social, ethnographic, religious and environmental aspects of Xinjiang history from the seventeenth through the twentieth centuries. Here we briefly introduce each chapter, in rough chronological order of the sources and subjects they discuss.

Hodong Kim presents several seventeenth-century royal decrees from the Moghul (Yarkand) khans, documents he found in the Jarring Collection in Lund, with close copies at Harvard’s Houghton Library. These khalan announcements of bequests, privileges and admonitions provide insight into the chancellery practices of the *Ulus-i Moghul*. In particular, they demonstrate continuities of language and structure with the thirteenth-century Mongol empire, practices that link later Turkic-language documents with Mongolian antecedents.

Another source that likewise illuminates the obscure period of the mid-sixteenth through mid-eighteenth centuries is the *ilāwa*, or addendum, to the *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī*. The *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī*, originally written in Persian, was completed by 1546. When Khwāja Muḥammad Sharīf translated this book into Turki in the early nineteenth century, he supplemented it with a narrative of events from the sixteenth century up

to the 1840s. As Amanbek Jalilov and Shinmen Yasushi show, this addendum adds to our knowledge of both Junghar and Qing periods, in particular regarding taxation, waqf, local administration, and bek interaction with higher authorities. Sawada Minoru, too, contributes to our knowledge of the Junghar era through his work with the seventeen manuscripts of the *Tadhkira-i khwājagān*, the “Biography of the Khwājas.” Sawada describes these manuscripts and their provenance, categorizing them into three groups on the basis of discrepancies between versions of the chapter on Khwāja Āfāq, and assessing which of the three groups is most reliable.

Onuma Takahiro and Laura Newby each write about different aspects of the voluminous Qing imperial record on Xinjiang. The Chinese published and archival sources on Qing Xinjiang are well known and reasonably accessible. Less commonly utilized, so far, are the many Manchu sources on Xinjiang, for which Newby supplies an invaluable *vade mecum*. One of her insights concerns Manchu “translations” of works such as Qishiyi’s *Xiyu wenjian lu*: while this and other seminal mid-Qing works on Xinjiang were written in Chinese, the sources on which they were based likely included many Manchu materials, and thus the Manchu “translations” may in some ways be closer to the original source than are the Chinese originals. Newby makes a case for comparison of the Manchu and Chinese versions. On the basis of a handful of documents in Chaghatay by hakim begs serving the Qing as local administrators, Onuma Takahiro concludes that Chaghatay was indeed an official administrative language in Qing Xinjiang, showing how the documentary style and language of these Turkic reports mirrors that of analogous dispatches in Manchu, Chinese and (in Mongolia) Mongolian. Few Chaghatay documents are extant in Beijing, however, because only top-ranking hakim begs of a city or district enjoyed the right to memorialize, and that only to the Manchu *amban*, who in turn would write to the Qing court in Beijing. Dispatches from subordinate hakim and other begs were channeled through the district’s top-ranked hakim. Administration in Xinjiang was thus rigidly hierarchical, with a small number of key officials commanding the information bottlenecks.

Sufis of the Naqshbandi order played a major role in the Xinjiang region, but many questions remain regarding their activities and organization, which spanned imperial and national boundaries to link Xinjiang with other parts of Central Asia. Timur Beisembiev reveals how the Kokand Chronicles, particularly the *Tuhfat at-tavarikh-i khani*, written in Persian by Mulla ‘Avaz Muhammad ‘Attar Khuqandi (early 1870s), comprise a key source for Xinjiang’s nineteenth-century history, particularly the invasions by the Naqshbandi Khoja (Khwāja) descendents and Ya‘qub Beg. Many historians of the Qing have wondered what became of the Naqshbandi Khojas after those tumultuous nineteenth-century events. Thierry Zarcone answers this question with spiritual genealogies, private archives, prayer books and oral history to reveal the lineages and movements, in Xinjiang and Central Asia, of the Khafiya and Jahriyya from after the wars of the nineteenth century through the end

of the twentieth.

History based on the official political record as preserved in an imperial capital tends to be state-centered and to occlude local and social history. Ildikó Bellér-Hann suggests how historical anthropology can address this problem, even in the absence of newly discovered sources. In her chapter, she re-reads well-known and less well-known accounts by European missionaries and travelers in Xinjiang from the first decades of the twentieth century, and draws on collections of Uyghur-language essays which they commissioned from local informants. The “Orientalist” cast of such materials, Bellér-Hann points out, presents little problem for the modern scholar who is aware of it, and these sources allow her to construct a rich and “thick” description of life in southern Xinjiang. Her sample case here using this method is an essay on poverty and the institutions of social welfare in early twentieth-century Xinjiang.

Sugawara Jun helps us reconstruct another aspect of local life in the Tarim Basin: the intersection of society and government at the moment when the Republican Chinese state began to extend its administrative reach beyond that achieved by the Qing. Through close examination of a collection of local land documents from the Kashgar and Khotan regions in 1912–50, Sugawara shows how the language, structure and legal procedures involved in real estate contracts evolved from traditional Central Asian hand-written documents bearing a *qāḍī*’s seal, through various stages of translation to hybrid forms in which Turki sections were pasted into printed Chinese standardized templates and contracts concluded without reference to an Islamic judge. These developments show a remarkable degree of Chinese state penetration into local affairs in southwestern Xinjiang before 1950, and set the stage for more dramatic changes to follow.

The situation in northern Xinjiang during this era was different from in the south, of course, where there was little or no Guomindang or Chinese influence. The historiography of the second Eastern Turkestan Republic (1944–49) is complicated by the Chinese, Soviet and Uyghur political concerns during and since that time. Ablet Kamalov finds that the collapse of the Soviet Union opened a window for the emergence of memoirs by figures involved in the ETR; while no more “objective” than any autobiography, and liable to the same inaccuracies as any recollection, these printed and oral memoirs present unique perspectives relatively untrammelled by Soviet and PRC agendas. Like any source, they must be treated critically, but Kamalov shows that they comprise a valuable and essential addition to the historical record on the ETR.

And finally, Millward assesses the possibilities for writing environmental history of Xinjiang, namely, history focusing on interactions of man and nature, human attitudes and policies towards the environment, and changes in landscape and resources over time. Such a project would entail, he suggests, on the one hand reading existing published and archival sources in new ways and for different sorts of information, and on the other integrating data from archaeology and the physical

sciences with traditional historical sources. As an example, he examines what the evidence from glacial, lakebed and sand dune cores tells us about the climatic history of the Tarim Basin and, in particular, temperature and availability of water at various periods.