

Zunun Kadir's Ambiguity
The dilemma of a Uyghur writer under Chinese rule

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my own original work under the supervision of Prof. W.J.F. Jenner and Prof. Geremie Barmé. No part of this dissertation has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or equivalent institution and to the best of my knowledge and belief contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Dilber Thwaites
Canberra
April 2001

*I dedicate this work to my husband Richard,
my son Adam and my daughter Denise.*

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Abstract

This thesis considers the work of the influential Uyghur writer Zunun Kadir (1912-1989), and through it charts some aspects of Uyghur identity and aspiration, while explaining the background of his work in relation to the culture and history of the Uyghur people of East Turkistan (Xinjiang).

Growing up in a poor and conservative family under Chinese rule, Zunun developed a commitment to nationalism and socialism in the belief that these would serve as the best basis for the advancement of the Uyghur people. In middle age he witnessed the absorption of the East Turkistan Republic into the People's Republic of China (PRC) established by the Chinese Communist Party, and he adapted himself to work under that government. This involved accepting a political agenda that called upon him to support a unified greater China to the detriment of Uyghur national interests. This situation presented Zunun Kadir with an enduring dilemma: how to resist the cultural domination of the Han Chinese and maintain the distinct cultural identity of the Uyghur people, while ensuring his freedom to write and publish in an environment controlled by the CCP.

In the volatile political environment of the PRC, this balance could not be maintained indefinitely and Zunun was eventually subjected to official criticism and sent to the Tarim desert to undergo labour reform. After 17 years of exile he was rehabilitated in the Deng Xiaoping era, and he returned to Urumqi to resume his career as a Uyghur writer. His later work indicates a degree of disillusionment and caution, but also shows how he reconciled his choices by balancing his idealism with the reality of his environment. The use of ambiguous language and imagery allowed Zunun Kadir to pass the political scrutiny required of a publishing author in the PRC, and at the same time to offer different layers of meaning to his Uyghur-reading audience through cultural and historical references to Uyghur life.

Illustration a)

East Turkistan (Xinjiang)



Illustrations b)



Zunun Kadir as a young writer



The bust on Zunun Kadir's grave.



Zunun Kadir with young Uyghur writers in Gulja (Ili), August 1986.
(Photographs by courtesy of Zunun Kadir's family members)

Note on translation and transliteration of Uyghur language.

The process of translation can never be perfect, and in cases where the Uyghur idiom does not translate exactly, I have employed the closest English equivalent. In such cases, the Uyghur term is usually included in the text for reference. In certain instances where the same word has been written differently in the Uyghur original (to reflect dialect pronunciations - eg. *Kashkhar*, *Kheshkher*) I have followed the original in my transliteration, rather than imposing a standard usage. I have abridged translations for the sake of clarity in English, and have also left out some repetitions that in my view did not add to the meaning, and also leaving out some passages of extended description not relevant to the discussion in the text. For any deficiencies in translation and analysis, I will willingly accept criticism and alternative interpretations.

There is currently no universally accepted standard for the expression of Uyghur sounds using Roman characters. The English keyboard set presents some difficulties, and many Uyghurs are unsatisfied with systems derived from the Chinese “*Hanyu pinyin*” romanisation.¹ The Pinyin based system uses a number of characters not available in general international usage, and adds some unique characters for particular Uyghur sounds. The Turkish Roman alphabet also contains an insufficient range of characters for all the sounds in Uyghur, and some characters are unfamiliar to most English-language readers. In considering what system to adopt, I have referred to elementary teaching materials used in Xinjiang (East Turkistan), and have followed with interest an ongoing debate on some Internet discussion forums concerning the transliteration of Uyghur for English keyboards. I referred to Reinhard F. Hahn’s work *Spoken Uyghur* (written in collaboration with Ablahat Ibrahim).² Finally, I have drawn on my own experience as a native speaker of Uyghur with experience of the Turkish, Hanyu Pinyin and English writing systems.

The romanisation adopted in this thesis is as close as possible to standard English characters or combinations of the characters for the expression of Uyghur sounds.

¹ Bilal Shimshir, *Türk Yazı Devrimi* [The Turkish Orthographical Reform], Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, Ankara, 1992, p.339.

² Reinhard. F. Hahn *Spoken Uyghur*, University of Washington Press, 1991

Where there are no appropriate direct correspondences for consonants, I have used two-letter combinations (ch, sh, gh, kh, ng, jh, hk) that are widely used by Uyghurs in international correspondence. For vowels that are not represented in the English alphabet, I have used Roman characters as applied in modern Turkish and some European languages, which are included in standard character sets available for word-processing and Internet use.

Table: Transliteration from Uyghur to Standard Alphabet

Standard Alphabet	Uyghur Alphabet	European approximation
a	ا	<i>ah</i>
b	ب	<i>boat</i>
ch	چ	<i>china</i>
d	د	<i>dog</i>
e	ە	<i>apple</i>
f	ف	<i>fire</i>
g	غ	<i>good</i>
gh	گ	<i>Rohre (German)*</i>
ng	ن	<i>king</i>
h	ه	<i>hat</i>
hk	ك	<i>loch (Scottish)*</i>
i	ي	<i>sit</i>
l	ل	<i>soften</i>
j	ج	<i>joke</i>
jh	چ	<i>decision</i>
k	ك	<i>king</i>
kh	خ	<i>macht (German)*</i>
l	ل	<i>lamb</i>
m	م	<i>mother</i>
n	ن	<i>nation</i>
o	و	<i>occupy</i>
ö	ۋ	<i>Goethe (German)*</i>
p	پ	<i>poke</i>
r	ر	<i>run</i>
s	س	<i>sit</i>
sh	ش	<i>shame</i>
t	ت	<i>time</i>
u	ۇ	<i>put</i>
ü	ۈ	<i>tu (French)</i>
v	ۋ	<i>vest</i>
y	ي	<i>yak</i>
z	ز	<i>zip</i>

* Non-English examples drawn from Hahn *Spoken Uyghur* op. cit. pp. 33-90.

Chapter 1

Zunun Kadir's dilemma: the situation of a Uyghur writer

The study of Uyghur literature, culture, politics and history has been relatively neglected in western scholarship in comparison with the Tibetan, Mongolian, and West Turkistan cultures that surround the Uyghur homelands of East Turkistan (or Xinjiang, as the area is called in Chinese). A number of archeological, cultural and political studies have been carried out by western scholars since the late 19th Century, when the area became interesting in geopolitical terms to the British, Russian, and Chinese imperial governments.³ Previously, the division of Turkistan culture (of which Uyghur forms a part) between the Russian and Chinese empires has limited its accessibility to Western scholars in recent decades. In addition, its Islamic image seems to some extent to have obscured its particularity from international observers and commentators who have, for example, enthusiastically taken up the cause of Tibetan nationalism as championed by the Dalai Lama. Uyghurs have never had the advocacy of an independent "government in exile" like the Tibetans, nor in recent times a recognised separate political state like the Uzbek, Kyrgyz, Kazaks, or Mongols.

Although there is a considerable body of Western scholarly work based on ancient religious and historical manuscripts found in archeological sites (mainly in the 19th Century), there is relatively little to be found on Uyghur writers and literature of the 20th Century. Research using contemporary Uyghur sources has been extremely difficult. Uyghur writers are very little known outside East Turkistan, due to the harsh political realities and the lack of support facilities that would allow foreign scholars to work with primary sources in the local language. Furthermore, Uyghur scholarship has been comparatively isolated from mainstream scholarship, both because of Chinese constraint on Uyghur contacts with scholars of other Turkic nationalities, and because foreign scholars of Central Asian cultures have tended to focus on the former Soviet Central Asian states, treating Xinjiang as an element of East Asian studies. Translations of Uyghur literature into European languages are rare. The restrictive practices of the Chinese authorities have made access to basic sources often difficult, if not impossible.

In these circumstances, the study of the literary output of a contemporary writer is one of the few available avenues for finding a reflection, through the working life of that writer, not only of Uyghur culture but of political and social change in the Uyghur world. Such an approach will take into account not only the explicit content of a writer's work, but also the literary strategies that he developed in response to the changing political climate of his environment.

The writer who is the subject of this study, Zunun Kadir (1912-1989) is considered to be among the ten best known writers in 20th Century Uyghur literature.⁴ As with many writers in China, some of his work was permanently lost as a result of periods of political repression. In Zunun's case, he was exiled in 1962 as a "revisionist", and at least two of his major works were destroyed at that time: his dramatic version of "Gerip and Senem" and his novel "Rage"[*Ghezep*]. During his creative life he wrote about ten plays, the first of which was "The Hardship of Ignorance" in 1936. About twenty short stories are available in print, including those mentioned in this study. Some ten essays are also in print. Uyghur scholars speak of a further quantity of his journalism, commentaries and various other writing that is held by the Public Security Bureau in Yili, and has not been accessible for research even by Chinese scholars as at the time of this study.⁵ He also produced a volume of seventeen biographical essays and reflections, and another of legends derived from collected oral epics. Zunun's works were read and his dramas staged all over East Turkistan (Xinjiang) from the 1940s to the 1990s, except during his period of exile 1962-1979. Although very well known among the Uyghur of Xinjiang and Central Asia generally, Zunun is little known outside this cultural environment.

Having lived all of his life in East Turkistan (Xinjiang), Zunun died during a visit to Kazakstan in 1989. His last request was that he should be buried in Kazakstan and not returned for burial to Chinese-controlled East Turkistan. The question arises as to why he did not want to be buried in East Turkistan: the place where his ancestors had lived,

³ Lars-Erik Nyman, *Great Britain and Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests in Sinkiang, 1918-1934*, Lund Studies in International History, vol 8, Esselte Studium, Stockholm, 1977, pp.119-122.

⁴ Azad Sultan, *Bugunki zaman Uyghur Edebiyati Toghrisida* [*On contemporary Uyghur Literature*], Xinjiang Peoples Publishing House, Urumqi, 1997, p.93.

⁵ This information on unavailability of Zunun's texts given to the author by Xinjiang academics during field research in Urumqi during 1998.

where his culture was centred, and where he himself had worked, served, and survived for 77 years, choosing instead to be interred far from his family, friends and memories. By analyzing some of Zunun's writing in the light of its historical context, this thesis traces the struggle of this writer to manage his continuing dilemma: to reconcile culture and politics, ideals and realities.

Zunun lived through a period of enormous cultural and political change, and era that impressed upon him a complex identity that reflected the layers of experience accumulated through the different phases of his life. The process of modernisation was bringing modern science and social thinking into Turkistan, via different international routes – Turkic, Russian, and Chinese. The implementation of socialist reforms was also contesting some elements of Uyghur culture. The process of incorporation into the Peoples' Republic of China (PRC) also involved a profound challenge to Uyghur culture, threatening to reduce it to a colonial relic on the fringe of a massive imperial power.⁶ Throughout his life, Zunun was a progressive writer who supported socialism and modernism, believing that these causes would improve the life of his Uyghur people. At the same time he maintained love⁷ for his national heritage and a commitment to the continuity of Uyghur national culture. Through his work we can trace his childhood experiences of oppressive rule under Chinese colonialism; his youthful commitment to the socialist independence of the East Turkistan Republic; his absorption into the cultural system of the PRC in his middle years; and his disillusionment after suffering Chinese Communist Party (CCP) persecution.

Zunun's continuing dilemma is most clearly seen in his political role as a minority writer within the PRC. Its roots go back further, however: to his complex experiences

⁶ "Colonialism" is used in this thesis in the sense of foreign rule based on immigration and economic exploitation. James Millward describes an evolution of Qing imperialism from a model of "tributary rule (similar to "old imperialism" such as Roman or Mongol Imperialism) to "new imperialism", implying tighter economic and political control in the Leninist sense of competition between countries to divide the undeveloped world into spheres of influence for economic exploitation. (James A Millward *Beyond the Pass: Economy, Ethnicity and Empire in Qing Central Asia 1759-1864*, Stanford University Press, 1998, p.16). Long-standing Chinese interests in economic and strategic control of East Turkistan began to take the form of colonialism from around 1820, as the Qing, in line with statecraft writings of the early and mid-19th Century, attempted after 1830 to build colonies in Altishehir based on Han immigration, in order to "metamorphosize the landscape and displace Xinjiang peoples" (Gong Zizhen and Wei Yuan, paraphrased in Millward op. cit., p.246.)

⁷ Zunun specifically uses the term "love" [*muhebbet*] in advocating love of nation and culture in his essay "Concerning Spiritual Nourishment" [*Ruhi Uzukh Toghrisida*] in Muhammet Polat (ed.) *Works of Zunun Kadir* [*Zunun Kadir Eserliri*], Xinjiang Peoples Publishing House, Urumqi 1992, p.670.

under conservative Islamic conditions in a poor family; to his youthful years committed to socialist internationalism; to an adulthood confronting the realities of the Marxist-Leninist political system of the CCP; and to his final few years of rehabilitation living with the unstable economic colonialism of the PRC during the 1980s. His dilemma set his Uyghur identity against a Chinese identity, his national identity against an international socialist identity, socialism against the market economy, and modernism against traditionalism. Because of his socialist ideals, Zunun tried to reconcile his socialist and nationalist convictions despite their being contradicted by his experience.

Uyghur Identity

Zunun's life and work can be said to centre on the question of Uyghur identity. The name "Uyghur" has a history of some 1200 years among the Turkic peoples in Central Asia, particularly those living in what is now Xinjiang Autonomous Region of China (XUAR). The name is associated with a continuous culture and at times significant political and economic power, although the name "Uyghur" itself was not generally used from the time that the last Buddhist and Nestorian Uyghur communities converted to Islam in around 1513, until the 1920s.⁸

In considering contemporary Uyghur identity, we must recognise that any nationality or ethnic, cultural or linguistic stream is likely to have a diversity of origins. The geographic region we identify as East Turkistan has a population that has been merged with different ethnic groups over a very long period, and the region itself has been known by different names. For example, during the Qin dynasty of China (221 BC) and for many centuries after, the region was known by Chinese as Xiyu [the Western Region]. Before there was any Uyghur nationality, the region was populated by a diversity of groups including Sarks, Parthians, Kushans, and others. The expansion of Hellenic and Persian empires also contributed to establishment of colonies that would eventually merge with local populations. Such populations did not simply disappear when the Turkic migrations from the north occurred in the 5th Century AD, but rather, as can be seen from the Orkhon inscriptions of 742, the region became turkicised, culturally and linguistically.

⁸ Dru C. Gladney, "The Ethnogenesis of the Uighur", *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 9 no.1, 1990, p.9.

The first use of the name Uyghur applies to the Kingdom founded in 744 AD after the fall of a Turkic Khanate. Dru Gladney notes that the history of the Uyghurs reveals “a transition from traditional Central Asian shamanistic nomads, to Manichaeans, then Buddhist, and Nestorian Christian believers”,⁹ thus confirming that a continuous ethnicity may refer to a cultural or political environment that undergoes significant change and development. Contemporary Uyghur scholars have no difficulty in accepting that a modern Uyghur identity, while based on the foundations of the earlier Uyghur empire, now includes the commingling of influences resulting from centuries of cultural development and interaction. Gladney also identifies an “evolution of Uyghur identity from steppe nomad tribal confederation, to settled semi-nomadic kingdom, to dispersed oasis traders, and finally to a minority nationality of PRC”.¹⁰ Gladney also notes that the ethnogenesis of the Uyghur has been significantly affected by successive stages of interaction with the Chinese state. William Samolin, from his reading of Tang histories, notes that the Chinese usually employed the term “Uyghur” as a political rather than a tribal or territorial designation, and that later it was used to distinguish a contemporary Turkic-Uyghur language from Old Turkish.¹¹

As the peoples of the Turkic Uyghur confederation progressively converted to Islam from the 9th Century, the Islamic Kara-Khanid rulers adopted different political names and the term Uyghur ceased to be used to describe a particular state. However this did not mean that the Uyghur people disappeared. Rather, they continued to evolve culturally under different names and different influences, such as the Chagatai Ulus, and under different political rules throughout the centuries.

In 1221, during the period of Mongol expansion, Chinggis Khan defeated the Turkic empire of Harezm Shah, and assigned the rule of Turkistan to his son Chagatai. Thus Turkistan became part of the Mongol empire, but the population of the region remained predominantly Turkic, and by the mid-14th Century the Chagatai Khanate was

⁹ *ibid*, p. 4.

¹⁰ *ibid*, p. 9.

¹¹ William Samolin, *East Turkistan to the 12th Century*, Mouton, The Hague, 1964, p. 73.

substantially turkicised in terms of language, culture and religion (Islam).¹² Leadership changed from the Mongol dynasty to Turkic rulers, of whom the best known, Timur, ruled a domain that spread (between 1370-1404) from the Altay Mountains in the east to the Black Sea and Mediterranean in the west, and south to the Indus river. Timur ruled this large domain through appointed regional rulers, and he died in 1404 on a march into China. Three years of civil war followed his death, and his empire began to break up. Timur's son Shah Ruh (1377-1447) ruled from Herat a domain from the Amu Darya and Sur Darya, and extending to Kashgar through his son Ulugh Beg.

Due to internal struggles, the capital moved from Samarkand to Herat, and back to Samarkand again. A major split occurred in the Chagatai Khanate when the Uzbeks, under the leadership of Sheybani Khan, declared independence and expelled the Timurid Zahiruddin bin Omer Shah Babur (1483-1530), who went on to establish the Turkic Mogul Empire in India. During this period, East Turkistan was still ruled by a Chagatai descendant, Ahmed Khan (died 1508), who continued to wage war with the Uzbeks. Following his death, East Turkistan became increasingly independent and split. Sultan Abu Bekir ruled the south (Kashgar, Yarkent, Khoten, and Kucha) and Muzaffer Khan ruled the north (Kumul and Ili). In 1516 Sultan Said reunified East Turkistan and began what is known as the Khoja period.

In 1583 Abdur Reshid Khan took over, and an era of religious factionalism began.¹³ The Sufi Brotherhood enjoyed great prestige at court, in particular Mahdum-i Azam, whose two sons, after his death, founded two separate Sufi orders, the *Ak Taghlik* ["white mountain"] and the *Kara Taghlik* ["black mountain"] which became the basis for a deep factional division in the East Turkistan. In the late 16th Century, Ismail Khan sought to reduce the influence of the Ak Taghlik Khoja, Appak Khoja. Appak Khoja fled to Tibet, from where, in 1678, he returned with the support (on the recommendation of the Dalai Lama) of the Junggars and took over the rule in Kashgar and Yarkent.

¹² Barthold Spuler, "Geschichte Mittelasiens" quoted in Baymirza Hayit, *Turkistan Devletlerinin Milli Mucadeleleri Tarihi* [History of the Independence Struggle of the Nations of Turkistan], tr Abdulkadir Sadak from *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, Turk Tarihi Kurumu, Ankara, 1995, p.1.

¹³ *ibid.* p.15.

Chinese Colonialism

During this period, Russia had begun expanding toward the east, and this Russian interest in Central Asia stimulated Qing Chinese concern about the potential for a Russian -Junggar alliance.¹⁴ In the Qianlong period, expeditions against the Junggars were mounted in 1754 and 1757, when Ili was taken and the Junggar Khanate ended.¹⁵ In 1758 the Qing expeditionary army attacked southern East Turkistan, taking Kucha, Aksu, Khotan, and Ush. The next year Yarkent and Kashgar were conquered and the last rulers of the Appak Khoja family fled to Badaskshan, in north eastern Afghanistan.

The Qing concern first to deal with Junggaria reflected the less stable situation there, and the different composition of the population of East Turkistan north of the Tian Shan range. The south was almost completely Turkic and agricultural, but the area north of the Tian Shan remained primarily pastoral, and the population included some Mongol peoples who lived a traditional nomadic tribal life, following the Lamaist form of Tibetan Buddhism. The oasis-dwelling Uyghur and nomadic Kazak, Kyrgyz were Turkic groups who had more in common with their Central Asian neighbours than with the Qing Chinese, whose language and culture were alien to them. Joanna Waley-Cohen notes that in some instances the Qing treated these groups as foreign tributaries, subject to the authority of the Court of Colonial Affairs.¹⁶

Qing colonialism is more clearly observed after the Qing government incorporated Xinjiang as a province in 1884 and established a hierarchical ruling system. The entire province was under a military Governor based at Huiyuan, near Ili, who supervised both civilian and military matters. Lieutenant Governors and Councillors were established in major cities and administrative centres, supported by garrison troops. By the 1770s, the influx of settlers from China had reached a point where local administrations modelled on those of China proper were set up in Urumqi and other population centres, in a kind of administrative transition between interior and frontier.¹⁷

¹⁴ James A. Millward, *Beyond the Pass: Economy, Ethnicity and Empire in Qing Central Asia, 1759-1864*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1998, p.28.

¹⁵ *ibid*, p. 30.

¹⁶ Joanna Waley-Cohen, *Exile in Mid-Qing China: Banishment to Xinjiang 1758-1820*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1991, p.24.

¹⁷ *ibid* p.25.

In the south, hereditary rulers in Hami and Turfan were given rank in the Qing nobility like the Mongol princes, and ruled with some degree of autonomy, though subject to the Lieutenant Governor in Urumqi. By contrast, in Altishehir¹⁸ the Qing removed the hereditary elite who had been persistently rebellious against Qing authority, and replaced them with local appointed officials (Begs), whose appointments were controlled by the Court of Colonial Affairs in Beijing.¹⁹

Waley-Cohen describes three goals of Qing colonialism in Xinjiang: to make Xinjiang a self-sufficient part of the Qing Empire, which could accommodate Chinese settlement to ease demographic pressures in China proper; to subjugate the native peoples of the Central Asian periphery as a buffer zone against Russian or Central Asian expansionist tendencies; and to guarantee Qing rule by establishing sufficient Han Chinese presence to prevent any other group attaining ascendancy among the multi-ethnic population.²⁰

The colonists who came to northern Xinjiang from China proper consisted of five main groups: soldiers, merchants, civilian immigrants, troublemakers and legal exiles. In Xinjiang were Manchu and Mongol banner troops transferred from China proper, Oloks from Rehe, Chahars from Mongolia, Chinese “Green Standard” soldiers and tribesmen such as Sibo, Solon and Daghur transferred from the northeast of China. Initially the Green Standard forces were seconded from Shanxi and Gansu for periods of three or later five years, to serve on military agricultural colonies [*bingtun*] whose primary function was to supply food to the army of occupation.²¹ After 1762, Green Standard soldiers were encouraged to settle permanently with their families in colonies throughout northern Xinjiang, and after 1802 the government also established colonies for the banner and tribal military groups to add to the supply of food.

In 1827, the Qing official Na-yan Ceng implemented substantial administrative reforms in southern Xinjiang involving trade, taxation, military affairs, currency, and foreign policy. This included a trade embargo against the Central Asian Khanate of Khokand. The embargo led, in 1830, to an attack on Altishehir by the Khanate, under the

¹⁸ *Altishehir* [Six Cities] is one of the names used to describe the southern region of East Turkistan, based on the six main cities Kashgar, Yarkent, Khoten, Kucha, Aksu, and Ush.

¹⁹ *ibid.*

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ *ibid* p.27.

command of Muhammad Yusuf, brother of Jehangir Khan, to redress the grievance of Khokand merchants expelled by Na-yan Ceng. According to non-Chinese sources, the Qing agreed to pay the Khokand Khanate an annual tribute if they would restrain the descendants of the Khoja clan, especially Jehangir (1790-1828), a grandson of Burhan ad Din. Jehangir declared war against Qing occupation of East Turkistan. A Qing force from Aksu was able to re-take Altishehir, but in 1835 the Qing government concluded what has been called China's first "unequal treaty settlement" with Khokand.²² Under this settlement, Khokand representatives [*aksakals*] gained the right to collect customs duties on foreign imports and to exercise jurisdiction over foreigners in Khotan, Yarkent, Kashgar, Aksu and Ush.²³

In 1851, the Russian and Qing governments concluded an agreement allowing tax-free trade for Russians in Ili and Tarbagatai, and in 1871 this favourable treatment was extended to all cities in Xinjiang.

In 1884, Xinjiang was made a province of the Qing Empire. One of the reasons was Russian interest in the region and a growing realisation of the natural wealth of Xinjiang. From this time on, Chinese control over Xinjiang was systematically increased. This intensified following the nationalist revolution and the collapse of the Qing in 1911. In the 1920s, the nationalist Governor Yang hoped to end the special privileges for Russian traders when the Tsarist government collapsed, but the Communist government of Russia, once established, continued to demand the same conditions for trade. In fact, on 17 December 1927 the USSR announced that it did not recognise the Central Chinese Government. In Xinjiang, the USSR "maintained good relations with the Government of Xinjiang".²⁴ Yang's successor Jin Shuren also sought to assert more direct control of Xinjiang.

With the recent example of Outer Mongolia's separation from China, further Chinese colonisation of Xinjiang was motivated by East Turkistan's natural resources, its strategic importance, and the continued USSR interest in the region. The Nationalist

²² Joseph Fletcher, quoted in Millward op. cit, p.35.

²³ Millward op cit p. 34-5.

²⁴ Zhang Dajun, *Sishi nien dongluan Xinjiang* [Forty Years' Turmoil in Xinjiang], Asia Publishing [*Yazhou Chubanshe*], Hong Kong 1956 p.26.

governors Yang and Jin increased military and police forces, implemented so-called “land reform” to give land to immigrant Chinese, and pushed local people out to open new land. Local officials were made more accountable to Chinese authorities by such means as having them “elected”, then referred to Chinese magistrates for recommendation and to the Chinese governor for approval. After Jin, the Chinese militarist Sheng Shicai developed his power with Soviet support. The USSR guided Sheng Shicai to use Stalinist-style Marxist ideology to promote social change. The USSR aimed to gain access to Xinjiang’s natural resources and to establish a friendly, communist Xinjiang next to their own Central Asian republics. Sheng applied the techniques of divide and conquer to suppress growing East Turkistan nationalism and take control of politics, the economy and administration, thus preparing the ground for the subsequent takeover of the Chinese Communist Party.

James Millward offers an analysis of changing Chinese approaches to the colonisation of East Turkistan through an examination of the story of Iparhan, or Xiang Fei, a Uyghur of the Khoja family who became a concubine at the court of the Qianlong emperor.²⁵ With reference to Uyghur and Han accounts and fictionalised novels and dramas, Millward notes the different interpretations placed upon the story reflecting different Chinese political eras. In the Qing period, “the guiding principles and techniques of Qing rule in Inner Asia differed fundamentally from those of its government in China proper... the Qing employed... strategic marriage to consolidate an alliance with the Khoja clan”,²⁶ whereas Han were generally excluded from the Imperial bedchamber.

In most of the popular accounts, Iparhan is said to have resisted the attentions of the Emperor, out of loyalty to her conquered people and her husband killed in that conquest. Millward suggests that this version of the story emerged in the late 19th Century, after the Altishehir rebellion had demonstrated to the Chinese the persistent

²⁵ James A. Millward, “A Uyghur Muslim in Qianlong’s Court: The Meanings of the Fragrant Concubine”, *Journal of Asian Studies*, 53, no. 2, May 1994 pp. 427-458.

²⁶ *ibid* p. 438.

desire for independence by the Turkic peoples of East Turkistan: “..to Han minds,. Xinjiang was in the empire, but not yet of it.”²⁷ The late Qing and early Republican period accounts (1907-1930s) are seen as emphasizing Iparhan’s resistance to the Qing, perhaps reflecting the specifically Han nationalism of the period which included anti-Manchu sentiment, so that the figure of resistance to the will of the Manchu Qing Emperor took on some contemporary appeal. This element may have continued into the period when Japanese encroachment was beginning to raise a new threat to Han nationalism.²⁸

In the early 1950s, during the period of the “United Front” policy for the CCP pacification of Xinjiang, a Beijing opera was performed which further focussed on Iparhan as an active participant in an heroic Uyghur rebellion against Qing oppression. But in 1955, a popular romantic novel by the Hong Kong-based writer Jin Yong (Zha Lianyong) portrayed the story as based on a romance between the Uyghur “Princess Fragrant” and a Han nobleman rebelling against the Manchu rulers. Most currently, Han historians have asserted that rather than a resistant “Xiang Fei” of the popular stories and Uyghur accounts, there was at Qianlong’s court a compliant Uyghur concubine, Rong Fei, who “made a definite contribution by opposing separatism and protecting nationality harmony and national unity”.²⁹ We might see reflected, in the development of these accounts, a steady transition from an original recognition, under the Qing, of diplomatic marriage between separate states, to a denial, under current Han colonial policy, of any form of legitimate separateness.

Uyghur Identity in the 20th Century

Over recent centuries, “Uyghur” identity has been predominantly a cultural and not a political one, as different kingdoms and empires used various names to describe themselves politically in relation to their control over different parts of the Turkic cultural domain.³⁰ In the early 20th Century, writers and political thinkers began to refer

²⁷ *ibid* p. 442.

²⁸ *ibid* p.443.

²⁹ Yu Shanpu, 1985, quoted in Millward *op. cit.* p. 447.

³⁰ William Samolin says the term *Uyyur* (Uyghur) was used as a linguistic designation to distinguish a particular form of Old Turkish. Later the Chinese used *Hui-hu*, originally *Uyyur*, for Muslim. This served to add to the confusion. Strictly speaking, the tribal confederation which succeeded the Turkish dynasty of the Inscription in 742 and possessed itself of the Ötüken refugium became generally known as *Uyyur* after that seizure of power. (Samolin *op. cit.*, p 72-73.)

again to the Uyghur identity when they spoke of the common heritage and culture that was recognised as extending from western Central Asia to the western edges of China in modern Gansu and Qinghai provinces. The name gained political significance during the period in which the Soviet Union was establishing its “nationality republics” in Central Asia (what is now the Commonwealth of Independent States). The Soviet regime put considerable effort into consolidating the many layers of identity among Uzbek, Uyghur, Kazak and so on into “nationalities” that were defined by political administrative boundaries of its Central Asian Republics.³¹ As Kazak, Kyrgyz, Turkmen and Uzbek branches of the Turkic peoples became established as “nationalities” under the Soviet system, it was inevitable that the similar peoples living outside the Soviet rule would reclaim the name “Uyghur” to describe their own national identity.

It was natural also that intellectuals and writers like Zunun would look towards the Soviet Union, especially the Central Asian Republics, rather than towards China, for affirmation of their national identity. They shared a common language and in some cases a common education with the intellectuals of the Turkic Soviet republics. In the case of East Turkistan, the Soviet Union was not the predominant colonial power. During that period, the Soviet Union was the undisputed centre of international socialism, and exerted considerable political influence in East Turkistan.

From 1944 to 1949, the East Turkistan Republic (ETR, or “Three Districts Government”) governed the area based on Ili, Altai and Tarbagatai in the far west of East Turkistan. This government was progressive and socialist in its policies, as well as being the beacon for East Turkistan national independence. The issue of the relative influence of the Soviet and Chinese regimes was critical to the fate of the ETR. While it received early support from the Soviet Union, the politics of Sino-Soviet relations in the 1940s resulted in the withdrawal of support by the Soviet Union, and a CCP takeover of the whole region in 1949. Zunun directly experienced these events, first as a member of the East Turkistan Republic literary establishment, and later as a member of the Chinese Writers’ Association under CCP control. Zunun’s whole later career was dominated by the politics of the CCP, and especially by the tension between the socialist programs of

³¹ Alexandre Bennigsen and Chantal Quelquejay, *The Evolution of the Muslim Nationalities of the USSR and their linguistic problems*, *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Sovietique* vol. 11 1960, translated from the

the CCP (which he was ideologically inclined to support), and the CCP's role as the implementer of Chinese rule over the Uyghur people.

Historical Background to Zunun Kadir's life

As Zunun's writing is very specific to the context of the Uyghur people and their history, some reference is needed to the historical background of the era in which he was active, in order to understand the society and the literary readership for which Zunun wrote.

Central Asia was the scene of major competition between expansionist powers over several centuries. The peoples of East Turkistan in the late 19th Century and early 20th Century were reduced to the position of being pawns in the geopolitical movements involving three major powers – the Russian Empire from the west, the Qing Empire of China from the East, and the British Indian Empire from the south. By the time of the formation of the Chinese Republic in 1911, the British policy had come down to supporting Chinese rule over East Turkistan, as the best way to combat Russian interests.

The Soviet Turkistan governments were established in 1919, and Soviet consulates set up in Xinjiang in the 1920s. At this time, Chinese authorities such as Governor Yang Zengxin were consolidating military and economic control over most of Xinjiang. Uyghurs were beginning to be increasingly dispossessed of their material and cultural independence. A Kuomintang military historian, Zhang Dajun, recorded that in this process the Chinese rulers were worse than the traditional local feudal lords.³²

From the 1920s, the East Turkistan elite was under pressure from both China and the Soviet Union, as both empires had ambitions to control the natural resources and strategic position of the region. In pursuit of these interests, they were keen to suppress any attempt to assert local national interests. They considered the pursuit of contemporary knowledge and ideas to be “political plotting” to overthrow Chinese or Russian (later Soviet) interests. Local intellectuals attempting to promote progress were

French by Geoffrey Wheeler, Central Asian Research Centre and St Anthony's College Oxford Soviet Affairs Study Group, Oxford, 1961, p.31.

³² Zhang Dajun, op. cit., p.28.

repressed by the Chinese rulers or warlords who claimed that these intellectuals were variously working for British, German, Japanese, Pan-Islamic or Pan-Turkic imperialist interests. A US Representative in Urumqi in 1945, Robert Ward, said of the Sheng Shicai period:

The formula was simple: arrest every outstanding individual, every personality suspected of more than ordinary force or resources, herd them all into prison and subject them to the worst vicious tortures.³³

The situation eventually drove the East Turkistan elite into organised rebellion. An Islamic East Turkistan Republic was declared with Kashgar as its capital in 1933. Hoja Niyaz was elected President. However, within a year this Republic was suppressed by the joint forces of the Soviet Union and Sheng Shicai's Chinese Xinjiang government.

Soviet influence was complex and, in reality, served Russian national objectives. Soviet policies claimed to support struggles of national liberation, but they were also mindful of the dangers of such independent thinking if transferred to their own Turkic dependent republics in Soviet Central Asia.³⁴ Thus they maintained contact with nationalist insurgent groups, but their support was very unstable. When an anti-Chinese rebellion began to grow in 1932, and there was a real prospect that an East Turkistan Republic would be established, the Soviet support for the movement was withdrawn and transferred to the Chinese Kuomintang-linked Sheng Shicai.

The second East Turkistan Republic was established in November 1944 in Ili, in the region known as the Three Districts. When a Sino-Soviet Friendship Treaty was signed in 1945 the status of this Republic became ambiguous. The USSR agreed not to give it military support, but China was unable to assert military control over the area. For the next four years, China sought to achieve full control. Early in the period, Uyghurs believe the president Alihan Tore was kidnapped and kept in exile in the Soviet Union.³⁵

³³ Linda Benson, *The Ili Rebellion: the Moslem Challenge to Chinese Authority in Xinjiang 1944-1949*, M.E.Sharpe, Armonk New York, 1990, p.38.

³⁴ ADW Forbes, *Warlords and Moslems in Chinese Central Asia*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1986, p 118.

³⁵ Ashur Vahit and other Uyghurs interviewed in Kazakstan asserted that Alihan Tore had lived till the end of his life in Kazakstan, working as a translator of Arabic and Persian texts.

He was succeeded as president by his vice-president Ashim Beg Hoja, and later by Ahmetjan Kasim.

The Soviet Union had clear ambitions to maintain as much political control over East Turkistan as possible. The Swedish scholar Lars-Erik Nyman describes a comprehensive organisation of Soviet agents in large parts of Xinjiang, particularly the Zhungaria region which includes Ili:

...the coordinating element of Soviet sway over the province was a complete net of GPU agents working in close co-operation with their native counterparts.

In 1934, the GPU net and its native subsidiary Pao-An Chu (i.e. the Bureau of Public Safety, with purely Chinese personnel) covered the whole of Dzungaria including the vital frontier town Hami guarding the eastern entrance to Sinkiang. The flagrant GPU terror made Sinkiang a Central Eurasian copy of Stalin's Russia and a Soviet colony in all but name.³⁶

In the late 1930s, the Chinese Republican Governor of Xinjiang, Sheng Shicai, proclaimed himself to be a Marxist. Soviet advisors were sent to Xinjiang to assist Sheng in implementing Soviet-style socialist programs. In addition, a number of CCP members arrived in Xinjiang from Yan'an to take up senior positions in Sheng's administration. These included Mao Zemin, brother of Mao Zedong, who was at one stage Sheng's Minister of Finance. As all this was taking place under a government that was nominally aligned to the KMT, the Communist Party presence was not formally recognised. Sheng implemented his programs under the name of a movement called the "Six Star Association". None the less, a formal liaison between the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and the CCP was established in Urumqi.³⁷ Sheng pursued a repressive policy against any opposition, and there is some reference to this in Zunun's writings.³⁸ In late 1943, Sheng Shicai switched sides to become an overt supporter of the KMT, and then set about persecution and repression of socialists,

³⁶ Nyman, op.cit, p 124.

³⁷ Donald H. McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power and Policy in Xinjiang 1949-1977*, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1979, p.21.

³⁸ See particularly "The Teacher's Letter" (discussed in Chapter 2) and "The Road in Quest for Knowledge" (discussed in Chapter 4).

communists, or other intellectuals who had links with the Soviet Union. This included a large number who, during Sheng's pro-Soviet phase, had been sent for education in Soviet states. In 1944, the East Turkistan Republic was established in the Ili region with Soviet backing, and with a clear program of establishing national autonomy for the Turkic peoples of East Turkistan, as well as for socialist reform. However, the ground shifted again in 1945 following the Yalta Agreement of the Allied powers. By August 1945 China and the Soviet Union had concluded a Sino-Soviet Friendship Treaty, in which Stalin traded recognition of China's sovereignty over Xinjiang in exchange for China's recognition of the Republic of Mongolia (Outer Mongolia, which China had claimed since Qing times).³⁹ The ETR authorities were pressed to negotiate with the KMT, with the Soviets as mediators. In 1946 this led to the establishment of a short-lived Coalition Government in Urumqi between ETR and KMT. In 1947 Mesut Sabri became Chairman of this Coalition Government, but the ETR authorities became increasingly suspicious of demands to incorporate their military resources into the KMT army, and later that year withdrew from the Coalition.⁴⁰ ETR's leadership returned to Ili, and from that point until 1949 ETR evolved as a separate political unit aligned with the Soviet Union. During this period, the KMT was losing ground and CCP strength was increasing in Xinjiang.⁴¹ Burhan Shahidi, a Soviet-trained Turkic communist, replaced the conservative Mesut Sabri⁴² as president of the Xinjiang government. Burhan continued to develop the Communist strength in Xinjiang until the time of CCP takeover in 1949.

Russian interests in the region, however, remained very strong and were not finally

³⁹ Wang Dagang, "The Xinjiang Question of the 1940s: The story behind the Sino-Soviet Treaty of August 1945", *Asian Studies Review*, vol.21, No.1, July 1997, p.83-4.

⁴⁰ McMillen, *op.cit.*, pp.22-3.

