

Discussion on the Course of Cultural Education in Xinjiang During the Qing Dynasty (1759-1912)

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ABSTRACT

The cultural education undertakings in Xinjiang during the Qing Dynasty went through three stages. During the Qianlong and Jiaqing periods, Xinjiang re-examined its territory and its cultural education undertakings were re-established. During the Tongzhi and Guangxu periods, due to the invasion of Yaqub Beg, Xinjiang's cultural education undertakings suffered a heavy blow. After the defeat of Yaqub Beg, Zuo Zongtang and Liu Jintang vigorously developed educational undertakings and Xinjiang's educational undertakings were gradually restored. During the late Qing Dynasty's New Reforms stage, the Qing government implemented new-style education, which directly promoted the modernization of education in Xinjiang.

Keywords: Qing Dynasty, Xinjiang, Education.

1. INTRODUCTION

Before the unification of Xinjiang by the Qing Dynasty, "The people of Xinjiang were doughty and willing to fight, but their education was backward." [1] Due to the fact that Xinjiang is located in the western border and far from the Central Plains, there was no known education on poetry and literature. After the 24th year of the Qianlong reign, Xinjiang re-examined its territory in the Qing Dynasty, and thus "established prefectures and counties, established schools, and implemented the same administrative system as the Central Plains region" [2]. Local officials in Xinjiang focused on implementing the cultural and educational policies of the Qing Dynasty. After careful handling and management with great concentration, by the middle and later stages of Qianlong's rule, Xinjiang had already "prospered in education, which had no differences from the mainland" [3]. During the Tongzhi and Guangxu periods, Yaqub Beg invaded Xinjiang, causing untold damage to Xinjiang's cultural education. With the efforts of Zuo Zongtang, Liu Jintang and other local officials in Xinjiang, Xinjiang's cultural education was restored. During the late Qing Dynasty's New Reforms stage, Xinjiang actively promoted the New Reforms along with the

mainland of the Central Plains, initiating the modernization process of education in Xinjiang.

2. REESTABLISHMENT AND COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT: EDUCATION IN XINJIANG DURING THE QIANJIA PERIOD

In the 24th year of the Qianlong reign, the Qing government unified the entire territory of Xinjiang. Later, Emperor Qianlong implemented the policy of "vigorously developing education and promoting the Confucian and Mencius doctrine" [4] in Xinjiang in an all-round way, hoping to improve the centripetal force of culture through the power of enlightenment, to narrow the emotional distance between various ethnic groups in Xinjiang and the central government, so as to achieve border stability and high governance of Xinjiang society. In this process, Xinjiang began with the establishment of various schools and used their effectiveness as an important basis for assessing officials in various regions. As a result, various schools in various regions of Xinjiang were successively established, and cultural education was comprehensively developed.

During the Qianlong period, in order to develop Xinjiang's cultural and educational undertakings,

local officials in Xinjiang actively took measures and formulated measures to promote education. For example, in order to solve the education problem of the children of the Eight Banners, the officials of Xinjiang in the Qing Dynasty set up the "Eight Banners' Official School" to recruit the children of Manchu, Xibe and Mongols. In places such as Turpan, Hami, Qitai, and Barkol, where Han people lived more, two types of schools were established: "free private schools" and "rural schools", with the former's enrollment targeting the children of Han green camp soldiers stationed in Xinjiang, while the latter's enrollment targeting the children of Han farmers. In order to motivate students to immerse themselves in hard study, Xinjiang officials regularly conduct tests on students from "rural schools" and "free private schools". Those with excellent results were recommended by officials and could go to Lanzhou to participate in the imperial competitive examination.

In the 24th year of the Qianlong reign, Ürümqi and Nyongbyon established offices. Due to the fact that most of the people in these areas moved in from areas within the Great Wall, they had long been influenced by Confucian culture. "Cultivation and reading to bequeath to the family" is an important value identification of the small peasant ideology during the feudal period of China. In order to ensure that the ethnic groups rooted in Urumqi could engage in agricultural production with peace of mind, "Local officials transplanted the mainland education model to the Urumqi region, changing social atmosphere through education and strengthening control and governance of society"[5].

