

XINJIANG

Uyghur culture's last stand.

Eric Lafforgue



Destruction of ancient Uyghur houses in Kashgar. The government claims it's demolishing the houses due to seismic and insalubrity issues. "It's not just our houses that are being demolished, the Hans are destroying our souls" says an inhabitant forced to flee the old city.



Kashgar, a poster of Mecca in an Uyghur house.

65000 Uyghur families must be moved into rent-controlled apartments in the suburbs. They have no choice. The Uyghurs represent only 46% of the population of Kashgar. A real colonization from the inside.

ئۆي ئالماشتۇرغان ئائىلە

بۇ ھۆججەت ئالماشتۇرغان ئائىلە

ئۆي ئالماشتۇرغان ئائىلە

A tag indicating that the (Uyghur) family that used to live in this old house has left (for a better place to live), Kashgar.

كۈرۈچى يارىشى كوچىسى
399
ئىككىنچى بېغىزى

مەدەنىيەتلىك ئائىلە
文明家庭
چاسا كوچا باشقارما مەنئى مەدەنىيەت قۇرۇلۇشى كومىتېتى
恰萨街办精神文明建设委员会

Signpost on a “Civilized Family” Uyghar house in Kashgar. The local association gives prize money to the families who adhere to social conventions.



Minfeng. The Uyghur man is a carpenter, and he has built a 4-roomed house for his large family, which is a luxury in the area. The government wants him to move, but he refuses to do so, as most of the inhabitants of his old neighborhood.



A Uyghur man passing by a billboard advertising a property construction plan which “shows you the way to go home” in Kashgar.

مۇقىملىق بەخت، مۇقىمسىزلىق ئاپەت

稳定是福、动乱是祸



A fresco at the entrance of a rent controlled building representing a policeman: "Stability is happiness, revolution is a catastrophe!"



A Uyghur man in Yarkand. The pressure that the Hans put on Uyghur men to shave their beards is apparently what initiated the clashes of June 2013. This measure was introduced during the 2008 Ramadan, but wasn't respected. Government workers cannot have beards or mustaches.



A veiled woman in Yecheng. In gas stations, women must remove their veils if they want to be served. The same applies in hospitals, administrations, banks, etc. The Hans see veils as linked with terrorism. In reality, the majority of Uyghur women still wear veils.



Kyria: a woman with a Talpak hat, sign of the region's married Uyghur women, and also the world's smallest hat. The anti-terrorism law forbids them from wearing it, except for funerals. Wearing it is a sign of defiance.



In Kashgar, it is forbidden to call to prayer using a PA system. This mosque's Imam has to make do with climbing onto to roof and bellowing to call the faithful. Madrasas are also prohibited, but many still exist. Finally, during Ramadan, it is illegal for government workers as well as student to fast.



A signpost that forbids tourists from certain Uyghur streets in Kashgar. Foreign visitors must follow a well marked-out path that leads to a real-life museum, which is controlled by the Hans and which presents the Uyghur life like a human zoo: the cook, the potter, the seamstress...



The Chinese government doesn't want the tourists to see the real Uyghur way of life. Here, a wedding in the streets of the old part of Kashgar, which was closed off and under police watch. These bans are no match for the legendary Uyghur hospitality.



Advertisement cards displaying sexy girls given out by the Chinese on Kashgar market: they offer the Uyghurs the chance to sell to the Hans the bodies of the animals that they can't eat, due to being Muslims. The whole process shocks everyone. Teenagers take pleasure in collecting the cards.



Ostangboyi Tea House, Kashgar. It's impossible to get my Uyghur guide to eat in a restaurant if he doesn't know the owner: "The Hans feed the lambs sow's milk, I have to be careful". The recent health scandals could probably prove him right...



Kashgar city center, run by the Hans. To access the outdoor commercial zone, you must pass through security stiles. The arrival of the Hans has also boosted the local economy by bringing new high-tension lines, motorways, airports and sanitary infrastructures that were nonexistent up until then.



Many jobs are de facto reserved for the Hans. Access to them is forbidden to the Uyghur, who stay stuck in farming jobs. More than a million potential Uyghur workers are unemployed. At the same time, the Chinese government is trying to encourage Hans to move to the area by giving them free public transportation and free housing.



The Uyghur don't have to stick to the one child policy that China has established, unlike the Hans, who see this as a huge privilege. They can have two children, sometime three or four in the countryside.



Shields and clubs at the entrance of a children's park in the Uyghur area of Keriya. In July 2009, riots killed 200 people, mostly Hans. The government repression was fierce, and resulted in waves of death penalties amongst the Uyghurs.



A school in Kashgar. The government has established a dual-language school to counter the development of the Uyghur language. But in reality, it's the Chinese language that's taken the upper hand. Hans have replaced many Uyghur teachers. Many fear that this occurrence is a replica of the policy instituted in Tibet.

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