⁴¹ Burhan Shahidi, *Xinjiang Wushi Nian* [Fifty Years in Xinjiang], Literary and Historical Materials Publishing House [*Wenshi Ziliao Chubanshe*], Beijing, 1984, p.359. Others question whether Burhan's account is accurate as it cannot be verified independently.

⁴² Sabri was a landowner's son, had studied in Turkey, and had been a deputy in the Nationalist parliament in Nanjing.

surrendered until the 1950s, when China was finally able to assert total control over East Turkistan. During Zunun Kadir's early years, East Turkistan was a turbulent colony of a China that was itself divided. By contrast, from the Soviet Union there was exposure to rapid social change and socialist ideology, and from Turkey there was exposure to new forms of secular Turkic nationalism. Some Uyghur youth were benefiting from education abroad in Russia, Germany, Turkey and other places, and on their return spreading ideas of social progress and cultural assertion.

The East Turkistan experience of colonialism was one of brutality and exploitation. Social and political institutions had been undermined or incorporated into the colonial system since the time of the Qing dynasty governors. The suffering of people in all strata of society created a widespread aspiration for social and economic development. It was natural that there was a common belief that such progress was directly linked to self-determination. The question would be how these aspirations could be achieved in the particular political situation in which Turkistan was dominated by outside powers. To the young Zunun and many of his contemporaries, the promise of international socialism seemed to bring together the values of social development and the best chance for national self-determination.

Biography of Zunun Kadir

Zunun Kadir was born in 1912 in Dorbujin County in Tarbagatai District in the north of East Turkistan. His father's name was Kadir, and he had come to Dorbujin from Tijen County, Atush (near Kasghar in southwest Xinjiang). When Zunun was four years old they moved to the nearby city of Gulja. Located in the Ili region of northwest Xinjiang, Gulja is also known as Ili or Yining. It is an area between high mountains covered with snow and glaciers, and the valley is irrigated by the Ili River, with substantial forests, pastures, croplands and orchards. The district is bordered by Kazakhstan to the northwest, and is not far from Mongolia to the northeast. The city is at an elevation of 640 metres, and is around 700 kilometres west of the regional capital Urumqi. The area was occupied by the Russian Empire in 1871, but returned to Chinese rule in 1881.

In Ili, Zunun's father started a small business running a food stall at the Kir Bazaar, and when he had accumulated a little capital he opened a small shop selling *mata* (a thin cotton fabric) and *chekmen* (a thicker kind of cloth). He built a house in the Orda

district of Gulja. Zunun's mother died when he was five, and his father remarried three times. Zunun described his father as "a bad-tempered person, even though he had a good heart. He could not stand injustice, and if he saw anyone being bullied he would speak out for the underdog".⁴³

Zunun was sent to a traditional Islamic school at the age of seven, and then from the age of ten he attended a modern-style school in Gulja. His father died when Zunun was thirteen, leaving the family as orphans. After the death of his father, Zunun worked as an errand boy for other families. When they were old enough, Zunun and his brother tried share-farming some land that his father had left them, but this was not successful. He then worked as an apprentice purchaser [*pirkaschi*] in a sheep-skin business. In 1935 he obtained training as a teacher, and taught in the Beytullah Primary School in Gulja for two years. When he was twenty-five years old he hitchhiked to Urumqi seeking further opportunities to study. In the same year (1937) he joined the "Anti-Imperialist Union" and took part in movements for new culture and theatre. During that period he began his literary career with the publication of a long poem, "Chimen" (1935) and a stage play "The Hardship of Ignorance" (1936). Both these, Zunun tells us, he later destroyed for fear of the purge then being instituted by Sheng Shicai.

After two years of senior secondary studies, and a further two years of agricultural technician training, he returned to Gulja in 1942 to work in theatre. He became Deputy Director of an organisation called "Uyghur Enlightenment" [*Uyghur akartish*]. When the East Turkistan Republic government was formed, he joined the administration as a reporter on a magazine called "The Road of Struggle" [*Koresh Yolida*], covering the Three Districts Government's military affairs. He was also a member of youth organisations formed to promote Uyghur culture and East Turkistan national identity.⁴⁴ In 1945 he became chief editor of a magazine called "Peace" [*Ittipak*]. After the CCP takeover of East Turkistan in 1949, Zunun worked as a teacher at a girls high school in Gulja from 1951-54. Zunun's first wife died, and he married Zileyhan, a secretary in

⁴³ Zunun Kadir Eserliri, op.cit, "My Father and Mother", p.465.

⁴⁴ Zunun's oral memoir (Appendix 1) refers specifically to the organisation "Peace and the People" [*Tinishchilik ve Helkchilik*], which was the parent of the *Ittipak* journal.

the Ili Theatre, in 1954. His son Umit and daughter Raziye of his first marriage later went to live in the Soviet Union.

In 1954, Zunun was sent by the Xinjiang authorities to Urumqi to work as a writer in the Department of Creative Literature under the regional Cultural Affairs Bureau. From 1957-58 he was a member of the Chinese Writers' Association, and also of the Xinjiang People's Congress. Until his exile in 1962, Zunun was Deputy Chairman of the Writers and Artists Union. Within the structure of the PRC, these organisations were fully integrated as part of the government apparatus for cultural work.

In 1962 Zunun was accused of "revisionism", having been caught near the Soviet border at a time when many tens of thousands of Uyghurs were fleeing Xinjiang for the Soviet Union.⁴⁵ Zunun was subjected to some violent persecution (described below), and sentenced to labour reform. From 1962 to 1979 he worked at a prison farm and was not able to write at all. He was stripped of all his official positions, and his wife Zileyhan also lost her job and was required to move to the Aksu district with him. She described the events leading to Zunun's conviction in the following way:

In 1962 there was an exodus from Gulja. Many people ran away to the Soviet Union. Zunun was detained by the government and brought back to Urumqi accused of trying to escape. They conducted many criticism meetings against him in Urumqi. The authorities decided to send all of us to the Tarim to do labour. At that time the family had three boys aged seven [Nurlan], four [Bakhtiar], and one [Perhad]. We were located at the labour camp near Aksu called *Yashlar Meydani* [Youth Square]. Zunun himself was not allowed to stay at the commune, but was sent to an irrigation canal construction site thirty kilometres away. Family visits were allowed only once every two months, and we had to go on foot. The other family members worked on the commune farmland, cultivating cotton, wheat, maize and so on. During this exile three daughters were born: Seyare, Zohre and Hatime.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ During this period of political dispute between China and the Soviet Union, the Soviet Union for a time opened its borders to large numbers of Turkic citizens of Xinjiang. The Soviet authorities granted entry very readily, but China at this time forbade emigration as being an act of disloyalty.

Zileyhan describes how the situation deteriorated during the Cultural Revolution:

His condition broke my heart. What did he eat? He drank corn flour porridge [*umash*]. When I say porridge – he seldom had time to cook it – he just mixed a bit of flour with boiled water. His task was digging irrigation channels. The rest of us worked at farming...I would save things for Zunun to eat.

In public criticisms Zunun was beaten, and his face was covered with blue oil paint. Some of the paint got into his eyes, and sent him blind in one eye. Despite his ill health and blind eye, he was still sent to dig in the canals. Because of his condition, he would sometimes fall down, and the overseers would blame him for not working diligently, and beat him.

... Zunun kept his sense of humour. We were ordered to go from door to door collecting human manure. Zunun would carry it. He would joke to people as he knocked at the door “I hope you have eaten well, so I can collect more shit from you!” He liked to make people laugh. The officials also ordered us to look after pigs. This is difficult for us, because we are Muslim. This job should be done by non-Muslim people like the Han. But they forced us to do it. If we refused, we would get into even bigger trouble – so we had to look after the pigs. We had one shared room and all slept on the *kang* [heated brick sleeping platform], and the pig and piglets slept on the floor. The room stank. At times like this we survived because of our love. If one of the piglets died, we would be fined a large amount, so we had to look after the piglets better than ourselves. There were also some advantages to looking after the pigs. They provided food for the pigs which was better than what they provided for us. So I would exchange some of our food for the pigs’ food. This situation contributed to our survival.⁴⁷

Zunun’s son Bakhtiyar also contributes some memories of Zunun’s life during this period.

⁴⁶ Author’s interview with family members, Urumqi 12 June 1998 (see Appendix 1).

⁴⁷ *ibid.*

We were a very close family, but once we were exiled there was less chance for us to be together. Apart from his labour, my father had to attend *xuexi ban*⁴⁸ [study sessions]. We had no chance to be with him. We saw him for a few moments every two months under the supervision of officials. The situation in labour camp was worse than a prison, because in prison people had more chance to see each other. When he was transferred to farming under the *minbing* [militia – here, the construction corps] he was so tired that he had very little communication with us. My father was one of the “five black elements” [*hei wu lei*].⁴⁹ People in these categories laboured under the supervision of the militia. Working under these conditions was harder than an ordinary jail. For example, if people normally worked ten hours, then the militia would work fourteen. In addition, they assigned the work to be completed up to a fixed standard within a limited time...the jobs might include watering or manuring fields. Sometimes the whole family would have to work to complete my father’s quota, otherwise the work would be added to the next day’s quota, which would then be impossible to achieve. Sometimes the local peasants helped out, even though their own conditions were also very harsh.

When we were very young we were told my father was a bad person, an enemy of the people. We were abused and called names, and we believed that our father was an enemy – it was very confusing. We could not see any badness in him, but we were continually told that he was an enemy of the people. Only when we returned to Urumqi after 1979 did we realise what a valuable person my father was. He often said “*Hem eyin guzeret*” [from Persian – “this too will pass”].⁵⁰ We asked him why he always said that, and he told us that in the past many intellectuals, because they could not cope with the terrible difficulties and could not see that “this too will pass”, had committed suicide - hung themselves, cut their own throats, or jumping to their death. My father always had an

⁴⁸ Though speaking in Uyghur, Bakhtiyar used the Chinese name for these sessions, as for other institutions and phrases particular to the Communist system in Xinjiang. Typically such sessions consisted of lengthy meetings at which a cadre would explain current ideological issues, followed by criticism and self-criticism sessions during which people had to prove they were conforming to the ideological line.

⁴⁹ The “five black elements” were capitalists, landlords, middle peasants, intellectuals and counter-revolutionary.

⁵⁰ Zunun’s story “*Buham*”, discussed in the Chapter 5, takes this phrase as its central theme.

optimistic view and believed that there is always hope. None of us had the opportunity for a good education, which our father would have wanted for us. We are fortunate if we can inherit some of the good character traits of our father, such as gentleness and fairness.⁵¹

After being rehabilitated in 1979, Zunun Kadir took up his pen again and wrote with enriched experience for another ten years until his death in 1989. Though he had gained strength and wisdom from his past sufferings, he still faced the same dilemma he had confronted in the past: if he became too strong a critic of the regime, would he again have to subject his family to the horrible life they had endured during his exile? And if he collaborated with the regime in order to survive and continue publishing, would he maintain his standing and respect among his Uyghur readers?

This issue followed him through all of his life in the turbulent political environment of East Turkistan, or the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR). In this thesis, I will argue that throughout his life he had to make choices by balancing his idealism with the realities of his environment. In examining how Zunun expressed those choices through his writing, I have analyzed representative works arranged generally according to the distinct historical periods of his life. Chapter 2 covers the 1940s, when Zunun was able to write comparatively unambiguous criticisms of colonialism in Xinjiang, and when he was forthright in his advocacy of the benefits of modernity for the Uyghur people. Chapter 3 concerns the 1950s and 1960s, following the takeover of East Turkistan by the Chinese Communist Party, when Zunun worked within the framework of the PRC literary establishment as a “minority writer” and continually faced the dilemma of balancing his nationalist agenda with the requirements of his position within the Chinese state. This chapter ends at the point where Zunun is sent off to labour reform. In Chapter 4, I address the works Zunun wrote in the 1980s after his return from exile, where his personal disillusionment found new opportunities for expression in an era of some limited literary freedom.

Like other writers of his generation in China, he often “used the past to serve the present”, for example using traditional epic tales and forms for political allegory relevant to the condition of the Uyghur people. In this period he used not only

⁵¹ Family interview *op. cit.*

traditional themes, but also recollections of his own youth as the material for allegorical references to the Uyghur experience. Chapter 5 examines some aspects in Zunun's work that concerns issues of cultural preservation or revival in the context of a colonised society subject both to cultural suppression and also to "orientalisation" by the dominant Han nationality. In Chapter 6, I consider some of the language resources that Zunun applied to his craft, including the rich heritage of the Uyghur language and its application to the kinds of deliberate ambiguity that Zunun employed in his literature. I also use the "keywords" method of Raymond Williams to compare some differences in the way Zunun used language in the period 1950-60 and in the 1980s.

In Chapter 7 I will attempt to come to some conclusions regarding Zunun's life and work with reference to comments made by other writers, and by comparison with some of his contemporary Uyghur writers who faced similar issues.

Culture and Nationalism

The relationship of culture to national aspirations is a complex one. It is well understood that culture is not a scientific "object", but rather that culture, and our views of it, are produced historically, and are actively contested.⁵² In the modern sense, culture is often seen as referring to self-cognition that is based on a state identity. However, statehood is not always clearly based on a single culture (for example, the PRC formally identifies itself as a "multinational" or "multiethnic" state). In these circumstances, culture may then be the means by which a minority "nationality", within a state, maintains self-cognition and survival of identity through common social experience and traditions, sharing what Bourdieu identifies as "cultural capital" that characterises the structure and educational processes of a society.⁵³ One of the key issues in cultural identity is to use the concept of "other" in order to define the self. Both the way in which cultures represent themselves, and the way in which they are represented by others, contribute to the definition of a culture. Cultural poetics and

⁵² James Clifford and George E Marcus (eds), *Writing Culture: The poetics and politics of ethnography*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1986, p.18.

⁵³ Richard Harker, "Bourdieu - Education and Reproduction", in R. Harker, C. Mahar and C. Wilkes (eds), *An Introduction to the Work of Pierre Bourdieu: The Practise of Theory*, MacMillan, London, 1990, p.87.

politics involve the constant reconstruction of self and of others through specific conventions of exclusion and discursive practices.⁵⁴

The role of writers in these processes is crucial, as it is evident in the dilemmas faced by Zunun Kadir. Zunun had both Uyghur cultural and socialist ideological identities. In working within the PRC's state system, he faced increasing pressure to accept a national identity as a citizen of New China. Both Uyghur and Chinese discursive systems influenced the way in which he had to address each new undertaking in his writing career. Nietzsche asserts that "all constructed truths are made possible by powerful 'lies' of exclusion and rhetoric... Power and history work through them, in ways their authors cannot fully control".⁵⁵ As a cultural worker for the CCP, Zunun faced all the normal hazards of working within a changeable and difficult political system, with the additional problem of being an "ethnic minority" writer (as defined by the colonial regime). The Chinese authorities did not fully trust minority writers, who are definitely "other" from the perspective of Han Chinese culture. For the Chinese authorities, the literary project had to be the creation of a new socialist culture, in which Uyghur culture would be included with "minority" status. At the same time, the effectiveness of Zunun's work depended upon maintaining credibility with his Uyghur audience, through sustaining the common history, experience and language of his own people. Within this environment, Zunun's personal commitment to his Uyghur culture and identity had to find a means of literary expression that would pass the censorious scrutiny of the Chinese authorities.

Zunun's early childhood experiences (coinciding with the early Chinese Republican era of Yang Zengxin and Jin Shuren⁵⁶), and the implementation of Soviet-influenced socialist programs by Governor Sheng Shicai when Zunun was a young man, provided the background to Zunun's pro-socialist, secular, modernist world view. This is discussed in Chapter 2. After the CCP takeover, the Uyghur leadership associated with the East Turkistan Republic was neutralised or destroyed. The influence of the Soviet Union in the region was not completely removed in the early 1950s, and Uyghur

⁵⁴ Clifford, op.cit., p. 24.

⁵⁵ *ibid*, p.7.

⁵⁶ Mehmet Emin Bugra, *Doğu Türkistan Tarihi* [A History of East Turkistan], Kabul, 1940, republished in facsimile by Repromat Offset, Ankara, 1987, p.521. Governor Yang Zengxin, recognized by the Chinese Republic, assassinated and replaced by Jin Shuren in 1928.

intellectuals like Zunun may have still hoped that the CCP, influenced by the Soviet Union, would implement some of the progressive socialist programs that had been promised, including the key Uyghur objective of national autonomy.

The period 1949-1962, however, showed Zunun that the CCP promises of Uyghur self-determination and modernisation did not eventuate. On the contrary, CCP restrictions and the erosion of various cultural elements of Uyghur identity seem to have caused Zunun to review his earlier idealism. Zunun continued to cooperate with the CCP, while using what subtle means he could employ to send messages of understanding to his people, recognising their grievances and their aspirations. His writings from this time will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Under the CCP, Zunun was formally designated as a “minority” writer. This meant that he was expected to use his “minority” language and culture to serve the ideological purposes of the CCP, but he was not supposed to write in such a way as to encourage any kind of localism or minority consciousness that would threaten the “unity of the Chinese peoples”. There was a political agenda that called on him to help foster a unified “Chinese” identity, and a “socialist” identity, while he wrote from the explicit viewpoint of his Uyghur identity. This dilemma existed not only in his literary undertakings, but also in the daily politics with which he had to live, in that the ideological effect of his work was under constant supervision by CCP cadres. The penalties for ideological deviance were heavy, as experienced by many of Zunun’s colleagues, and eventually by Zunun himself when he was sent into exile.

Zunun’s dilemma in finding a balance between fidelity to CCP policy and role as a nationality writer was always difficult. His experience of the continual erosion of economic and cultural status of the Uyghur people, in favour of Han, culminated in his own exile and a seventeen-year sentence for hard labour. Zunun’s return from the labour camp coincided with the advent of Deng Xiaoping’s “open door” policy. In January 1979, Deng Xiaoping announced the “Four Basic Principles” reminding all writers that the authority of the Communist Party could not be challenged. These four principles were that China must adhere to: 1) the socialist road; 2) the democratic dictatorship of the people; 3) the leadership of the Communist Party; and 4) Marxism-

Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought.⁵⁷ From the end of 1979, most of the critical and independent publications were suppressed.⁵⁸ In January 1980 Deng Xiaoping clearly signalled an end to the tolerance of dissent, and also stated his view that the purges of 1957-8 had been fundamentally necessary and correct.⁵⁹ In 1980-81 there were increasing official attacks and warnings against “bourgeois liberalization”, and in 1982 the National Peoples Congress deleted the “Four Great Freedoms” (freedom of belief, freedom of speech, freedom of publication and freedom of association) from the Constitution of the Peoples’ Republic of China.⁶⁰

These were the political currents in the PRC at the time that Zunun returned to Urumqi from his exile in the Tarim desert and resumed his life as a writer. It was only natural that he would adopt a cautious position, but compared to the time leading up to and including his exile, the 1980s were a period of relative cultural relaxation.

Under these circumstances, one can understand why Zunun’s last efforts went into restoring and recording Uyghur cultural resources, an effort aimed at securing the continuing viability of national identity through Uyghur culture. In this phase of his work, Zunun seems to have changed some of his earlier views that various aspects of Uyghur culture were “superstitious and backward”. Zunun’s writings from this time are discussed in Chapter 4.

In an environment of such danger for a writer, where any political error could have serious consequences, Zunun Kadir had to try to work in a way that allowed him to give genuine literary support to Uyghur culture and Uyghur identity, without crossing the lines in such a way that could have resulted in loss of his ability to publish, loss of livelihood, and serious hazard to himself and his family. The circumstances of literary politics offered him several methods to pursue his creative goals with as much integrity as possible. He could draw upon a range of traditional literary and folklore traditions for style and imagery which was meaningful to his Uyghur readers, but was also

⁵⁷ Deng Xiaoping in *Renmin Ribao*, reprinted in *Beijing Review*, July 17 1989, p.16.

⁵⁸ W.J.F. Jenner discusses unofficial journals (“*samizdat*”) with their articles breaking taboos ahead of any developments in official publications in “1979: A New Start for Literature in China?”, *China Quarterly* no. 86, 1981, p.275.

⁵⁹ *ibid* p.299.

acceptable to the Chinese censors who did not have the depth of cultural knowledge to understand their full range of meaning. He could also adopt the current required styles and themes, but at the same time include in his treatment matters of detail, shading, and characterisation, which would bring out the special meanings that reflected the experience of his Uyghur people in modern political and social contexts. One of these styles was “reportage”, which he employed in some of his works.

Zunun could also draw on a rich heritage of literary traditions, arising from the multi-layered culture that is the inheritance of the Uyghurs' geography and history, which placed them in the path of many of the great cultural movements. For example, the role of Uyghurs in diffusion of Buddhism and Manichaeism is noted by S.N.C. Lieu.⁶¹ Commerce was as significant for the ancestors of the Uyghurs as for modern Uyghurs. As merchants, Uyghurs had an important role in cultural diffusion. Lieu states:

This connection between Manichaeism and commerce would manifest itself again to the east with conversion of the Sogdians, as it was through their role as the conveyors of western religions and cultures that Manichaeism found a home in China, or more importantly in the kingdom of the Uyghur Turks which adopted it as its official religion.⁶²

The many elements that make up the Uyghur identity themselves provided a range of literary opportunities for a writer in Zunun's position. Some of the folkloric heritage

⁶⁰ Robin Munro in Robert Benwick and Paul Wingrove (eds), *Reforming the Revolution: China in Transition*, MacMillan Education, Basingstoke, 1988, p.79.

⁶¹ S.N.C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in the later Roman Empire and Mediaeval China*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1985, p.25: “Buddhism had also exerted considerable influence on the cultural and religious life of Eastern Turkistan, especially areas conquered by the Sassanians from the Kushan empire. It was [as] “Buddha” that Mani was received by the Shah of Turan.”

⁶² Ibid, p.37: “In the 8th Century [Manichaeism] became the state religion of Uyghur Turks...one of the main military powers on the northern frontiers of China....After the eclipse of the first Uyghur Empire in the ninth century, the religion continued to thrive in the Tarim Basin until the rise of Genghis Khan. From 1904-14, in four expeditions to Central Asia, German archeologists led by Prof Albert von le Coq and A Grunwedel brought back to Berlin from Manichaeism monasteries at Turfan in Xinjiang several thousand fragments of Manichaeism texts. The texts are written in a number of Central Asian languages, especially middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian and Uyghur.”

goes back into the pastoral and shamanistic practice of the early Turkic and pre-Turkic settlers in the region. Other ideas and references came from contacts with Indian, Persian, Arabic and Hellenic cultures over the centuries. Islamic culture provides a strong overlay to all of these. In writing that is set in modern contexts, there are clear and frequent references to the literary approaches and techniques of Russian writers of the socialist school. In writing with a more historical basis, there is a consistent strand of symbolism and allegory that is characteristic of the Chagatai Turkic literary culture of Central Asia⁶³ (discussed in Chapter 5). At no point does Zunun make any reference to influence of Chinese literature, either classical or contemporary, except to the extent that he quotes official Communist Party texts.

The Uyghur language itself is enriched with the inheritances of the many contributory cultures. Zunun drew on this to some degree, but was generally careful to pitch his language at the level of the ordinary Uyghur reader. He did not adopt a high literary style, although he demonstrated the ability to use such a style when appropriate (discussed in Chapter 6). Zunun's literary project was to reach out to his fellow Uyghurs, to educate and motivate them for their own immediate benefit through social and economic development. His dialogue is down to earth and reflects his close contact with the ordinary people. At the same time, Zunun was conscious that he was working in a political context where every word might be scrutinised for its hidden meanings, or for signs of political dissidence. Under these conditions, he often used language which could be read differently according to the point of view of the reader. For example, he writes frequently about "anti-Imperialism" in ways that are consistent with the CCP policy and rhetoric of the time. However, the message to a Uyghur reader is as likely to reflect a perception of Chinese imperialism as it is to reflect the orthodox Western Imperialism that a CCP cadre would perceive.

Zunun's literary project follows and reflects the course of his life through a changing political landscape from the 1930s to the 1980s. Over this period, his writings can be seen to reflect both his ideals and his experience in the reality of the Uyghurs' situation. As a young writer, he was dissatisfied with the injustice, inequality, and ignorance that

⁶³ Abdusalam Tohti, Kasim Arshou (eds), *Uyghur Edibiyati Tarihi* [History of Uyghur Literature], vol 11, Xinjiang Maarip Neshriyati [Xinjiang Educational Publishing House], Urumqi, 1993, p 104-5. This stems from the

he saw around him. His idealism at that time was based on the belief that knowledge and selfless dedication would bring about radical social change for the better. His life was to expose him to repeated betrayals of these ideals by the forces of politics. He himself became a victim of political forces that condemned him to seventeen years of exile (1962-79) during which time he suffered extreme physical hardship and was prevented from writing.

Zunun's early writings indicate that he was sincerely internationalist in his ideals, and that he believed that implementation of the socialist international program would result in justice for all, including the Uyghurs. The leaders of the East Turkistan Republic were encouraged in this belief by the Soviet authorities, and later by the CCP when it was initially seeking to achieve a peaceful incorporation of East Turkistan into the People's Republic of China. But the repeated betrayal of the Uyghur interests by the Soviet Union and the competing Chinese parties placed a severe strain on Zunun's socialist idealism.⁶⁴ At times, his work seemed to be directed toward saving his people from complete demoralisation. At the time when he returned from political exile, into a new political context of the People's Republic as led by Deng Xiaoping, we must ask whether he had despaired of socialism and directed his remaining efforts to recording, and if possible restoring, the identity and culture of his Uyghur people. This was a period characterised by mass transmigration and the rapid sinicisation of Xinjiang by the Han government.

When Zunun left Urumqi for his final visit to Kazakstan, he was carrying with him a lifetime of memories that included many disappointed ideals. Having dedicated his life to encouraging the education and enlightenment of his people, he had seen his own children deprived of education for reasons of political malice. He had seen the exploitation of the people of Xinjiang reach levels that the worst of Qing dynasty

13th Century, to until the late 19th Century. It falls within the broad Islamic literary culture. The name "Chagatai" derives the Central Asian dynasty founded by Chagatai, the second son of Chinggis Khan, which spread from the Tarim Basin to the Mavrunnehir, the Amudarya, and parts of northern Iran.

⁶⁴ Atan Deli Orman, Prof Abdulkadir Donuk (eds), *Isa Yusuf – Turk Mujahid* [Isa Yusuf, Turkish Fighter], Bayrak, Istanbul, 1991, pp. 26-29. Isa Yusuf Alptekin served as Secretary-General in the Coalition Government of Xinjiang in 1947, and Mesut Sabri served as Chairman.

governors could not have dreamed of achieving.⁶⁵ He had seen all economic and intellectual opportunity kept in the control of a Han-dominated government that was unwilling to trust any Uyghur with real power over their own future.⁶⁶ He had seen his own attempts to compromise, and to work within a hostile system, frustrated by the depth of suspicion and obsession with control demonstrated by the CCP.

It would not be hard to conclude that Zunun's memories of his life in Xinjiang were so painful that he did not want even his corpse to be part of it. If this were the case, Zunun Kadir's last request could symbolise the Uyghur people's disappointment and despair. Certainly, Zunun's personal experience was similar to that of large numbers of Uyghurs of all classes. The main difference is that, as a writer, he has left us with a record of his experience and thinking over a lifetime of disillusionment.

This thesis will explore Zunun Kadir's response to the dilemma he faced as a writer and cultural cadre through almost all of his working life. A major element of his response to this dilemma was the use of ambiguous language or imagery, which would allow him to satisfy official expectations of his role as an established writer, and also to offer different layers of meaning to his Uyghur audience with the cultural understanding to appreciate the ambiguity.

Study of Zunun's work is not easy, because the political circumstances of his life are still very sensitive in China, and materials on Zunun's life and work are difficult to obtain. The primary source is Zunun Kadir's works, published in Uyghur script.⁶⁷ The work of Zunun Kadir is available in a representative edition of writings from the 1940s to the 1980s. In addition, he has left some valuable memoir materials that describe his childhood and early life. These include descriptions of works he wrote in the 1930s but

⁶⁵ Kadir Kerim Shehyari, *Tarihka körülmigen dehshet*, [A Terror Unprecedented in History], Bayrak, Istanbul, 1997, p.4-7. Shehyari worked in the Xinjiang Academy of Social Sciences archives from 1956-63, after which he emigrated to Kyrgyzstan. He describes how, under the guise of "land reform", all farmers were progressively dispossessed of their land as it was given over to Han-controlled cooperatives and communes. The local agricultural system largely collapsed. He mentions that in 1959 in Bay County (Aksu district), the peasants were compelled to deliver a state-ordered quota of grain to the government, while one third of their population died of starvation. In 1962, more than 4,000 died in Toksun county and more than 10,000 died in Peysivat County (Kashgar district).

⁶⁶ McMillen, *op.cit.*, p.28-29.

⁶⁷ During Zunun's working life there were several changes in official orthography of the Uyghur language in PRC (described in Chapter 6), but Zunun always wrote in the Arabic-based Uyghur script.

that were destroyed during times of political danger.⁶⁸ Phases of Zunun's career can be generally identified as the pre-PRC era (1930s-1940s); the period in which he worked within Maoist China (1949-1961), and his final creative period (1979-1989) following resumption of a writing career that was completely suppressed from 1962 to 1979.

My purpose in this project has been to expose, to an international readership, some of the richness of the Uyghur literary tradition, the skill with which Zunun Kadir employed it in a difficult contemporary context, and the continuing struggle of the Uyghur people to sustain their cultural and national identity under enormous external pressures.

Note on Source Materials

None of Zunun Kadir's works have been published in any Western language, although his life and work present issues that are of great interest to any scholar concerned with post-colonial Central Asia, with contemporary issues involving China's "minority" politics, or with contemporary Uyghur issues. My objective in this study has been to make available a representative selection of the works of this important writer, together with an assessment of the special dilemma that underlies the themes of many of his works in a range of genres. Because metaphor and symbol have a prominent place in Uyghur writing, a degree of interpretation has been provided, both in an attempt to elucidate his themes as they would be understood by his Uyghur readership, and to convey to non-Uyghur readers the Uyghur cultural background on which his literary project is based.

Zunun, as far as is known, never wrote anything in Chinese. However, some of his works have appeared in Chinese translation. The primary sources of Zunun's works, though not complete, are drawn from "*Zunun Kadir Eserliri*" (Works of Zunun Kadir) published in 1992; a volume of Fables and Stories published in 1986 and reprinted in 1998; "Chenikish" (a volume of stories) published in 1991 and 1998; "Recollections" published in Chinese and Uyghur parallel text in 1991. The full opera and film script texts of "Gerip and Senem" (co-authored with Ali Azziz) were available in print only in a Chinese language translation⁶⁹, although I was able to transcribe the Uyghur language film dialogue of "Gerip and Senem" from a video recording, and some of the operatic

⁶⁸ Discussed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 4.

songs from “Gerip and Senem” were available in Uyghur lyric sheets accompanying audio recordings.

Audio taped recordings left by Zunun near the end of his life, and interviews recorded with his wife and family members during field work in 1998, provide further biographical material. Zunun refers to having revised a number of his works over time. In most cases, it is not possible to directly compare the revisions, as the original versions are not available.

Secondary source references on Zunun Kadir are rare and mostly only found in Uyghur language materials. I have referred to my conversations in 1998 with Abdu Kadir Jelaeddin, Associate Professor in the Literature Department of Urumqi Teachers’ University; and with Yusupjan (Zhang Shirong), a senior writer in the Xinjiang Writers’ Association and specialist in translation of Uyghur to Chinese, who is also a member of the Xinjiang People’s Congress and has translated Uyghur poetry as well as other literature. Published critical references are from Nurmuhamet Zaman⁷⁰; Enver Abdurehim⁷¹; Ehet Turdi⁷²; Azad Sultan⁷³; and Muhammad Polat writing in *Tarim* journal no.4 of 1981. I have drawn upon references in Turkish by Prof Dr Sultan Mahmut Kashgarli,⁷⁴ and in German by Dr Michael Friedrich.⁷⁵ No English-language references have been found.

Other secondary sources for this study are found in Chinese, English and Turkish texts. In addition to published works, I have also obtained firsthand unpublished written and interview materials from sources in East Turkistan, Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Turkey.

⁶⁹ Translated by Zhang Shirong.

⁷⁰ Nurmuhamet Zaman, "The development and influence of Soviet Uyghur literature" in Xinjiang University Language and Literature Department_(eds) *Ili Makaleleri Toplami* [A collection of Ili Articles],Xinjiang University Publishing House, Urumqi 1995, p.199ff.

⁷¹ Enver Abdurehim, "Famous artist Zunun Kadir and his creative works" in *Edeb, Eser ve Baha* [Author, Work and Evaluation], Minzu Chubanshe [Nationalities Publishing House], Beijing, 1993 p.204.

⁷² Ehet Turdi, *Bir Evliya hekkide khisse* [A Story of a Sage], Kashgar Uyghur Neshriyati [Kashgar Uyghur Publishing House], 1997, pp.244-298.

⁷³ Azad Sultan op. cit., pp.93-4.

⁷⁴ Sultan Mahmut Kashgarli, *Çağdaş Uyğur Türklerinin Edebiyatı* [The Contemporary Literature of the Uyghur Turks], Neyir Publishing and Turkish Ministry of Culture, Ankara, 1998, p.203

⁷⁵ Michael Friedrich, *Die Uyghurisch Literatur in Xinjiang 1956-1966*, Harrisowitz Verlag, Weisbaden, 1997.

Attempts to obtain additional materials during my field trip to Urumqi in 1998 were largely frustrated by the reluctance of the local authorities to give me access to unpublished materials of any kind. Some materials that had previously been published were also unobtainable despite my efforts. Working with the available materials, I have given priority to drawing out the layered meanings of Zunun's writings and placing them within the context of contemporary Uyghur life. In particular I trace the continuing dilemma that consistently characterised Zunun's life in steering a course between nationalism, socialism, and political necessity.

Chapter 2: The 1940s: Nationalism and Modernity

The 1940s were Zunun Kadir's most productive writing period. It was a time of active cultural nationalism, especially the period of national autonomy identified with the influence of the Three Districts Government (also known as the 2nd East Turkistan Republic) based in Ili. Zunun participated as a writer, producer, actor and director in stage productions of the Uyghur Enlightenment [*Uyghur Akartish*] Association that had been formed to promote Uyghur culture. Later he became head of the Literature Department of the three district government. He also worked as an editor of various newspapers and magazines during that period. On the other hand, Zunun and other Uyghur writers during this period had to cope with a changing political climate. For those Uyghur writers operating within the Soviet sphere of influence (which at times included the ETR) there were editorial influences that reflected Soviet literary policy regarding "nationalities" literature. When, later, the political power shifted toward the KMT, writers came under pressure to observe different limitations that reflected KMT policies toward the integration of Xinjiang with China.

Zunun's writings of the 1940s contain criticisms of the pre-1949 governments of East Turkistan. The historical events of early 20th Century Turkistan (as described in Chapter 1) resulted in a very strong influence of Soviet literary policies in East Turkistan in the 1940s. The Soviet Union had a well-established policy toward minority cultures and writing that had been laid down at the 16th Party Congress in Moscow in 1930. This provided a formula of literary rules to guide Soviet citizens, especially minority writers and artists, on the treatment of questions of national culture and literature. In 1934 the Soviet Writers' Congress also adopted a policy and a program on this theme. In this policy, Stalin advocated socialist realism, which he defined as "...culture that is socialist in content and national in form, having the object of educating the masses in the spirit of socialism."⁷⁶

Zunun's writing in the 1940s was affected both by the political and social currents of the time, and by Zunun's own aspiration to contribute to the development of his society.

⁷⁶ Edward Allworth, *Uzbek Literary Politics*, Mouton & Co, The Hague, 1964, p.70.

For this, he was in search both of the causes of problems, and the solutions to problems. He was an enthusiastic socialist, and may have believed at the beginning that the Uyghur people's living standards would be best improved through socialism. His writing of the period often exemplifies socialist realist approaches, criticising the old social order and encouraging reformist views

In Zunun's criticisms at this time of the former Qing, warlord and Nationalist regimes, a modern reader can find parallels with the criticisms now made of the Communist regime, with regard to the disappointment of many early supporters in the outcomes for political freedoms and social equality. In addition, as an Uyghur nationalist, Zunun may have found it hard to accept some aspects of Chinese rule. The 1940s, while coming before his period of life under direct CCP authority, show that his dilemmas of identity, loyalty and idealism were already developing. Power in Xinjiang was exercised during this period by various and changing combinations of KMT, Soviet, ETR and CCP regimes. Zunun had to find ways to express his national and social aspirations without too directly bringing himself into conflict with the ruling authorities.⁷⁷

The ten years rule of Sheng Shicai, who first implemented Soviet-influenced programs and later aligned with the KMT, was a major disillusionment to Zunun. This point is clearly demonstrated in his writings from the 1980s, which are discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. Zunun's involvement with the East Turkistan Republic, and his experience of the betrayal of ETR by USSR, KMT, CCP and other powers, can be seen from his writing to have affected Zunun deeply.

When we look at Sheng's period of rule, and the short life of the ETR, we can see a pattern of Soviet sponsorship for Soviet sympathisers among the group of Uyghur nationalists. The issue of this support seems to have been used by the Soviet Union as a bargaining chip in its broader negotiations with Chinese governments, whether KMT or CCP. On the other hand, all Chinese factions had the ambition to hold on to all of

⁷⁷ Uyghur writers still can only function within very limited bounds and under the strict orders imposed by the Chinese regulations designed to control the minorities generally, and in this case the Uyghurs in particular. This situation of constraint adds interest to Zunun's writing, because having to write under such restriction and danger obliges him to use artistic devices such as metaphor to express himself. We are reminded of Nietzsche's idea of Art: "The repression of the drives is the basis of all great art and civilisation, leaving as it does a void in human being which culture alone can fill" (Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic*, Blackwell, Cambridge Mass., 1990, p.238).

Xinjiang as a Chinese territory, and were willing at times to make concessions to the Soviet government in order to achieve this. East Turkistan was faced in the end with two strong powers opposing Uyghur independence. With these two major powers (China and the Soviet Union) preoccupying world attention, the issue of a Uyghur nation seeking autonomy has generally been given little international attention.

I would argue that in Zunun's work of the 1940s two stages can be identified that show the influence of Soviet literary policies: a critical realist phase; followed by socialist realist phase.⁷⁸ These paralleled contemporary movements in Soviet literary politics. The critical realist phase is characterised by concentration on social problems before Communist rule, such as education, the position of women, and the sources of poverty and insecurity. Zunun attacked imperialism and Chinese colonial exploitation, and openly supported the nationalist Ili Rebellion movement. The socialist realist phase is characterised by portrayal of nationalist themes, but only in allegorical form, and contains elements of propaganda for Communist party policies. For example, he ridicules pan-Turk sentiment⁷⁹, attacks the Kuomintang, writes about class struggle and conflict, and portrays capitalist, land-owning classes and opponents of Communism in a bad light. In this phase, his writing reflects current Chinese literary policy⁸⁰.