In the 31st year of Qianlong's reign, General Mingrui of Yili believed that "The children of the Eight Banners don't have the conditions for homeschooling. Each Banner should have one school and each school should have two teachers to teach students book knowledge and archery on horseback"[6]. In the 32nd year of the Qianlong reign, the Amban of Urumqi, Wen Fu, believed that ordinary people's children should also have a rough understanding of literature and science. Therefore, he requested the court to establish education in Urumqi. After Wen Fu's request was approved by the court, there was a wave of official schools and private schools in various military garrisons and battalions. Number of enrollees, textbooks, academies, and educational officers at all levels were established one after another, such as Hufeng Academy, Hutubi Academy, Qitai Academy, Bifeng Academy, and Yongbyon Academy.

In the 34th year of Qianlong's reign, General Yonggui of Yili set up one Manchu, one Han and one Mongolian official school respectively. Yiletu, the new General of Yili, specially set up a place for free private schools. The Xibe Camp commanders stationed in Yili, Xinjiang also set up official schools to allow local people's sons and nephews to attend. In the same year, "Wen Fu, the Amban, reported to the court to build schools in places such as Urumqi and appointed teachers. For all exams, students from Urumqi and Yongbyon shall take the same day as candidates from Shaanxi and Gansu"[7]. To ensure the fairness and confidentiality of the imperial examination and the timely delivery of the examination questions to Xinjiang, the Provincial Education Commissioner of Gansu sealed the examination questions and handed them over to the Amban through military posts. After the exam was completed, the test paper would be sealed and delivered to the Provincial Education Commissioner of Gansu for review through military posts. At the same time, the corresponding examination system was also revised, with number of enrollees being established in some prefectures and counties. The responsibility for the examination and admission of candidates was handled by Urumqi Military-Governor and the Provincial Education Commissioner of Shaanxi and Gansu.

Barkol is an important town on Mount Tianshan North Road. Due to "its prosperous population and increasing numbers of people learning Confucianism"[8], the government established educational institutions here. In the 38th year of the Qianlong reign, it "established schools based on the experience of Urumqi and Yongbyon"[8], and stipulated that the number of enrollees would be determined after the prosperity of the Barkol humanities in the future.

From the 34th year of the Qianlong reign to the 44th year of the Qianlong reign, prefectural schools, departmental schools, and county schools occupied important positions during the 10 years. In addition, academies were successively established in Ürümqi, Changji, Fukang, Qitai, and other places. At that time, the situation of establishing schools in Xinjiang was recorded in literature: "Setting up schools in Ürümqi and Nyongbyon was exciting. Schools were set up and talents were educated to demonstrate national peace... Xinjiang was unified, and among the children of businessmen and other people, for those talented and intelligent ones, they were educated with heart and influenced in an immersing and subtle manner. Over time, the

results were good"[8]. In the 42nd year of the Qianlong reign, due to the establishment of Qitai and Fukang counties, Suonuomu Celing, the Urumqi Military-Governor, reported to Emperor Qianlong to "establish schools in accordance with the practice of Yihe and Changji counties, with the aim of admitting four literary students and four martial students each year"[9]. In addition, all exam questions in the government's schools must be sealed and sent to Barkol, and after the exam was completed, the test papers should be sent to the Provincial Education Commissioner. Due to the fact that China and Russia are adjacent, the two had many exchanges at that time. In the 57th year of Qianlong's reign, General Baoning of Yili "asked to send a person to Yili from the Russian Embassy in the capital to educate the children of officers and soldiers"[10]. This was the precedent for local officials in Xinjiang to develop foreign language education since Qianlong.

In addition to Manchu and Han officials' dedication of developing education in Xinjiang, local ethnic officials in Xinjiang also focused on promoting education in the region. In the 56th year of the Qianlong reign, Maimote Abdullah petitioned the Qing government to establish a Qing language school in Xinjiang and appoint teachers. The students mainly came from Uyghur Burke families and the teaching content mainly focused on etiquette and Qing language.

After the unification of Xinjiang, Emperor Qianlong adopted the policy of "governing according to customs". In terms of education, on the one hand, whether it was official Confucian education, banner education, or camp education, they were consistent with mainland education. According to Ge Beng'e, the General Manager of Yili official schools, "The books that students read for enlightenment are 'Twelve Characters and Forty Articles of Mandarin Chinese', 'Ten Articles of Lianzhu Collection', 'Seven Instructions', and 'Extensive Admonishment of Imperial Edict'"[11]. At the same time, due to factors such as Xinjiang's border location and complex ethnic composition, education in Xinjiang had its unique characteristics, which also brought many difficulties to local officials in promoting cultural education in Xinjiang.

In the 7th year of the Jiaqing reign, General Songyun of Yili recorded that, "Among the Eight Banners' children, there are many people who can read. The children of the Eight Banners who are studying in official schools should be aware of

Confucian loyalty and filial piety, as well as sense of propriety, justice, honesty and honour"[12]. At Dingsi in February of the 8th year of Jiaqing's reign, he again reported to Emperor Jiaqing to develop education in Yili, but his request was reprimanded by the Emperor. Emperor Jiaqing believed that: "Yili is located in the border, bordering on foreign countries, and military border defense should be the center of work. If cultural education is specifically promoted, it will inevitably result in soldiers neglecting their martial arts skills"^[13]. Songyun's memorial was not approved by Emperor Jiaqing.

3. HEAVY TRAUMA AND RECOVERY: EDUCATION IN XINJIANG DURING THE TONGGUANG PERIOD

During the Daoguang and Xianfeng periods, despite the awaiting of foreign powers and domestic turmoil, education in Xinjiang advanced in an orderly manner and didn't stagnate.

During the Tongzhi and Guangxu periods, Yaqub Beg invaded Xinjiang, and the 14-year turmoil caused great damage to Xinjiang's education undertakings. At this time, the towns were in ruins, the countryside was in flames of war, the land was barren, and "The school was completely destroyed. Only one school in the west of the town was relatively complete, so the academic level there ranked first in Xinjiang"[14]. In particular, the extreme educational measures Yaqub Beg imposed in the north and south of Xinjiang led to the collapse of the diversified educational system in Xinjiang. Not much of the educational foundation that had been built up in Xinjiang for more than a hundred years since the Qianlong period survived. In the 12th year of Tongzhi's reign, during the period when Jing Lian supervised the military affairs in Xinjiang, he presided over the renovation of the academies in Qitai County, but this played little role in recovering the post-war educational trauma in Xinjiang.

In the 2nd year of Guangxu's reign, Zuo Zongtang defeated Yaqub Beg. After recovering the lost land in Xinjiang, Zuo Zongtang found that there was a language barrier between the officials and the people at that time, and words were not known to each other. Many times, there was even a need for someone to translate, which largely resulted in isolation between the officials and the people and made it difficult to implement government orders. Therefore, he advocated that

Xinjiang must "widely establish schools and first teach Chinese"[15]. Only by setting up a wide range of schools could it be possible to solve the language communication barrier and enhance the feelings among people of all ethnic groups. Therefore, he asked all the prefectures, departments, states and counties in Xinjiang to set up free private schools extensively, and "private schools of Uyghur language" should also be set up in areas where ethnic minorities live intensively. However, at the beginning of "setting up schools in various cities and selecting Uyghur children to attend schools", due to "the public's skeptical attitude towards setting up schools and promoting education, and the task of studying for the sake of studying"[16], it was relatively difficult to implement it.

Zuo Zongtang's educational proposition changed the previous situation of only focusing on the eastern Mount Tianshan region and neglecting education in southern Xinjiang. Especially under the suggestion of Zuo Zongtang, both official schools and private schools received strong support from local officials in Xinjiang, which also attracted high attention from the Qing government. As a result, "clarifying taxes, setting up schools, determining currency" and other major issues were regarded as the "most important things" in the "aftermath of Xinjiang"[17].

In the 6th year of the Guangxu reign, Zuo Zongtang pointed out in his "Commentary on the Aftermath Matters of Xinjiang": "Xinjiang has been stable for a long time, but there are language barriers between Han and Uyghur languages. There is also a gap between officials and the people due to language barriers, making it difficult to implement government orders. It is necessary to establish schools to enable Uyghur children to read and study and understand the language"[18]. As a result of Yaqub Beg's 10-year invasion, Xinjiang's education seriously deteriorated, so that after the Qing army regained Xinjiang, officials and civilians were estranged, government decrees could not be implemented, and advanced technologies could not be popularized. Therefore, cultural barriers to some extent hindered the economic development of Xinjiang region. In order to enable the ethnic minorities in Xinjiang to receive cultural education, Zuo Zongtang and Liu Jintang successively established 37 free private schools in their aftermath work in Xinjiang. Among the Uyghur people in southern Xinjiang, "Fathers, sons and brothers compete to read as a glorious thing"[18]. At the same time, Liu Jintang was well aware that the backwardness of education in Xinjiang was

closely related to the unhealthy tendencies in society. For example, there were many people in various parts of Xinjiang who were "addicted to drinking alcohol all night long, viewing it as the happiest thing"[19]. In order to transform social traditions and educate people, vigorously developing education undertakings was imperative.