Zunun Kadir's works reveal the influence of socialist ideals, and also of the techniques of the new Russian literary movements of this time. His humanitarian views are consistent with his origins and experience as a member of a colonised people. The linguistic and cultural links between the Uyghurs and the other Turkic peoples of Soviet Central Asia also ensured that there was a penetration of Soviet literary ideas across the border into Xinjiang. Indeed, many Uyghur intellectuals of that generation had obtained their education in Soviet institutions, as part of the Soviet push for influence in Xinjiang.⁸¹ Primary literary influences came from the Russian school of realism that had originated in the 1840s with the literary critic Vissarion Belinsky, who promoted the

⁷⁸ Allworth, op.cit., pp. 71-2.

⁷⁹ See Zunun's story "Perman" (*Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.75.)

⁸⁰ In the article "Writers and Artists should join masses of the Workers, Peasants and Soldiers for the long term"[*Yazghuchilar ve senetchiler chokum uzun muddet, ishchi, dikkhan, eskerler ammusining ichige berish kerek*]in *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.663, Zunun discusses the need for authors to write "reality" by following the contemporary CCP call for intellectuals go among the masses, saying that through this uyghur literature will acquire "deeper meaning".

view that art had a duty to society, and that art must reflect reality and carry a message of social value. A secondary influence came from the Chinese May Fourth movement of critical realism which looked towards western political culture and literary models.⁸² Literary influences acknowledged by Zunun Kadir include Chekhov, Gorky,⁸³ Tolstoy, Shakespeare, and the Uyghur nationalist from the Ili faction, Lutpullah Mutellip.⁸⁴

Zunun also drew upon the other traditional literary sources of Uyghur culture such as the Turkic Chagatai literature (discussed in Chapter 6), which brought Persian and Islamic influences into the Uyghur culture,⁸⁵ combining high literary style of rich poetic forms, symbolism and metaphor, with oral culture and folk traditions of storytelling, fables of the struggle between good and evil, and humour.⁸⁶ He refers to his admiration of the Uzbek poet Navayi (of Uyghur descent), and of the Azeri poet

⁸¹ Among the better-known of those trained in Soviet institutions were Burhan Shahidi, Saifuddin Azziz, and Ahmetjan Kassim.

⁸² Xiaomei Chen, *Occidentalism - a theory of Counter-Discourse in post-Mao China*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1995, p.139.

⁸³ Mahmut Polat, editor of *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, notes that Zunun read Gorky and other writers in translation into the Tatar language.

⁸⁴ Born in 1922, Lutpullah Mutellip studied both Russian and Uyghur in the Stalin High School in Gulja. He began writing poems in 1937, at the age of 15. He worked as a reporter on the "Ili Gazette" His poems were patriotic and on the theme of liberty. He moved to Urumqi in 1939 and studied in a Teachers College. His writing and poetry became known all over East Turkistan. Later Sheng Shicai's regime exiled him to Aksu. In 1945 he was arrested by the KMT. In September of that year he was executed, at the age of 23, along with many colleagues. (Eminjan Ehmedi, *Uyghur Edebiyati Tarihindeki Namayendiler* [Representatives of Uyghur Literary History], Xinjiang Helk Neshriyati [Peoples Publishing House], Urumqi, 1996, p. 405.)

⁸⁵ The use of Chagatai literature as a background was a strong theme in early post-1917 revolution literary debate, (Allworth op cit p.47)

⁸⁶ Chagatai literature has its origins with the Gok Turk (8thCent), Uyghur (8-13th Cent), and Karluk (11-13th Cent) and Chagatai reaches its peak in 15-16th Century with AliShir Navayi. (Allworth, op.cit., p.18.)

Fuzuliy. Zunun also draws upon Pirdeu's *Sahname* (from the 11th century), written in Persian under Turkish Ghaznavid rule.

Zunun's literary output during the 1940s included short stories, two major plays "Ghunchem" and "Gulnissa". The stories discussed here are from among those published in his Collected Works [*Eserleri*] and a volume entitled *Chenikish*.⁸⁷ In these works we find evidence of some freedom to express direct criticism of colonialism and corrupt rule, whereas his later writings under a consolidated CCP regime, I will argue, are progressively more inhibited and ambiguous in their criticisms, reflecting tighter control by the regime over writing and publication.

Short Stories

Zunun's short stories from the 1940s show clearly why he was considered one of the leading realists in contemporary Uyghur literature⁸⁸. He utilised Uyghur folk tales and narratives, adding new social dimension and applying a style of expression drawn from Uyghur classical literary forms, to develop realism in Uyghur literature. By the mid-1940s his short stories well fitted the definition of realism both in form and in meaning.

The Teacher's Letter⁸⁹

This story deals with the difficulties of receiving education in 1940s East Turkistan under Sheng Shicai's regime. Applying the principles of realist writing, Zunun describes the degraded conditions in which a Uyghur teacher at this time must conduct his life. In his dark, poor, filthy room, infested with rats and insects, Rozi the

⁸⁷ The common modern understanding of "realism" is as offered in the Macquarie Dictionary: '...the treatment of subject in literature with fidelity to nature or to real life. Deliberate depiction of ugly things or people in art' (*Macquarie Dictionary*, Macquarie University, 1991, p.1467). In Zunun Kadir's cultural context, we also apply the ideological definitions of realism as used in Communist theory of his time: 'Socialist Realism – an exposition of the current Party line or of a position in harmony with it; Critical Realism – voicing social protest, reflecting contradictions of life and propagandizing democracy and humanism.' (Allworth op cit p.72.

⁸⁸ Nurmhammet Zaman, "Soviet-Uyghur Edebiyatining shekillenishi ve tesiri" [Formation and Influence of Soviet-Uyghur Literature], in *Ili Makaleleri Toplamı* [An Ili Anthology], Xinjiang Dashue Neshriyati [Xinjiang University Press], Urumqi, 1995, pp.199-200.

⁸⁹ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., pp.47-55.

teacher is sitting helplessly on his bed.⁹⁰ When he hears his name called, he imagines that the colonial tyrant Sheng Shicai has sent people to arrest him, and all the horrors of persecution under Sheng's rule go through his mind as on a movie screen.

His tangled thoughts fled, replaced by a terrible fear. He raised his head and stared straight ahead, shivering like a person with malaria. He saw in his mind the terror, blood-baths and murders of Sheng Shicai, with thousands and thousands of people unexpectedly put into green trucks, and disappearing for ever. No-one knew what crime they had committed or where they were taken to. People could only talk about prisons, humiliations, oppression, hardships and barbaric tortures. In this human abattoir things were many times worse than medieval horrors. Most of his schoolmates had in one night been put into a green truck, and had disappeared. There went one of them, his head covered like an animal, being dragged by one of those stealers of men. Probably, they would kill him. He could see the stomachs being ripped open, the heads crushed, the hearts torn out and tongues cut, the bloody corpses lying there. Prisoners digging the graves in which they would be buried alive, with exhaustion and suffering on their faces. Dried-out skulls were scattered among the mountains.

The visitor calling his name is in fact his friend Sadik, also a teacher. He looks poor and ill, almost unrecognisable:

His face, once round and pale, was now dark. His eyes were sunken and looked infected [*chapak*]. His normally strong body seemed to have shrunk. His old and torn clothing gave him an even uglier appearance.

The friends converse about their situation in bleak and hopeless terms:

⁹⁰ "The teacher's room is dark, humid, with an old table, black with dirt, that serves both as bed and as table. By the bed a doona and pillow, and on the table books, notebooks, paper. Spider webs in the corners, and on the floor shoes with worn-out heels. A few significant items under the teacher's pillow. On the window-ledge is an enamel mug [*kurushka*] and a bowl [*hejir*]. Next to the door is a tall, long-spouted kettle [*chogun*] used for making tea as well as for washing. A broken suitcase and a candle for light. It is a night quiet as death. Dogs bark and there is the sound of rats gnawing. In the dark, the teacher sits motionless on the bed, bedbugs [*burge*] crawling on him and sucking his blood. The teacher

“Your situation is even worse than mine! A teacher’s room shouldn’t be this dirty!”

“With no security, how can one work, my friend. For a tidy room, you need a secure life”. So saying he spat in his blackened hand.

“In our mental condition and stress, you are right. But for a teacher to lack self-control and willpower is bad...”

“Don’t sell me philosophy!” Rozi cut across Sadik’s words. “How did you get in here?”

“I called and called, but could not be heard, so I climbed the wall”.

“So now you have learned to be a thief!”

“In this situation, we could be anything.” With anguish, he continued bobbing his head and hitting his fist on his knee, while continuing the conversation.

The two friends discuss the political situation of the time, when the South of Xinjiang was controlled by the rightist Kuomintang and the North west (“Three Districts”) was controlled by the leftist East Turkistan Republic. Sadik refers to the Kuomintang as unjust, and suggests that they should be exposed and the virtues of the Three Districts government made clear, “..to tell the people the way to freedom”. Yet something has made it difficult for them to communicate:

The two teachers sat together without saying anything for a short time. Then Rozi raised his head and looked at Sadik, wanting to say something, but stopped. Why was it that he could not tell his friend what was in his heart?

The political atmosphere has apparently made it impossible for Rozi to trust the man he considered to be his old friend. Rozi could not talk about the underground activity in Urumqi and encourage his friend to participate in it. Realising that Rozi is not telling him what is on his mind, Sadik inquires further, but Rozi will not speak.

Sadik then tells the story of how he was appointed head of a local school. He had problems finding transport to the place, eventually making his way from cart station to

does not feel anything, resting his head between his hands, and not noticing the pain in his elbows.

cart station, and obtaining passage on a broken-down ox cart. After three days hard travel he arrived at his destination, to find nobody expecting him there, no school, and nobody to tell him what he was expected to do. He found a rundown old house surrounded by marshland, which was so damp inside he could not sleep for the smell and mosquitoes. These thoughts about his situation reflect the hopelessness of the teacher's life. He wondered whether he was there as a teacher, or as an exiled prisoner. After having acquired his own education with such difficulty, was he now to be prevented from using it to serve his people? He goes to see the county head [*xianzhang*], who treats him with disdain, saying:

“There is no Uyghur school here - you must have made a mistake!”

I asked what I should do. Should I leave? He seemed to be expecting that question, and said immediately “Yes - write an application to me to say you could not work, and then go.”

The teacher and the county head both act out the only opportunities that are available to them under an oppressive system which requires individuals to take responsibility for situations that they are forced into. The county head not only is reluctant to allow Uyghur children to have education, but also insists that the teacher lie in order to cancel the setting up of a Uyghur school. The county head

... continued casually smoking his cigarette and sipping tea... He was pleased that I was leaving, and I was pleased to be getting away from such bad conditions and isolation.

Now the teacher had been back in Urumqi for six months working as a bricklayer. After all his education, Sadik is unable to work in the job for which he is qualified. In the end, Rozi takes a letter out from under his pillow, and gives it to Sadik. The letter reads:

Dear Mother,

You saw educated people living happily in some places enjoying their rights. You thought that if you educated your darling son, he would be happy. With these sweet thoughts, sacrificing everything, you educated me. But alas, I am not happy. I have no security, I am afraid of my own shadow. Every day I dream of prison, torture and death. Because of this I smell blood every moment, and my heart aches....No, I was not born unlucky and fearful...I also believe that my future will not be like this. I understand very well what makes your son unhappy now, and what makes the teacher repulsive to his own people. It is an unjust society and domination.

Mother, you are smiling in Ili.⁹¹ Do you miss us? Probably you want to share your happiness and good fortune with us. Probably you also need teachers - I know very well, of course you need them. We are not the kind of people who abandon their children, abandon their mother, or abandon their country.

Dear Mother, don't fear that your son has given this away. I am ready to fight for freedom and for happiness.

(August 1945)

The story shows a change from Zunun's earlier view that he tells us he wrote in "The Hardship of Ignorance" in 1936. This work, now lost but described by Zunun in other writings, emphasises that hard work and education will bring solutions to the problems of the Uyghur people. Owing to the political circumstances of the period, by the time "The Teacher's Letter" was written Zunun had lost that confident belief.

This story demonstrates a number of reasons why some of Zunun's writing may have been banned during certain later periods in Xinjiang. There is a further allegorical layer to this letter that can readily be interpreted as referring to Uyghur nationalist aspirations. Zunun frequently uses the image of "mother" to represent national aspiration or autonomous government. The language of this letter explicitly locates

⁹¹ The "Three Districts".

the “mother” in the Ili, East Turkistan Republic, and associates this with happiness and good fortune, by contrast to life under an oppressive colonialism . Even today, this parallel could be drawn between the situation of Uyghurs in Xinjiang compared to the situation of their relatives in the autonomous CIS states.

Rudupay⁹²

“Rudupay” is defined in the dictionary as: “a mythical, boneless creature with legs like intestines, once lodged on a person’s back, impossible to dislodge”.⁹³ Zunun begins his story “Rudupay” (1945) by raising the question of how people react to disaster, or respond to the threat of disaster.

People have heard of it, but not everyone has seen it, and even if they have seen it they have pretended they did not see, but many people have seen it.

People are very cautious about meeting disaster, but people ask what disaster looks like, where it dwells, and what it does. There are many who will say ‘I don’t know’. Such people carry disaster with them and nurture it without recognising it. They are afraid of its name, but they imagine ‘If one can avoid meeting disaster, how comfortably and freely one can live’.

The period in which this story was written was a period of close links and engagements with the Soviet Union. The Ili region, where Zunun grew up, was the area most influenced by the Soviet Union. Soviet policy toward this region was ambiguous. On the one hand, the Soviets dealt directly with the local ruler Sheng Shicai as if he were sovereign, and on the other hand, they continued to assure both the KMT and the CCP that they recognised Chinese sovereignty over the whole of Xinjiang. During this same period, the Soviet Union under Stalin was waging strong campaigns to tighten the Soviet political and cultural grip on Central Asia. Writers such as Cholpan, from

⁹² *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.56.

⁹³ Xinjiang Nationalities Language and Orthography Committee Lexicography Section (eds), *Uyghur Telining İzahlıkh Lughiti* [Explanatory Dictionary of the Uyghur Language], Minzu Chubanshe, Beijing, 1992, p.248.

Uzbekistan, were criticised for “resorting to Chagataisms and other archaic forms”, as well as anti-proletarian activity and “propaganda for Chagataism and pan-Turkism”.⁹⁴

The same forces were present in Xinjiang through the influence of the Soviet Union on Sheng Shicai. Xinjiang cultural policy also was hostile to pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism, and therefore limited writers in the extent to which they could pursue literary styles and genres that could be classed, under this policy, as “feudal” and “backward”.⁹⁵

In this context, I will suggest an interpretation of the story “Rudupay” in which the disaster that befalls a young man is an allegory for colonial rule of Turkistan. Sultan M Kashgarli has written, “In his story Rudupay, Zunun Kadir uses a vivid metaphor of a creature who symbolizes the cruelty and exploitation of Chinese colonialism in East Turkistan, especially toward Uyghurs”.⁹⁶

Given the political sensitivity of Islamic connections at that time, it is interesting that in his tale of Rudupay Zunun openly refers to the traditional importance of the Haj and the road to Mecca. He uses the narrative device of putting the cultural importance of Mecca in the words of his grandfather. This may have been a deliberate device to distance himself from appearing to advocate Islam, considering the official anti-Islamic policies of Chinese authorities. Even so, his reference to the road to Mecca is in relation to the dangers that lie on that road – in particular, the encounter with Rudupay. On the other hand, his grandfather’s words make clear that not everyone encountered on the road to Mecca is a Rudupay.

Our ancestors have passed down to us a thought about the way disaster happens: ‘On the way to Mecca, there is Rudupay. If that disaster comes upon you it will stick to you and will be difficult to dislodge. There is a bird that will pick the eyes of Rudupay, but until you encounter that bird, you will carry the peddler’.

⁹⁴ Allworth, *op.cit.*, pp.228-229. “Chagataism” meant traditional Central Asian high literature, which contained substantial Arabic and Persian lexicon and reference, and Islamic culture, and therefore presented competition to the attempt to create a universal Soviet culture.

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, p.50.

⁹⁶ Kashgarli, *op.cit.*, p.204.

The grandfather in this story can be seen as the representative of traditional Uyghur culture and people. The young Zunun asks his grandfather to explain more about the Rudupay:

I was very concerned about that idea of disaster. One day I asked my grandfather: “Grandfather, when you went on the Haj, did you meet the Rudupay on the road? Did he cling to you? Does he look human?”. My grandfather laughed at my worrying about nothing [*kelse-kelmes nimilerge*], but he explained to me:

“On the road to Mecca I met many of the poor and wretched of Mecca. I gave them alms, and they were happy. Some people, without thinking about it, call them ‘Rudupay’, but it is not true. These are poor beggars. It is said that those who went via the Indian road met a Rudupay. According to them, Rudupay’s feet are twisted and hang uselessly (*sorulup yurudiken*), he is really old, has bad eyes, and under the cover of a gentle (*yavas*) manner he asks help from people. If you feel pity and approach him, he sticks to you.”

In these paragraphs, we may sense the anti-imperialist rhetoric of the Soviet Union as well as the underground CCP. In answer to young Zunun’s questions, the grandfather makes a neutral reference to pan-Islamism when he says that the poor people on the road to Mecca are not Rudupays (although some people have said so). This defence of some of the Islamic faithful is protected from the accusation of being “Pan-Islamic” by the explicit reference to the “poor people”, which allows for a proletarian sentiment to be read into the relevant passage. This is an example of the ambiguous literary strategy that is found through much of Zunun’s work.

The grandfather explicitly refers to the existence of Rudupays on the road through India. India at the period of writing was “British India”, and there could be some implications here that Rudupay is associated with colonialism – in this case, the British in India. That interpretation would be politically safe in either Soviet or Chinese ideological environments of the time, but none the less Zunun distances the comment about India to the status of hearsay, as the grandfather recalls that “it is said” that Rudupays are encountered there.

The narrative moves at this stage to take the question of the Rudupay/disaster from the general to the very particular, starting with the identification of Rudupay as a person. Zunun asks his grandfather for details of Rudupay, and the grandfather tells him:

It mixes with people, I think. It also has a human shape, but is is very greedy and never satisfied – that is why all its weight will be placed on your shoulder. Slowly, without letting you know, it sucks your blood. Even if you collapse from the exhaustion of carrying it, it does not leave your neck.

Interestingly, Zunun uses his own voice as author to say that his main worry about the effect of Rudupay was that it “is an obstacle to the free movement of people”; this makes him angry, and he asks his grandfather if there is any way to get rid of Rudupay. He then presents a summary of the story told by his grandfather, condensed from what he calls “a big book”.⁹⁷

A brave young man called Senober loved a fairy called Gulyar. He went searching for Gulyar and faced many difficulties, and saw many strange events. He saw high buildings with no people in them, and in another place he saw a marble palace full of gold, jewels and precious objects, but no people and strange animals sitting upon the thrones. In another place, all kinds of food from all over the world were being cooked. In a building with a big orchard garden, the foods were being prepared and set out as if for a great wedding feast – but there were no people.

The hungry young man, who had been eating the roots of plants, saw this beautiful food all laid out, exclaimed at his luck, and with great appetite went to eat the food. But when he reached for a steamed dumpling [*manta*] the steamer [*kaskan*] jumped up, beat him thoroughly and chased him away. When he stretched out for some halva, the ladle [*chomush*] began to hit him until his head and eyes were bleeding. It was a strange and funny situation. No pot would give him food, and all reprimanded him. No plate gave him dried fruit [*kak*] and no tree gave him fruit – all beat him and chased him away.

⁹⁷ Zunun refers in his oral memoir, and in other places, to being familiar with the “Thousand and one Nights” collection of folk tales. This story of Rudupay has much in common with the story of Sinbad

The structure of the narrative at this point presents us with one of Zunun's frequent literary devices: a young man taking the road in quest of his aspiration. I would suggest that Senobar's love for Gulyar should be seen not simply as a young man's romantic quest for a lover, but also as a general metaphor for aspiration and endeavour. We know from Zunun's other writings that this period of his life was dominated by strong aspirations for the self-determination of his Uyghur people, the advancement of their economic and social situation, and in more personal terms, for education.⁹⁸ Thus we see the hungry young man approaching a delicious feast, only to have it denied to him, and to be punished for trying to partake of it. We should note that the year in which this story was written was also the year of the Yalta Agreement and the Sino-Soviet Friendship Agreement, by which sovereignty over East Turkistan was transferred to China (the KMT at that point), and the Chinese authorities ceased to use the name of East Turkistan Republic, referring instead as Three Districts Government.⁹⁹

We may consider what is meant here by the image of the material feasts and luxuries without any people to enjoy them. With "strange animals" sitting on the beautiful thrones, there is a sense of material luxury but of absence of human values, and of rule by inhumane, corrupt and cruel despots willing to sacrifice other people for their own advantage. Notably, the young Senobar "had seen many events of this kind and had received many beatings, so he was not too surprised and continued on his road". In the world of Zunun's readers, cruelty and capricious exploitation had been a frequent experience over a long period, and anyone who survived had to have some considerable qualities of endurance. None the less, Senobar is "looking forward to seeing a human face" so much that he takes the risk that puts him in the path of the Rudupay.

This young lover was so looking forward to seeing a human face, that one day he took a risk [*tevekkul*] and went into a garden. He saw a smiling and gentle person sitting under a tree full of ripe apples. He thought: 'Now God's wheel of fortune has turned favourably, and here is Father Fortune', and he ran to embrace him.

(Senobar) and the Old Man of the Sea (as it is called in English translations of the "Thousand and one Nights").

⁹⁸ In particular, Zunun's memoir "On the Road in Quest of Knowledge" (discussed in Chapter 4).

⁹⁹ Ikil Kurban, *Sharki Turkistan Jumhuriyeti 1944-49* [The East Turkistan Republic 1944-49], Turk Tarih Kurumu Basimevi [Turkish History Association Publishers], Ankara, 1992, p.78.

‘What are you doing, respected Father?’

‘Dear son’, he said beseechingly [*yalyvurup*], ‘I was the gardener here. I became crippled from lying too often in the damp. Every month of every year I cared for this garden, but I could not have a single apple from these branches. I have only one wish in the world – that I would like to pick a fruit with my own hand. Please help me, I will do anything.’

‘Very well, don’t make my heart tremble with your weeping. Get on my back and I will take you to the apple tree so you can pick with your own hand and eat as much as you wish’, said the brave young man. So he took the crippled gardener into the apple tree. He said there were many apples on the branches, and looked back and asked “Are you eating? If you allow it, I would like to eat five or six apples myself.” But the gardener did not answer. His eyes shone like an owl’s, his mouth was grinning. The young man thought the cripple was so happy from achieving his wish that he could not speak, so he ate apples until he was full.

The crippled gardener will soon be revealed to be a Rudupay, but Senobar is unable to resist the appeal of the “smiling and gentle” gardener who cannot walk and asks for his help. The Rudupay’s appeal works on Senobar’s better qualities, and he becomes involved not out of personal greed, but out of a desire to help someone who seems to have a human face and to be deserving of help. During the ETR period and the rule of Sheng Shicai, many idealistic young Uyghurs cooperated in different ways with socialism in general, and with Soviet and Chinese communist parties. Mao Zedong’s brother Mao Zemin among others were included in Sheng Shicai’s cabinet in the late 1930s. From a Uyghur perspective, it is easy to interpret the action of the Rudupay as having some parallels with the various Chinese authorities, who offered cooperation but then became impossible to dislodge from pursuing their own interests and objectives, regardless of the interests of their Uyghur hosts.

The last line of this passage shows that Senobar, in eating his own fill of apples, also receives some reward for the assistance that he is giving the crippled man. Even though he does not yet realise that the cripple is in fact Rudupay, the passage is already beginning to offer a warning to those Uyghurs who are tempted to believe that they can benefit personally from cooperation with someone whose intentions they should suspect.

“I have eaten your apples, and you have too, so shall we get down and go?” He looked behind him. But the gardener did not answer him – he was licking the young man’s back. The young man thought he probably was bloated, and he got down from the tree. The young man suggested gently that he get down, but the cripple did not answer, and clung to him more strongly than ever like a leech, while still licking him with his tongue. The young man was tickled:

“Hey! What are you doing?”

“Don’t die on my back, having achieved your life’s wish!”

“Hey, are you in pain?”

“Get down! You aren’t saying anything. Get down!”

The gardener did not speak but kept licking. The young man began to get angry, and pushed away the cripple’s hand that was grasping his shoulder.

“Get down! I should continue my journey. This joke or game has gone on long enough!”

The image here of the parasite Rudupay licking the back of his victim Senober is very powerful. The licking conveys a both a horrible and degrading relationship that violates normal contact between people, and on the other hand the licking can be seen as some sort of intimacy, as with the licking of a friendly dog. Though not clearly stated, it seems that Rudupay is gaining his nourishment and his power by licking the sweat of the young man (and thus, allegorically, the people or nation) who has become his victim and his host.

The young man shook himself to get rid of him, and many times got up and sat down again, and pushed at his forehead. The cripple never got off, and never said anything. The young man angrily began to insult the cripple, and stretched his arm around his back and tried to punch him. He took him to the apple orchard to hit him, and several times jumped high up and down, but the cripple clung to him ever more strongly. The young man now realised that this cripple was no gentle gardener, but the disaster Rudupay. He began to feel sorry for himself.

Freed from one disaster,

Meet with a thousand disasters,

Freed from a thousand disasters,
Meet with Rudupay¹⁰⁰

Senober's attempts to rid himself of Rudupay might recall the many attempts by the Uyghurs of East Turkistan to gain self-determination and shake off Chinese rule. They show a gradual development from polite request to increasingly angry and violent efforts, which are all in vain. Finally, there is a despairing realisation that the situation is the worst possible kind of disaster, as expressed in the verse of the poem.

From this point, the direction of the story changes. Having described the process by which the innocent young man became a victim of Rudupay, and noted the moment at which he realises the calamity, the narrative then immediately changes to a positive direction. The young man unhesitatingly commits himself to continue on his journey, motivated by his love.

He decided to proceed on his journey, carrying Rudupay. He passed deserts and icy mountains, walking for several months. Day after day he was exhausted and weakened, the poor young man's rib cage was showing, his feet were covered in cuts, and his bones were visible, yet he continued with endurance and perseverance. When he was dropping on the ground and clambering up again, almost to the point of death, he came to a very beautiful scene. There was a clear, endless lake, and next to the lake a big plane-tree stretched its branches out giving shade. In the cool breeze, its leaves made mysterious noises as if playing with each other, to this young man in love. The meadows around the lake looked in the distance like green velvet, and on the meadows colourful flowers bloomed, reminding him of coquettish young girls. The young lover took a deep breath of this place, and as he inhaled he thought: "If I continue to carry Rudupay I will die. I should gather all my strength for the last time to fight off this disaster. If I am to die, this place is so beautiful and fresh that my body might as well rest here."

¹⁰⁰ *Bir baladin kurtulup,
Mung balanga uchrudum,
Ming baladin kurtulup,*

Arriving at a beautiful place presents the young man with two possibilities: to enjoy and relax, or to take advantage of some improvement in the situation to challenge his oppressor. I would suggest that this could be translated into the situation of Uyghurs in East Turkistan, who could be tempted to accept their fate when they feel the immediate situation is not so urgent. But Senober's reaction shows that this is not the way. He is clearly aware that if he continues to carry Rudupay he will die. For a Uyghur readership, the suggestion would be that any benefits from the Chinese regime would be limited, enjoyed only by a few, and would carry the price of final destruction of the people. Senober again commits himself to a final struggle for his life.

He leaned on the plane tree to rest, and drank from the lake until he was satisfied. The water seemed to strengthen him. He lay on his back and looked up at the sky, and began to think. He came up with an excellent plan. He climbed into the tree and squeezed Rudupay's head in a fork [*achisigha*] of two strong branches, then pushed on his head with all his power, to throw himself into the lake. The young man washed himself, cleansed all of his body, and became as strong and brave a young man as he had been before.

The young man looked at Rudupay, who was suddenly again grasping at him and screaming with his ugliest voice and thrashing about with his feet. The world became covered with smoke and all kinds of frightening voices were heard. A black hurricane blew and turned the leaves yellow, causing them to fall. The flowers withered. In no time, the lake froze, and a freezing wind blew. The young man did not panic in this situation. With perseverance and endurance, he climbed up the plane tree and choked the Rudupay to death.

It is significant that when Rudupay is threatened with death, there are "all kinds of frightening voices" heard. For the Uyghur situation, it is a reminder that problems may not be limited to a single colonial power, but will also involve beneficiaries of that regime, including for example corrupt politicians, greedy officials, and those given privilege and advantage, who will resist change as strongly as possible. The situation is only resolved by direct attack on the head of Rudupay. Victory over the oppressor brings back a world restored to beauty, and even improved.

The world smiled again, the ice thawed and trees grew. Flowers bloomed many times better than before. The curse that had made this brave young man suffer for many years was finally broken, and without fear he could breath freely. In the end, he met his Gulyar in the rose garden. Gulyar is so beautiful, my pen and language are not strong enough to describe her. I could not boast that I can describe how beautiful and loveable is that young lover's Gulyar unless you could see her with your own eyes. So there was this brave young man called Senober, lover of Gulyar, who crushed and punished Rudupay for the first time in the world.

Here we see Zunun relating Gulyar to Uyghur aspirations, and almost pleading with his readers to understand what indescribable beauty and glory they could aspire to – something that is beyond the current experience of any of them “seeing with their own eyes”. This interpretation is encouraged as Zunun sums up this story with a commentary in his own voice as narrator:

From this story, I thought it is possible to defeat disaster such as Rudupay, and I was happy about that. But I thought – In our gardens there is no Rudupay; we have a secure life. But later, as I became wiser, I looked more carefully. It is not true. In our gardens also there are Rudupays. They pretend to be gardeners, but they don't give people the fruit that the people themselves planted and raised. They let them suffer in poverty. But there are people who understand the reasons for this, and these people will expose the cunning falsehoods of the Rudupay and show their true colours. They will tell their community:

“Hey Community [*Halayik*], you complain, you suffer, but who is it who brings you this disaster? The feasting Rudupay is the one who sucks your blood! Why don't you see those free-feasting Rudupays?”

People also start to open their eyes and see the roots of their disasters..... In the end, we also find ways to free ourselves from that disaster called Rudupay.

Here Zunun calls on his readers to open their eyes and clearly identify the causes of their misery. The point recalls the issue he raised in the first paragraph of this piece - the issue of people declining to recognise the cause of their suffering, and therefore

never considering the means to relieve themselves of that suffering. The burden of solving a problem, he suggests, rests with the victim alone. In the Uyghur situation, this would mean that a seemingly impossible situation might have a good result if the people have the character to remain alert to any opportunity, and to maintain courage and determination to struggle against hardship. The final paragraph shows another shift in direction:

Senober having put the Rudupay's head between two branches to choke him and break his head, since then the Rudupay's descendants have become afraid of all trees, and cudgels, and sticks. We took advantage of that to beat the Rudupays in our garden. Rudupays are so afraid of sticks, and eat and sleep lazily, they have become so fat, and like cripples can't walk – they run away without looking around.

Here we see the use of political rhetorical imagery which is familiar to the Communist anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist vocabulary of the 1940s.¹⁰¹ The working people are credited with chasing away a despised exploiting class of Rudupays. However, the important ambiguity in this passage is that the identity of the Rudupays is never made explicitly clear, and readers must draw their own inferences. This is another expression of Zunun Kadir's response to his dilemma, where he must attempt to tread a line that enables him both to promote his ideals of social justice and reform; to work within a framework that is controlled by colonial power, and still to maintain his ideals and his credentials with his Uyghur readership as a believer in Uyghur nationality and self-determination. As noted above, the clarity of the implications in this story is greater than Zunun could convey from the 1950s onward.

With Finger And Thumb¹⁰²

In this story written in the 1940s, Zunun uses humour to portray some aspects of colonial rule in the early Republic period. Corrupt colonial officials, to sustain their expensive habits, use graft as well as intimidation of local leaders who are afraid of punishment and eager to please their colonial masters to ensure their own survival. In the story, a man who has just been appointed to an official position in Kashgar meets his

¹⁰¹ McMillen, op.cit, p.21.

predecessor on the road. The former County Head [*Sengen* = Chinese *xianguan*] is riding in a carriage pulled by seven horses, piled high with gold, silver, silk and carpets. He sits smoking in a special palanquin built for him on top of it all. But the new *Sengen* has only a one-horse sulky. The new one asks his predecessor how he gained such wealth, and the old one proudly says: “With finger and thumb!” The story continues :

“How could finger and thumb produce such wealth? Obviously, there must be a secret to it?”

“When you think of the people you are going to govern, think of them as sheep in the barn or cows that you are going to milk.”

“But how did you butcher, and how did you milk?”

“For example - if I see one raise his head a little, I point my index finger at him and say ‘You are bad!’. He will be so afraid that he will give me everything he has, and bring it to my home himself. If I hold up my thumb to another one and say to him ‘You are good!’, he is so pleased that he also brings everything he owns to my home, to please me and seek my favour. So you see, I rule just with finger and thumb”.

The choice of language in those stories is significant. *Zunun* does not directly name the oppressors as Chinese, because he does not wish to accuse Chinese as a race. But by using the Chinese forms of the authorities’ positions and titles (eg *Sengen* for County Head), coopted into a Uyghur language narrative, he suggests the most likely inference that he is talking about certain Chinese officials.

Drama

As noted in Chapter 1, *Zunun* began writing for the stage in 1936. His first produced work was a three-act play called “The Hardship of Ignorance”, staged in 1937. In 1941 he contributed two scenes to a restaging of an opera written a few years earlier by *Ziya Samedi*, based on the classical Uyghur romance “*Gerip and Senem*”. This theme he re-worked in the early 1950s, and then in 1981 produced a movie script for “*Gerip and Senem*”. These works will be discussed in the chapter on 1980s, as the only available texts are from that period.

¹⁰² *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.69.

A well-known Uyghur specialist in Zunun's writing, Muhammet Polat, has written: "Zunun Kadir's drama became an inseparable part of our national culture, expressing a panorama of national life and the history of an era."¹⁰³ In his own article "Concerning Spiritual Nourishment", Zunun said that "Love is not limited to people of the opposite sex. Love may include higher love: love of one's country, one's people, and love of brotherhood and friendship, and deep enthusiasm for a job freely chosen."¹⁰⁴ Both the above comments support interpretation of Zunun's drama in terms of more than one layer of meaning. The layers may often be found in ambiguity of meaning, as well as in allegory or metaphor.

We can see in Zunun's writing an endeavour to preserve Uyghur culture; on the other hand, however, he includes some criticisms of that culture that express his modernist views, or the socialist policies of the times. For example, in "Ghunchem" and "Gulnissa", a socialist content can be identified, based on criticism of the feudal past and admiration for courageous young people who dare to defy the authorities of the old society. There is also a "national" content, in that the characters are explicitly located in the Uyghur culture and society.

The two dramas that are analysed in this chapter represent some important aspects of Zunun's developing strategy for dealing with his dilemma as a writer in a political climate of serious risk. This period precedes the establishment of CCP authority in 1949, but none the less it was a dangerous political environment, even in Ili, where Soviet agents were active and there was some persecution of intellectuals accused of "nationalism". As described in the Introduction, during these years many intellectuals and writers were arrested and killed by local authorities. Zunun also witnessed during this period the weakening of the East Turkistan Republic as Soviet and Chinese agreement forced them into a coalition government with the KMT. This political phase continued a trend toward sinicisation of Xinjiang, and therefore threw into sharper focus, for writers like Zunun, the question of survival of Uyghur national culture. Zunun's works from this period indicate that he sought to use his writing to promote Uyghur culture, while also promoting progressive social development within the Uyghur cultural context. In terms of freedom of political expression, he faced

¹⁰³ Muhammet Polat, "Introduction" in *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.35.

increasing danger and therefore had reason to employ ambiguous meaning, metaphor and allegory to get across the messages to his Uyghur audience. The two plays “Ghunchem” and “Gulnissa” were written in these circumstances, and therefore need to be read in terms of cultural commentary (both positive and negative), with elements of more or less veiled political criticism.

Ghunchem (1942 and later revisions)¹⁰⁵

Zunun’s work “Ghunchem” has been through several revisions since it was first written (according to Zunun himself¹⁰⁶) in 1941. Another source in the magazine “Xinjiang Art” [*Xinjiang seneti*] says “Ghunchem” and “Gulnissa” were both staged first in 1942.¹⁰⁷ S.M. Kashgarli dates Ghunchem’s publication as 1946.¹⁰⁸ A handwritten bibliography given to me by the Xinjiang Academy of Social Sciences in 1998 dates Ghunchem from its publication in the Ili-based journal “*Ittipak*” (Peace) in 1949. Zunun then mentions its publication in 1954, after strenuous revision, in the journal “*Tarim*”. Ghunchem, as published, is a three-act, five scene tragedy drawing upon the pressures of social tradition, class differences, exploitation, and young people attempting to take charge of their destiny through rebellion. The story of Ghunchem is significant in the way that the familiar socialist themes of class difference, feudalism, colonialism and systematic corruption are brought together with a distinctively Uyghur cultural setting. The play, with its emphasis on dialogue, demonstrates Zunun Kadir’s skill in the Uyghur language and culture.¹⁰⁹ In his use of dialogue between the characters, Zunun presents us with a rich picture of Uyghur sensibilities and traditional ways of life, including some acute social issues faced by the common people.

Synopsis

The story begins with two young people in love, and traces how social circumstances and the actions of a rich landlord force them apart. As already noted, there are grounds for reading Zunun’s accounts of love allegorically. The narrative begins with

¹⁰⁴ Zunun Kadir Eserleri, op.cit., p. 670.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, p. 249. (English translation in Appendix 2)

¹⁰⁶ Zunun Kadir, “Our Platform” [*Bizning Mumberimiz*] (1987), *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.693.

¹⁰⁷ Muhammet Polat, “*Meshhur sennetkar Zunun Kadir*” [Famous Artist Zunun Kadir], *Xinjiang Art [Xinjiang Seneti]*, 1988, no.3, p.51.

¹⁰⁸ Kashgarli, op.cit., p.206.

Ghunchem and her mother, Zoruhan, trying to survive in the house and apple orchard left by her late father. Wanting the property, the rich landowner seeks to marry Ghunchem to his son. The young lovers, Ghunchem and Nur, try to run away, helped by poor farmers and nomads. With the collaboration of Chinese officials and another wealthy Uyghur, the runaways are caught. Ghunchem is brought back to marry the landowner's son, and Nur is imprisoned. He escapes to rescue her, but finds that she is dying of tuberculosis aggravated by violent abuse at the hands of the landlord's son, who never loved her. In pursuing his greed for Ghunchem's property, the landowner, Omer Shangyo,¹¹⁰ is happy to cooperate with the Chinese authorities to help him in exploiting Ghunchem.

The play can be analysed in relation to three different themes: criticism of "feudal" society with its corruption, exploitation and moral decay; veiled criticism of the collaboration of certain Uyghurs with Turkistan's colonial regime; and the celebration of Uyghur culture. Because these themes are often interwoven in the structure of the play, I will often need to discuss these themes in parallel where they arise in the same scene in the play. Certain parts of the play that specifically celebrate Uyghur culture (for example, wedding customs) will be noted separately in a later section of this chapter.

It is not known when Zunun made his last revisions to Ghunchem. The one definite date mentioned in the text of the play, on Ghunchem's contract with Shangyo, is 1954.¹¹¹ If the events of "Ghunchem" are indeed set in 1954, five years after "Liberation" by the PLA/CCP, then it is strange that there is no reference at any point to this event or to any aspect of the PRC regime. Zunun himself says in "Our Platform" [*Bizning Mnbirimiz*], an article commenting on the development of literature in Xinjiang:

¹⁰⁹ Professor Azad Sultan of Xinjiang University says that "Uyghur drama reached an important stage with Zunun Kadir's 'Ghunchem', due to Zunun Kadir's skill in the usage of the Uyghur language." (Azad Sultan, op.cit., p.102.)

¹¹⁰ "Shangyo" is one of the imported Chinese titles used within the colonial regime in Xinjiang since Qing times. A Shangyo was a local tax collector on behalf of the Chinese administration. (Du Jingguo, *Zuo Zongtang ve Xinjiang* [Zuo Zongtang and Xinjiang], tr. Ibrahim Suleiman, Xinjiang Helk Neshriyati, Urumqi, 1997, p.299.

¹¹¹ The contract date is read out as "24th of 8th month of 1332 Hejira", which translates from the Islamic calendar, based on the year 622AD, to 1954AD.

In 1954 the intense sense of responsibility shown by the magazine's commissars made a strong impression on me, and I reviewed all my works carefully, and paid even more attention to what I was writing. I tried time after time to revise my drama "Ghunchem",¹¹² which I had written in 1941 in a simple way. I changed it to suit the circumstances, to publish in the journal "Tarim".¹¹³

The significance of the date 1954 is that this year was when the CCP control of Xinjiang was finally established. A structure of "democratic centralism" was put in place, which gave a superficial "autonomy" to lower-level government organs in Xinjiang, while firmly maintaining all real power under the CCP in Beijing, and locally through the North West Military Affairs Commission.¹¹⁴ 1954 was also the year in which Zunun Kadir was brought from Ili to Urumqi, and began to work in the Cultural Affairs Department of Creative Literature, subject to commissars of the CCP.¹¹⁵ Any Uyghur like Zunun, who had believed that true autonomy might be possible within the PRC, would by this time have been realising that such hope was lost. Zunun's references to the "intense sense of responsibility" of the editorial commissar show how this situation directly affected him as a writer.

Poor and Honest Heroes

The socialist realist aspects of "Ghunchem" are evident from the very first scene. Ghunchem and her mother are revealed as honest and hard-working small-holders, but they are being harassed by Seyit, the spoiled son of the rich man Omer Shangyo, and Seyit's cronies. The social conflict is immediately characterised in terms of a gardening image. Ghunchem's late father is described as a skilled gardener. The garden has a very special place in Uyghur literature and is associated with many of the literary symbols of Uyghur authors, such as rose and nightingale. A gardener is a nurturer and an honest hard worker who gains from his own toil.¹¹⁶

Gunchem: Oh? So my father was a gardener?

¹¹² In 1960, Zunun wrote further self-criticism concerning his lack of "class struggle" perspective in the writing of Ghunchem – this is discussed in Chapter 3.

¹¹³ "Our Platform", op.cit., p.693.

¹¹⁴ McMillen, op.cit., pp.43-45.

¹¹⁵ Zunun's oral memoir, op.cit.

Zoruhan: Yes, he was very skilled in the garden. He treated those apple trees like his children, and raised them with great care. Alas, there are so many bad people in this world who have no conscience about treating others badly. They would steal the young grafted trees that he had planted, or even just deliberately pull them out and throw them away. It upset your father greatly.

Zoruhan's complaint about the life of a farmer is a complex matter. Initially, her complaint is directly about the son of Shangyo, the Chinese-appointed official, but as the story develops we realise that the patterns of exploitation are more complex, with a hierarchy of officials including "Head of Ten" (households), "Head of Fifty", Shangyo, Lozung, and Sengen. From early republican times, under Governor Yang Zengxin,¹¹⁷ the Chinese colonial government had local people as its lower-level officials, thus insulating the Chinese officials from the mass of the local people, since the local junior officials would bear the brunt of any popular anger at government actions. As well, the local officials developed a vested interest in protecting the system which provided them with a degree of power and affluence.¹¹⁸

In the drama of Ghunchem, the sympathetic characters are common people: gardeners, honest workers, and sincere lovers (Zoruhan, Ghunchem, Ghunchem's betrothed Nur, Patemhan, Turghan, Azimbaki, and the Kazak Amantay). These characters stand up against oppression and exploitation (represented by Seyit, Basit the Head of Fifty, Hashimbay the trader, the Uyghur officials Omer Shangyo and his wife Shervan, and Shangyo's Chinese bosses Lozung and Shengen).

The story also reflects Zunun's reformist ideology of this period. The honest people in poor and weak positions suffer from lack of money, lack of land, lack of water and lack of opportunity. Early in the narrative, Ghunchem seems to take a step towards activism when she asserts "If you tolerate them, things get worse. You must teach them lessons". In another dialogue, Ghunchem mentions that her boyfriend Nur is "working with the family cooperative". Programs of this kind had been in force long before the CCP

¹¹⁶ This idea of the gardener is used in the story "Rudupay", where the evil parasite pretends to be a virtuous gardener in order to gain the trust of his intended victim.

¹¹⁷ Governor 1912-27, assassinated by Jin Shuren who then ruled until Sheng Shicai's takeover (1927-33).

¹¹⁸ Forbes, op.cit., p.33.

attained power in Xinjiang, under the Soviet-influenced regime of Sheng Shicai (1933-1944).

The tragedy is seen to build up step by step. In the first scene, it is clear that Ghunchem wants Nur to marry her right away and take on responsibility for managing their orchard. However, her mother Zoruhan rules this out, demonstrating typical Uyghur traditional values in her fear that she would lose face if she did not provide a “respectable” wedding party to the community. Nur, however, warns that “if the gardener can’t taste the ripe fruit, a worm may spoil it”. This proves to be an omen of the tragedy that unfolds, as his marriage to Ghunchem never occurs.

Tradition Holding People Back

Zoruhan is not portrayed as shallow, even though she is intended to represent the traditional viewpoint (“feudal” in contemporary political rhetoric) in insisting on a respectable wedding. She expresses traditional Uyghur community ethics, having promised Nur’s dying mother that she would look after him. Zoruhan is not behaving selfishly in wanting a “proper” wedding, rather she believes that it will be better for the happiness of the young couple if their marriage is socially accepted. This is evidenced by the fact that she does not mind that Nur is a poor orphan, and she wants the marriage with Ghunchem to proceed as soon as possible. However, Zoruhan’s health is poor, and she dies before Nur can gather the money needed for the wedding. Her values thus have contributed to the tragedy that she did not foresee. She also underestimates the cunning and power of the greedy Shangyo and his wife, who plot to ensure that the marriage cannot take place and they can take control of Ghunchem and her orchard. Therefore while Zoruhan’s conservative cultural attitudes are not directly held up to criticism, the plot of the drama very clearly shows that a simple adherence to old ways and customs can expose people to disaster.

Cruel and Corrupt Oppressors

Omer Shangyo is the main agent of suffering in the play. Shangyo has bought his official position from the Chinese authorities, and is ruthless in exploiting the people to recover the cost of the position and become wealthy. In a remark to his subordinate Basit, he explicitly justifies tax gouging and graft as necessary to pay back the cost of purchasing his official position:

Shangyo: Do you think it was cheap for me to become Shangyo? I had to feed an army! I spent lots of money.

Basit: Tell me about it. You have to give horses and money to the *daren*, Lozung, and Beg.

Shangyo: Yes, who except the people are going to pay back all that money I spent?

Basit: Yes, the country owes it to us.

Shangyo: I got to keep 6 *tenge* of the 12 *tenge* for the barley and hay, plus 100 *tenge* in taxes spread around the country. If I make it 150 *tenge*, then charge people for solving their problems, then I can pay it back.

Otherwise, where can I get my pay? Will it come from the other world?

Basit: Well done, well done. Well spoken! Brother Shangyo, the ignorant peasants just don't understand.

When Shangyo says in this passage “I had to feed an army”, the surface meaning is clear – in order to get the job, he had to extend hospitality to a large number of influential people and their hangers-on. There can be another meaning detected here, however, one that reflects the circumstances of Chinese occupation of Xinjiang. During the pre-Communist period, as well as under the PRC, the feeding of a Chinese army stationed in Xinjiang was a serious imposition on the local economy. As the PRC system developed, it became a matter not only of paying taxes or having provisions requisitioned, but also of having the best agricultural land, water and opportunities diverted to the army-run Production and Construction Corps military colonies. These actions had to take place through the agency of local officials, such as Shangyo. Although the original script was written in the 1940s before the Production and Construction Corps was formally instituted in Xinjiang, the play seems to have been revised at least as late as 1954 (since Ghunchem's contract is dated 1954). Therefore we can not rule out interpretive references to the situation in the 1950s, and we can be sure that the play was presented to audiences in the 1950s who would look for such contemporary references.

Omer Shangyo is hypocritical, greedy and corrupt. He knows well that Nur and Ghunchem are in love, but will not let that stand in the way of his intention to get hold

of her fine apple orchard. He hopes also to take Ghunchem as another wife, until his wife Shervan puts a stop to that part of the plan because she does not want to have competition in her house from a younger and more beautiful new wife. In this scene Zunun expresses his modernist view of the harm to domestic relationships associated with traditional social customs:

Shangyo: It is allowed for a man to marry four women. I only have two wives.

Shervan: Where are you hiding that one in Baytokay? You think I don't know anything? I know what a snake does underground!...

Shangyo: Even it is true, I still don't have four.

Shervan: It is about twelve! You have married girls and divorced them. Now you have three wives. You should be reasonable, your beard has begun to turn grey.

Shangyo: Look at me. I am a man like a mountain... If I have married nine girls and divorced them, let it be ten! If I have three wives, then let it be four. It is a round number to count.

Shervan: No, I will not allow any more. I am not a house wife of yours come from a lower background, or a peasant, I grew up in the city, daughter of a *Beg*. I did not fuss when you married two women in addition to me. I will not accept any more. My youth and my beauty are withered like a rose in this Hell.

Shervan is as interested as Shangyo in acquiring Ghunchem's orchard, so she proposes that Ghunchem be married to their son Seyit. Shervan's reasoning makes clear that "the community" will support their actions because Gunchem's fiance Nur is of low social status and the woman's feelings do not need to be taken into account, as after marriage she will be no more than a slave to the husband.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ "Shangyo: ...Nur and Ghunchem love each other. Zoruhan wants her daughter to marry him. What are you going to do about that?"

Shervan: Who would look at that bad-tempered beggar? Anyone with any sense will know Ghunchem would be wasted on that derelict.

Shangyo: Yes, if we say we will marry Ghunchem to Seyit, the community will support us. Nevertheless, until Ghunchem marries Seyit we should not let Nur know. After marriage [*nikah*] a woman is a man's slave. If someone makes a fuss about a woman who is already married to someone else, he will burn his tongue." (p.274.)

Conversations between Shangyo and his subordinate Basit, the Head of Fifty, demonstrate the preoccupation of these officials with conspiring to squeeze as much

as they can out of the poor farmers, down to the level of deals over a single animal. For example Hashimbay, the trader, “lends” a cow to the farmer Saki for milking, then, when the cow’s calf dies, claims compensation for the value of a full-grown cow, compounded over the year to that hypothetical cow plus another hypothetical calf, making Hashimbay’s claim more than double the value of what he had lost. This anecdote also illustrates the trader exploiting Uyghur cultural tradition for his own gain. He seeks to gain prestige in the community for his act of charity in lending the cow, but when a natural consequence follows, he makes an exorbitant claim for repayment. In discussing this local event, Shangyo and Basit show how in the chain of corruption the profit of exploitation is shared around from the lower level officials up the chain to the Chinese officials.

Basit: It will not harm you if I become closer to Lozung. I give you more benefits than the other heads of Fifties.

Shangyo: Have you fixed a share of the barley and hay taxes?

Basit: We got only two tenge where the farmers got four tenge for each *ho*¹²⁰ of barley, and each 100 bales of hay.

Shangyo: Other Heads of Fifties gave three tenge, and kept three for themselves.

This conversation then turns to the conflict between these privileged individuals and the poor farmers whom they are exploiting. The exploiters express outrage at the claims of the farmers, and suggest that they should be violently punished to prevent resistance from growing:

Basit: Under my hand, there is a troublemaker [*kokeme*] (who says..) ‘The government gave twelve tenge for a *ho* of barley and a 100 bales of hay, the rest went to whose pocket?’ They were wanting the lot!

Shangyo: They should be flogged for interfering with government business. You are like a soft rag. Why didn’t you get your Heads of Tens to tie him up and bring him here? I would punish him by hanging him from a tree. If you don’t punish them and intimidate them, others will follow and make it even worse. Look at that! Shamelessly asking whose pocket the money went to!

¹²⁰ *ho* is a measure of grain equivalent to 65.52 kilograms.

As Shangyo and his wife develop their plan to get Nur out of the way, so that they can take control of Ghunchem and her orchard, Nur, who is working for them, is called in to get new instructions that will send him on job to the mountains for several days. Nur reminds his employers of all of the hard work he has done for them, bring in crops and hay from planting to harvest. In this passage, Nur exhibits a level of assertiveness toward authorities that is found in his writings on the 1940s, but less so in his writings of the 1950s and 1960s. Nur talks back to his employer in a directly confrontational way, threatening to leave the job.¹²¹ In Zunun's later writings of the 1950s and 1960s, workers' complaints are far more muted, and expressed in terms of ideology rather than personal conflict.

The Powerless Victim

Having got Nur out of the way at the time of Zoruhan's death, Shangyo and his wife take control of Ghunchem, pretending to "look after her". They pay for Zoruhan's funeral, but get the illiterate girl to sign a contract she cannot read, by which she hands over her orchard and her personal freedom to Shangyo as security for money "lent" for the funeral. Ghunchem is deprived even of her freedom of movement, confined in Shangyo's compound. Part of their plot is for Ghunchem to marry Seyit, their spoiled son. Seyit represents a person of no merit who enjoys privilege without having earned it. This is perhaps analagous to the privileged status of those Uyghurs under Chinese rule in Xinjiang who were given opportunities and privilege because they supported Han rule rather than by their merit. Seyit is portrayed as dirty, with no purpose in life, and a parasite. He is preoccupied with his status and bullies anyone who cannot fight back. Seyit is also incapable of appreciating Ghunchem's value, and does not want to marry Ghunchem. He has been brought up to be obsessed with his social position and privilege, and he is too shallow to see that Ghunchem is beautiful, hardworking and

¹²¹ "Nur: Let's talk about how I worked all summer. (points to the hayshed) Under that shelter are 15,000 bales of hay. Who brought and put it there? Who harvested the endless wheat crop? Who grew it? Who ploughed it, harrowed it, winnowed the grain and drove the cart? Do you think Shangyoka all this is dancing? These crops, piled up like a mountain, probably we will do it, getting up early morning and working until all are asleep. If still I can't satisfy you, then settle my account and I will quit."

honest. He repeatedly complains against marrying her because she is poor and a peasant.¹²²

Considering that Seyit may represent an aspect of the colonial regime, and Ghunchem represents Uyghur aspiration, we should also remember that when Ghunchem was first published in 1946, there was a coalition government in Urumqi consisting of Uyghur and Chinese, pro-communist and anti-communist. Taking into account Zunun's experience from the point of view of the Three Districts government, and the way that East Turkistan Republic group was treated in the formation of the coalition, Zunun may well have felt that this current coalition government had no future, as both sides were unwilling to make a genuine partnership – as with a forced marriage.

Despite the falsity of the marriage that is being arranged, Seyit's family, and in particular his mother Shervan, are determined that he will put up a good appearance in front of the community, observing the traditional dress and customs. This will uphold the family reputation in the community, and ensure that the whole community is involved in endorsing the Shangyo's family taking control of Ghunchem and her property. As Seyit is reluctant to marry Ghunchem, his mother enlists Basit and Meshrep to flatter Seyit about his appearance, so he will at least enjoy the attention.¹²³ they compare him to the son of Hakim Beg, who was the last hereditary Khan of Ili, recognised by the final generations of the Qing government.¹²⁴ Though he is compared to "the son of" Hakim Beg (this symbol of traditional local authority) the audience are all aware that Seyit is merely wearing a costume, and is neither sincere in the wedding¹²⁵ nor worthy of comparison to a ruler.

¹²² "Seyit: I don't want to marry a low-class beggar's daughter... If they insist I marry, then I should get the girl from wherever I want. In the town, among my mother's community, there are many beautiful girls. If I marry, I will marry one of them. Girls who wear silk dresses, golden jewels, hands as soft as feather – not a girl with a cotton dress, head scarf, a sunburnt country girl like Gunche." (pp.288-9.)

¹²³ "Basit and Seyit come in, whips in hand. Seyit is wearing squeaky boots. He turns back and looks around..."

Shervan smiles to Basit: Poo! You made Seyitjan handsome!

Seyit: Don't make fun of me.

Shervan looks at Seyit's fur hat: Very well made.

Basit: Look at the boots. Walking around town with that squeaking, everyone looked at him.

Shervan: Probably they thought you were Hakim Beg's son."

¹²⁴ Jack Chen, *The Sinkiang Story*, MacMillan, New York, 1977, p.24.

¹²⁵ The insincerity of the wedding is further confirmed in this exchange implies criticism of the traditional Islamic social rules by which a man could easily divorce his wife, and have up to four wives at one time: "Basit: If he is not willing, what can we do Shervan agcha?"

Wolf Symbolism

At the time Zunun wrote *Ghunchem*, there was a strong division among the Uyghur elite between those who supported progressive or socialist ideas, and those who were conservative, both politically and socially. The conservative group were often the landowning class, and some among them, such as Mesut Sabri and Isa Yusuf Alptekin, publicly demanded greater national autonomy for Uyghurs. The socialist progressives of that time were more influenced by Soviet “internationalism” and therefore appeared to play down the more open symbols of Turkic nationalism in this period. The wolf is a recurrent symbol of the nationalistic element of Uyghur culture,¹²⁶ and at this time was certainly associated with pan-Turkism. Pan-Turkism had been a long-time threat to Russian imperialism, and was also strongly denounced by Stalin’s Soviet regime, which identified it as an enemy of socialism. Zunun himself was writing at this time from the socialist internationalist viewpoint, and he associates the conservative, exploitative landowners with Turkic nationalism. If there is an apparent contradiction between Zunun’s basic nationalist views and his distancing from explicit Turkic symbolism, it is because at this period his political position was more internationalist and his focus was on social injustice. Though maintaining this position, Zunun still continued to believe that social justice must include self-determination.

There is therefore a symbolic meaning in Shervan’s motherly remark to her son Seyit “We will also have a wolfskin overcoat, like your father’s, made for you”. In this context, the wolfskin overcoat represents more than just a material symbol of privilege. It represents Shervan’s intention that her son will inherit the traditional Uyghur political privilege as well as the material status of being wealthy, and it is a defiance of any movement toward social or political reform. Wolf imagery associated with Shangyo is again presented negatively soon afterwards in the play. When Ghunchem complains about the corruption and mistreatment she receives in Shangyo’s house, Nur replies angrily “They are wolves in human shape!”

Shervan: Tell him I am not expecting him to marry her forever, just to marry her and he can divorce her the next day. Then we can find someone from a suitable origin to marry him.”

¹²⁶ Geng Shimin and Tursun Ayup (eds), *Khedimki Uyghurlarning Tarihi Destani Oghuz Name*, [The Ancient Uyghur Historical Epic “Oghuz Name”], Minzu Chubanshe [Nationalities’ Publishing House], Beijing, 1997, pp.48-9.

The negative connotations of the wolf image are here much stronger than the connotations of the wolf image in Zunun's later writings of the 1980s (discussed in Chapter 4). It can be argued that this is one indicator of a shift over time in Zunun's views between socialist internationalism and Uyghur nationalism.

Deception and truth

Although Shangyo and his family seem to have all the advantages in the community, Zunun makes clear that this does not mean happiness. In fact he attributes to them a range of immoral traits and behaviour that suggests that privilege and corruption go hand in hand. Shangyo and his wife argue continually, and only agree when there is a need to work together to exploit somebody else (such as Ghunchem). In their private lives, Shangyo has been taking additional wives and lovers without respect to Shervan, and it is also revealed that Shervan is having an affair with Hashimbay, the local trader. Shervan's adultery is exposed in a subtle way. There is never any conversation between Shervan and Hashimbay, and the whole relationship is only implied. This contrasts with the open argument between Shervan and Shangyo about how many wives he has or has had, and which affairs he has tried to hide from Shervan. We may conclude that adultery (as Shervan's affair would be classed) is such a serious offence in Islamic culture, that Zunun needs to respect that convention even when he is writing scenes to expose the immoral behaviour. There is no sweet talk, no sex, only implications (when Shervan goes to an implied meeting with Hashimbay in the orchard).¹²⁷ Shervan's affair is hinted at again when Hashimbay arrives for the wedding, saying, "I can't see my sweetheart (*janan*). ..It would be good if I meet Mistress Shervan (Shervan *aghcha*) today".

The question of Shervan's lover also provides the occasion for Nur to demonstrate that he has retained a traditional Uyghur sensibility, in which a woman's honour is a very

¹²⁷ "From the direction of the orchard, two stones fall, one after the other..."

Nur goes toward the verandah to hide, Ghunchem goes into the kitchen. Hashimbay comes under the tree and disappears again. Shervan comes out of the house and walks in a flirtatious way toward the orchard. After some time there are loud voices and the sound of a horse coming. Shervan comes back toward the tree, then grabs onto Nur (who has also come to the tree)

Shervan: Hey, footloose, what are you doing here? (Nur pushes her over) Oh! Oh!
Nur: Footloose is your name, you bitch!" (p.300.)

serious matter. Nur, hiding in the courtyard, becomes aware of Shervan's (implied) meeting with Hashimbay in the orchard. Shervan's reaction is to deny guilt, and demand a false witness from Meshrep, her servant. Nur, even though he is falsely accused, is not willing to say what he knows and publicly expose Shervan. He tells Shangyo, who arrives on the scene, that he will only tell him about it privately. This proves to be tactically wrong, as Shangyo simply dismisses his information, and turns the accusations against Nur.

Nur: What did I do to deserve being tied up? Is it for my whole summer's work, or for exposing the shamelessness of your wife [*aghcha*]. Or to hide the trap you have prepared for Ghunchem? Hey Shangyo, the one who has a black heart is plain to see, and it will be exposed in front of all the people!

This strengthens Shangyo's determination to get rid of Nur altogether, and will not even pay him for his summer's labour on the farm. Faced with the reality that Shangyo has the power to suppress him, Nur says: "Whatever you may do, the truth can be bent, but not broken." Shangyo uses his authority to have Nur sent to be imprisoned at the Chinese courthouse [Yamen]. Adding insult to injury, he instructs that the money needed to ensure that Nur is jailed should be collected from the local community. This money will be given as "transport expense money"¹²⁸ to the superior official Lozung and his armed guards who will take Nur in charge and deliver him to the Yamen.

"Brother nationalities"

The character Amantay is the son of a stockman who is responsible for Shangyo's flocks in their pastures. Shangyo refers to him patronisingly as "that Kazak", but Zunun portrays the son Amantay positively and affectionately. Amantay's dialogue is authentic Kazak dialect.¹²⁹ The point of this insertion, I would suggest, is to show the closeness between these Turkic nationalities when they have a common cause or a common enemy. It also shows that the "nationality" difference embodied in the separately-described languages is in fact no barrier to communication between Kazak and Uyghur – each may speak their own dialect and yet understand each other.

¹²⁸ The phrase "transport expense money" corresponds with the Chinese usage "*che ma fei*" (vehicle and horse fee), meaning a gratuity offered in return for a service or favour.

Zunun had reason to give special consideration to the relations with Kazaks. His home town of Ili is very close to Kazakhstan, and the region has a substantial Kazak population. As noted, Zunun's last journey was to Kazakhstan, where he died and was treated with honour by the national government. The CCP formed its United Front Work Department in Yan'an in 1944, with the purpose of dealing with "national minorities" and other significant organised minority groups.¹³⁰ Whether the influence of these policies was felt in Xinjiang by 1945 is not clear, but it could certainly have been in Zunun's mind when he made later revisions to the text. In any case, here Zunun clearly portrays a multi-national East Turkistan.

Forced marriage and abuse

In the climactic action of the narrative, Ghunchem is smuggled out of the house during her wedding to Seyit, so that she may escape with Nur and his friends, who are waiting in the orchard. When Ghunchem's escape is discovered, Shangyo orders the arrest of Nur and his companions, using all his influence with the authorities.

The lovers are recaptured, Nur is imprisoned and Ghunchem is sick with tuberculosis, having been punished and abused in Shangyo's house. Throughout the scene she is increasingly abused. Shervan first tries to convince her that she should be grateful and humbly accept her situation. Seyit, however, becomes more and more cruel. He has lost face because Ghunchem fled on their wedding night. He denies that she is his wife: "This loose woman who ran away with Nur? I divorced her a long time ago. I never even touched her fingertips. She is not my wife, she is a slave of this house. (to Ghunchem) Isn't that true, eh? Say something, corpse!"

This forced and false marriage can be seen as an element of Zunun's veiled commentary on the relationship between East Turkistan and China. Around the time Zunun was writing Ghunchem, the East Turkistan Republic had ceased to exist by name, and had been forced to join a coalition with the Chinese regional authorities. Zunun may have been coming to realise that the Chinese parties were not capable of seeing the Uyghur

¹²⁹ For example, a Kazak dialect phrase from Amantay's speech is "*Yappiray jenim Nur, bay ekeng kurutuptughuy seni.*".....

parties as genuine partners in this administration, much like the “corpse” Ghunchem in her “marriage” to Seyit.

The extreme cruelty of Seyit toward the sick Ghunchem has an important effect that is relevant to Zunun’s implied criticism of the political situation of his time. Patemhan, a loyal servant of Shangyo, is eventually driven to rebel, initially by criticising Seyit’s cruelty. She tries to prevent Seyit continuing to hit and abuse the dying Ghunchem, and her son Meshrep also intervenes to protect his mother from Seyit. However, Shangyo fully backs up his son, and instead of restraining him, Shangyo blames Ghunchem: “Cruel? You loose women also are malevolent. (He points at Ghunchem) With women like her, treacherous to their husband and unclean like you, any place they step will loose it’s prosperity.” The “treachery” he refers to may very easily be related to the suspect loyalty of Uyghurs to China, particularly during this period when the East Turkistan Republic had shown strong political leanings towards the Soviet Union.

Another likely implication of this scene is that even loyal supporters will not be tolerated if they offer criticism or show sympathy to the oppressed. Shangyo turns on Patemhan, and her son Meshrep, and throws them out after years of loyal service: “Get out of my house!” (looks at Meshrep) “And you, parasite [*rudupay*],¹³¹ get out of here too, together with your mother. (to Seyit) Throw their things out.”

Patemhan, who has turned against her boss and made an effort to protect Ghunchem, is forced to abandon her. However, while Ghunchem appears to be dying, it is Patemhan, who offers a word of hope to the oppressed and warning to the oppressor: “Goodbye my poor daughter. Our day will come, too.”

Call to rebellion and vengeance

Taking advantage of a lax official, Nur and Amantay manage to escape from the Chinese prison. The nationality of the official is not stated directly, but is inferred from the name to be Chinese. The Yayi’s comment suggests that the Chinese official is not taking his job seriously. This might be taken as a suggestion that the Chinese official

¹³⁰ June Teufel Dreyer, *China's forty millions : minority nationalities and national integration in the People's Republic of China*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1976., p.98.

was of low quality, either because service in Xinjiang did not attract better Chinese officials, or because he obtained his appointment corruptly.¹³²

Shangyo is determined that Nur and friends must be captured, and offers his own reward for their capture. After the guards go off to search, Nur arrives secretly and finds Ghunchem, who only just recognises him, then dies in his arms. Having lost Ghunchem, Nur and his friends are now concerned with revenge. They set fire to the hayshed containing the stored hay that Nur had worked to produce, and Nur says to Ghunchem (not realising she is already dead) that he wants to see “this nest of snakes and scorpions” burned to the ground.

With a background of a flaming sky (a typical revolutionary image), the play ends with a chorus. Friends of Nur, a few farming people, and Shangyo’s two former servants Meshrep and Patemhan sing together

So long since Reshitdin
Rosebud withered before it bloomed

¹³¹ Zunun here has Shangyo using the term given such depth in his story “Rudupay”, discussed earlier in this chapter.

¹³² “Shangyo: How could they get away from such a secure prison?
1st Yayi: We gave them to Si Loye, and it seems he took it easy.
Shangyo: If it is not directly handled by Lozung Beg, everything goes like this!
2nd Yayi: Begim had a talk with Daren about this matter – they had a dispute with Si Loye.” (p.332)

The world is blind to the poor
That is the condition of the times.¹³³

Turghan: Brothers! We must avenge this cruelty! Let's take revenge!

Let this story make us resolute,
Our rage shall be our magic sword,
Break the throne of oppression,
Let Justice become the people's lover.¹³⁴

This poem's reference to Reshitdin is very important. Reshitdin was the inspirational leader of a peasant uprising that began in Kucha in 1857, rebelling against excessive taxation by Qing-appointed officials. Yerkendi describes Reshitdin's divinely inspired magical powers. This rebellion led to further insurrections in 1864.¹³⁵ The first verse of this song may reflect Zunun's disappointment in "withering" of the East Turkistan Republic. At the time the play was first written, the ETR was operating under reduced self-determination, and it was abolished completely before the later (post-1949) revisions of the play. The second verse then gives a resolute declaration of revolutionary intention; the question is left open as to who is to be rebelled against. In terms of the plot of the play, there is obvious reference to the exploiting landowners and officials. In terms of the ambiguous imagery that fills Zunun's work, there is likely to be a second level at which the reference is to rebellion against the colonial power.

The song ends the play. Nur is alive, though Ghunchem is dead, and he approaches the audience holding Ghunchem's body, in recognition of her sacrifice,¹³⁶ and with an

¹³³ *Uzuldi reshitdin unche*
Echilmay tozidi ghunche
Jahan yoksulga kör boldi
Zamanning kheulukli shunche

¹³⁴ *Khissas bizge karar bolsun*
Ghexepler zulpikar bolsun
Pachaklansun zulum tehti
Adalet elge yar bolsun

¹³⁵ Muhammed Sadik Yerkendi, "Risaleti Mektup", quoted in Abdukerim Rahman and Tursun Mehsut (eds), *Uyghur Edebiyat Tarihi* [History of Uyghur Literature], vol.3, Xinjiang Maarip Neshriyat, Urumqi, 1993, p.295.

¹³⁶ Ghunchem is a sacrifice, not simply a victim, because her suffering and death are the result of her determination to resist the oppressors, rather than cooperating with corruption and exploitation. An

implied commitment that he will continue to struggle against oppression. To continue the allegorical reading, we may view Ghunchem's abuse and death as representing the death of the ETR, and the survival of Nur and his supporters as representing continuing struggle for national freedom and independence.

Gulnissa (1942) and revisions¹³⁷

The theme of political allegory can be seen further developed in the play "Gulnissa", a four-act drama. It reaches beyond its historical context and raises themes that have remained relevant through to the present day. On the surface, the play concerns the important Uyghur educational and cultural tradition of the *meshrep*, an event which combines individual displays of poetry-making, musical performance, singing and dancing, in a structured context which includes supervised, ritualised courtship between unmarried young men and women. The *meshrep* also teaches and reinforces etiquette concerning the details of social positions and relationships. The typical poems and humour of the event reinforce moral messages as well as drawing out declarations of love and admiration.

Synopsis

The play opens with a *meshrep* in the courtyard of Polat, who is courting Gulnissa. Gulnissa's stepmother Ayhan arrives angrily looking for Gulnissa, who has come secretly to meet Polat at the *meshrep*. Gulnissa's friends hide her from her stepmother, and she expresses sadness that she is abused by her stepmother and longs to have her own mother. While Gulnissa and Polat long to be together, the stepmother arranges for Gulnissa to marry her own worthless brother, Kadir, so that they may obtain Gulnissa's property. Ayhan and Kadir pressure Gulnissa's father Samsak to cooperate with this. When Gulnissa tries to protect her father from an attack by Kadir, Kadir kills Gulnissa. Polat comes seeking justice for Gulnissa's death, but sets aside revenge on the urging of a *mezzin* – a local religious official. Samsak and Polat plant wheat and roses on Gulnissa's grave, so her memory and spirit will be kept alive. Samsak leaves the place to go beyond the mountains in search of help for justice. Polat stays to protect the

unprincipled girl in her position could have made a comfortable life for herself in the role Shangyo and Shervan wanted her to play.

¹³⁷ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.336. Although attributed to 1942, "Gulnissa" was revised several times, including after Zunun's return from Tarim exile. I take these revisions to incorporate Zunun's changing views of events in the ETR in the 1940s.

memory of Gulnissa, and becomes more despairing, feeling that the only way to reach her is by joining her in death. He again thinks of revenge. Ayhan's scheming gains her the property, but ends badly for her and her brother. Kadir, haunted by the memory of Gulnissa's death, goes insane and attacks his sister Ayhan, mistaking her for Gulnissa, and causes her death. He destroys the property, setting fire to it, and finally running into the fire and dying in the burning house.

The lost mother and the evil stepmother

In this play, Zunun's detailed description of the traditional cultural institution of the *meshrep* is combined with some implicit political comment on the situation of Uyghurs in Turkistan. The narrative turns as well on the pain of broken families and difficult relationships between stepmother and stepdaughter. Zunun advocates liberation from conservative social conventions to enable relationships based upon love and free will. When Gulnissa's friends support her and hide her from the stepmother, in answer to a query from her friend as to why she is so melancholy, Gulnissa replies that the loss of her mother is the cause of her sadness:

Each of you have your own parents, and nobody can say anything against you. One can only understand what one has experienced. Perhaps you have heard the words 'pain', 'grief' and 'outrage', but you have not lived them and you cannot understand them. If I had my own mother, I would not be this melancholy, but would be fun-loving like the rest of you.

I would suggest that an allegory can be seen here for the situation of the Uyghur people under colonial domination. The "mother" would be true sovereignty and national independence, and the people grieve for its absence. In support of the allegorical interpretation, attention should be given to the names given to the major characters in this play. It may be no coincidence that the stepmother's Turkic name Ayhan (meaning 'Moon Lady') could also be read phonetically as the Chinese phrase *ai han* meaning "Lover of the Han". The name of her brother Kadir in Uyghur is phonetically similar to the word *kadir*, meaning "Cadre"; and the name of Gulnissa's heroic boyfriend Polat means "steel" or strength. (Her weak father's name, Samsak, means "garlic", which may lend support to his characterisation as a person who seeks to please all sides but is not able to satisfy anyone fully.)

Gulnissa's stepmother forces her to work hard and keeps her from enjoyment – perhaps an allegory for China's exploitation of Turkistan and suppression of its culture. Gulnissa complains that her stepmother never lets her take a holiday, saying "If I had my own mother... the situation would be different".¹³⁸

Gulnissa's boyfriend Polat represents the fulfilment of Uyghur cultural aspirations. She longs to be with him at the cultural event of the *meshrep*. The stepmother's intervention and persecution of Gulnissa prevents them from being together. Under pressure from the stepmother, Gulnissa's friends cannot support her. Gulnissa's father Samsak is good hearted but weak and unable to defend her - perhaps an allegory for those Uyghur political figures who tried to help their people by collaborating with the colonial power.

On another allegorical level, that of socialist realism, the stepmother Ayhan can be seen to represent rich capitalists or landowners behaving in a spoilt, abusive and cruel manner. Samsak would then be a 'middle peasant' attempting to get by with the minimum of trouble, and Gulnissa and Polat are the struggling proletariat. At all levels, the whole cast of characters, including the religious figure of the *Mezzin*, are united in their wish to be rid of Ayhan the stepmother.

The narrative shows Ayhan conspiring to have Gulnissa marry Ayhan's own brother, a drunken, incompetent gambler named Kadir. Kadir, I suggest, may be taken to represent some local Xinjiang authorities, dishonest and incompetent, operating under Chinese control. Ayhan believes the marriage would stop Kadir's gambling and also would obtain Gulnissa's property for Ayhan's family. She secretly encourages Kadir to go to Samsak and threaten him at knife point, demanding to marry Gulnissa. This reflects the patriarchal structure of the time, when a father's word could not be ignored. Meanwhile, Gulnissa and Polat have decided to run away. Gulnissa quietly farewells her sleeping father, but he wakes as she is opening the gate to leave. At this point Kadir arrives, drunk and carrying a knife. He grabs Samsak and holds the knife to his throat, demanding "Your daughter or your life". When Gulnissa tries to protect her father,

¹³⁸ In some writings Zunun glorified physical labor as good, cheerful, and the solution to social ills, but in this play he identifies hard work with deprivation and exploitation. For Gulnissa, hard work is what she

Kadir turns to attack her. As Gulnissa runs to escape, Kadir chases her and stabs her in the chest. She falls to the ground and, with a final cry of “Mother”, she dies.

Two generations respond to the tragedy

Polat then arrives on the scene, struggles with Kadir and wounds him. Before he can kill Kadir, he is restrained by the Muezzin (the symbol of Islamic morality). Polat tells Kadir:

I want you to know that today the Muezzin has saved your life. This bloodstained knife will one day ask for justice. The pure blood of these people¹³⁹ will ask for justice one day from you and people like you. And many more sons will be born to ask for justice.

Following the previous allegorical themes in this story, I would suggest that Polat’s statement here is saying that although Gulnissa (perhaps representing ETR)¹⁴⁰ is dead, Polat (representing Uyghur aspirations and culture) lives on, will continue to struggle against colonial rulers and their collaborators. The fact that “pure blood” has been shed strengthens the claim for justice that will one day be made upon those who have caused the blood to be shed.

The fourth act begins with a strong religious motif. There is a distant sound of the Quran being read, which swells loudly as the curtain opens. Polat comes and kneels beside a grave, and prays. But Zunun does not leave the story on a note of despair alone. The allegory continues with reference to the situation of those who have been driven away from their homes but remain loyal, and of those who have remained, despite hardship, to maintain their culture as best they can. This reflects the situation of Uyghurs having to choose whether to remain under Chinese rule or take foreign refuge, as repeated in the traumatic events of the late fifties and early sixties in Xinjiang, when according to Chinese accounts, up to half a million Turkic people left Xinjiang in a massive exodus for the Eastern Soviet republics and other destinations.

is condemned to by her stepmother's refusal to let her take part in the fulfilling cultural activity of the meshrep. Her job is to stay home and cook, clean and spin.