In Liu Jintang's view, solving the problem of language barriers must start with Uyghur children, requiring more "free private schools" to be established in various regions, and hiring teachers to teach Confucian classics such as "Great Learning", "Analects of Confucius", "Doctrine of the Mean", and "Mencius" to Uyghur children. For example, during the tenure of Chen Jinfan in Zhenxi Department in the 7th year of the Guangxu's reign, he not only widely established "free private schools", but also "personally educated students to read". Therefore, "Since the recovery of Xinjiang, many cities have set up schools to allow Uyghur children to read and study and learn Chinese. There are many intelligent students among Uyghur children. After teaching them Confucian classics, they can quickly memorize them, and their regular script is very beautiful"[20].

Liu Jintang, in order to change the misconception among the people of Xinjiang that "reading and studying are tasks", stimulate the enthusiasm of Uyghur children to study, and ensure their school enrollment rate, he specially submitted to the court for approving the "selection of students who roughly understand Confucian classics according to the rules and regulations of mainland schools, with monthly living expenses as a reward"[21]. After the implementation of his scholarship policy, the enthusiasm of Uyghur children to "study in private schools" greatly increased. Over the years, the wisdom of the people was gradually enlightened, and even later, "The people took the initiative to bring their children and begged to enter schools for education"[22]. According to Xiao Xiong, "Recently, because of the establishment of schools, ethnic minority students were enrolled to study Confucian classics. In schools such as Awati and Aksu, some minority children who studied Chinese could recite hundreds of ancient poems every day"[23]. As a result, Uyghur children in southern Xinjiang rapidly improved their skills in Chinese listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

After Zuo Zongtang recovered Xinjiang, the government opened private schools to popularize culture and education. Children of all ethnic groups

could enter schools on a grand scale, surpassing the previous generations. Zuo Zongtang and Liu Jintang made great contributions to the modernization of education in Xinjiang. When later generations commented on the cultural contributions of the two, it was pointed out that, "In the past, Zuo Zongtang and Liu Jintang spent a lot of money and effort to inspire the people's wisdom through education"[24]. This comment is objective and fair, reflecting the great contributions of Zuo Zongtang and Liu Jintang in the development of education in Xinjiang.

In the 8th year of the Guangxu reign, Liu Jintang pointed out in his memorial to the Qing court that "The language and script of the Uyghur people are different from Manchu and Chinese. When faced with a lawsuit, officials and the people have language barriers. Uyghur grassroots officials engage in fraud"[25]. In order to reverse these drawbacks, Liu Jintang carried out extensive school construction throughout Xinjiang and made Han culture and education an important part of administration in Xinjiang. Under the strong promotion of Liu Jintang, as many as 77 private schools were established in Hami, Yanqi, Turpan, Aksu, Wushi, Yingjishaer, Kuche, and other places. After Xinjiang became a province in 1884, there were many schools in the north of Mount Tianshan, such as 5 schools in Hami, 4 in Qitai County, 3 in Jimsar, 2 in Fukang County, 6 in Ürümqi County, 2 in Changji County, 4 in Suilai County, and 2 in Hutubi, a total of 77 schools.

Before and after the establishment of Xinjiang Province in 1884, the Qing government even rewarded local officials in Xinjiang who valued education. For example, Peng Shizhan, the Prefect of Wensu, Zhang Xian, the Prefect of Yanqi, Zhao Mengpan, the Magistrate of Ningyuan County, and others were rewarded by the imperial court for their meritorious efforts in starting schools. However, the court punished those who abolished and neglected academic affairs. For example, for Zhou Yuan, the Assistant of Magistrate of Hutubi County, "Because he neglected academic affairs and ignored education during his tenure, he was recorded with demerits three times by the government as a punishment"[26]. Li Bingyuan, the Tongzhi (同知, the deputy position of the Prefect) of Yingjishaer, Hu Cifu, the Tongzhi of Wushi, and Li Weigao, the Magistrate of Xayar, and others were dismissed by the Qing government because of their poor education running.