¹³⁹ In Uyghur, literally “these pure bloods” [*pak khan*]

¹⁴⁰ It should be kept in mind that while Gulnissa was first written in 1942, it was revised and published in 1946, and further revised in the 1980s.

Polat is watering roses planted on Gulnissa's grave, and Samsak scatters wheat around the grave. He asks Polat to undertake to plant the rest of the wheat he has brought.

Polat agrees. Samsak says:

....my Daughter Gulnissa died without achieving her dream. Her mother and I both longed to see her wedding. All of that has left a scar of disappointment... My daughter Gulnissa, I am leaving your grave and going beyond the mountains. Don't be sad, thinking we have left you alone. I could not stay in this despair and pain....I have been divided from you and from my inheritance, I am being destroyed. My eyes are dry from weeping. Oh God, do you see us!

Polat: Samsak'ka,¹⁴¹ as long as I live I will not desert Gulnissa's grave. This grave is of my love, my desires, my hopes.. it is my shrine to worship. I will avenge this, it is my final desire.

Samsak and Polat unite in committing to maintain the seeds of identity and culture. We might note that they have planted things that are both useful (wheat) and beautiful (roses). The old man Samsak feels guilty about migrating to another place leaving his daughter's grave behind - much like the feelings of the thousands of political refugees and emigrants who left Xinjiang to escape persecution and hardship, but whose hearts still suffer for their motherland. And Gulnissa's grave is not deserted - there remain many people like Polat (maybe Zunun himself) to tend the grave, love and respect it.

Samsak says he will travel around the country to see whether there is any limit to the

¹⁴¹ “'ka” - abbreviation of "aka" meaning "older brother" - is used as a suffix denoting respect.

suffering their people are undergoing, if there is any solution to their problems, or if there is anyone who can offer help. Samsak is quite explicitly talking here about seeking for outside help. It is difficult to see what kind of help he might be seeking within the confines of the explicit narrative. However, at the allegorical level that we have been considering, this is a very significant statement, because of the close relationships between the Uyghurs of Turkistan and the neighbouring Turkic nations. Going “beyond the mountains” here seems to mean seeking help from abroad for the Uyghurs’ situation at home. Under Chinese rule, this is a very dangerous thing to say.

After Samsak has gone, Polat lies down beside the grave and dreams of Gulnissa wearing a long white wedding dress. Polat opens his arms to embrace Gulnissa, and the stage lights go down. When they come up again, Polat is lying on Gulnissa’s grave, calling out her name. Looking at the setting moon, Polat says:

Dying is frightening only to the living, but not to the dead. What despair I am in!
I can reach neither Gulnissa nor death, walking around this grave. I had a strange dream. I will avenge and come to you, Gulnissa!

We see here the figure of Polat pushed to the point where he sees only death and violence as the way to reach his beloved Gulnissa. The meaning is not that he is reduced to despair, but that when people are pushed to an extreme, they may choose danger rather than submission. Zunun would probably have been aware that at all times from the first writing of *Gulnissa* to its last revisions, there were some underground elements of Uyghur nationalism who would resort to violence in protest at unbearable oppression.

Oppressors bring about their own destruction

In the final scene of this drama, the stepmother Ayhan has inherited the property of Samsak and Gulnissa, but is in a disastrous situation. She appears desperate and raggedly dressed, and her brother Kadir has gone insane. She mutters about how she lost all her possessions to the *Beg* (the local authority) and the *Xianzhang* (the Chinese County Head) in order to save Kadir. Kadir, however, has lost his mind, hallucinating that Polat and Gulnissa have returned to kill him, and becomes violent.

In this situation Ayhan herself is also close to madness. Kadir then hallucinates that his sister Ayhan is Gulnissa, and attacks and chokes her. He then takes fright, runs into the

house, destroys everything in it and sets it on fire. Ayhan lifts her head and sees the fire, raises her hand to point to it, and then drops dead. Kadir can be heard screaming inside the house. Neighbours, including the Muezzin and Polat, come to the scene. Kadir runs out of the fire but, seeing Polat, he takes fright, turns and runs back into the burning house, where he dies.

An allegorical interpretation would be that Ayhan the colonialist is nurturing her local collaborator (her brother Kadir), but this becomes her own downfall. Ayhan incites Kadir to violent acts against Gulnissa, but Kadir through fear descends into paranoia so that he can no longer distinguish between his sister Ayhan and his victim Gulnissa. One theme of the play may be a warning to the colonial authorities that the stresses their oppression places on their subjects, and also on their collaborators, may lead to negative events that get out of control and result in destruction for all concerned. The destruction of the victim (Gulnissa) also leads to the destruction of the oppressor (Ayhan and Kadir).

I would suggest that the tragedy that befalls both young heroes Ghunchem and Gulnissa, through domination by greedy and unscrupulous oppressors, represents the setbacks for the Uyghur people under Chinese domination.

Cultural Events Portrayed in the dramas

As a result of the tension between the socialist and nationalist values, Zunun's descriptions of major Uyghur cultural events such as wedding and *meshrep* may be subject to ambiguous interpretation. The political dangers of the period would have given Zunun good reason to be careful with any writing that might bring him any kind of political accusations from the authorities of the time.¹⁴²

Throughout the 1940s, Zunun was becoming increasingly conscious of the trend towards the sinicisation of Uyghur culture. With each change in the political balance during the 1940s, Chinese influence became stronger, and the Chinese population in the

¹⁴² Zunun wrote in a time when the purges of Stalinist Soviet Union, particularly from 1937 onwards, were well known; when the CCP's policies had been set by Mao Zedong's 1942 Yan'an talks; and when many writers and intellectuals were being arrested in Xinjiang by the local government (see his Memoirs – especially "The Road in Quest of Knowledge".)

region increased.¹⁴³ In this context, Zunun strengthened his own resolve to record and preserve the identity of Uyghur culture.¹⁴⁴ The portrayals of the wedding and the meshrep are particularly strong in his 1940s writings, and there are many other examples in his writings of the 1980s (discussed in Chapter 4).

The story of the play “Ghunchem” revolves around the issues of marriage. According to Uyghur custom, the engagement process has a number of steps, each involving some hospitality. First from the boy’s side, the boy’s mother takes a few closely involved people, with some presents, on a courtesy visit to the girl’s family. This visit is called *kichik chay* (small tea). The next stage is *chong chay* (big tea). This takes place in the girl’s family house. Usually the girls’s side invite about 50-60 people from both family groups to an entertainment. For this ceremony, some jewellery and clothing are bought for the girl. In addition, material for clothing is provided to the closer relatives and parents of both the young people. These gifts from the girl’s side are displayed in front of everyone. The boy’s side will bring rice, oil, bread, sweets, dried fruit, and one or two stock animals, the sheep’s head decorated with a red dye. The girl’s side gives some return gifts to the boys side. Some of the sweets are thrown to the guests, and the sweets scattered this way are considered to be bring luck.¹⁴⁵

As Nur is an orphan in the play, the burden of meeting all these obligations would fall on Ghunchem’s mother Zoruhan (who had adopted him) as well as the obligations of the girl’s side. This would explain why Zoruhan would have needed to sell some land to pay the costs.¹⁴⁶ The burden of these obligations results in postponement of the wedding, and subsequent disaster. Zunun has attributed this kind of pressure as being at the root of Ghunchem’s tragedy, as her mother’s unwillingness to have a simple wedding causes the delay which gives Shanyo his opportunity to interfere and cause the final disaster. As noted, Zunun appears to be issuing a powerful warning about the risks of clinging to such old customs without considering contemporary realities.

¹⁴³ Isa Yusuf Alptekin, *Doğu Türkistan Davası*, Seha Neşriyatı, 1992, Istanbul, p.171.

¹⁴⁴ Zunun’s oral memoir, op.cit.

¹⁴⁵ Professor Abdikerim Rahman, *Uyghur Örp-Adetleri* [Uyghur Tradition and Customs], Xinjiang Yashlar-Ösmürler Neshriyatı [Xinjiang Youth Publishing House], Urumqi, 1996, p.128.

¹⁴⁶ Early in the play, Ghunchem complains that her mother has already sold part of the orchard to pay the expenses of her engagement to Nur: “Poor Nurum, he is embarrassed. My mother is so keen to observe social customs. She competes with others, saying ‘I’m not less than them’. She sold five or six ho of our

The wedding described in Act Three Scene 1 follows the usual Uyghur custom. First, the religious ceremony is conducted by the mullah or muezzin, often in the early morning of the wedding day. As described in the play, the bride and groom are in separate rooms when they say “I accept”. In principle, the boy and girl are supposed to call out loudly enough for everyone to hear, but due to shyness on the part of the couple, the custom developed that representatives would be appointed to inform the guests, as witnesses, that they had heard the acceptance directly from the bride and the groom. Basit informs Shangyo: “Mezzin has arranged representative fathers [*ata tutkuzmak*] for Ghunchem and Seyit”. After this, the bride and groom eat salted bread, assisted by the groom’s best man and the bride’s chief assistant.

During the wedding, more presents are offered to relatives, to religious figures conducting the ceremony, and to others who have helped. This custom is reflected in “Ghunchem” so as to emphasize the greed and meanness of Omer Shangyo.

(Shangyo brings out cotton, cut into a few handkerchiefs, material for a dress, a few envelopes containing money.)

Shangyo: Give this material and money for the ceremony to preacher Ahun. (he hands it to Hashimbay) This is for Lozung Beg, and these are for his two guards.....

Hashimbay: You are conducting this wedding in a very stingy way, Shangyo. You should at least have given Preacher Ahun and Lozung¹⁴⁷ each a fur coat.

Shangyo: We will do it... For the last three or four days we have been feeding the whole community.

Hashimbay: Of course, you have a respectable place in the community, so you should do things in a big way.¹⁴⁸

farm for engagement presents. As Nurum says, since we don’t have any money, a big wedding is like an impassible mountain.” (p.260.)

¹⁴⁷ Preacher Ahun is a local Uyghur figure of importance, and Lozung represents Chinese authority – both are considered to need an acceptable level of gift in order to smooth the path for Shangyo’s ambition.

¹⁴⁸ As well as ensuring support from influential individuals, it is necessary for Shangyo to ensure his reputation with the community as a whole, to get their support.

In the next stage, a group of people accompanied by musicians go to the bride's house to bring her to the groom's house. The girl is expected to cry because she is leaving her parents' house, starting a new life, and farewelling her parents and her previous life. The parents send her off with their blessings.¹⁴⁹ These aspects of the marriage ceremony are described in "Ghunchem", but conduct of the farewelling part of the ceremony is complicated by the fact that Ghunchem has been confined at Shangyo's house (the house of her husband-to-be) since her mother's funeral, and has not been allowed to return to her own house. The script contains the line: "The sound of the *dap*¹⁵⁰, drum and song can be heard." These are the musicians who would normally be accompanying the bride in a procession from her family's house to her husband's house. Although it is not mentioned, we have to assume that Ghunchem has been taken to her family house or another place temporarily for the ceremony. The only alternative would be that the musicians are coming without accompanying the bride, which would not be in accordance with the custom.

The following passages provide a detailed and colourful description of a typical wedding, with a group of young men becoming very excited, singing and playing instruments, calling out cheers and congratulations such as "Good on you!", "Long life!" and so on. However, although the young men are excited, the songs they sing are not entirely spontaneous. There are certain songs and genres of songs that are specifically associated with the wedding celebration. Some of these are known by their refrain, eg "Hey hey olen" and "Yar, yar". In writing this passage, Zunun has probably drawn upon the work of some earlier Uyghur poets and scholars who collected and organised oral literature and tradition. As early as 1820-8 a collection was made of the "Hey hey olen!" song type, which is typical of the Ili region of Zunun's upbringing. In 1849, Molla Sanjar Ibni Ibrahim Kashgari organised a collection of "Yar yar" couplets, as part of a collection that included other kinds of folk stories.¹⁵¹ Zunun seems to have drawn upon these two kinds of popular folksong form, and adopted their styles to create new verses offering reflections on contemporary conditions, as a sort of "chorus" commentary to his narrative.

¹⁴⁹ Rahman, op.cit., p.129.

¹⁵⁰ The *dap* is a flat, wide, open drum, held high and played with the fingers.

¹⁵¹ Rahman and Mesut, op.cit., pp.285-6.

Hey hey sing, hey sing, where is the rose, darling, darling
 A bad person for a good person, this can happen anywhere
 Hey hey sing, hey sing, is there Life?
 Darling, darling
 You are the apple of my eye, my joy to see, darling darling.¹⁵²
Red red onions have many layers of skin darling darling,
 Young bachelors have many friends darling darling,
 Black black crows gather at the threshing-floor, darling darling,
 The young bachelors regret their unfulfilled wish, darling darling.¹⁵³

Where this song genre is normally applied with words of hope and joy, the elements above show Zunun adding notes of foreboding and anxiety that can be related to the narrative. The ideas can indeed reflect the thoughts of young unmarried men, who might be jealous of the bridegroom. They recall Nur and his attempt, supported by his friends, to save Ghunchem and enjoy the marriage they had anticipated together.

The young men's banter reflects another characteristic element of Uyghur culture, in which competitive repartee is found in songs, and especially in poems such as the verses exchanged in the *meshrep* cultural forum. In the wedding context, it consists of jokes about the bridal couple.

2nd Young man: Seyitjan's heart is beating. (to Seyit) don't worry, we won't be spying on you!

1st young man: Don't go to sleep tonight!

Hizim: If he goes to sleep, we will make a hole in the roof and pour water on him

Seyit: Do that if you want to die.

Hizim: We have seen boastful people, Groom! Today, don't call out 'Mother'!

¹⁵² *Hey hey olen, hey olen Gul kayda bar, yar yar
 Bir yahshigha, bir yaman, her jayda bar yar yar
 Hey hey olen, hey olen bar mu hayat yar yar
 Karchugidek boylariga boldum seyyat yar yar*

¹⁵³*Khizil khizil piyazning pusti tola yar yar
 Oylenmigen yigitning dosti tola yar yar
 Khara khara karghilar hamandidur yar yar
 Oylenmigen yigitler armandadur yar yar*

2nd young man: If you don't say "it's up to you", this person, who can make a hole in the wall to get millet and make a hole in the ice to get fish,¹⁵⁴ will give you some trouble today.

(Everyone laughs)

Hizim: When they asked did you want to marry her with your own free will, you insisted on saying nothing, Seyit, so I called out "Yes" on your behalf.

1st young man: Oh, then Hizim got married.

2nd young man: If you say this, this mischievous guy may go to the wedding bed!
(laughs)

1st young man: But Seyit ate the salty bread.¹⁵⁵

Another element of the Uyghur wedding is the ceremonial opening of the bride's trousseau trunk. This is done in front of the wedding guests (especially the women), and therefore raises some social pressure to ensure that the trousseau will not attract negative comment or comparison with others in the community.

From the distance is heard the sound of the *dap*, drum and wedding songs. After a while, Turghan and two other people bring in a trunk, bedding, and a few bundles of other things.

In one of the final stages of a Uyghur wedding, the bride is carried on a carpet to the groom's house. While this is happening, her *yengge* and other supporters call out *chin*, which are couplets giving advice and comfort to the bride before she enters the bridal chamber. Again, Zunun adds a couplet to this repertoire that makes a special point for Ghunchem, and for the Uyghur condition:

Don't cry, a golden nail is fixed in your place
There's water in the ewer, but it's not warm
The mother of the girl may be stepmother,
Because she doesn't cry.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ This expression means someone capable of looking after themselves in all situations.

¹⁵⁵ Eating the salty bread is the confirmation of the wedding ceremony.

¹⁵⁶ *Yiglima kiz sanga bugun beht ekiptu*
Koshkenge altundin mih kekeptu
Aptuvida su koysam ilimaydu

The next step in the marriage involves the bride, seated on a carpet, being carried over a burning flame three times. Prof Abdukerim Rahman attributes this to a remnant custom of Zoroastrian religion, which was prevalent in Turkistan for many centuries prior to Islam, and elements of which were incorporated into Islamic practice in this region.¹⁵⁷

These portrayals of customary procedures would be familiar to Uyghur audiences who would appreciate the commonality of cultural experience and identify with the events that they had experienced in their own lives. The descriptions portray cultural vitality even where there is no political autonomy. Zunun's assertion of cultural vitality is another aspect of his writing under colonial domination.

In "Gulnissa", the major cultural feature portrayed is the *meshrep*. Zunun describes a scene in which young people and adolescent boys and girls are gathered together under a vine pergola [*barang*]. The *meshrep* is an event which combines individual displays of poetry-making, musical performance, singing and dancing, in a structured context which includes supervised, ritualised courtship between unmarried young men and women. The *mesrep* also teaches and reinforces etiquette concerning the details of social positions and relationships. The typical poems and humour of the event reinforce moral messages as well as drawing out declarations of love and admiration.

In *Gulnissa*, Zunun describes *meshrep* activities in detail. Musicians play in the centre of the group,¹⁵⁸ and a drummer playing the *dap* commences with the formal rhythms of a *mukam*, the structured classical music of traditional Uyghur culture. After performance of a number of songs from this *mukam*, the music change to dancing music, and the youngsters begin to dance. Polat comes before Gulnissa and bows to her, crossing his hands over his chest. Gulnissa returns the bow, and they dance as a couple, along with other couples. When the music and dance finish, the participants come to the part of the *meshrep* known as "*Pota*¹⁵⁹ Game". Polat undoes his *pota* from his waist and twists it firmly, and invites the group to play the game. Facing Gulnissa, he recites a four-line verse of love poetry. Then, holding his *pota*, he lightly taps Gulnissa with it. She tries

Kiz anisi ögeymikin yighlimaydu

¹⁵⁷ Rahman, op.cit.

¹⁵⁸ Zunun *Kadir Eserleri*, op cit., pp.336-341.

¹⁵⁹ The Uyghur *pota* is a thick cloth waistband worn as a belt over the coat or jacket by men, and sometimes serving as a place to keep small items such as coins.

to grab the rolled-up waistband, and he teasingly moves it left and right to frustrate her. When they are face to face, she catches it, and he gives the *pota* to her. The crowd calls out demanding that she reply to his poem, and Gulnissa in her turn teases Polat with the rolled *pota*, turning left and right, while reciting her own four-line love verse. When Polat catches back his *pota*, he moves on to another girl, Teleyhan, and continues the game with her, until she takes it and plays with another different young man. The game continues with the *pota* passing from boy to girl and girl to boy throughout the group.¹⁶⁰

The *meshrep* is one of the most important Uyghur cultural events, combining performance of music, dance and poetry with the transmission of social values. For this reason, it was viewed with suspicion under CCP rule, generally discouraged and at times forbidden altogether.¹⁶¹ In “Gulnissa”, Zunun portrays the *meshrep* as the environment in which the Uyghur lovers can express themselves openly and honestly, and can participate freely and willingly in a Uyghur cultural event. We can therefore see the *meshrep* as symbolising the integrity and continuity of Uyghur culture.

Conclusion

Zunun’s own memoirs note that the conditions for writers and intellectuals were relatively better following the 1933 revolution in East Turkistan.¹⁶² Zunun began his political writing idealistically, in early works such as “The Hardship of Ignorance”, which took individual effort and self-improvement through education as the key to progress. Throughout the 1940s, after Zunun had accumulated his own experience of political repression and danger, his own writings evolved from unambiguous criticism of colonialism and advocacy of nationalism, toward a socialist realism criticising the ills of the old society. This is most notable from the mid-1940s onward. But Zunun does not abandon his underlying commitment to preserving the identity, culture and self-determination of his Uyghur people. His writing consistently contained more or less

¹⁶⁰ Zunun portrays a different aspect of the *meshrep* in his later story “*Eslesh*” [Recollection] (1959). In this story, he writes from the perspective of a younger boy observing the proceedings. He notes particularly the dominant presence of an adult referee [*khazi*] who sits in the centre. There is another figure, the *Pashshap Beg*, whose role is to keep the whole event very much under his discipline. In this version, the exchange of verses is a competition between the boys, rather than a flirtatious game between boys and girls. Another significant cultural reference in this version of the *meshrep* is that it incorporates some activities that are derived from pre-Islamic Uyghur culture. The participants build and fire and jump over it, in a relic of Zoroastrian practice.

¹⁶¹ Even in the late 1980s, young people have been arrested for attending *meshreps* and accused of holding unauthorised meetings.

veiled criticisms of colonialism and oppression. He uses cultural forms sanctioned by the authorities as the vehicle to carry his political messages, obscured where necessary in allegory and metaphor. Thus he could survive as a writer, and still publish his criticisms of social injustice and its consequences, in ways accessible to his Uyghur readers. The writings of this period demonstrate the strategies by which Zunun would manage his dilemma of being true to his project as a writer, while surviving in a dangerous political environment.

¹⁶² Zunun's recorded memoir, *op.cit.*

Chapter 3

1950-60: Undesirable Alternatives

Chapter 2 discussed Zunun's writings from the 1940s, before the CCP takeover of Xinjiang. This chapter will deal with the way in which Zunun Kadir responded to the changed political circumstances after the CCP takeover, and up to the point when Zunun himself was accused of disloyalty by the CCP and sent to a labour camp.

In this chapter I will consider some of the key aspects of CCP policy that formed the environment for Zunun's working life, after which I will discuss a range of examples of Zunun's work typical of his various responses to the political situation. First the chapter examines "Ahmetjan Kasim", written in 1952, which praises the leader of the former East Turkistan Republic. Next "Chenikish", written in 1955, is principally concerned with cultural issues but also contains some political views. In the late 1950s he wrote "Guman", "Red Rose" and "Remembrance", which concern "socialist" personal development. The examples from the 1960s, "Let's Go to the Front Line of Rural Development" and "Writers and Artists should Join the Masses of the Workers, Peasants and Soldiers for the Long Term" show his attempts to conform with ever narrower political requirements of the time. As can be observed from the titles of these works, Zunun at this stage adopted the orthodox rhetoric required by CCP cultural policy, as most famously expressed in Mao Zedong's *Yan'an Talks* on the subject in 1942. However, whatever balancing act Zunun attempted in managing his dilemma between writing as a Uyghur author and performing as a CCP official, he was finally not able to avoid being labelled a Rightist and Nationalist, and being sentenced to exile in 1962.

Political movements affecting Uyghur literature

The general political movements going on throughout the PRC at that time took on special characteristics in Xinjiang. The major changes in power structures in the PRC generally were not ethnically oriented, but in Xinjiang they had an ethnic character from the start, starting from the top down. The appointment of Han cadres to senior positions started on a "temporary" basis in 1949, but gradually expanded

and became more common throughout the 1950s and 1960s, until few Uyghur held effective power.¹⁶³

Zunun had experienced Sheng Shicai's rule and the establishment of the East Turkistan Republic in the Three Districts in 1944. He had seen the East Turkistan Army being absorbed into the PLA from 1949 onwards. He saw the CCP government gaining confidence as it consolidated its power in Xinjiang as well as throughout mainland China, and saw the PRC aiming to become a major world power. China's ambition to incorporate East Turkistan fully into the Chinese state was indicated in Mao's Yan'an speech and in Zhou Enlai's "Concerning a few questions on our Nationality work", delivered in 1957. Political movements in the 1950s and 1960s supported this objective, justifying suppression of dissent, forced labour, and dispossession.

From the beginning of CCP rule, Zunun's dilemma took on different aspects. Firstly, although he continued to hope, and maybe believe, that the promises of the CCP to respect national self-rule would be honoured, and continued to believe in the need for social and cultural change that would take the Uyghur people forward and allow them to develop, these beliefs were to be continually challenged by the implementation of Chinese policies that steadily eroded hopes of self-determination, once full CCP control was in place. Secondly, Zunun would also face disillusionment with some of the socialist program that, in the way that it was implemented, seemed to dispossess Uyghurs and entrench Han transmigration, rather than the kind of socialism that Zunun had been keen to support. Thirdly, Zunun's experience through the 1950s and 1960s was of increasing restriction on his freedom to write as he saw things, and increasing pressure to write within strict Party guidelines¹⁶⁴.

¹⁶³ Friedrich, *op.cit.*, p.108. Friedrich notes that in 1956-7 the number of Han in Xinjiang had doubled since 1949, but that from 1957 to 1962 the numbers of Han in Xinjiang rose from around 600,000 to over two million. Friedrich says that in the name of helping the development of socialism, Chinese immigrants "thereby usually took over the leading positions, and were to set the example for Uyghurs".

¹⁶⁴ Interviewed in Urumqi in June 1998, Zhang Shirong of the Xinjiang Writers' Association said that Zunun had written some political propaganda pieces in the 1960s although he did not want to write such things, and Zunun had told Zhang that he hated telling lies and considered the propaganda pieces to be his worst works.

Zunun Kadir therefore faced the question as to how, as a pro-socialist Uyghur intellectual, to contribute to bringing genuine modernisation and prosperity to his people, while at the same time facing the cultural and political challenges of sinicisation. He needed a means to adjust himself to CCP rule and continue working within a CCP bureaucracy while writing from a nationality perspective.

Zunun's experience of politics and betrayals in the 1930s and 1940s may have dampened some of his idealism, but he appears to have remained essentially idealistic at the start of the 1950s. His understanding of politics, as well as his understanding of his Uyghur people, enabled him at least initially to balance his work as a CCP bureaucrat with his role as a Uyghur writer. Principally, it enabled him to find the way to address his Uyghur audience with messages they would understand, without unduly offending his CCP supervisors. He could strongly support, together with CCP colleagues, the themes of modernisation and anti-imperialism in which he himself believed, and he did this consistently. He was politically flexible enough to adapt to the demands of the times, so that he was willing and able to obscure some of his more dangerous political views, such as using references to "international Imperialism" to make points concerning Han colonialism in Xinjiang. At other times, when such a strategy might be too dangerous, he focussed on educational, social, and personal development issues relevant to his Uyghur people.

Before the CCP takeover, Zunun had been employed as a literary worker in the Cultural Office of the East Turkistan Republic ("Three Districts") government. After 1949 he continued in the official literary establishment, now under the CCP-controlled administration. The following section will discuss the political currents of the time, which influenced the creative activities of the writers and intellectuals. I will then focus on how this particular writer was able to use his skill to negotiate between his own ideas and Government policy requirements. The way this is managed will determine whether a particular writer earns a place in history or is forgotten as a puppet of the political times.

As noted in the previous chapter, the East Turkistan Republic, declared in 1933, had been suppressed by the joint forces of the Soviet Union and the Chinese-controlled

Xinjiang Government under General Sheng Shicai. The Second East Turkistan Republic had been a subject of contestation between China and the Soviet Union, and had fallen in 1949 with the declaration of the People's Republic of China under the leadership of the CCP.

In August 1949, Ahmetjan Kasim and his core Cabinet were invited to fly to Beijing to meet with Chairman Mao Zedong and negotiate the future of East Turkistan. Mysteriously, the plane crashed and all aboard were killed.¹⁶⁵ Once this core nationalist leadership had been killed, the remaining members of the elite were intimidated, isolated both internally and internationally, and had no choice but to accept cooperation with the invading Chinese armies which claimed to offer liberation. The CCP presented itself as the only possible alternative to the traditionally repressive forms of Chinese rule that were all too familiar to the residents of East Turkistan.

Once CCP control had been fully established, Mao went back on the promises of self-determination that, according to Uyghur sources, had been made in earlier times.¹⁶⁶ Wang Zhen, the PLA General who commanded the takeover, seems to have had three objectives. First, to eliminate Turkic separatism. Second, to ensure complete Chinese political and economic control.¹⁶⁷ Third, to eliminate Soviet influence in the region.¹⁶⁸ For these objectives, the Uyghur nationalist elites had to be eliminated. Those from the anti-communist side who were known to have actively resisted the Chinese advance were hunted down until captured or forced into exile.¹⁶⁹ Zunun's survival through this period could indicate that he was careful to avoid any

¹⁶⁵ Benson, op.cit., p.175.

¹⁶⁶ Kurban, op.cit., p.92, says that Mao had promised that non-Han people, if they wished, could join the People's Republic of China, or could form separate independent nations. He says that in the beginning of the 1950s the CCP maintained the rhetoric of Right of Self-Determination for nationalities. (Ikhlil Kurban is the son-in-law of Rahimjan Sabri, one of the East Turkistan Republic representatives in negotiations with the KMT in 1945).

¹⁶⁷ John Gittings, *Survey of the Sino-Soviet Dispute*, Oxford University Press, London, 1968, p.56. Gittings says Chinese control of East Turkistan was consolidated by 1954, when the Soviet leader Khrushchev visited Beijing to "remove causes of tension", as evidenced by Chinese leaders at the First National Peoples' Congress of PRC in 1954 praising the "sincere cooperation and friendship of the USSR".

¹⁶⁸ Forbes, A.D.W., *Warlords and Muslims in Chinese Central Asia: a political history of Republican Sinkiang 1911-49*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1986, p.221.

¹⁶⁹ Yusuf Beg Muhlisi, a former official of the ETR and PRC governments, who fled to Kazakstan in 1960 and led a movement called the "East Turkistan Liberation Front", interviewed by the author in Alma Ata, 1992.

outright criticism of or opposition to the CCP, and there are indications that he was still hoping that the socialist ideals of Communism might produce good results for the economic and social development of the Uyghur people.

We know from Zunun's remarks about his efforts to revise "Ghunchem" (see previous chapter) that by 1954 he was under pressure from the literary commissars, who were not satisfied that his earlier writings met the criteria for ideological correctness. By 1957, the movements to criticise those who had been part of the East Turkistan Republic were more difficult to avoid. The "Hundred Flowers" movement, encouraging cadres to speak freely, started in 1956 and was intensified after Mao's speech in February 1957 "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People." In April 1957, a Rectification Team was appointed by the XUAR CCP Committee, under the leadership of Wang Enmao and Sayfuddin. The first targets of this "rectification" were nationalism and "Great Han-ism", but the focus was on eliminating two kinds of criticism of the CCP – local nationalism, and also criticism of CCP policies by Han cadres.¹⁷⁰ McMillen gives the example of the editors of the *Xinjiang Ribao* being criticised and purged because they had published articles (and sent others to the Shanghai *Wenhui Bao*) that complained of lack of free speech in Xinjiang compared to other parts of China.¹⁷¹

By late 1957, more than 2,700 cadres had been transferred to rural areas by the XUAR Party Committee as punishment for their criticisms, as well as to undermine the authority of the local traditional leadership. Zunun's writings of this period, during which there were mass trials and up to 100,000 people accused of being counter-revolutionary, show a careful adherence to the permissible themes of socialism and CCP policy, with any other messages buried in metaphor. In late November 1957, the anti-Rightist campaign began to focus on an "anti-local nationalist struggle". The Party now said that there had been a rise of "local nationalism" as a result of overemphasis on the recent campaign criticising "Great Han-ism".

¹⁷⁰ Friedrich, op.cit., p.81: Friedrich notes that the anti-nationalism campaign was not a feature of the political campaign in China proper, and that the anti-Revisionism element of the campaign lasted less than a year in China proper before being overtaken by the Great Leap Forward, whereas in Xinjiang "anti-Revisionism" continued as a major campaign theme right through until 1960.

¹⁷¹ McMillen, op.cit., p.90.

Any such local nationalists in Xinjiang were now accused of being pro-Soviet, anti-CCP, and of wanting to establish the East Turkistan Republic.¹⁷²

In the course of this criticism campaign, the Xinjiang newspapers reported the kind of criticisms that non-Han cadres had been making. These included that “autonomy was a farce; that all responsible CCP posts were dominated by Han; that minority cadres could not voice their opinions for fear of being charged with “local nationalism”; and that minority cadres were promoted solely on the basis of their political loyalties without regard to their competence. During the same period, the XUAR government began to withdraw Soviet-originated school textbooks, and replaced them with material published in Beijing. Pro-Soviet cadres and other prominent people were attacked and purged.¹⁷³

At this time, Sayfuddin made the announcement that Xinjiang was an indivisible part of the territory of China, and that any talk about secession or independence was “reactionary”. Anyone who opposed the advance toward socialism “under the CCP and with the aid of the Han” would be following a nationalistic and counterrevolutionary trend.¹⁷⁴ The history of the ETR was reinterpreted (in words attributed to Sayfuddin) as having been intended to achieve “a merger of the people of Xinjiang with the mainstream of the revolutionary struggle of all China”, especially against KMT rule.¹⁷⁵

After the liquidation of the Three District government, CCP propaganda continued to suggest that a democratic system would be established under Chairman Mao, and that self-rule would be granted to the Uyghurs as long as their intellectuals, leadership and people complied with Marxist ideology and Mao Zedong Thought. In reality, the CCP organised opposition among Uyghur people to the indigenous elite, claiming that it was time for the ordinary people to live in comfort, that the past poor conditions of life had been caused by the corrupt rulers of the former China and

¹⁷² Ibid, p.91.

¹⁷³ Ibid, p.92.

¹⁷⁴ McMillen, op.cit. p.93.

¹⁷⁵ Xinjiang üchvilayet İnkilabi Tarihini Yizish Tehrirlesh Komititi [Xinjiang Committee for the Preparation and Writing of the History of the Three Districts Revolution] (eds), “Foreword”, in *Xinjiang üchvilayet İnkilabigha Dair chong ishlar Hatirisi* [Recollections of Major Events of the Three Districts Revolution], Xinjiang Helk Neshriyati, Urumqi, 1995.

a small group of people exploiting, cheating and mismanaging the region. Now it was the time for the ordinary people, with the support of the new government of China, to turn against their enemy who had caused this poverty. The CCP was thus able to separate the masses from the local elites (that is, the intellectuals, capitalists, landowners and upper middle classes) and to place itself firmly and unopposed in the leadership role. They neutralised the former upper social levels of Uyghur society by isolating them, and then could deal one by one with the small number who resisted, using intimidation, torture, political purges, imprisonment and murder. In the period just before the Hundred Flowers Campaign “Han Chauvinism was stirring on every hand”, and in particular, resentment against Soviet influence in Chinese affairs.¹⁷⁶

Key documents affecting nationalities literature

Having outlined some key political events of the 1950s relevant to Zunun’s position, I will now discuss specific policy documents that are important to an understanding of literary politics in this period. Two key documents of the CCP are most relevant in understanding the political context in which Zunun, as a cadre in a government organisation, had to work (like all other writers in China at that time). The first is Mao Zedong’s address to the Yan’an Forum on Literature and Art in 1942 which set out the Maoist principles of the relationship of literature and art with the Chinese Communist program. Zunun specifically refers to this speech in overtly political writings such as “Writers and Artists should join the masses of the Workers, Peasants and Soldiers for the long term” (discussed below). Although Mao’s talk dates from the 1940s, it was not until the CCP took power in China that its contents became applied as national arts policy.

The essence of Mao’s Yan’an speech is that literature and art must serve politics, and can not be considered exempt from class struggle. Mao’s central statement on this is the aim of art and literature is to “serve the masses of the people...the workers, peasants, soldiers and urban petty bourgeoisie. To serve them, we must take the class stand of the proletariat and not that of the petty bourgeoisie”.¹⁷⁷ The first section of this talk concerns the question “Literature and Art for whom?” Mao says

¹⁷⁶ Dick Wilson, *Chou: The Story of Chou Enlai*, Hutchinson, London, 1984, p.214.

¹⁷⁷ Mao Zedong, *Talks at the Yanan Forum on Art and Literature*, Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1956, pp.12-20.

Indeed, literature and art exist which are for the exploiters and oppressors. Literature and art for the landlord class are feudal literature and art...China's new culture at the present stage is an anti-imperialist, anti-feudal culture of the masses of the people under the leadership of the proletariat.¹⁷⁸

Mao later addresses the question of whether applying Marxist methods will make writers and artists less creative:

[Some comrades¹⁷⁹ in Yan'an say]... 'To call on us to study Marxism is to repeat the mistake of the dialectic materialist creative method, which will harm the creative mood'. To study Marxism means to apply the dialectical materialist and historical materialism viewpoint in our observation of the world, of society and of literature and art; it does not mean writing philosophical lectures into our works of literature and art. Marxism embraces but cannot replace realism in literature and artistic creation, just as it embraces but can not replace the atomic and electronic theories in physics. Empty, dry, dogmatic formulas do indeed destroy the creative mood; not only that – they first destroy Marxism. Dogmatic 'Marxism' is not Marxism, it is anti-Marxism. Then does not Marxism destroy the creative mood? Yes, it does. It definitely destroys creative moods that are feudal, bourgeois, petty bourgeois, liberalistic, nihilist, art-for-art's sake, aristocratic, decadent or pessimistic, and every other creative mood that is alien to the masses of the people and to the proletariat.¹⁸⁰

In the above paragraph, Mao makes clear that he does not want Marxism to be dogmatic when applied by himself or the CCP, but on the other hand, he expects a dogmatic application of Marxism when it comes to all other schools of thought that he considers to be "alien to the masses and to the proletariat".

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, p.13-14.

¹⁷⁹ "Some comrades" refers to those other intellectual figures in the CCP itself, such as Wang Meng and Zhou Yang, who were debating this issue with Mao.

¹⁸⁰ Mao Tsetung, "Talks at the Yanan Forum on Literature and Art May 1942" in *Selected Readings from the Works of Mao Tsetung*, Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1971, p.281.

We can see evidence in Zunun's work that this strict limitation on the purposes of writing, implemented by the CCP, affected his choice of subjects, themes, and even the kind of language he uses in writings from the later 1950s and early 1960s. In that sense, Zunun's writings over this period appear "orthodox", although some also contain meanings at other levels that are not so orthodox in CCP terms. These are discussed later in this chapter.

Mao's talks also call on socialist writers to "take over the rich legacy and the good tradition in literature and art that have been handed down from past ages in China and foreign countries, but the aim is still to serve the masses of the people". In this we see a basis for Zunun to draw upon folkloric or other traditional themes of Uyghur literature and culture, so long as he is able to present these as being used to convey messages consistent with the CCP ("proletariat") programs and policies. Therefore, even within this very demanding policy set down by Mao Zedong himself, Zunun could find scope for the literary ambiguity that was his main tool in managing the dilemma of his life as a writer: to strike a balance between socialist identity and his Uyghur identity in the context of the PRC.

A later document with particular reference to the situation of minority writers is Zhou Enlai's speech to a Party meeting on "Nationalities Work" in Qingdao on 4th August 1957, "Concerning a few questions on our nationalities work". The speech dealt with "Opposing two kinds of nationalism". Zhou stated that it was necessary to oppose both Han Chauvinism and "local nationalism", and that to overcome both of these problems, the CCP would use Mao Zedong's formula of "criticism and struggle". Zhou makes frank reference to historical occasions on which the Han nationality have exploited other nationalities of China, noting that this has made such nationalities suspicious of Han. The Han, he suggests, should not over-react to this.¹⁸¹ He notes that in history, the Han have invaded and dominated fraternal nationalities, but have also suffered domination from such fraternal nationalities (he names the Northern Zhao, Liao, Jin, Yuan and Manchus). On balance, however, it has been the Han who have predominantly been the ones to

¹⁸¹ Zhou Enlai, "Concerning Some Questions on Nationalities" in Gansu Nationality Research Centre Study Committee (eds), *Zhongguo Minzu Bolan* [Readings on China's Nationalities], Zhishi Chubanshe, Shanghai, 1982, p.4.

invade and displace brother nationalities, pushing them to the periphery and difficult conditions. Because of this, such nationalities had difficulties in developing their economies and cultures.¹⁸² Such experience had left a deep scar in the impression held of the Han nationality by other nationalities. Therefore criticism of nationalities should not be directed to their education or their economy, but should be directed towards encouraging them to take part in creating a better China.¹⁸³

This speech reveals a deft approach to dealing with the treatment of colonies or minority populations. If cadres do not talk about the inequality of educational opportunity and economic opportunity, they will not stimulate subject peoples (such as Uyghurs) to compare themselves to the Han peoples in terms of opportunities in education and economy. So long as this important issue is disguised, colonial conduct can continue without responsibility being taken for the wellbeing and development of the native peoples. It must be recognised, however, that Zhou was frank about the situation and realised the danger of extreme Han Chauvinism in minority areas. He was far-sighted enough to be concerned about containing Han Chauvinism and to remind his audience of some harsh facts of history.

However, Zhou also warns that cadres should not be over-sympathetic to the non-Han minorities. He recommends that they do not take the minorities' stand-point in criticising Han behaviour, because this could create problems (by aggravating contradictions between nationalities). The criticism should be of the action of individuals, not of the Han people. If cadres point out difficulties and prejudices faced by minorities, they will feel that nothing has changed from before, and this could create division.¹⁸⁴ In this statement, we see the creation of a new social class of people, created by the CCP, based on ethnicity. Here we can clearly see Zhou's advice to the colonial cadres not to stand on the local people's platform. Things must be seen from the view of "national interest", which means essentially Han interest. The policy speech encourages promising the utopia of socialism to local people, but shows no real concern for justice or equality between the different peoples making up the population of the PRC.

¹⁸² Ibid, p.3.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, p.4.

Zhou does not ignore the issue of racism. In this speech he makes critical reference to racism, noting particularly Nazi racism. He says that all nationalities are equal, but only if given the conditions and opportunity for training. If some nationality is backward, this reflects a lack of opportunity and economic conditions. We may note here that this comment, while on the face of it humane, is also a justification for colonisation done in the name of progress.¹⁸⁵

Zhou's speech goes on to explain why the minority policy is important: "In today's world", he notes, "if we are not a strong socialist nation, we will be bullied by imperialist forces. Today, the imperialists are still there, waiting for an opportunity to create chaos in China. We have to be careful, because if we don't, our country of many nationalities will not be able to raise its head, and will remain a poor, backward, bullied country".¹⁸⁶ The speech goes on to say that with over fifty nationalities working together, China can be turned into a big, strong, modern nation. For this, China must not rely solely on the Han. He states that although the Han population is very large, and its economy and culture are "more developed", the Han are lacking in farming land and mineral resources compared to other nationalities. The development of the natural resources of the "brother nationalities" is an important requirement for the development of China's industrialisation. Without the Han, these other nationalities (supposedly) can not develop their resources, so the Han and other nationalities should "help each other" – for example in opening the Karamay oilfields in Xinjiang, and making Urumqi an industrial city. Without the effort both of Xinjiang's nationalities and of the Han, they could not achieve the goal of a strong China.¹⁸⁷

Zhou notes that because of this common purpose, the opposition (i.e. "Imperialism", which at that time was rhetorical code for the West¹⁸⁸) will try to destroy the unity between the nationalities. To maintain unity, Han Chauvinism and local nationalism should both be criticised. This issue should be adopted as "new knowledge".

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, p.16.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid, p.5.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid, p.6.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid, p.15. Zhou identifies "imperialism" as a Western phenomenon, naming England, France and USA as examples, with policies of exploiting local peoples.

Criticism, he says, should not be prevented, and people being criticised should not be protected.¹⁸⁹

When Zhou says to make this issue a “new knowledge”, it suggests an intention to make up a new narrative to obscure the identity of minority peoples in the PRC such as the Uyghurs, making their history a subordinate branch of Chinese national history. This also involves obscuring other aspects and interpretations of their own history. The Han are to subordinate the interest of “minorities” to the cause of a stronger, greater, Han China, which will be a dominant power in the future.

The Chinese Government’s objective as set out in this speech is not, therefore, to create a true common good, but to create a China that is powerful and united against external threats (Western Imperialism). This can not be achieved without colonies to exploit for their land, minerals and manpower. To obtain this, different rules may be created for Han Chinese and for others. At the same time, a socialist utopia could be promised to the local people (of whatever nationality). This point is clearly made in the advice to cadres not to stand on the side of the nationalities in criticising Han behaviour. The effect of taking this advice is to create a double standard, allowing for inequality and dishonesty. Even though the Party recognised the existence of Han Chauvinism, it indirectly prevented criticism of Han Chauvinists by Han themselves, raising questions about how seriously it was intended to overcome this Han Chauvinism. In fact, it could be said that in this way Han Chauvinism is encouraged. The argument that the Han’s land and mineral resources are not enough to build a strong and powerful China are presented as being sufficient to legitimise a policy of expansion of Han territory and exploitation of local people for the sake of a future powerful Han-China.

The second section of this important speech by Zhou Enlai is entitled “Concerning the issue of the Autonomy of Nationalities”. The speech gives policy direction at two levels. At the first level, it contains a frank explanation to the Han cadres as to why Xinjiang (and other minority areas) must be colonized. The second level at which the speech works is to overlay this colonialistic need with ideological rhetoric

¹⁸⁹ Ibid, p.7.

and justifications relating to the need to oppose capitalism, imperialism and feudalism.

First, Zhou points out why China disagrees with the Soviet Union's approach of establishing separate Soviet Republics for the various nationalities. Zhou's reasoning is that Russia had by the nineteenth century already attained the status of a capitalist state in possession of a colonial empire already owned by Tsarist Russia. By contrast (according to Zhou) China was itself in a state of semi-colonisation by Western imperialist powers. This state was only ended with the success of the Communist revolution. The purpose of these observations is to explain to CCP cadres why China now needs its own colonies in order to achieve industrialisation. Now it is the turn of the Han to pursue industrialisation, and there is no need to hesitate in taking possession of the lands and resources of local nationalities in order to serve that greater national purpose.

It should be noted that the speech was made in a period during which China was in the process of developing its own nuclear weapons capability, with policies firmly set on attaining the status of a world nuclear power.¹⁹⁰ It was therefore clear that the Chinese nation could not afford to be distracted by the voices of objections from minority groups, whether Han or non-Han. In the case of Xinjiang, the resources that were needed were both uranium (mined in the Three Districts region) and the desert spaces suitable for conducting nuclear testing. Secrecy on these matters was essential, and could not be compromised by any concerns over the humanist or socialist arguments about the economic, social or health effects that such a program could have on the local population and land. Secrecy would therefore include concealing much of the nature of these programs from the very people who would be most affected by them – the population of Xinjiang.

¹⁹⁰ Morton H. Halperin, *China and the Bomb*, Pall Mall Press, London, 1965, pp.41-4. Halperin states: "...during 1951-2 the Chinese became increasingly nervous over signs of the American development of a thermonuclear capability... They were relieved at the Soviet H-Bomb test in August 1953, but as soon as they came to recognize that the Soviets were not inclined to share [it]...China's commitment of resources to the development of a nuclear capacity makes it clear that she assigns a high priority to the goal of becoming a militarily effective nuclear power - a goal determined by the fundamental aspiration to make China a great power".

Zhou points out that the concept of separate republics would imply separate economic units.¹⁹¹ We see in this his concern that in order to build a strong, centralised China, it was not tolerable to have regional autonomy as regards the use of economic resources that would be needed for a larger national purpose. (This follows his earlier remarks, noted above, to the effect that Han China was short of land and mineral resources, “brother” nationalities had these resources, and therefore “cooperation” was essential.) To build a strong and powerful China, China must take the land and resources of these “brother” nationalities; its aim of attaining the status of a world power could only be achieved through total economic and political control of the so-called “brother nationalities”.

This period also coincided with some attempt between the Soviet Union and the United States to achieve *détente*, and the start of a cooling of relations with the Peoples Republic of China. In 1957 China criticised the Soviet Union for taking a revisionist path.¹⁹² There was also some tension with the Soviet Union in relation to the Taiwan issue, after Khrushchev suggested to the PRC government that they should stop provoking the United States on this issue.¹⁹³

These geopolitical issues continued to develop between 1959 and 1961 in ways that were directly relevant to the position of Xinjiang within China’s strategic views, and therefore had a major influence on the political environment in which Zunun Kadir could pursue his writing career. In 1959 the Soviet Union criticised the Great Leap forward for wasting Soviet economic aid. In 1959, Zhou Enlai went to Moscow to seek further aid from the Soviet Union, and the initial Soviet agreement to provide some more assistance was later dropped. During the same year, there was political disunity within the top ranks of the CCP, as Mao Zedong played off Zhou Enlai in

¹⁹¹ Zhou, *op.cit.*, p.8.

¹⁹² Zhou Enlai is quoted as saying that at the Moscow conference of world Communist Parties in November 1957, he had tried fruitlessly to “persuade the Soviet Communist Party from going to far along the revisionist road” (Wilson, *op.cit.*, p.217.)

¹⁹³ In 1958, China had escalated its confrontation with Taiwan over the offshore islands, to a degree that threatened to bring the United States into the dispute. This occurred at the time Khrushchev was pursuing a policy of *détente* with the United States. He flew to Beijing to ask China to take a softer line for the time being, but was rejected. (Wilson, *op.cit.*, quoting Khrushchev’s memoirs and other sources, p.218.)

rivalry with Liu Shaoqi.¹⁹⁴ Internationally, it was also the year in which there were some small clashes with Indian troops on the border, and the year in which the Tibetan Rebellion broke out, culminating in the flight of the Dalai Lama to India. China was therefore in no situation to feel confident about the situation on its western borders.

The Camp David détente between the Soviet Union and the United States, agreed between Khrushchev and Eisenhower with the objective of reducing tensions between USSR and USA, was seen by China as the Soviet Union selling out the people of the Third World.¹⁹⁵ In 1960, the Soviet Union withdrew all its technicians from China, and abolished 257 different programs of scientific and technical cooperation. This intensified China's need and determination to use all resources under its own control to continue its drive towards industrialisation, wealth and international influence.

Under these conditions, the CCP used deceptive methods to consolidate and maintain its control over Xinjiang and its resources. Political and economic power was held firmly and totally by the Han cadres. At the same time, however, subject to final policy control by the central authorities, some measure of autonomy was allowed in the cultural arena. Though there was increased sinicisation in Xinjiang generally, a number of Uyghurs were used as cadres in the cultural fields.

The second level of Zhou's speech is the attempt to construct an ideological justification for the colonialist needs of Han China, and to wrap these intentions in the rhetoric of socialism, equality and future prosperity for all, so as to gain support from the subject peoples to the greatest extent possible, effectively by deception. By acknowledging the misconduct of previous Chinese rulers of Xinjiang and the other territories, the CCP seeks to distance itself from them and to portray the CCP as a progressive government which is sympathetic to the sufferings and aspirations of its minority nationalities. As with the references to past Chinese rulers, the speech also

¹⁹⁴ Wilson, *op.cit.*, p. 221: The Lushan Conference of the CCP Central Committee in July 1959 was the scene of recriminations about the economic failures of the Great Leap Forward campaign. Mao Zedong faced the greatest criticism, but he astutely undermined both of his potential replacements (Zhou Enlai and Liu Shaoqi) by implicating them in the economic failures and encouraging competition between them.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid*, p.225.

mobilizes anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist rhetoric so as to pass blame for the history of bad conditions and poverty on to the heads of feudalism, capitalism and imperialism.¹⁹⁶

Zhou is careful to note that “the achievement of China in revolution is due to the hard work of all the nationalities. There have been twenty-two years of active revolution in Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang. The Communist Party has absorbed cadres of all nationalities”.¹⁹⁷ This line is intended to claim a close linkage between Han and minority nationality peoples, whereas in reality the CCP reserved all political and economic power in the hands of the Han. The rhetoric continues that the Han have a common program with the minority peoples to build a better future for all people in unity. The argument goes that this objective cannot be reached by separate republics or genuinely autonomous states, because such autonomy would create division, which would weaken China and therefore serve imperialism. Zhou continues:

History has progressed to the point at which the nationalities must cooperate. That is why, since Liberation, we have taken the line that is suitable to our country’s national interest – that is, upholding the idea of cooperation between nationalities together with regional national autonomy¹⁹⁸ We do not encourage national separation, because the imperialists will use it against us. For example, before Liberation, in Xinjiang there was an East Turkistan separation movement. This was an imperialist activity. For this reason, we use the name Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, and not Uyghuristan. Xinjiang is not only Uyghur but is made of another 12 nationalities. Because Uyghurs are over 70 percent of the population, we use the title Uyghur Autonomous Region.¹⁹⁹

Zhou explains that the use of the name “Xinjiang” is an important issue, because it removes the claim of any particular nationality to the land: “The meaning is ‘New

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, p.4, p.15.

¹⁹⁷ Zhou, op.cit., p.13.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid, p.12.

Frontier’, but it does not connote invasion... this word contains the meaning of cooperation between nationalities.’²⁰⁰ In reality, of course, this ancient land can only be “New Territory” for the Han, not for its traditional inhabitants. Thus the “imperialism” that Zhou warned against in the case of Uyghurs is encoded in the very name of the territory as a part of China.

In effect, the sense of Zhou’s words is to discredit the legitimacy of any movement for independence, such as the Three Districts Government, by describing any attempt to assert “minority” nationality interests as serving “imperialist” interests. At the same time it undermines the principle of autonomy, by also associating this, and anyone who seeks to assert real autonomy, as being “separatist”. This line is in radical contrast to the promises of support for autonomy that were made to the Three Districts (East Turkistan) Government before “Liberation”.²⁰¹ Zunun Kadir was close to these events throughout the changes in policy line, having worked for the East Turkistan government and successor administrations in Ili up until 1954, when he was transferred to Urumqi to work under PRC administration. He could not have been unaffected by the continual betrayal of former promises.

Zhou goes on to explain that China’s economic reform will be achieved in two stages. The first stage is “democratic reform”, which will be the basis for land reform. The second stage will be socialism. In practice, this first “democratic” step consisted of dividing the local elite from the masses of the population and turning one against the other. This had the double advantage of placing the CCP on the side of the masses, and ensuring that any criticism of their program was silenced.

The second stage, of Socialism, amounted to collectivisation. Although applied all over China, this program, like other programs of the CCP, was applied differently in Xinjiang because the CCP’s strategic objectives and priorities in Xinjiang were different. In Han territories, the purpose was to ensure that the CCP obtained and held all political power, but in Xinjiang the priority was that the Han would acquire economic and political power and control from the local authorities and population.

²⁰⁰ Ibid, p.13.

²⁰¹ Kurban, op.cit.

From the beginning, the Han perception was of the “otherness” of Xinjiang’s indigenous people. Many Uyghurs believed that CCP land reform was not actually a matter of taking land from the rich and giving it to the poor, or of dividing it equally among the people. Rather it was often seen as a policy that led to the transference of wealth from Uyghur hands into the hands of the Han.

Zhou says in this speech that the CCP government should make clear that no elements of society can resist the socialist transformation. Pressure should be applied to persuade the wealthy to accept the economic reforms, and the wealthy should know that if they resist, the masses will overthrow them, under the leadership of the CCP. In this way they have no choice but to agree, in order to guarantee their own security.²⁰²

The CCP in the 1950s implemented a program of fragmenting East Turkistan society by class distinction, ethnic distinction, and implementing divisive Communist propaganda campaigns.²⁰³ As previous Chinese rulers have done, the CCP created insecurity in Xinjiang by means of public trials, neighbourhood reporting systems, public criticism and “struggle sessions”. Under such conditions, the promise of a little security became a big incentive for people to cooperate and submit. Zhou Enlai says on the subject of dealing with landowners and middle peasants, “the longer the person keeps his private wealth, the more he will lose his ground and will fail further.”²⁰⁴ Zhou stated that the transformation to socialism might differ slightly from region to region, but every one would have to give up living in luxury, because not all of China could live in luxury.²⁰⁵

Right from the Yan’an origins of the CCP political machinery, the United Front Work Department, which was responsible for building alliances with the minority nationalities, had no non-Han nationality representatives on it at all. All promises of

²⁰² Ibid, p.17.

²⁰³ W.J.F. Jenner refers to elements of historical Chinese statecraft : “The secret of preventing things from happening was fragmentation, and this was something at which the state got better and better, reaching a culmination under the Qing” (W.J.F. Jenner, *The Tyranny of History*, Allen Lane the Penguin Press, London, 1992, p.31.

²⁰⁴ An example of this principle applied by the CCP in Xinjiang can be found in Zunun’s drama “*Toy*” [the Wedding].

²⁰⁵ Zhou, op.cit., p.17-18.

equality and prosperity were simply political tactics. The main objective appears to have been to concentrate all political and economic powers in Han Chinese hands. The CCP chose puppet figureheads for its representative assemblies, while the real economic power remained with the Central Government, which was a Han government.

Presumably, the somewhat more relaxed cultural policies were supposed to compensate for this concentration of political and economic power. In reality, however, even this cultural policy was largely a deception. Although minority nationality cadres were used in literary and cultural activities (including Zunun himself), cultural policy remained dominated by the CCP. The results of this duality are evident in Zunun's writings.

For minority peoples facing colonisation, the question of assimilation creates a difficult dilemma: preservation of their own language and culture as separate and viable is very important to national survival; but on the other hand, such separateness also isolates minority peoples from the main stream of actual power, and prevents them competing, in their own environment or the central political system, against the representatives of the dominant culture. Therefore, the CCP cultural policy of encouraging minority cultures to remain outside the mainstream could have the effect of condemning the minorities to remain on the margins of society and power. In turn, this marginalisation could provide internal justifications for the policies of population transfer into the colonised territory.

Zunun's work in the 1950s

As noted above, the East Turkistan government was suppressed by the combination of multiple forces. The CCP used the popular nature of the Ili rebellion to claim that it was not nationalist in nature, was not against the CCP, but was a rebellion against the KMT and "Imperialism". After the liquidation of the Three Districts Government, CCP propaganda continued to suggest that a democratic system would be established under Mao. Self-rule would be granted to the Uyghurs as long as their intellectuals, leadership and people cooperated with Marxist ideology and Mao Zedong Thought. In principle, Zunun may have believed that Marxist ideology would benefit the Uyghur people. But increasingly, the behaviour of the CCP would have reminded him of past Uyghur experience under Chinese rule. The more Uyghurs complained of the behaviour of Mao's regime, the more the CCP

suppressed those individual writers and intellectuals who were exposing the situation. This led to Uyghur intellectuals being targeted as bourgeois, pan-Turkist, rightist, or nationalist. This limited the ability of writers to continue to write as they had been able to do in the thirties and forties, with a nationalistic, anti-imperialist flavour.

Under these circumstances, Zunun Kadir relied increasingly upon literary devices such as metaphor (which was a prominent device in the Uyghur literary tradition) to communicate to his people and later generations his understanding of the political interactions and social events of his era, and some views on the problems and their solutions. Because of the conditions of the time, he needed to disguise his meaning, and to present it in the context of communist ideology. He also used the communist-approved idea of “anti-colonialism” (normally directed towards Western colonists) to expose Chinese colonialism, which the Uyghur people had suffered for centuries. Considering this environment, it is wrong to conclude, as some Uyghurs have done, that Zunun never promoted or cooperated with the policies of the CCP government. During that era, it was simply not possible to survive and publish without being useful to the CCP government. Every writer is the product of his or her time. Zunun, given the circumstances in which he had to live, still wanted to uplift his people, and analyse the reasons for their sufferings. The central issue was how he could raise his people’s consciousness to improve society. We will now consider some examples of his work from the 1950s.

Ahmetjan Khasim²⁰⁶

In 1952, Zunun wrote an article about the President of the East Turkistan Republic, Ahmetjan Kasim, who had been killed in the mysterious plane crash of 1949 (mentioned earlier).²⁰⁷ Zunun’s narrative begins with the terrible news of the accident in which the leader of the Uyghurs, described here as modest, friendly, open, honest, and patriotic, was killed and became a martyr. Zunun explicitly states, “This news added one more black line to the contemporary history of our people, who have

²⁰⁶ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.195-219.

²⁰⁷ Mao’s invitation to a meeting in Beijing was for September 1949, and for some reason the plane crashed in Kazakhstan. According to once source, the bodies of Ahmetjan and his colleagues were brought back to Ili in April 1950 for a public funeral.(Abdurahman Ebey, *Ehmetjan Khasimi hekkide hikayeler* [The Story of Ahmetjan Khasim], vol.2, Xinjiang Renmin Chubanshe, Urumqi, 1986, p.1.

suffered centuries of injustices and oppression”²⁰⁸ – a brave and outspoken statement in the context of the time.

In his story, Zunun compares the leadership of the Chinese Sheng Shicai, who ruled at gunpoint, with Ahmetjan’s leadership, presented as humanist, compassionate, just and loving towards all nationalities.²⁰⁹ Ahmetjan, he states, had also been courageous in bringing about justice for his people, leading them to active participation, and discouraging passivity. Zunun says that justice was sacred to Ahmetjan. For this reason Ahmetjan named his son “Adil” (meaning Justice) and his daughter “Adalet”, which is the feminine of the same word.²¹⁰

At the end of the piece, Zunun writes “Ahmetjan has left us physically, but he will never be forgotten in the history of our glorious struggle for freedom. Ahmetjan will live forever in the minds and hearts of future generations. We will turn our misery into strength to work for his aspiration and humanism”.

After this confident statement, Zunun ends his story by acknowledging CCP power and expressing the continuing hope that the CCP’s promises will be realised: “We will advance towards Ahmetjan’s dream of a beautiful future, along the Great Leader Mao Zedong’s new democratic road”. It is difficult to know to what extent Zunun still believed that Mao and the CCP would rule justly in Xinjiang, or whether he was already under political pressure to use this sort of political rhetoric to protect himself and achieve publication for his writings. Before long it would become clear that neither the democratic road nor the beautiful future was about to become a reality in Xinjiang.

***Chenikhish* [Practice]²¹¹**

The story “Chenikhish”, was written in 1955, at a time when nationalist themes were forbidden. It illustrates Zunun’s disappointment and disillusionment. He asserts

²⁰⁸ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.195.

²⁰⁹ Although this piece can be classified as a “story” because of the elements of personal reflection and related incident that are included, it is also a closely contemporary record of a events that had recently occurred, within Zunun’s personal experience.

²¹⁰ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.218.

²¹¹ *Ibid*, p.104-139.

national identity through metaphors, principally to do with metals, arts and crafts with which the Uyghur people have had a long association. This association is clearly demonstrated in one of the better-known 12th Century texts from Turfan, “*Oguzname*”, which according to Xinjiang scholars began its development in 7th Century.²¹² This text contains many references to the Uyghur skill in metal working, cart-building and other crafts.

Synopsis

In “Chenikhish”, Zunun creates a character called Metniyaz, who is skilled in traditional crafts and generous with his labour, but does not conform to the collective expectations of his community, who are in the process of implementing collectivisation. Metniyaz encounters all kinds of trouble because he is not able to commit himself wholeheartedly to the collective work – he is an individualist by nature. An activist woman leader of his group, Hemra, encourages and helps him with his farm tasks, and Metniyaz in return offers to make a pair of shoes for Hemra’s sister Izzethan. This woman is a widow with a four year-old son named Erkin (freedom). Metniyaz is impressed by the kindness and warmth of Izzethan and her little son. Eventually he marries Izzethan, and through this relationship he gains confidence and becomes more committed to his collective work. None the less, in spite of support and encouragement from Izzethan and others, he lags behind others in collective farm work, but compensates for this by exercising his individual skills in making special items of farm equipment.

Zunun portrays Metniyaz as a kind person, and it seems that he feels Metniyaz represents an important aspect of the Uyghur national character. Though not stupid, Metniyaz is not successful in his contemporary life:

Metniyaz could work as a goldsmith, a woodworker, a shoemaker or a barber. As a shoemaker he could make his own shoe trees, needles and awls. As a barber he could make his own razors and ear protectors. He was helpful, always willing to repair the shoes and buckets of the people of the district. He never haggled over payment, accepting whatever people offered him.

²¹² Geng and Tursun, *Oghuz Name*, op.cit., pp.54, 56.

Sometimes if people just said "Thank You", that was enough. He was happy when invited to dinner, but never went to burden others by calling on them. He cared nothing for profit.

Metniyaz is complex, able to do many different things whenever and wherever he wishes. He cherishes his personal freedom. But this character is not suited to the new social context. The Communist Party wants to 'reform him through labour', and expects him to work hard, but Metniyaz's character is not one that responds well to forced labour. When land reform is implemented, Metniyaz is given a piece of land to work, but he does not devote himself seriously to farming it, preferring to walk around and enjoy the sights and smells of nature. The only thing that can change his attitude is love, and in the end a hard-working young widow is able to change Metniyaz's behavior. Metniyaz does not have the strength to participate in a competitive contemporary world. The narrative really concerns how such a person (or such a nation?) can become less passive and more active. This is all expressed through narrative elements that conform to the contemporary CCP ideological requirement to promote the idea of remoulding individuals through physical labour.

It is apparent from this story that Zunun had to support and propagate Party policy in his writings, and in that sense is himself a victim of propaganda. In "Chenikhish", Zunun supports collectivisation, and criticizes "middle peasants" who are reluctant to give up their personal possessions because they regard collectivisation as dispossession of the Uyghurs (which proved, in fact, to be true). Zunun's support for collectivisation could also be seen to reflect his sense of justice and the traditional Uyghur sensibility that relationships with other people are more important than accumulation of material wealth. On the other hand, he seems critical of any idea that collectivisation should also mean total uniformity or conformity. With his characteristic style of addressing direct comments to his readers, Zunun says "It is important that skills are matched to the labour. Only in this way can labour be productive."

Although Zunun writes here in support of the policy of collectivisation, he is not reluctant to criticise what occurs during the implementation of that policy. The middle peasant Seyit Ahun is portrayed as an uncooperative, conservative and selfish person.

However, the narrative actually evokes some sympathy for Seyit Ahun, because of the way that he is picked on by the group, and targetted deliberately by the Party cadres who seem to want someone like Seyit Ahun to be the focus of reformist propaganda. In the small group headed by Hemra there are eight families, of whom six are of poor background and two are middle peasants (one of them Seyit Ahun). Seyit Ahun is the only one who is given no land in the land redistribution. A young cadre is sent to manage this group's "discipline and propaganda" and prepare it for collectivisation,²¹³ and Zunun says that "in reality, Seyit Ahun was the reason for this propaganda activity" (because of his tendency to gossip and exaggerate his complaints).²¹⁴

Any implied criticism of Party policy that appears in this piece is presented subtly. "Chenikhish" appears relatively sympathetic to Chinese policy and reflective of the Communist domination of the time, without any overt expression of nationalistic views.

Conversation with a young Farmer [*Bir dikkhan yigit bilen söhbet*] (1958)²¹⁵

In this report of a visit to a "model" vegetable farm called the New Road Commune in 1958, Zunun manages to combine some subtle expressions of nationalism with his overt support of collectivisation policies. He describes his first impressions of the Commune.

On the street there was nobody capable of work, just five or six children flying kites. Next to the creek was a tree in which hung a bell, taken from an old Chinese temple. It was big and old, broken on one side. Of course, it was used for calling people to and from labour and meetings.

The bell rings very early in the morning, calling all farmers to the fields where strenuous work was expected. That is why anyone wanting to meet a farmer

²¹³ The practice of sending young cadres down to the villages had its origins in the earliest CCP practices, but was formalised in Xinjiang at a Regional Party Committee meeting in October 1957. 2,700 such cadres were to be "sent down" [*xiafang*] initially, and more later. McMillen suggests that this was a deliberate policy intended to introduce new Han and non-Han cadres into rural communities, thus undercutting the position and authority of the traditional elites. (McMillen, op.cit., p.91.)

²¹⁴ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.126.

²¹⁵ *Ibid*, p.229.

would not go around the streets looking for their address, but go straight to the open fields. The bell was a silent reminder of this.

I would suggest that the bell is a metaphor for continued Chinese domination. One side of the old bell is broken (as the injustices of the old system were supposed to have been broken by socialism) but the bell is still put to work, regulating the lives of the people. The point is made that the bell is taken from an old Chinese temple. A Chinese temple is essentially alien to the Islamic culture of the Uyghurs. Zunun's comment that "of course" this bell was used for calling people to and from labour and meetings is deliberate, to draw attention to the continuity in the role of this bell as expressing Chinese authority. The use of this symbol indicates that Zunun's belief in the promise that Communism would deliver a better life was beginning to be shaken. This indirect reference of the symbolism of the bell evokes Zhou Enlai's 1957 warning to cadres, in his 1957 speech on Nationality Affairs, to be careful when criticising Han behaviour, because reminding minorities of past Han "errors" could encourage them to feel that the present was a continuation of that past.²¹⁶

In Zunun's story, the composition of the model production team is also interesting: ten Han, eight Uyghur and one Hui (Chinese Muslim). It should be recalled that in 1949 Xinjiang's population was at most five percent Han. Zunun also notes that while he wanted to interview the keen young Uyghur Youth League member who received him and showed him around, he was instead directed to interview the Party Secretary, who was Hui (Muslim Chinese). It is unlikely that Zunun's noting of this was accidental, and it subtly makes the point that any direct communications between Uyghurs was likely to be interrupted and filtered through an intermediary.

By this time, in the late 1950s, the Communist Party had attained total power and was asserting tighter controls. Many Uyghur intellectuals were being punished or isolated.²¹⁷ These were conditions where it was not easy to express national

²¹⁶ Zhou Enlai, *op.cit.*, p.4.

²¹⁷ Iklil Kurban, *op.cit.*, p.92, states that among those severely punished in 1957-8 were 51 former colleagues of Ahmetjan Kasim in the East Turkistan Republic movement, who after Ahmetjan Kasim's death had petitioned the Chinese government to grant East Turkistan a status at least equal to the autonomous republics of the Soviet Union. These 51 included the writer Ziya Samedi (discussed in later chapters).

expectations or point out the wrongdoings and injustices of the power structure. In these circumstances, Zunun continued to write on educational themes for improving society, in line with Communist policy. In order to improve Uyghur society, he points out social weaknesses, and advocates the education of leading Uyghurs' consciousness towards a more contemporary and humanist understanding as an important step toward the improvement of Uyghurs' lives.

Suspicion [*Guman*]²¹⁸

“Guman” deals with issues of the status of women: the effects of conservative mentality toward women's behaviour, the social expectations of women, and the nature of traditional male chauvinism. The story also deals with the hypocrisy of on these matters, with old-fashioned individuals applying double standards or judging others by their own inappropriate standards. The narrative describes a young couple. Alimjan is the husband, who seems superficially to be polite and well spoken. His wife, Mesture, is uncomplicated and loyal to their relationship. Alimjan is suspicious of his wife and verbally abusive. He spies on her and calls her dishonest and shameless because she has spoken innocently with a former schoolmate – Tohti. Alimjan's suspicion arises from his own double standards on such matters. He argues with his wife and walks out to go to a Uyghur cultural club. There he is impressed with the performance of a young female singer, and follows her after the performance, seeking to gain her favours with polite flattery, which she is happy to hear. Alimjan takes her pleased response as a sign of sexual interest in him. When they come to part, he tries to pull her towards him, but she angrily rejects this advance. He asks why she was smiling and friendly if she was not interested in him and she responds by calling him dishonest and shameless. Zunun's point is that the misunderstanding between these two is an expression of Alimjan's inconsistent moral standards. This was also the cause of his distrust of his own wife. Alimjan's assumption is that any friendly conversation between members of the opposite sex must be with ulterior motives. The main message of this story is to encourage Uyghurs to rise above this kind of backward and closed mentality, in which double standards are applied to women.

²¹⁸ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.140.

Red Rose [Kizilgul]²¹⁹

The story “Red Rose” also develops the theme of women’s status, portraying the struggle of three activist women in a Production Brigade to be recognised as of equal status to the men. The story is an example of one of Zunun’s more obvious propaganda pieces. An evaluation by Ehed Turdi, published in Xinjiang in 1997, notes that the work is criticised as “lacking literary value”, but also notes that it was written under official pressure.²²⁰ None the less, and despite its stereotypical theme, it seems to reflect a genuine concern for greater equality in Uyghur society. One of the women, Raziye, is determined to compete with the men in pulling a plough. She overcomes physical limitations (she is small and of plain appearance) to prove herself in this way. Zunun particularly notes that her assertive character is to be seen as a positive attribute, where the men had initially laughed at her. Her status is in the end recognised, with the Brigade leader saying that he “would not exchange one Raziye for a hundred idle men”.

Rehmet²²¹

In his short story Rehmet, which on the surface concerns the educational experience of a young boy, Zunun deals with some deeper themes concerning authority, reason and discipline, which had particular political significance in the late 1950s. The story reveals conflicts between the conservative emotional values of the mother, and the disobedience of a nine year-old son. Zunun comments on the benefit of reasoned and consistent discipline, rather than emotional outbursts and corporal punishment.²²² In advocating a well-informed and calm educational method to the mother, Zunun takes the opportunity to make some subtle criticism of the authorities. This was written in the context of experiences of the Great Leap Forward, in which people had been required to

²¹⁹ Ibid, p. 176.

²²⁰ Ehed Turdi, *Bir Evliya Hakkide khisse* [A Story of a Sage], Kashgar Uyghur Publishing House, Urumqi, 1997, p.244.

²²¹ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.151.

²²² In the story, Rehmet disobeys his mother, she slaps him and shouts at him, and he angrily runs out of the house. The mother is left sadly thinking about this situation, as she loves her son and she cannot understand why he, though a good student, does not take her seriously and disobeys her, while he behaves more agreeably and obediently with his father.

Rozi suggested to his wife that when she was in a good mood she was tolerant and Rehmet got away with everything, but when she was in a bad temper, she called him names and smacked him, and that was why he did not respect her. Nisahan was angry with her husband for not taking her side. Rozi’s temperament was slow and quiet, while Nisahan was quick-tempered, easily changing her mood between very happy and very angry. She was also quick to speak her mind, though she was a very loving and good-hearted person.

do unreasonable things that were counter-productive to the stated objectives of developing the economy. One such requirement was the demand on schoolchildren throughout China to compete with each other to bring the most scrap metal to school for recycling into steel through backyard furnaces:²²³

Rehmet had wanted to be the one to take the most metal to school, so he deliberately damaged some household items that were in good condition, in order to pretend that they were scrap metal. In this sort of way, he used to make his mother angry. One of the reasons for this naughtiness was that the teacher did not make clear the purpose of collecting the scrap metal, and the kind of metal that should be collected, so that children would not compete with each other to bring more. When he made this mistake, through trying to do well at school, his mother should have explained to him why he was wrong...

The schoolteacher may represent authority here, and is perhaps an analogy for the role of the CCP as the authority in society in general. In both contexts, without proper knowledge and explanation, to educate either children or society at large is difficult. In particular, punishment may well backfire. The mother's decision to participate in the school meetings provides a conclusion to the story that is acceptable to the CCP authorities.²²⁴

Remembrance [*Eshesh*]²²⁵

The story "Remembrance" conveys some points based on the experience of a rough young man who has served in both the Three Districts army and the Peoples' Liberation army. On meeting his childhood acquaintance after many years, Zunun notices that his character has improved greatly. Zunun suggests that this was because of joining the

²²³ "In launching the Great Leap forward in January 1958, Mao insisted "We must now start a technological revolution...so that we may overtake England in 15 or more years..the technological revolution is designed to make everyone learn science and technology"...The utopian fervour and expectations of 1958 were accompanied by a distinctive Maoist theory of economic development which, even on strictly economic grounds, emerges as irrational'. (Maurice Meisner, *Mao's China and After – A history of the People's Republic*, Macmillan, New York, 1986, p.223)

²²⁴ "Later, when Nishan attended school meetings and understood what was going on, her relationship with her son improved. She no longer called him names, but explained situations to him. And when Rehmet did something good, she encouraged him".

²²⁵ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.160.

“national” (Three Districts) army, but the character says that his change was due to his experience in the Peoples Liberation Army. He says that after joining the Liberation Army he was made to understand that delinquency was bad, how to distinguish who was his friend and who was his enemy, and about class struggle (i.e. the standard themes of Maoist society). In order to be published, it was necessary for Zunun to indicate support for the CCP and the Liberation Army, but by putting these words in the mouth of one of his characters, he is able to establish some personal distance from this task.

In the context of educational themes, Zunun’s work reflects the importance of Uyghur cultural events such as the *meshrep* and *tunek*.²²⁶ In his piece *Eslesh*, set in his youth, he nostalgically describes the constructive activity among these Uyghur youth at the *meshrep* – playing musical instruments, singing, making poetry and dancing. The *meshrep* had an emotional and psychological benefit, and also had educational, ethical and disciplinary functions for the Uyghur youth. It introduced Uyghur adolescents to Uyghur social sensibility and protocol in a playful, enjoyable youth environment. Zunun is in an extremely difficult position in providing a positive description of traditional activities such as the *meshrep* which are regarded as a “residue of the old system”, while he is officially expected to carry out CCP policy to condemn “localist” national pride and identity. He condemns certain negative features of the *meshrep*, relating how, at the end of the *meshrep*, groups of youth from different districts began to challenge each other and eventually begin to fight.²²⁷ In exposing the negative side of this social situation, Zunun is in line with CCP directives.

²²⁶ In his “Recollections”, Zunun relates how at the age of nine he himself had insisted on attending a *meshrep*. Being too young to participate, he was allowed to sit in a corner and observe.

²²⁷“Sahiphān *yighit* (young man) came in and said " Fellows, fellows! A group from Kazanchi has come to our neighbourhood!" At that, the thirty young men got up and went out. We didn't get the chance to build a fire and jump over it, or to make oiled cloth torches and march around the streets with them, dressed up as animals.

The young men from Kazanchi had got everything ready and were parading past us. Some of our group became angry and wanted to attack the Kazanchi boys. Our leader started to give orders" Hashim, bring your knuckleduster! You bring sticks with nails in them... Older boys joined in and a fight started... There was no real reason to fight. Half an hour's fighting resulted in one Kazanchi boy unconscious and covered in blood, three or four other injured, and also quite a number from outside injured....

I couldn't understand the reason for this hostility. My father came and took me home. Fights like this happened on *Tunek* night, Ramazan night, and wedding nights. The events not only involved the youth, but affected the adults as well. Hatred and blood feuds were started, and many people were destroyed as a result of these actions".(Zunun *Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.183).

This is a poisonous fruit of our past. This aggressive localism [*mehellevazlık*] is a bitter memory of our history. Now, with a new generation, and new life where everyone works hard, things are different.

We may see the above passage as Zunun's response to Zhou Enlai's call for cadres to oppose "localism". However, there is a considerable difference between Zunun's interpretation of "localism" and that intended by Zhou. Whereas Zhou meant regional localism (such as affected the whole issue of national identity of Xinjiang or Tibet), Zunun chooses to limit his criticism to street-level, neighbourhood localism. Indeed, his criticism is directed to a social problem rather than to an expression of national identity per se.