In the 12th year of the Guangxu's reign, Liu Jintang reported to Emperor Guangxu Emperor to upgrade Ürümqi prefecture schools to government schools and set up a professor to manage the school affairs of Ürümqi counties. At the same time, 8 private schools were established in Turpan, 2 were established in Wusu, and 2 were established in Jinghe. In order to restore education in southern Xinjiang, Liu Jintang established schools in cities such as Baicheng, Shaya, and Yanqi, and spent heavily on hiring teachers.

Due to the border between Xinjiang and Tsarist Russia, there were frequent commercial exchanges, and there were very few people who were proficient in Russian throughout Xinjiang. For a long time, when local governments in Xinjiang negotiated affairs with Tsarist Russia, especially economic and trade exchanges, they also relied on third-party translators, making them often at a disadvantage. For this reason, in the 13th year of the Guangxu reign, Liu Jintang founded the "Russian Language School" in Urumqi, in order to cultivate students who are familiar with Russian language and to avoid being disadvantaged due to language barriers when conducting commercial trade and political negotiations with Tsarist Russia in the future.

In June of the 17th year of the reign of Guangxu, Wei Guangtao, the Governor of Xinjiang, made a request to Emperor Guangxu to establish "Boda Academy" in Urumqi. After being approved by the imperial court, Wei Guangtao organized the fundraising in person and served as the first president of Boda Academy. In the 24th year of Guangxu period, Huang Tingzhen, the Magistrate of Suilai County (now Manas), "donated his salary to establish schools"[27], Kui Qing, the Manchu Regiment Colonel in the ancient city, donated money to establish the "Six Banners' Private School", and Zhu Huangxiang advocated the construction of the "Pingshan Academy" while serving as the Magistrate of Qitai County. Besides, in order to start schools and promote culture and education, some local officials were willing to sell off their official property to establish free private schools. For example, Ren Guanzhao, the Magistrate of Fukang County, sold off the old office and created two private schools on the basis of the original Confucian temple. Afterwards, even education in remote ethnic areas received attention from local officials, and education in Xinjiang as a whole, in terms of depth and breadth, made significant progress compared to before.

With the continuous efforts of officials stationed in Xinjiang such as Zuo Zongtang and Liu Jintang, the educational facilities in Xinjiang were gradually restored and rebuilt, and Xinjiang also achieved significant results in the establishment of schools and the popularization of "the Chinese language". Zuo Zongtang and Liu Jintang established private schools throughout Xinjiang, which increased the enthusiasm of people from all ethnic groups in the north and south of Mount Tianshan to learn Chinese culture. In addition, the minority talents trained by Zuo and Liu, who were familiar with Chinese language and writing, were to some extent conducive to communication, interaction, and integration among various ethnic groups in Xinjiang. When Xinjiang was established as a province, Shi Buhua, a poet, passed through Luntai County and witnessed the grand scene of the local schools, thus writing the sentence "Uighur children read Confucian classics such as 'Analects of Confucius' and 'Doctrine of the Mean' aloud"[28].

4. THE BEGINNING OF EDUCATION MODERNIZATION: EDUCATION IN XINJIANG DURING THE LATE QING DYNASTY'S NEW REFORMS STAGE

In 1895, after the signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki between China and Japan, especially after the "1901 national disaster", under the promotion of the domestic patriotic movement, the officials of the court and frontiers successively requested political reforms, and "attaching importance to practical learning" was one of them. Subsequently, the Qing government began to implement the New Reforms, and "Officials from various regions responded to the Qing government's order to establish schools and established many new-style schools"[29]. With the active advocacy of Xinjiang officials, Xinjiang education began to fully modernize.