As a socialist and humanist, Zunun maybe hopes for a future in which all nationalities may live as brothers, mutually supporting each other. But his idealistic vision was somewhat blurred by his experiences of CCP policy. He opens the story "Remembrance" with the image of a broken-down truck, with a Uyghur assisting a Chinese to repair it. At the end of this story, the scene returns to this image:

The truck Tohti was helping with was finally started by the Chinese driver. Tohti left with it. He looked happy - perhaps he was going to meet his family. His truck took off with a lot of noise. I stood there watching the dusty horizon until it faded from view.

As the socialist vehicle heads off noisily towards the future, there is a blurred horizon obscured by dust. Written in 1959, the piece brings Zunun's work to the end of a decade in which his commitment to socialist idealism has been through the trials of the land reforms, anti-Rightist movement, and finally the Great Leap Forward. His friend Tohti may well represent those Uyghur intellectuals who supported socialism, but who under the CCP regime were now increasingly uncertain what the future held for them. As the 1950s drew to a close, writers in Zunun's position had to accept that the CCP's promises of equality for nationalities and popular democracy were taking second place

to the need to secure unchallenged power. International issues were increasingly important, and national goals were increasingly stated in terms of a struggle against “imperialism” (USA and the West) and “revisionism” (the Soviet Union). To ensure the Chinese state was strong against external threats, a “chessboard” approach to development would be adopted, which would result in economic development of minority areas being given low priority.²²⁸

By the second half of the 1950s, disagreement between CCP and the Soviet government was becoming more open. Uyghur intellectuals who had cooperated with the CCP were coming under pressure and criticism. Many left for the Soviet Central Asian republics, some were imprisoned or executed, and some committed suicide.

The 1960s

Zunun’s own writing had been accepted by the CCP in the earlier period of the 1950s, but by the end of that decade it had come under direct criticism. Zunun seems to have realised that he could be arrested at any time. But he still attempted to rationalise his position according to the official line. He incorporated into his writings references to Mao Zedong’s talks at Yan’an in order to prove that his views and writings were consistent with the directions of Chairman Mao. He also seems to have paid close attention to the writings of Zhou Yang, who had been one of the leading CCP cultural figures in the Yan’an days and who was Minister of Culture and Vice-Minister of Propaganda until the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution. Zhou Yang strongly supported the line laid down by Mao Zedong at Yan’an, and took it even further in explicitly setting out that the primary function of literature was in fact to support Communist Party authority. A clear example of Zhou Yang’s position is set out in his article “What do we want to learn from Socialist Realism and how should we learn it?”,²²⁹ in which he promotes the idea of socialist realism as being the only acceptable

²²⁸ A *Peoples’ Daily* editorial in February 1959 entitled “Take the whole country as a Chessboard” provided the rationale for a selective development policy, under which planners would concentrate their resources on strong points, the more quickly to win the struggle against poverty and imperialism. The unspoken inference was that minority areas, clearly among the weakest section in Chinese industry, would be among the first pawns sacrificed. This aspect was spelled out in a article by Saifuddin in *Min-tzu Tuan Ch’ieh* in July 1959. (Dreyer, *China’s 40 Millions*, op.cit., p.174.)

²²⁹ Chou Yang, *China’s New Literature and Art*, Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1954, p.78. (According to notes in the publication, this piece was originally written for a Soviet publication during the period of Sino-Soviet collaboration.)

approach for a writer in the PRC. The term “realism” becomes turned around to mean an approach which highlights “contradictions” between “progressive” and “backward” elements of society:

Socialist realism demands, in the first place, that the writer be sincere and depict truthfully reality in its revolutionary development. In real life, there are constant contradictions and struggles between what is progressive and developing, and what is backward and dying. A writer should give a penetrating picture of these contradictions in life, understand clearly the main tendencies in historical development, vigorously support that is new and oppose the old....

We have seen a succession of innumerable exemplary workers performing heroic deeds on our country’s various construction fronts. These should be given first place in our literary description and in our praise...²³⁰

According to this definition, Zunun is recognised in Xinjiang as a leading realist writer in Uyghur.²³¹ There are examples of realism from his earlier writings, but two pieces from 1960 show more explicit socialist realism: “Let’s go to the Front Line of Rural Development”, and “Writers and Artists should join the Masses of the Workers, Peasants and Soldiers for the Long Term.”

Let’s go to the Front Line of Rural Development [*Yiza egilikining birinchi sipige baryli*]²³²

In the first of these pieces “Let’s go to the Front Line of Rural Development”, Zunun reflects the campaign of the time sponsored by Chairman Mao to have writers and other intellectuals go to the countryside to participate in hard labour. It seeks to encourage the line that writers will be able to combine writing with farming or any other form of hard labour. It claims that everyone, by working at labour, will help to establish the basis for ‘the people’s’ ownership of production.

²³⁰ Ibid, p 98.

²³¹ Muhammet Polat “Introduction to Zunun Kadir” in Abdurusul Omer (ed) *Chenikish*, Xinjiang Renmin Chubanshe, Urumqi, 1991, p.4.

²³² *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.657.

Zunun introduces the article

When we strengthen and uphold this policy, we can change our country's two images as 1) “white” (blank) and 2) poor, using contemporary art and contemporary science, to build a strong, socialist, civilized country. This is the long-term, honourable and difficult task before us.

The term generally used in China at this time was “blank” [*kongbai*], and had special meaning in Maoist ideology. The state of being “poor and blank” [*yi qiong er bai*] was put forward by Mao as being the necessary starting point for building a new socialist society on the basis of permanent revolution. This was a departure from conventional Marxism, which saw socialism built on the history of a declining capitalist society.²³³ However, the word used in Uyghur is *ak* (white) which has a broader range of meanings than *kongbai*. In particular, the term would evoke a second political meaning in Xinjiang at this time, when the political and military struggles with the “white” anti-Communist forces were still in recent memory. Since the 1920s Xinjiang had had a significant presence of “white” Russian refugees from the Soviet system. Much of the political vocabulary of East Turkistan was derived from Russian and Soviet republics, and, to some extent, Xinjiang was still considered to be hostile territory by the CCP at the time of writing. Anyone accused of being “white” would be in danger of being considered a counter-revolutionary. The term “poor” reflects the reality that the Uyghurs had been the victims of plunder and destruction for many years, but none the less were very keen to do anything that could improve the material conditions of their own lives and that of their people.

Zunun’s words also reiterate CCP directives that art and science should be devoted to the cause of building socialism along CCP lines.²³⁴ The article upholds the Maoist rhetoric about the achievement of writers being due to their close understanding of the ordinary people.

²³³ Meisner, op.cit., p.215.

²³⁴ On the “chessboard” principle noted earlier, any sacrifice could be imposed on “weaker points” in the economy, and even forced labour could be justified in pursuit of the national objective. For Han Chinese, there was an extra layer of meaning in this directive. To “modernise China” was to build China as a world power, recognised and respected internationally. Ken Coates suggests that to reach this position, Han China needed the Atomic Bomb to counter threats from the US and Soviet superpowers (Ken Coates (ed), *China and the Bomb*, Spokesman, London, 1986, p.12.)

Over the last few years, our artists and writers, working in the countryside and the factories, have created works reflecting new characters and new events, opening up our horizons.

We can not be sure whether Zunun believed in this policy of sending writers to live among the peasants, or whether his writing here is an attempt to be seen to support the CCP line at a time when he was himself under political threat. Before he was sent into rural exile, he fully expected that there would be some difficulties, but wrote as positively as he could about the benefits that might also be experienced. The circumstances of his own transfer to the Tarim desert were certainly not voluntary, as he was sent as punishment for “revisionism” following an attempt to escape to Kazakhstan. There would be grounds to conclude that Zunun at the time of writing this piece felt obliged to cover up his real opinions and produce orthodox views, even to the extent of praising the CCP’s instrumentalist view of the purpose of literature:

Even though success is difficult, it is worth trying even harder. Otherwise we will not match the needs of the times. Especially now, when we turn literature and art to be the Party's strong political and ideological weapon. We should turn it into a strong educational weapon to inspire millions of people for development of farms and increasing the production of food.

He also notes the concern among intellectuals about writing under the strict direction of the CCP, but argues against it, approvingly quoting Mao Zedong (as writers of the time were required to do).²³⁵ There follows a reference to “continuous reading and study of the works of the problem-solver Chairman Mao” which indicates the extent to which, at this period, it was required of a writer to refer to Mao in terms close to those of a

²³⁵ “Some comrades say that if we are all writing about land [development] and production, our work will all be the same. I don't agree with this. As Chairman Mao says, “The countryside is big, one can do all sorts of things”. If we can not be truly of one heart and mind with the peasants, we can not develop selfless political standards. We could practice self-criticism as well as developing our skills in writing, we could produce many kinds of good works. We could understand the life of the proletariat, their feelings, only by working together, living closely together, eating together and discussing all kinds of issues together” (*Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit, p.658.)

religious cult.²³⁶ Reasoning and questioning were not encouraged, all solutions should be sought in the works of Chairman Mao, and blind faith was strongly recommended.

“Let’s go to the front-line of rural development!” further reflects Mao’s Yan’an speech (noted earlier in this chapter) on using realism to express a correct ideological viewpoint.

The art of writing has its own features; through characters it expresses true realism. If we cannot invent good characters it will affect our works. A writer is not a person who writes of events as they see them, but perhaps one who looks at situations and events, identifies the patterns [*tipiklesh-turup*], and uplifts them to a higher level, using characters to reflect its meaning. This is where the art of literature differs from other sciences. That is why we oppose presenting superficially, as well as the portrayal of ordinary life plain and without character, or just relying on certain formula. To avoid these faults we should deeply study the life of the ordinary people and observe how they are continually occupied in innovative labour. Our people possess a rich heritage. We should learn from this heritage. We should explore people’s characters, and the light and shade of their meaningful language. Particularly if we study the similes and allegories of legends [*chojek*], epics [*destan*] and ballads [*koshak*], we will benefit greatly.²³⁷

In “Let’s go to the Front Line of Rural Development”, Zunun interprets the CCP policy for a purpose that is not present in Mao’s speech to the Yan’an Forum, applying the policy to uplift Uyghur literature. He encourages reference to traditional themes and literary techniques that will reinforce the Uyghur culture (though he does not directly point that out). Zunun’s love of his people and his heritage is clearly still a guiding

²³⁶ “Those who go to the countryside to work in labour production can not produce good works unless they avoid some serious errors. This depends on continuous reading and study of the works of the problem-solver Chairman Mao. We don’t immerse ourselves in peasant life just for the sake of it. The motive for immersion in life is to understand life deeply, to join the struggle to reform that life and to reflect it correctly. That is why we should possess a dialectical materialist world view, the era of the freedom of the proletariat, and taking Mao Zedong Thought as the centre [*kible*] of our movement. (*kible* is the Islamic religious term denoting the direction towards Mecca, toward which one should face when praying). (Zunun Kadir Eserleri, op.cit., p.660.)

²³⁷ Ibid.

principle, even in a most difficult time of his life. In his reference to the importance of “similes and allegories”, and his opposition to “presenting superficially”, Zunun also gives an important pointer to the way that his own literary works should be read, with the reader sensitive to different layers of meaning within his texts.

Writers and Artists should join the Masses of the Workers, Peasants and Soldiers for the Long Term. [*Yazghuchilar ve senetchiler chokum uzun muddet, ishchi, dikkhan, eskerler ammisining ichige berish kerek*]²³⁸

The piece, written in 1960, endeavours to show full support for the CCP policy to send intellectuals to participate in labour. This policy followed Mao’s strategy, as adopted in the early days of Yan’an, of identifying the CCP with the masses, and using the masses against their own social elites.²³⁹ It has been noted that he sought to separate the intellectual leadership from the masses. This new policy reinforced such separation by sending them into situations where they could not exert influence.

As a member of the official Xinjiang Writer’s Association, Zunun would also have been familiar with key CCP policy documents such as Zhou Yang’s prescription for eulogizing the new socialist characteristics of the workers, peasants and soldiers, delivered to the Second All-China Conference of Writers and Artists in Beijing, September 1953.²⁴⁰

Zunun begins his article with a reference to Mao’s Yan’an speech, including a claim that Mao’s noble aims have been realised:

²³⁸ Ibid, p.663.

²³⁹ In his Yan’an speech, Mao said: ‘Only counter-revolutionary writers and artists describe the people as ‘born fools’ and the revolutionary masses as ‘tyrannical mobs’ ’(Mao, *Selected Readings*, op.cit., p.278.)

²⁴⁰ ‘Our writers and artists have endeavoured to portray workers, peasants and soldiers with their new characteristics and moral qualities. The victory of the Chinese revolution, the social reforms, and widespread political education and ideological remoulding carried out among the people, have changed not only the social and economic conditions of our country, but the mental and moral attitudes of the people as well. The most important and most valuable results of our revolution are the heightened political consciousness and labour enthusiasm, and the growth of new moral qualities among our people. These are the things which our literature and art should primarily reflect.’(Zhou Yang op cit ‘For More and Better Literary and Artistic Creations’, report to the Second All-China Conference of Writers and Artists, Peking, September, 1953, p.3.)

In his talks eighteen years ago to the meeting in Yan'an, Chairman Mao showed us the line on literature and the arts serving the workers, peasants and soldiers. Since then our country's literature and arts have been developing in the correct direction. In the light of socialism, today we have rapid development in our arts, land [development], and food production. We have followed the line of serving workers, peasants and soldiers, and of serving socialism. We succeeded in "Letting all flowers bloom, letting all voices sing competitively", and "Replace the old with the new" - these new kinds of attitudes.

Zunun then reproduces the CCP line on "minority" literature, reflecting the "new knowledge" that denies the historical and traditional facts of the Uyghur people and replaces it the new narrative of the CCP, in which Uyghurs are placed alongside other minorities as ethnic groups within China, and their history and literature effectively began when their lands came under Chinese rule:

The literature and art of our Xinjiang Autonomous Region is an inseparable part of our multi-national, socialist literature. Under the leadership of the Party and with the help of our Han brothers, there has been great success in literature and the arts. Before liberation, the majority of almost all nationalities were illiterate. There were no literary journals. At the beginning of the anti-Japanese war, a new literature movement began to develop under the leadership of the communist intellectuals Tian Chiyu, Mao Zemin, and Ling Jiliu. Patriotic poets like Li (Lutfullah) Mutellip appeared. But this new literature movement soon faced strangulation and destruction under the counter-revolutionary authorities. After liberation, the literature and arts affairs of all nationalities developed as never seen before. Now we have Uyghur, Hanzu, Kazak, Mongol, Huizu, Kirgiz, Uzbek, Tajik, Shibo, Tatar, Daur: more than ten nationalities and 3000 people working in our organisation. Among these are over 400 branches. According to the road directed by Comrade Mao Zedong, the writers and artists have immersed themselves in the heated struggle of the workers, peasants and soldiers, closely got to know them, studied and development to create quite a number of good works. They created heroic characters from every nationality of

workers, who reflect the growth of communist ethics and virtues in this heroic period through social revolution and social organisation, to increase the enthusiasm of the masses.

Initially, Zunun says that before liberation, the majority of all nationalities were illiterate and that there were no literary journals; but then he refers to a literary movement among the Uyghurs before 1949. After appeasing the authorities by naming a few Han officials who were sent by the CCP to work under Sheng Shicai's oppressive regime (including Mao Zedong's own brother Mao Zemin), Zunun goes on to mention a well-known pro-independence Uyghur poet, Lutfullah Mutellip, who had been killed by the Sheng regime, and whom he describes as a martyr. He relates how, during the early 1940s, intellectuals in Xinjiang were allowed to write relatively freely, but in the second half of the 1940s, the defection of Sheng Shicai from the Soviet side to the KMT resulted in Sheng's massacre of Uyghur intellectuals under the name of purging communists: in Zunun's words, "strangulation and destruction under the counter-revolutionary authority".²⁴¹

Zunun continues to offer praise to the CCP, while at the same time pointing out that under the CCP regime, minority writers were being organised according to the CCP's policies; he also recognises, with a ritualistic endorsement, the reality that intellectuals were condemned by the CCP to leave their own environment and go to labour in unfamiliar rural areas far from home.

In this article Zunun humbly declares that Uyghur writers are under the "leadership" of the Han.

Literature and art reflect the rich meaning of life. Day by day more works are being created to portray the socialist system with all nationalities hand in hand (especially the Hanzu with other brother nationalities) on the road to friendship and peace. With our inheritance of literary classics, and applying the principle of taking them forward, there is continual development, renewal and innovation in the forms of literature and art. Works will be popular with the people when

²⁴¹ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.664.

they combine mass style with nationality style.²⁴² Previously in Xinjiang nationalities' literature was limited to a few genres [*janra*]. Prose is now continuously developing, and movie scripts are being created. Previously illiterate people now have their own writers and artists. Popular literature and art is innovating and spreading its wings, creating “village poems” [*shiir yiza*]; “work unit poems” [*shiir dui*]; and “branch poems” [*shiir shehleri*]. Writers and poets have developed among the workers and peasants. Apart from this we achieved a lot by collecting, interpreting and organising every nationality's oral literature, classic epics, new and old ballads [*koshak*], stories and articles.

One aspect of the propaganda style, apart from its being admonitory, is the continual reference to comparison between “before Liberation” and “after Liberation”. In CCP propaganda terms, life “before Liberation” is “feudal” and bad, whereas life “after Liberation” is socialist and good. As a “cultural worker” employed by the CCP, Zunun was compelled to write within this framework. This structure extends in all directions, from small details of daily life to the nature and quality of literature and language itself. An example of this comparative structure:

Previously in Xinjiang, nationalities literature was limited to a few genres.
Prose is now continuously developing and movie scripts are being created.
People who previously were illiterate now have their own writers and artists.²⁴³

We may note the obligatory suggestion that illiteracy was only addressed after “Liberation”. This suggestion ignores the local movements begun fifty years before “Liberation” to promote modern education and literacy among the Uyghurs (particularly the *Jadid* movement, discussed further in Chapter 6). Here, again, we see Zunun's dilemma in the expression of a Party line that he would have known, from his own experience, not to reflect reality.

²⁴² Ibid, p.665.

²⁴³ Ibid.

Zunun's acknowledgement of Han "leadership" of Uyghur literature is likely to have been a deliberate attempt to protect himself from criticism, though it may be that Zunun still maintained an idealistic hope that hard work and communal life will be of benefit to the Uyghurs. Uyghur literature was until then written in Arabic script which few if any Han could read, let alone write. Most Han cadres could not even speak the Uyghur language. In this situation, to assert Han leadership of Uyghur culture could only be seen as a response to political pressure. In fact, it would have been true that Han cadres would exert political leadership over Uyghur literature, by checking, supervising and insisting on the political correctness of anything that was published. Zunun would certainly have known that acknowledging Han leadership was one way to improve his chances of continuing to reach his audience.

In this passage, Zunun draws attention to the long literary tradition of the Uyghurs, in contradiction to the general CCP view that Uyghur people were backward. He also does not hide his disappointment that there has been little progress in Uyghur literature under the CCP, compared to that achieved in "fraternal countries".

One thing is clear – the demands for action on socialist organisation in our country are flying ahead. Compared with the literary and art affairs of fraternal countries and other autonomous regions, our achievement has been very little.²⁴⁴

This statement could be read in two ways. First, it could be interpreted as Zunun's disappointment in the standard of literary and artistic work. The other meaning, likely to be read by the Han authorities, would be to confirm the Han view that Uyghur culture is inferior. Only those who understood that the comparison with "fraternal countries" refers to the progress of fellow-Turkic writers and artists would realise that the comment is an implied criticism of the conditions under the CCP. Though the reference is indirect, we know that Zunun in 1958 had attended a meeting of Afro-Asian writers and artists in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, and had been impressed with the quality of work he had encountered there.²⁴⁵

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ "The Friendship and Peace Display", in *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.655.

This article contains the most explicit self-criticism in Zunun's work.²⁴⁶ It seems to be presented with the intention of impressing the CCP commissars who were putting pressure on Zunun.

The first time I wrote a drama, "The Hardship of Ignorance" in 1937, my point was to show the condition of the poor townspeople under counter-revolutionary authorities. My main character was a hemp (marijuana) -smoking, poor and ignorant man, who did not send his son to a modern school. With all his family he led a wandering life [*sergerdanlarche*]. Later his son went to university to save the family from poverty. At that time I had not studied Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought, so I did not express the life of struggle and desire for liberation of the urban proletariat, because I did not know of it.²⁴⁷

The purpose of this statement is to repudiate a view that Zunun had himself clearly advocated in many of his earlier writings: that education and economic opportunity were the key to improving the life of the people.²⁴⁸ This was unsatisfactory to the CCP commissars of the time, and he had to repudiate it. The shallowness of the argument is obvious – all he confesses is that he "had not studied" Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought. In the next passage he confesses to a more specific ideological error:

Later, in 1946, I wrote "Ghunchem", intending to show the struggle between peasants and landowners. But I did not know the farmers well, and I did not observe things from the perspective of class struggle, so "Ghunchem" was very superficial. The farmers' characters were weak. My biggest mistake was showing landowners with a conscience. After liberation, when I had studied Chairman Mao's 'Talks at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art', I realized my mistakes. I realised that I had distorted my own experience and history, and

²⁴⁶ From the earliest years of the CCP, Party members were encouraged to practice public self-criticism in which they acknowledged their ideological shortcomings and pledged to reform themselves.

²⁴⁷ Ibid, p.667.

²⁴⁸ Zunun's first major work, "The Hardship of Ignorance" (1936), was precisely on this theme of self-improvement through education and effort.

the history of the working people. I made some oppressing landowners look good. (Later I made significant changes to this drama.)²⁴⁹

Zunun's play "Ghunchem" (discussed in Chapter 2) had been very popular throughout over Xinjiang and in China itself, being staged into the 1960s. Although Zunun says he had revised it several times to bring it in line with Maoist guidelines, in the end even this socialist realist play was not satisfactory to the CCP authorities. Zunun's realistic description of the Uyghur characters, including landlords, was not in line with the CCP analysis of "feudal" societies. One aspect of the play that attracted disapproval was the depiction of charitable acts by a member of the exploiting class. Such acts were depicted on the basis that in traditional Uyghur society, respect was earned through demonstrating charitable virtues, and even the most heartless exploiter was likely to perform some public charitable acts as a means to maintain public respect. Even so, Zunun none the less had to repudiate this realistic description of an aspect of Uyghur society because it did not fit with the Han-centred analysis of the CCP.

We can not fully assess how much Zunun believed in the policy of going to live among the masses. The language he uses to advocate the policy is common to other writings of that period, for example, Zhou Yang's remarks in "For more and better Literary and Artistic Creation":

The key to overcoming these deviations is in raising the writer's ability to understand and describe life. Many writers have now established closer contact with the masses. They realise that true and close ties with the people can only be established through participation in the people's struggle, productive activity and work.²⁵⁰

Even though several years had passed since Zhou Yang wrote these words, we find them strongly echoed in Zunun's this example among his last published works before his exile:

²⁴⁹ Zunun Kadir Eserleri, op.cit., p.667.

²⁵⁰ Zhou Yang, op.cit., p.15.

Immerse yourself in the masses. Many writers and artists have obtained great success through living with the masses. So we writers and artists should go to the countryside, to the factories and mines, to live and work extensively with the workers and peasants. In doing this we will find the truth, and we will develop worker-peasant ideology and feelings. By living with them for a long time we can find out what they like, what will interest them, so we can create works that they will appreciate. In doing this we can accomplish the tasks given to us in this new era. We can follow the line of turning writers and artists into workers, peasants and soldiers. If we only claim to be workers, soldiers and peasants, but do not participate in their production, struggle and hopes, then what we say will be empty words.

Zunun's stated views on the advantages of going to the countryside, and combining labour with producing good quality literary work, turned out to be unrealistic, at least going by his own experience. He was not allowed to write at all for a period of some seventeen years.

A family finds security [*Hatirjem bolghan Aile*]²⁵¹

This is one of the last pieces Zunun wrote before he was sent into exile. The article is written with Zunun narrating in the role of a reporter, interviewing a commune woman, Behtihan (literally "fortunate one"). It praises CCP policies to emancipate women, and the opportunities, such as child care, that were given to Uyghur women in the communes. On the other hand, Zunun still needs to distance himself from Party policy to some degree, as can be seen in the following passage in which he gives Behtihan a speech in praise of the communalisation brought by the CCP:

'For the last ten years, with our Party's leadership, our eyes have been opened. Now we realise it is not true that disaster and bad luck are our destiny. We were told that rich people were fated to be rich, and poor people were fated to be poor. But now we realise that we workers were the ones who created the better fortune for the rich. Now that we are collected into communes, whatever we work for

²⁵¹ Zunun Kadir Eserleri, op.cit., p.222.

will be ours. Already we are experiencing the benefits of the communes.’ She stopped, blinking. I realised she was remembering something, but whether it was happy or sad I could not tell.

While Zunun has his character Behtihan mouth CCP propaganda, he is also able to project through her body language some doubt or ambiguity in the woman’s feelings. The sense is that while giving the CCP line she was blinking, suggesting inner conflict, and when she stopped blinking, the observer (Zunun) realised that she had inner feelings that he could not discern. The woman is perhaps a metaphor for Uyghurs under the CCP: they could not survive without appearing to support the system, but their inner life was not extinguished. At this time in Zunun’s own experience, as he faced criticism and the likelihood of exile or worse, this was obviously a significant issue.

Zunun’s support for women’s right to education, work and independence shows his progressiveness, and he gives sincere credit where he sees improvements in society in these areas. At the same time, he recognises the harm that his people had suffered from superstition and the exploitation of their superstitious beliefs. His character Behtihan describes her former belief in Fate and in religion, regarding these “superstitions”.²⁵²

Behtihan continues:

‘Four years after liberation I had this daughter. Still thinking in the old ways, I called her Tursunay (lit. “She must stay”). I hung the tongue amulet²⁵³ on her until she was three. Then I began to get a new understanding of things from

²⁵² ‘From childhood we learned to ask what is the hardest thing in life. We used to say that poverty is the hardest thing in life, but it was destiny, and whatever difficulty or disaster came to us we would blame destiny...I gave all the eggs that I collected one summer to a Mullah. But after all that, the child. The fifth time, I again gave birth to a son. We took him to *Ulugh Mazarghucam* (sacred tomb of a Master. The custom of visiting the tomb of a prominent figure on such occasions is a pre-Islamic custom that has remained part of folk culture.) to name him Niyaz. Even though he was a boy, I left a little tuft of hair to grow on the side of his head. But Mazarghucam could not help us - my son died. It broke my heart. I prayed in the early mornings. I could not understand what my crime was, that my children were dying.’ (Ibid.)

²⁵³ A custom by which an Islamic prayer is written, placed in a container (usually soft) and hung around the neck, particularly to preserve the health of a child from evil influences.

our meetings and discussions. It is not we (workers) who are at fault. It is those masters who sucked our blood and sweat, and left us with no strength.’

Bekhtihan’s statement here looks like standard CCP language about class enemies, the “masters” who suck blood. But taking into account Zunun’s frequent use of ambiguity, it can also be seen to refer indirectly colonial exploitation by imperial masters. A further passage reminds Uyghur readers of the threat to their ownership of their land.

‘We had no land’, she said. ‘My husband worked on the landlord's land and they let us live in a cottage. I washed clothes and baked bread. When I say a “cottage”, it was really more like a stable. But when we improved it, the master would kick us out and put us in an even worse place.

‘If you don't have a house, you don't have a life’ [*Öyi yoknung, jeni yok*].²⁵⁴

Superficially, this passage clearly fits the current propaganda requirements of denouncing “feudalism” and the land-owning classes. But in the special context of Xinjiang under Chinese control, it has a further underlying meaning: namely that the Uyghurs are a dispossessed people, and that Uyghur land has passed into Han hands. Every Uyghur would recall that while there were Uyghur landlords in the old society, the far more significant change in possession of land was the process by which their land was moving from Uyghur control to Han control, under the successive regimes of the Qing dynasty, the warlord governors, the KMT and the CCP. When Bekhtihan says “If you don’t have a house, you don’t have a life”, she may be speaking from the deep need of her people for their own country.

Conclusion

Zunun’s writings in 1960 are the last he was able to publish until the beginning of the Deng Xiaoping era in 1979. He spent what could have been the most productive period of his life in the Tarim deserts, subject to the demands of hard labour and deprivation that severely affected his physical health. His last writings before this exile show him

²⁵⁴ Zunun Kadir Eserleri, op.cit., p.224.

struggling to prove that he is conforming to CCP expectations and is fulfilling his role as a cadre in the CCP's literary/propaganda apparatus. On the other hand, he can not deny his identity, and continues to find ways to write for his people and show that he understands their position. Uyghurs who read his writings in this period would have found many reminders of their experience of Han exploitation and colonisation, along with Zunun's encouragement of social and economic development.

Uyghur writers of Zunun's background were under great pressure in the early sixties. He had worked with the ETR government cultural office. He had written admiringly of the ETR President Ahmetjan Khasim. He had promoted inspiration and hope for the future of his people as an independent nation and culture. All these historical facts made Zunun a clear target for the CCP purges and persecution, once their power in Xinjiang had been fully consolidated. Even his rather strained efforts at self-criticism and at supporting the CCP line would not be enough to save him from the treacherous political currents of China under the CCP.

We can see from Zunun's writings of the 1950s and 1960s how ten years' experience of CCP rule steadily disillusioned him and undermined his initial socialist idealism, as social progress seemed less evident than increasing Han domination of Xinjiang. This was the common experience of many Uyghur intellectuals of his generation. Eventually, at a time when these conditions had induced tens of thousands to flee from Chinese-controlled Xinjiang to Soviet-controlled Turkic Republics, Zunun himself was caught attempting to flee. He was brought back and subjected to punishment which not only deprived him of writing for his people, the activity most dear to him, but also subjected him to humiliation, torture, and exile to seventeen years' hard labour in a hostile desert environment.

Chapter 4

The 1980s: Return from Exile

Introduction

After the fall of the Gang of Four, Zunun Kadir was “rehabilitated” in 1979 and allowed to return from the seventeen years of exile at Yashlar Maidani commune, near Aksu, in the Tarim basin²⁵⁵ (discussed in Chapter 1). During those years he had been subject to a double punishment. He was not only humiliated and tortured,²⁵⁶ but he was also deprived of any opportunity to write. He returned as a sick and broken person, and he was not immediately restored to the relatively comfortable life he had enjoyed before his banishment. He and his family were left camping in the streets for ten days. Eventually they were allowed to live in a store room, before finally being given accommodation in the compound of the Writers’ Association in Urumqi.²⁵⁷

It was an experience that came as a clear warning – he was by no means unconditionally rehabilitated. He would continue to depend on the good will of the CCP government. He did not have a separate office to work in as he had had before, and could only write from his home. Every aspect of his life would be affected by the way he was viewed by officials of the government. In this situation, it is to be expected that Zunun, with his life-long experience of political conditions in Xinjiang, would become more cautious than ever in dealing with political material, and would concentrate instead on cultural and historical themes, while carefully hiding his references to those political themes that could attract official criticism.

Although Zunun may have lost some of his political idealism, he continued to try to use his writing to assert distinctive elements of Uyghur identity in contrast to the CCP vision of the Uyghur as a “minority” entity within greater China. This required him to use ambiguity in his writing so that the line that was acceptable to the CCP political

²⁵⁵ Zunun’s oral memoir, *op.cit.*

²⁵⁶ As discussed in Chapter 1, during “struggle” sessions Zunun was beaten, had his teeth knocked out, and was smeared with blue paint that blinded him in one eye.

²⁵⁷ Interview with Zunun’s wife Zileyhan, 12 June 1998 (Appendix 1), and also reported by Zhang Shirong (*op.cit.*), a member of the Xinjiang Writers’ Association. The Writers’ Association residential compound (*Wen Lian Jiashu Yuan*) is at 44 Yan’an Lu in Urumqi.

regime could be used to camouflage other messages that his Uyghur readers would understand indirectly.

The political environment in 1979 was one of change, but not one of certainty. In Zunun's own words 1979 was a year in which "our great Party corrected the mistakes of the Cultural Revolution. Our family of eight came back to Urumqi."²⁵⁸ The rehabilitation of intellectuals persecuted in the Cultural Revolution was taking place all over the PRC, but after such persecution it was not easy for the intellectuals to resume their former life, or to gauge readily how much freedom they would now have to express their views. While the "excesses of the Cultural Revolution" were being officially criticised, it was not clear how far non-Han writers might be able to go in articulating their separate cultural identity and dissatisfaction with CCP policies. There was certainly no relaxation in the CCP's hostility to anything that could be interpreted as "harming the unity of nationalities" or "encouraging splittism".

Zunun was a writer who had supported socialism, but by the time he was facing the new climate of the 1980s, with a changed political and economic policy environment, he observed society with the personal experience of having spent seventeen years in a labour camp, and of being personally subject to the "proletarian dictatorship". This seems to have given him a different perspective on the socialist idealism that he had earlier maintained. Although his earlier life had shown him much concerning the dangers of confrontation with authority, his life working within the CCP system emphasized his dilemma of submitting to authority in order to survive, while at the same time attempting to maintain his intellectual integrity. This necessitated employing subtle means to express his criticisms. In such a complex socio-political environment, Zunun's dilemma was common to many Uyghurs who shared his position, and who sought to express their inner voice or the "truth" about their condition and their culture. Zunun's life-long experience of the danger of being labelled a "splittist" or "nationalist" would have given him good reason to be cautious.

²⁵⁸ Zunun's taped memoir, op cit.

Zunun Kadir's interest in reviving Uyghur culture may be seen in the context of the changed Chinese political climate of the 1980s. Since the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, there had been a gradual loosening of restraints on public debate. The use of historical analogy as a form of political criticism is a tradition in China at least as old as Confucius. Within months of Mao's death and the coup against the "Gang of Four", the official mass media itself was "dressing up contemporary politics in the clothes of the past". For example, Mao's widow Jiang Qing was portrayed as a modern counterpart to Empress Lu, who had a place in Chinese folklore as a usurper of imperial power during the Han dynasty.²⁵⁹ In December 1978, Deng Xiaoping gave a speech to a preparatory meeting for the 11th Party Congress entitled "Liberate Thinking, Seek Truth from Facts, and Unite and look to the Future".²⁶⁰ By the early to mid-1980s, the then Party Secretary Hu Yaobang advocated new cultural and political policies that would allow a higher degree of historical reassessment than any other leader at the time, creating an atmosphere that allowed the publishing of many works that would previously have been suppressed. From 1978 there was also a growing literary output of the so-called "scar literature" ("literature of the wounded") that expressed resentment, anger and sadness about the sufferings of the preceding period²⁶¹ - in particular the grievances of intellectuals and young people who had been compelled to live in rural exile. At the same time, however, there was a counter-current of reasserting party control, which began with suppressing direct political comment (particularly the "Democracy Wall" movement in 1979) and later through gradual tightening of control on publishing that "curbed the trend of excessively negative exposure and crushed the semi-underground democracy movement".²⁶²

In Xinjiang, the early 1980s saw some attempts to implement a more liberal policy toward minority cultures, for example by permitting more expression of culture and history, and more formal practice of Islamic religion (though under strictly controlled conditions). However, it also was a time of renewed economic activity, including encouragement of foreign joint ventures for the exploitation of Xinjiang's mineral

²⁵⁹ Jonathan Unger, op.cit., p.4.

²⁶⁰ Speech to the closing session of the monthly work meeting held in preparation for the 3rd Plenum of the 11th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party : Geremie Barmé in Unger (ed), op.cit., p.261.

²⁶¹ Ibid, p.267.

²⁶² Jeffrey C Kinkley (ed), *After Mao: Chinese Literature and Society 1978-1981*, Harvard University Press, 1985, p.188.

and petroleum resources. These economic programs were accompanied by accelerated transmigration of Han people into Xinjiang, and therefore increased tension between Han and Uyghur as the majority of economic benefits were seen to be taken up by incoming Han migrants. There were a series of violent uprisings,²⁶³ which resulted in the Han authorities bringing in more severe public security measures designed to suppress nationalistic expression or activity. This was the environment in which Zunun's dilemma (that is, his attempts to balance his social ideals and national identity with political realities) would find expression again throughout the last phase of his creative life.

Within this context, Uyghur writers such as Zunun might have enjoyed some degree of freedom to write on Uyghur historical content, but they could never ignore the special danger of being labelled as "splittist" or "nationalist" if their writings offended official views regarding the "national unity" of the PRC. Their situation therefore was not the same as that of Han intellectuals. During this period of the "Four Modernisations" and early Dengist economic reforms, the Chinese government was encouraging the Chinese to be ambitious, engage in the world of business enterprises, and take on management responsibilities for the development of all China. However, the scope for Uyghur intellectuals was more limited. They were encouraged to promote certain aspects of Uyghur life and culture that were seen as "exotic", but not those which would threaten the Chinese view of the Uyghur place within China. Thus certain kinds of Uyghur cultural symbol could be promoted, but only those that would promote images of Uyghur culture which would pigeonhole Uyghurs as a primitive, Islamic fundamentalist, or otherwise backward-looking group who needed the direction of the Chinese state in order to improve their economic and social status. Views of a progressive Uyghur future were liable to be

²⁶³ In Kashgar, 30th October 1980, there was a violent demonstration of up to 30,000 Uyghurs protesting against the beating to death of a Uyghur youth by Han. In January 1981 in Karghilik and in May 1981 in Peyzivat there were demonstrations against Han domination, where the sayings from the Koran were taken as slogans (Ablikim Iltebir Baki, *Shehitler Shejeresi* [a Record of the Martyrs], Dogu Turkistan Dayanişma derneği Yayınları [East Turkistan Solidarity Association Publishing], Istanbul, 1998, p.62.)

considered subversive.²⁶⁴ Chinese policies had the effect that in all situations there would be conditions that favoured Han Chinese opportunities in Xinjiang, and that placed Uyghurs at a disadvantage no matter what course of action they might choose.²⁶⁵

While progressive Uyghurs might risk being considered subversive, the Chinese policies toward minority nationalities generally favour an image of the minority nationalities as culturally backward, while benefiting from the economic progress provided by China. This essentially colonialist attitude is supported in such cultural expressions as the depiction of conservative Islamic dress codes, such as one can see in Chinese tourist brochures and magazines about Xinjiang.²⁶⁶ These depictions select the minority of women who choose to wear the thick veil, and emphasize the “otherness” of Uyghur people, not just from Chinese, but also from the Western point of view which sees Islam as alien. This is consistent with a process that Louisa Schein and others have identified as “internal orientalisation”. Schein describes this as “a set of practices that occur within China, and that, in this case, refers to the fascination of more cosmopolitan Chinese with the “exotic” minority cultures in an array of polychromatic and titillating forms”.²⁶⁷ This “orientalisation” of Uyghurs, in the name of cultural revival, on the one hand portrays Uyghurs as exhibits for tourist purposes rather than an intelligent, capable and cultured people who look West more than they look to China. On the other hand, the Chinese authorities, in encouraging controlled aspects of conservative cultural revival, may gain support from the most conservative forces in Uyghur society, who may assist them in suppressing or obstructing modern social and cultural developments.