In order to cultivate military talents, in the 28th year of the Guangxu reign, Xinjiang Governor Rao Yingqi opened a military-readiness school in the provincial capital to cultivate modern military talents for Xinjiang. In the 29th year of the Guangxu reign, General Ma Liang of Yili, in order to train local Russian translation talents in Xinjiang, requested to open a "Yangzheng School" in Yili. In his memorial to the Qing government, he pointed out that "Yili society has been stable for a long time, and many government officials are proficient in Manchu, Chinese, Mongolian, and Uyghur, but

very few are familiar with Russian and know foreign affairs. The schools currently established only educate students to have a general understanding of Manchu and Chinese, and they have no knowledge of foreign languages. If this situation is not changed, there may be no successor. Moreover, Yili is relatively close to Russia and if it doesn't reserve Russian language talents, when there are unexpected situations, it is difficult to handle them calmly"[30]. "Yili is located in the northwest, with a lack of prosperity in culture and education. It also borders Russia, and there are relatively many exchanges between China and Russia. Since the 8th year of the Guangxu reign, there have been very few people who can proficiently master multiple languages and scripts"[31]. After the establishment of the Yili Yangzheng School, special attention was paid to the study of Russian script, foreign politics, economy, and culture. In the same year, Zhirui, the leader of the Soren Camp, selected 10 intelligent young children from Manchu and Mongols to the "Seven-river Province School in Russia" to achieve mastery through a comprehensive study of "Chinese and Russian"[32]. "Since 1903, Yili has sent 10 students annually to study in Almaty, Russia"[33].

In 1905, the imperial examination system was abolished, and the old academies in Xinjiang were converted into schools. The curriculum included foreign languages such as Russian, German, French, and English, and Russian became a compulsory course for elementary schools. This to some extent cultivated translation talents proficient in multiple languages and scripts in Xinjiang. In the same year, Xinjiang Governor Wu Yinsun rebuilt a higher education institution on the basis of the "Boda Academy" and formulated the "Xinjiang Higher Education Institution Constitution" following the Shandong educational regulations, with the aim of innovating education in Xinjiang. The specific measures were to establish a general office in the school to manage the affairs of the entire school, while also setting up ethical education and teaching the Four Books and Five Classics. In addition to traditional Confucian education, Wu Yinsun "planned to use Russian as the teaching content, and then hire teachers proficient in English, German, and French. Schools throughout Xinjiang all imitate"[34]. Wu Yinsun's action fused Chinese traditional culture with Western modern scientific knowledge, greatly broadened the vision of schoolchildren, and played an important role in the modern history of education in Xinjiang.

In the 32nd year of the Guangxu reign, Xinjiang established the position of Admission Officer, with Du Tong serving as the first Admission Officer. Du Tong had experience of conducting research in Japan in his early years, and his educational ideas were relatively advanced. After serving as the Admission Officer in Xinjiang, he reflected on the current situation and shortcomings of education in Xinjiang, believing that "The future of the country lies in primary education", and deeply felt that "Establishing school education in Xinjiang is several times more difficult than in the mainland". However, he lived up to his mission and immediately "set up a higher school in Urumqi and later turned it into a middle school. He set up elementary schools in prefectures, departments, states and counties. In order to solve the problem of teachers, a simple normal class was attached to the middle school for a year of short-term training. After graduation, students were assigned to primary schools in various counties as principals and teachers, marking the beginning of modern primary education in Xinjiang". At the same time, he also included the achievements of prefectures, departments, states and counties' education in the assessment of officials. During his tenure, he reformed educational institutions, improved the educational inspector system, clarified the educational objectives as follows: "First, it is to strive for widespread education for the public; second, teachers should be professional and cannot hold other positions; third, education should be carried out in a gradual way"[35], and gradually implemented his educational philosophy in practical operations.

In 1907, Chang Geng, then General of Yili, requested to set up the "Yili Military-readiness Accelerated School", which selected 100 students and 300 soldiers from the children of Manchu Camp, Xibe Camp and Soren Camp to teach military science.

At that time, in order to alleviate the shortage of teachers, especially to eradicate the barriers of communication between ethnic languages in the south of Mount Tianshan, Urumqi officials set up a Uighur Normal School nearby, which specially recruited Uighur students with certain cultural background in southern Xinjiang. After they completed their studies, students "would be awarded official positions, or serve as rural grassroots officials"[36], or become teachers or township officials. In addition, other local officials in Xinjiang also established "simple normal classes" to train teachers. When Mannerheim, a

foreign explorer, visited Xinjiang at the end of the Qing Dynasty, he passed through Yarkant County. According to his records, "a Uighur children's school was opened in the head office of Yeerqiang military district, and the children were lively, happy and clean dressed". They recited Chinese characters aloud. "The only course was reading and writing Chinese (Han language), and it was said that they also studied Uygur"[37].

At the beginning of Xuantong's accession to the throne, the Qing government's Ministry of Education began to compile the "Simplified Literacy Textbook". However, Xinjiang is located in the western border, and it would take some time for the "Simplified Literacy Textbook" to be transported to Xinjiang. Local officials in Xinjiang actively sought ways to "purchase thousands of drawing books and distribute them, so that children could happily read them". In order to meet the needs of the "New Reforms", disciplines such as science, chemistry, and mathematics were also established in secondary education. In higher education, the curriculum mainly included ethics, Confucianism, Chinese, mathematical surveying and mapping, Chinese and foreign history, military affairs, Chinese and foreign geography, English, Russian, and physical exercises, with either English or Russian being chosen freely"[38].

During the late Qing Dynasty's New Reforms stage, with the efforts of officials at all levels in Xinjiang, modern style schools in Xinjiang emerged from scratch, like bamboo shoots springing up after rain. For example, "In Urumqi, there are also provincial political and legal schools, provincial experimental education workshops, provincial patrol police schools, provincial Sino-Russian schools, provincial general schools, and provincial army primary schools, with a total enrollment of 673 students"[39]. And other Dao, prefectures, departments, states and counties "established a total of 606 new-style schools, with 764 teachers and 16,063 students. Among them, Shache Prefecture had 49 schools with 1,878 students"[40]. According to incomplete statistics, "From 1908 (the 34th year of the Guangxu reign) to 1910 (the 2nd year of the Xuantong reign), there were over 80 new-style schools established in Xinjiang, with over 4,000 students enrolled"[41]. The late Qing Dynasty's New Reforms stage was a crucial period for the modernization of education in Xinjiang. The rapid progress of education in Xinjiang was closely related to the local officials, especially the Admission Officer Du Tong, who had the experience of studying abroad. It was

precisely under the promotion of education by this group of local officials in Xinjiang that education in Xinjiang gradually broke free from the quagmire of feudal education and began to stride forward towards modernization of education.

5. CONCLUSION

In the Qing Dynasty, officials at all levels in Xinjiang implemented reform measures in cultural education, which led to "the establishment of schools and counties together, with a large number of students and the same learning content as in the mainland"[42]. The traditional Confucian education implemented also led to a high degree of consistency in the "Great Unity" ideology, which not only greatly changed the backward situation of education and culture in Xinjiang, but also further strengthened the relationship between Xinjiang and the mainland, playing a positive role in the social development of modern Xinjiang.

As for cultural education aspects, during the Qianlong period, officials of all levels in Xinjiang began to establish prefectures and counties on one hand, and on the other hand, they began to build schools. Not only had there been established free private schools, but also rural schools and Eight Banners' Official School were started. Each prefecture, department and county also had official schools, and students could study Confucian classics and participate in the Qing court's imperial examination to become officials. The Qing government attached great importance to cultural education, so the ability to establish schools was regarded as an important criterion for evaluating officials. Some officials received commendations for their excellent academic achievements, while a few officials abandoned and neglected their academic affairs, resulting in their removal from office and nobility by the Qing government.

Yaqub Beg's invasion was a disaster to Xinjiang's cultural education. In order to break the language barriers and restore the prosperity of Confucian culture since the Han and Tang Dynasties, Zuo Zongtang, Liu Jintang, Rao Yingqi, Wei Guangtao and others set up schools extensively to actively attract minority students. They spared no effort to promote cultural education and achieved fruitful results. A year later, from the north to the south of Mount Tianshan, the sound of reading was resounding and endless.

During the late Qing Dynasty's New Reforms stage, local officials in Xinjiang didn't follow the

beaten track and become complacent. On the contrary, under the promotion of local officials in Xinjiang, Xinjiang initiated the modernization of education, cultivating numerous modern scientific and technological, educational, legal, and military talents. General Ma Liang of Yili founded the Yangzheng School, and Zhirui sent dozens of children to study in Russia. Especially with the arrival of Du Tong, the Admission Officer in Xinjiang who had the experience of studying in Japan, the education in Xinjiang took on a new look. During Du Tong's tenure, he established elementary and higher schools, established simple normal classes, and trained a teaching staff for the northern and southern regions of Xinjiang. Although the late Qing Dynasty's New Reforms were only implemented for 10 years, their historical achievements couldn't be underestimated. For education, during the late Qing Dynasty's New Reforms stage, local officials in Xinjiang set a model for the development of education in later Xinjiang.

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