²⁶⁴ In the course of field research I was told of an incident exemplifying this problem. The writer Ehem Omer was criticised and placed under supervision after he published an article in the *Xinjiang Ayallari Journali* [Xinjiang Women’s Journal] which advocated the importance of educating women so as to provide a strong basis for educating future generations. Ehem Omer related social problems in Xinjiang to the comparative lack of education given to girls. In official criticism, the writer was accused of mounting a hidden attack on the state system. The article was reproduced in *Ittipak no.1(32)*, the Uyghur newspaper published in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 1 January 1998, p.3.

²⁶⁵ For example, promotion of cultural icons such as the *mukam* music as uniquely Uyghur, while setting up a basis for Uyghur national cultural self esteem, could also create competitiveness between Uyghur and the other Central Asian Turkic nations, and could contribute to undermining development of common feeling between these nationalities.

²⁶⁶ Examples are the illustrations on the back covers of *Zhongguo Xibu Wenxue* [The Literature of China’s West], 1986, no.6 and 1988, no 2.

²⁶⁷ Louisa Schein, “Gender and Orientalism in China”, *Modern China* vol.23, no.1, Jan 1997, p.70.

Such Chinese policy may have an unintended effect, in that Uyghur intellectuals may be encouraged to find ways to promote Uyghur cultural traditions and preserve their distinct identity from the Chinese, while proceeding carefully so as not to antagonise the Chinese government. I consider that Zunun Kadir was in this position, and the results are seen in his writing, particularly his works of the 1980s that are discussed in this chapter.

Under the CCP's encouragement to create and renovate cultural identity, Zunun Kadir had some opportunities to emphasize the differences between Han and Uyghur identities. This provided another approach to resolving his continuing dilemma between his roles as a CCP functionary and his calling as a Uyghur writer. A device that enabled him to maintain a balance between these roles was the use of ambiguous references which would pass political scrutiny, and also, when read in specific Uyghur cultural context, offered references to Uyghur identity or viewpoint that would be appreciated by the Uyghur reader. Folklore and other cultural references often provided the imagery that could be used in this way. Some of his stories are based on popular cultural themes, which provide both a distinctive background, and also an appropriate working class setting. Zunun's stories of this kind contain motives that can be seen in terms of Louisa Schien's concept of "internal orientalisation", but this does not undermine their purpose of reinforcing Uyghur identity. Zunun did not appear to endorse reactionary or backward cultural positions, but seems to have seen an opportunity to use official Chinese policies to bolster Uyghur identity as much as possible. Zunun's personal experience and disappointment with politics seems to have changed some of his earlier views about elements of his culture that could seem superstitious and backward. In his 1980s writings, some such traditional practices are treated with dignity. Zunun may have felt that Uyghur culture survived because of a certain spiritual energy, provided by these cultural traditions and links, that generates common ethos and inspiration.

It is notable that throughout Zunun's writings of the 1980s there is a focus on the past, rather than the future. His drive, from the 1940s onward, to promote social progress and political modernisation seems to have been set aside, and he now seems to see his responsibility as a writer to be in the preservation of a culture that is under threat. This takes place at a time when, in mainstream Chinese writing, there was considerable

freedom to write about social, political and economic modernisation (as well as the cultural themes of regretting lost traditions, reviving folk culture and so on). Why is this not the case with Zunun? The answer may be found in the different status of “minority” nationalities and the limitations placed upon their political activity, including writing. There could be risks for any writer in China who dealt with democratic themes, but when any suggestion of self-determination for minorities was still considered to be treasonous (“splittist”), what credible discussion could be held on democracy in Xinjiang? The literary policies of the time were always directed towards limiting “minority” freedoms to activity that would serve the greater objective, that is “preserving the Unity of the Motherland, the ways and means of establishing national unity and making China once again a rich and powerful country.”²⁶⁸ In these circumstances, a writer such as Zunun was pushed in the direction of memoir and cultural preservation, rather than progressive political writing. This provided an opportunity to write, through the medium of folk tale, recollection and legend, about many elements of Uyghur culture that had been hidden from publication for some decades.

After his return from labour camp, he published a series of stories set in earlier periods of his lifetime. As he said himself, he drew creatively on his own experience. His oral memoir, recorded shortly before he left Xinjiang for the last time on his journey to Kazakhstan, concludes with the statement: “Until the end of my life, I would like to continue my work as a creative writer, in order to leave works to my people”.²⁶⁹

In fact, Zunun was very productive in the 1980s. The major works of this period were his collaboration on the film script for “Gerip and Senem” (completed 1981), and the publication of a collection of short pieces, “Recollections” [*Hatireler*]. Zunun’s oral memoir, taped near the end of his life, refers to his having published seventeen such recollections, and to be working on the “second and third volumes”. The volume published in 1991 after his death includes recollections written up to the time of his death. Zunun also refers to his work in the 1980s as including “some legends, derived

²⁶⁸ Samuel S Kim, *China in and out of a changing world*, Centre for International Studies World Order Study Program Occasional Paper no.21, Princeton University 1991, p.44.

²⁶⁹ Zunun’s recorded memoir, op.cit.

from classical legends and stories, and a further ten stories that I collected from Kyrgyz and prepared for publication. I collected 2000 riddles together with Kadir Mehmet.”²⁷⁰

A common element of these works of the 1980s is that they all refer to the past, either realistic or legendary. Zunun seems to have consciously avoided contemporary settings and references, which might be more politically dangerous, preferring instead to make his points through literary analogy and metaphor, and by drawing upon historical allusions. In this way he hoped to secure approval for publication of works that would have meaning for his own people, as he had stated in the final words of his oral memoir quoted above. To achieve this, he would have to maintain his position as a publishable writer under the political supervision that still prevailed in Xinjiang.

This chapter will focus in particular on four works – the epic story of “Gerip and Senem” (opera and film scripts), and three different examples of the works published in the volume “Recollections”: “Hessen”; “On the Journey”; and “The Road in Quest of Knowledge”.

Gerip and Senem

Zunun’s work on this epic story is of special interest, because it exists in three forms that show various stages of development. The first form is an opera libretto, on which the film script is based. The second is the Chinese translation of the film script, which was published in a single volume together with the opera script in 1981.²⁷¹ The third version is the actual transcription of the Uyghur language version of the film, which was made by the Tianshan Film Studio under the direction of Han production crew with Uyghur actors and assistant director. A translation of the opera version is provided in Appendix 3. Appendix 4 is a table in which the differences between the film script and soundtrack transcript versions are noted in detail, whereas only the major differences are noted between the opera and the film. The major textual discussion focuses on the differences between the opera and the film, as these two treatments were made at different times in China’s political development of the early 1980s.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

²⁷¹ Zunun Kadir and Ali Azziz, *Ailipu yu Sainaimu* [Gerip and Senem], (tr)Zhang Shirong, Xinjiang Qingnian Chubanshe [Xinjiang Youth Publishing House], Urumqi, 1981.

Origins and evolution of the opera

Some history of the story of Gerip and Senem is provided in the translator's note. It refers to a 175-year old story as a major source "as well as other sources". Thus some of Zunun's contribution to the work is unacknowledged. In the article "Remembering Artist Friends" Zunun states that in 1945 he added two scenes to a dramatic musical version of "Gerip and Senem" that had been staged in the 1930s by the Uyghur Cultural Development Organisation's Arts Committee.²⁷² Separately, Zunun says in his oral memoir: "In 1963 my five-act, seven-scene drama of Gerip and Senem... was destroyed". The published script that is discussed here gives credit only to Ali Azziz, with the acknowledgement that he "used previous material". According to Zunun's wife Zileyhan, the script attributed to Ali Azziz was in fact based on Zunun's earlier work.

The current opera script was published in 1980, following Zunun's return from exile. Although we cannot identify clearly what parts of the opera were Zunun's individual work, his involvement is strong enough to justify considering it in this thesis. The final film script is attributed to both Ali Azziz and Zunun Kadir.

Synopsis

King Abbas has agreed to betroth his daughter Senem to Gerip, the son of his trusted Vezir Hessen. However, his military chief Shawazi and his wife want their own unworthy son Abdullah to marry the King's daughter. Shawazi plots to have Hessen assassinated, after which the King goes back on his promise and dissolves the betrothal. As Gerip and Senem love each other, Abdullah plots to separate them, and Gerip is sent into exile, leaving Senem grieving. Shawazi's faction gains strength at the court, and Gerip becomes the focus of hope for other honourable officials who are exiled or imprisoned. They join with the rebellious Mountain People, and eventually return to

²⁷² An article in *Xinjiang Yishu*, no.3, 1988, p.52, says Zunun Kadir "improved and added two scenes to" the Gerip-Senem drama staged in 1943. Kashgarlie notes that the well-known writer Ziya Samedi had written an earlier musical play based on the "Gerip and Senem" story, staged in Gulja in 1936 (Kashgarli, op.cit., p.161).

rescue Senem from a forced marriage to Abdullah. The King is forced to accept the marriage of Gerip and Senem.

Commentary

The story of Gerip and Senem has developed to contain considerably more than just a simple love story. In introducing his Chinese translation, the Han writer Zhang Shirong of the Xinjiang Writers' Association says that it symbolizes feudal relationships between Islamic rulers and their subjects under the Abassi Empire²⁷³ - a conventional CCP-based view of this type of writing. However, for those who know how to interpret it, the story has other meanings. In conversations with a number of Uyghur scholars during this study, it was almost unanimously said that such stories have layers that the reader must understand for himself. As noted in Chapter 2, in his own article "Concerning Spiritual Nourishment", Zunun said that "Love may include higher love: love of one's country, one's people..."²⁷⁴ My reading of "Gerip and Senem" is based on understanding of the way such material may be read by a Uyghur audience, with the love between the central characters symbolizing "higher" kinds of love. The story has many threads, but three of these are most important as social and political comment that is usually presented indirectly:

- East Turkistan culture and its relation to Central Asian and Middle Eastern culture;
- the power relation of China as a whole to East Turkistan, and Chinese views of Xinjiang; and
- the relationship of Uyghur people in East Turkistan to Chinese rule, and their means of self-preservation.

I identify these key threads separately, even though they are sometimes interwoven in the narrative and their evidence is often deliberately obscure. In considering these different narrative threads, I will also note the changes that were made between the

²⁷³ Zhang Shirong, "Translator's Note" in *Gerip and Senem*, op.cit., pp.141-145.

²⁷⁴ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.670.

opera libretto and the film script, and between the published script and the released film as transcribed from the sound-track.

This analysis indicates the assertion of Uyghur identity tends to be more overt in the opera, whereas the film versions of the story, where there are differences, lean more towards imagery and references that support the incorporation of Xinjiang into China. There can be two reasons for this: the time difference between the publication of the opera and the publication of the film spans a period during which political supervision of literary activity was being tightened up throughout China (as mentioned earlier in this chapter); and in addition, the opera was produced only in Uyghur for a Uyghur audience, whereas the film was dubbed into Chinese and therefore would potentially be seen by an audience throughout China. However, there are instances where the film seems to have included elements that favour the Uyghur point of view. It would appear that, in the negotiation process between the Uyghur and Han members of the production team, there was some scope for the Uyghur writers (principally Zunun himself) to argue on cultural grounds for the inclusion of material, the political significance of which would not be evident to the Han officials.

East Turkistan culture and its relation to Central Asian and Middle Eastern culture

The characters of the cast initially are supposed to be those of the Court of King Abbas. The figure of King Abbas has several points of reference in Uyghur culture. The earlier Abu al'Abbas was a founder (750 AD) of the Abassid Caliphate based in Baghdad. The regime was characterised, among other things, by its reliance on Turkic military officials, who became increasingly powerful at the court. The Abassid Caliphate was overpowered in 1055 by the Seljuk Turks, who incorporated the Caliphate into their empire. The dynasty itself was finally overthrown by Prince Hulegu of the Chagatai state (with which Uyghurs identify themselves historically), who took Baghdad after a siege in 1258.²⁷⁵ A later Abbas is Shah Abbas I of the Persian Saffavid dynasty, who maintained a splendid court at Isfahan (1587-1629). This king was on the one hand a rival of the Turkic dynasties to the north, and on the

²⁷⁵ David Morgan, *Medieval Persia 1047-1797*, Longman, UK, 1988, p.19.

other hand shared a common culture based on Chagatai, Seljuk and Islamic elements.²⁷⁶ In the opera script, although the character of Abbas is not meant to be historically accurate, a further date reference can be picked up in a remark by the worthy official Kasim, who says that King Abbas “can be a reincarnation of Rukh-Shah Vani”.²⁷⁷ Shah Rukh (1405-1447) was a son of Timurlane who moved the Timurid capital from Samarkand to Herat (now in western Afghanistan) and is most noted as a patron of the arts.²⁷⁸ Beneficiaries of his rule included Huseyin Baykara and Navayi, who was one of the literary influences recognised by Zunun Kadir. The reference to “Rukh Shah Vani” is not present in the film script. Thus for a Uyghur audience (but not a Han one) the name of the King held many associations of a political, cultural and moral nature.

In Gerip’s journey to his place of exile, there are explicit references in the film script to the Gobi Desert. This suggests locating the narrative in East Turkistan (whereas the opera story did not specify this location). This is both an appropriation of the story for a Uyghur cultural identity, and also a strong linkage between the homeland of the Uyghurs (in the region of the Gobi desert) and the sources of the Abbasid stories in the Middle East.

One of the early visitors to the Court in the opera version is “Tulu Beg”. This name also has historical resonances that may refer to more than one individual. Tolonoghlu (868-905), was a military official of Turkic origin who had earlier ruled Egypt and Syria. Another possibility is Tolui (died 1223), son of Genghis Khan and father of Mongke.²⁷⁹ A third possibility is Toghril Beg (1037-63), founder of the Seljuk Turk empire, who took over the Abassid Caliphate in 1055, before establishing rule over Persia and Iraq by 1059.²⁸⁰ The literary project here is to relate the Uyghur people to great figures of Turkic background who ruled significant parts of Central Asia and the Middle East. By doing this, writers assert pride and self-esteem from connecting Uyghurs to such an empire and such a period, asserting the

²⁷⁶ Ibid, pp.132-142.

²⁷⁷ *Gerip and Senem* opera script op.cit., p. 74.

²⁷⁸ Morgan, op.cit., pp.94-95.

²⁷⁹ Mongke was the Chagatai dynasty ruler who ordered his son Hulegu to conquer the Abbassid Caliphate at Baghdad.

²⁸⁰ Morgan, op.cit., p.28.

long history and international influence of their people. At the same time, they also distance themselves from the Chinese political and cultural regime that now dominates their homeland. In this situation, ambiguity about the actual historical persons involved can be seen as consistent with the ambiguity employed as protection by Zunun in other areas of his writing. The references to Tulu Beg are also removed from the film script and the soundtrack.

The opera opens with a scene that is specifically described as including a wolf-skin on the throne. The wolf is the principal totemic symbol of the Turkic peoples.²⁸¹ In the opera script, the settings are described as having an identifiably Turkic flavour. In the film, however, the settings are described in a more generic Islamic imagery. The Turkic totemic “wolf” imagery is removed. From an official Chinese point of view, this would be consistent with a desire to discourage Uyghurs from identifying themselves with other neighbouring Turkic nations,²⁸² while encouraging stereotypes of fundamentalist Islamic “other”.

The story uses a common theme of Uyghur folklore – the childless ruler, who in spite of having every worldly success is not happy.²⁸³ King Abbas declares in the opening scene of the opera:

As a King, I have everything. I should be happy. But I do not have a child, so I am miserable.

In this we may see that the power and success that has been acquired and kept through force and cunning, has failed to satisfy the ruler. The thing that the King misses is a child – the fruit of love rather than of just power. The image of the child may represent the legacy of nationhood or cultural identity that the ruler hopes to pass on to future

²⁸¹ Turgun Almas *Uyghurlar* (The Uyghurs), Xinjiang Yashalar-Ossumler Nashryati [Xinjiang Youth Publishing House], Urumqi, 1989, p.65.

²⁸² Some Uyghur nationalists whom I interviewed also said that they considered it would be counter-productive to encourage a general Turkic identity in the present time, when Western Turkistan is already divided into five separate republics. In this way of thought, it is most important for the Uyghur to establish their own separate national identity as a more effective platform to claim independence or self-determination.

²⁸³ The theme recurs in Zunun’s legend “Leelshah”, discussed in Chapter 5.

generations. This aspect of the King lamenting his childlessness is also absent from the film versions.

One of the principal agents of evil in the story of Gerip and Senem is Abdullah, son of Shawazi²⁸⁴ and Chief of the Palace Guard. Abdullah's name identifies him as Islamic and Uyghur, although the name of his father (Shawazi) is not a Uyghur name. Abdullah could also represent Xinjiang. People associate Xinjiang with Islamic faith, even though Xinjiang is ruled by Chinese. Abdullah thus has an ambiguous identity, since he is Islamic in exterior, but actually works for the authorities who do not represent the people (that is, Chinese rule). When Abdullah makes his first entrance in the opera, he is holding prayer beads, but he is revealed to be a hypocrite and therefore does not represent the true spirituality or religion of the Uyghur people. This raises interesting issues on the place of religion in this narrative, at various levels. From the perspective of the CCP, religion is associated with backwardness. Religious affairs officials in Xinjiang are required to admit that their religious faith is inconsistent with the atheist principles of Communism. They are permitted to practise and propagate their religion only in the most superficial and formalistic ways (dressing in traditional garb and memorising Arabic prayers), while they are forbidden to engage in discussion of the meaning and content of their religion, especially with young people. The policy appears to be intended to isolate Islam as an element of cultural heritage. Although most Uyghur intellectuals (including Zunun Kadir) do not approve of Islamic fundamentalism, it could be in China's interest to portray Uyghur nationalism as close to, or the same as, Islamic fundamentalism. This might explain why images in the opera that are critical of Islamic extremism are not present in the film versions.

The opera includes a poetic reference to two previous romantic stories similar to the story of "Gerip and Senem": "Perhad and Shirin" (originally from Persian) and "Leyla and Mejnun" (originally from Arabic). These references would be familiar to Uyghur audiences but Chinese audiences would not be aware of their significance. The references demonstrate the strong linkages between Central Asian and Middle Eastern

²⁸⁴ The name Shawazi in the Chinese version sounds like the name of a Hui poet *Shiwazi* (Tenth Born Son). In the Uyghur version, and earlier Persian versions, the name used is Shapur.

culture, and in particular emphasizes that Uyghur culture is more related to Central Asian and Middle Eastern cultures than to Chinese culture.

In the film script, there is an enactment of an episode from the epic love story of “Perhad and Shirin”,²⁸⁵ a love story in which the young man Perhad has to pass many tests and troubles to win the hand of Princess Shirin. According to some Uyghur scholars, this epic is of Persian origin. Zhang Shirong, translator of the film script into Chinese, informs his Chinese readers that the Gerip and Senem, and Perhad and Shirin stories have been part of Uyghur culture since the 15th Century.²⁸⁶ In the opera, the Perhad and Shirin story is included only by way of several references in poems. In the two film versions, there is a dream-like enactment of an episode from “Perhad and Shirin” as a symbolic reference to the romance of Gerip and Senem. Taken to this almost mystical level, this romance may, for Uyghur viewers, evoke a nation-based reading, symbolizing the unity, despite obstacles, of Uyghur people with their historical cultural identity.

The film script also significantly increases the role of “bad” women in the narrative. The principal villain, Shawazi, is in the film script supported and pressured by his wife Hatiche, who is determined that her son Abdullah will gain the throne of the kingdom. Another minor character, Suchuk, is a lady in waiting who supports Abdullah and spreads negative views about Gerip and Senem. It might be noted that during this period China was undergoing some political backlash against the dominant role played by the wife of Mao Zedong, Jiang Qing, in the late Cultural Revolution period.

Another change in the film version is to do with passing on inappropriate ideas to the next generation. In the opera, the scandal that is used to rouse the King to anger is the idea that Jelaleddin, a respected scholar, has been teaching “unsuitable knowledge” to young people. In the film script, the scandal element is changed, and

²⁸⁵ “Perhad and Shirin” was rewritten many times: By Firdosi (10th Century) in Persian, then by Kutub Nizami (1336) in Chagatai Turkic, then by Navayi (1484). A consistent element of the story involves Perhad being set the task of splitting a mountain to bring water to a dry land, as a condition for marrying Shirin. (*Uyghur Edebiyati Tarihi*, op.cit., vol.II, pp.424-5.)

²⁸⁶ The story of Perhad and Shirin is named by the translator Zhang Shirong as among the seven favourite love epics of Uyghur literature (Zhang Shirong, op.cit., p.141.)

is based on the suggestion that Gerip and Senem have been behaving too freely in the palace garden, by embracing. The difference is that the first of these crimes is political, whereas the second is a breach of social or moral conventions. This kind of change might well have been made in order to reduce the political risk in the script.

In the changes in usage of cultural images in the opera and film versions, two points can be noted. The Turkic cultural linkage of the Uyghurs are played down in the later (film) version, and the generic Islamic cultural profile is accentuated. Criticism of Islamic extremism in the opera is removed in the film. Thus the Islamic “otherness” of the Uyghur is emphasized, while their similarity to the other states of the Turkic world is suppressed. None the less, the effect of this work on audiences, whether Uyghur or Han, would be to reinforce the sense of a separate cultural identity of the Uyghur people.

Relation of China as a whole to East Turkistan

Another dimension to the symbolism of “Gerip and Senem” concerns the political context of China in the Deng era, and in particular the relations of Xinjiang with the rest of China during that period. The interpretation in terms of power relations between Xinjiang and the central authorities of China is ambiguous. In the opera, there is a greater focus on separate Uyghur identity and the issues concerning separate identity are emphasized, whereas in the film script, there is a different recurring theme of preserving the unity of the Kingdom. This second theme is perfectly in tune with the Chinese government’s preoccupation with “maintaining stability and unity” in the PRC.

At one symbolic level, King Abbas may be seen to represent Mao Zedong and the Communist Party. He possesses glory and success, and is respected for his early achievements and good intentions - but his own greed for power, and being surrounded by less worthy people, create disaster in the court. This was precisely the prevailing contemporary reading of the career of Mao.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁷ Geremie Barmé, “History for the Masses”, op.cit., p.267, refers to Sun Jingxuan’s 1980 poem “A Spectre prowls our land”, which equates Mao with feudalism, and Bai Hua’s 1980 plays “The King of Wu and Yue” and “Unrequited Love”, which carried a subtext attacking Mao, and were criticised by Deng Xiaoping in March 1981.

The use of literary characters to represent Mao was not uncommon during the late 70s and early 80s. The Chinese scholar Chen Xiaomei has noted of the post-Mao period:

When Chinese intellectuals were promoting the West in their theatrical productions (eg many productions of Shakespeare's plays such as Macbeth) their seeming celebration of the current regime were on many occasions used as a cover-up for criticizing the Communist system in general...Macbeth was compared to Mao as exemplifying how greed for power ruined a great man.²⁸⁸

Like Macbeth, King Abbas was a suitable vehicle for reflection upon the rule of the recently-deceased Mao. King Abbas is portrayed somewhat differently in the opera and in the film. In both his rule is unjust, and he is misled by greedy and corrupt officials. In the opera, he is described as unhappy because he has no children, whereas in the film there is no reference to him being unhappy on that account. In all versions, however, there is an incident in which he shows compassion towards a pregnant gazelle that he encounters on the hunt, because of his own wife's pregnancy, and he responds to this encounter by betrothing his unborn child to the unborn child of his trusted Vezir Hessen. This shows that, at least at the beginning of the story, the King is capable of being moved by sympathy.

However, at the same time, his scheming military adviser Shawazi is arranging the assassination of Vezir Hessen in order to further his political ambition and disguise his own corruption. The betrothal, which would unite two worthy parties and ensure national stability, may be seen as the promise of Utopia held out by the CCP to the people of China. That it is destroyed by an unworthy schemer might represent the blaming of extremists (the Cultural Revolution, Gang of Four and ultraleftists in general) for the failure to deliver this Utopia. At another level, the betrothal and its later rejection would readily recall to Uyghurs the promises of self-determination that were held out during the period when the CCP was seeking cooperation from Uyghurs so as to achieve control of Xinjiang, and withdrawn once that control was established.²⁸⁹ In

²⁸⁸ Chen Xiaomei, op.cit. p.51.

²⁸⁹ Owen Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia: Sinkiang and Inner Asian Frontiers of China and Russia*, Brown & Co, Boston, 1950, p.115 (also quoted in Linda Benson, op.cit., p.13.) In 1930 the first All China Congress of Soviets announced that non-Chinese nationalities in China should have the right to determine whether they wished to secede or remain within the Chinese state.

this interpretation, Mao/CCP (King Abbas) is promising Xinjiang (Gerip) that it will receive autonomy (Senem) under the authority of China (the King's decree).

In the opera version, there is a song in praise of King Abbas, sung by the court ladies, which brings to mind the songs of praise to Chairman Mao and the Communist Party that were common in China from the late 1950s through the 1970s (allowing for the difference between songs written in an Islamic context, and songs written in a Marxist context) which is quite consistent with the Zunun's subtle and ambiguous writing:

We are court ladies of the Abbasi King
 Day and night we praise the king
 The honourable King is the envoy of God
 We are like butterflies dancing among the flowers.²⁹⁰

The song, however, is absent from the film version. In the aftermath of Maoism, there was a pervasive rejection of personality cults, which may account for the excision of the song.

A more detailed examination of the plot of "Gerip and Senem" suggests further possible allegorical readings. After the passage of some years, when Gerip and Senem have grown up, Gerip is in love with Senem. If Gerip is taken to represent the Uyghur people, then Senem may represent a truly autonomous homeland, culture, nationhood and hope for the future. At the same time, Senem's role is ambiguous. Considering Senem as the daughter of King Abbas, she may also be seen as representing the positive elements of the Han people (for instance those who are sympathetic to Uyghur aspirations) and in that sense, her romance with Gerip might represent the positive possibilities of Uyghur-Han relations.

²⁹⁰ *Gerip and Senem* opera script, op.cit., p.91.

The villain Shawazi, who has plotted that his son, Abdullah, should marry Senem, becomes angry that the orphaned Gerip is “hanging around” Senem, because he understands that Gerip is a threat to his plan. Abdullah is more conceited about his rank and position, and is reluctant at first to recognise Gerip as a rival. None the less, Abdullah suggests that they persuade King Abbas to formally repudiate the marriage agreement. I would suggest that Abdullah could be seen as representing Chinese cadres in Xinjiang and also those Uyghurs who act as representatives of the Chinese regime. Thus an allegorical reading would suggest that the autonomy (Senem) is likely to be given to a non-genuine Uyghur (Abdullah) instead of the true Uyghur (Gerip).

Faced with this threat, Gerip suggests to Senem that they elope. Their romance may in some way represent the hopes of well-meaning Uyghur and Han people to live in peace and happiness together, under the promised terms of true autonomy. In the story, however, this is not allowed to happen, because Shawazi and his associates persuade the King (through the agency of the Queen) that the match is unsuitable, as Gerip does not come from the right background. A possible reading here is that Uyghurs are not entitled to power because of their ethnicity. In the story, this act of separating Senem and Gerip, for the ulterior motive of Shawazi’s power-seeking, stirs up further suspicion and distrust between the people and their rulers, and brings the kingdom into danger.

Further context to this drama may be seen in the political events of the 1980s, when the opera was written and the film scripted. This was a period of power struggles between Uyghur and Han, with several violent uprisings, mass arrests, and assassinations taking place (as noted above). One particular incident in the narrative recalls that this was the period in China when the first post-Mao attempts were being made to introduce the rule of law into the PRC, with one of the main issues being the question of the proper authority for detention. When Abdullah comes to arrest Gerip, Senem is able to frustrate him by demanding to see the warrant, which Abdullah is not able to produce. This issue of arbitrary powers of arrest was very familiar and significant to Uyghurs at this time, who were seeing mass arrests of political “criminals” take place whenever

there were demonstrations or other actions that challenged the authorities in Xinjiang²⁹¹ and more broadly in China as a whole.

The factionalism at the court of King Abbas can also be seen as reflecting factional struggles that were taking place in China at this time between reformers and conservatives. Just as the introduction of new political and economic ideas into the Chinese system was creating confusion and challenges to all cadres in the late 1970s, so King Abbas is shown in the play to be confused by the different lines of advice that he is receiving from his advisors: Shawazi and his supporter Shemshi on the one hand, and on the other hand Gerip's supporter Dawut, the former groom of Vezir Hessen, who knows the truth about Hessen's assassination. Jelaledin, another supporter of Gerip, is a scholar, the teacher of both Gerip and Senem, and an honorable intellectual of personal integrity. In the opera, Jelaledin is accused of teaching "inappropriate knowledge" to the youth – this may remind readers of the campaign against "spiritual pollution" that was running in China in the early eighties following the first post-Mao democracy movement. In the film this particular aspect of Jelaledin's role is reduced, and his supposed "crime" is a moral one, of encouraging the young couple to pursue their love against the King's wishes.

In the opera version, the villains also make use of Zamira (one of the court ladies) to spread rumours in the court against the relationship between Gerip and Senem. They exploit the fact that Zamira herself is in love with Gerip, in order to manipulate her into harming him. Zamira is used by others to damage the person she loves, which may symbolize how people may be used to destroy the cause that they believe in. It would recall, for Uyghurs, the many occasions on which individual Uyghurs had been used by Chinese authorities, in spite of good intentions, to divide or frustrate the ambitions of their own people. Gossip mongering is a recognised tool of "security" officials in fomenting disunity among peoples who, if united, could threaten their power.

In the opera, the scholar Jelaledin is arrested because the fugitive rebel Dawut, whom Gerip had helped to escape, returns to the Court and tries to contact Jelaledin. Dawut

²⁹¹ Ablikim Baki, *op.cit.*, pp.62-78.

can perhaps be interpreted as a representative of the exiled dissidents who are closely watched by the authorities. Contact with such people is still treated very harshly in East Turkistan today.²⁹² In the film versions the role played by Dawut in the narrative is split between different characters: the older rebel leader Sidik (who leads the Mountain People) and Sidik's son Zapar, who plays the more adventurous role of the revolutionary hero. As noted, the film versions edit out some plot elements that may have conveyed special meaning for Uyghur viewers of the original opera.

The declining values of trust in the Court are shown in the incident where Senem prevents the arrest of Gerip for the "crime" of being in the forbidden garden with her. As noted above, Senem questions the authority of Abdullah, by demanding to see the arrest warrant. This reflects the modern values of the "rule of law", which were receiving much official attention in China at the time of writing. In the original opera version of this scene, however, the rule of law is inconsistently applied, for Senem guarantees Gerip's escape from arrest by throwing some items of jewelry to the guards.²⁹³ This would seem to be an act of corruption, and therefore not consistent with the previous reference to rule of law, which could be seen as a comment that the rule of law in China is only partial, and can be influenced by wealth or power. It could also, however, be read as confirming the day-to-day reality that, when faced with arbitrary threats to freedom, all means may be justified in a good cause. Either interpretation could also explain why this element of corruption was taken out of the story in the later film versions.

In the opera version of the story, there is a further reference to the rule of law when Dawut (Hessen's groom), leader of the rebels, comes back to the capital to contact Jeleleddin. He is accused of being a spy, and Senem intervenes to prevent him being arrested by demanding of Abdullah "Why are you arbitrarily arresting him?". The assumption is that there should be some authoritative basis in law for the arrest. Ilyas (Jeleleddin's) son helps Dawut to contact Jeleleddin.

²⁹² Abduljelil Karakash, "The Most Successful Uyghur Businesswoman is Arrested", World Uyghur Network News, East Turkistan Information Centre, 4 April 1997, also confirmed in conversation with John Kamm, Executive Director of the Dui Hua Foundation, USA (June 2000). In 1997 the well-known businesswoman Rabiye Kadir was arrested in relation to her contacts with people overseas, including her Uyghur husband who worked for Radio Free Asia.

²⁹³ *Gerip and Senem* opera script, op.cit., p.89.

In the film, the role of Jelaleddin, the court intellectual, evokes the cautious relations between establishment intellectuals in China and the more activist young dissidents. In the opera, Jelaleddin helps Dawut (whom Abdullah has accused of spying for the Mountain people) to avoid capture and get out of the city. As a member of the Court elite, Jelaleddin has some informed views on how political events may be developing. When Jelaleddin says in the opera “a big storm is coming”, many of the audience would recognise in his words a reflection of the situation around them. The political and economic reforms being instituted under Deng Xiaoping were anything but stable, and hasty moves to demand freedom could provoke severe crackdowns, punishments, and conflict. If the “marriage agreement” is a metaphor for the “autonomous” relationship between Xinjiang and Beijing, then the early 1980s were one of those periods in which some senior Uyghur officials were most likely to be asking Beijing to honour the terms of autonomy that had been promised in the 1940s and 1950s. When the King finally repudiates the marriage agreement, the honest intellectual Jelaleddin is outraged, and is persuaded to join forces with the rebels. In the opera, when Senem decides to run away with Gerip, Jelaleddin encourages them, saying, “Break down this prison cage and fly, like birds to the sky!” In the context of the times, I would suggest that any reference to freedom could be interpreted as a reference to national freedom. A parallel may be seen between Jelaleddin and some senior Chinese intellectuals of the 1980s who came out in public support of dissident movements. In the film version Jelaleddin’s role is somewhat reduced to that of passive observer at the beginning of the story, and by the end only to that of an advocate of the rule of law, rather than an outright rebel against the regime.

A more extended philosophical reflection by Jelaleddin is also different in the opera and the film script. In the opera, Jelaleddin recites:

The sea of knowledge extends far into the distance
 Each drop of that sea is more valuable than *kevser*²⁹⁴

²⁹⁴ Holy water from the Haj.

He who throws himself into the sea of knowledge
 Will find innumerable treasures
 The heart of an ignoramus, black as night
 Is like a strong body with its bone-marrow drawn out
 Be strenuous in searching for the mysteries of knowledge
 Let the star of wisdom brighten your heart.

The poem conveys traditional Uyghur value of the importance of knowledge.
 The other poem, which appears in the published film script (published in Chinese translation), brings out resentment of present-day conditions which may reflect the turmoil and factionalism of political currents in China at that time:

In the cosmos, life is a nightmare
 You promote cunning words and good looks
 Good people face humiliation and hardship
 Corruption and oppression of the powerful is tolerated
 The crys and sighs of the ordinary people are ignored
 The low are wearing the crown of roses.
 Scheming cliques try to get everything
 Is there no distinction between black and white?²⁹⁵

This poem criticises corruption, oppression and injustice that is perpetrated by rulers against the ordinary people, while “scheming cliques” get all the benefits. The sentiments in this poem could be shared not only by those “ordinary people” mentioned in the poem, but also by the generation of older supporters of Communism who were alienated by the Dengist program. W.J.F. Jenner has noted the strength of feeling among such older communists who felt that “once there was a Communist-run, non-socialist revolution that for all its brutality, intolerance and violence had a moral power and appeared to have the values needed to create a new and better China”.²⁹⁶ These meanings apply to all of China, not just to Xinjiang.

²⁹⁵ *Gerip and Senem* film script, op.cit., p.29.

²⁹⁶ W.J.F.Jenner, *The Tyranny of History*, op.cit., p.156.

However, the opera version of the poem reappears in the released film (as transcribed). The finished film thus substitutes a much less political poem, in which Jelaeddin talks only about the value and importance of knowledge.²⁹⁷ This change removes a political criticism and replaces it with a social or moral statement that could offend nobody. However, the poem as used still has a special cultural meaning for Uyghurs, reminding them of their deep culture and respect for knowledge and education.

Given the importance of symbolism that runs through this work, I will discuss eleven examples of where there are changes between the opera and films versions that affect the symbolism in veiled political messages, sometimes weakening and sometimes strengthening or changing these messages.

The Broken Promise

In the opera, there is a scene where Shawazi tries to persuade the King that the marriage agreement should be broken.²⁹⁸ Jelaeddin argues that a serious promise should not be broken, saying that “the arrow that has left the bow can not be recalled”. None the less, the marriage agreement is broken. In the film script, there is a symbolic moment at which the King tears up the marriage agreement that Gerip’s mother Mihrivan has brought to the Court in order to remind the King of his promise to her husband that Gerip should marry Senem. Jelaeddin, (who represents the national intelligentsia) directly criticises the King with the words “A contract can be torn up, but the Truth cannot be changed.” In the edited film version, this line is given to Mihrivan, the mother figure. It might be considered that the effect of this statement is reduced by that change of source, in that it becomes an expression of passion from a disappointed mother, rather than a statement of high principle from the most respected intellectual of the Court. On the other hand, it could also be argued that from a Uyghur perspective the Mother (representing the motherland) may give more significance to the statement. In either case this is a meaningful change, bearing in mind that the status of intellectuals in the early 1980s was under intense political discussion. It would seem that the editors of this film decided it would be

²⁹⁷ *Gerip and Senem* opera script, op.cit., p.81.

²⁹⁸ Appendix 3, p.18.

best if the Court intellectual was not the one to challenge the King in this way. This would be consistent with the policies of discouraging intellectuals from being bold with their criticism of authorities.

In the film there is a scene in which the dissidents, at their mountain headquarters, discuss the political situation (with Shawazi's faction dominating the Court of King Abbas) and what to do about it.²⁹⁹ In both script and transcript versions, Sidik says "I did not imagine that King Abbas would not stick to his promises." However, in the actual film he adds "...and make the people suffer like this." Here again we see scope for ambiguity in interpretation of the references to "promises" and the responsibility for carrying them out. From the Han perspective, King Abbas' failure to carry out his promise may be taken to represent the betrayal, by the extreme leftists of the Maoist faction (Jiang Qing and her supporters), of early CCP promises. Chinese politics of the late 1970s and early 1980s were intensely focussed on correcting the "errors" of the Cultural Revolution. The Uyghur frame of reference, based on culture, experience and current conditions, would suggest a different interpretation that focusses on the CCP failure to honour early promises of Uyghur autonomy.

Sidik (who says these lines in the film) does not exist in the Opera, and this scene does not take place. The role of leader of the Mountain people is taken by Dawut, who is the former groom of Vezir Hessen. The role of "revolutionary hero" therefore undergoes a subtle change - in the earlier (opera) narrative, the hero Dawut is definitely "proletarian", being a servant of a high official. In the later (film) script, the hero Sidik is the son of a court official.

The shabby room

At the beginning of Act 2 in the opera, the prescribed stage setting carries some interesting symbolism. The King's jewelled throne is in the centre, and to the western side is "a shabby domed room". The throne, the seat of power, could be taken to represent China, the Middle Kingdom, while the "shabby domed room" on the western side may represent Xinjiang, the most westerly part of China. "From the window of the

²⁹⁹ Film script, Scene 47, p 41-3.

Court, one can see in the distance an old eastern-style spire, the domed roof of the royal *medrese*,³⁰⁰ and a tall minaret”³⁰¹ This view, from the centre (China) reminds the Uyghur audience of how China views the Uyghurs in Xinjiang. From the perspective of Beijing, the Uyghurs are a distant “other” whose room is condemned to be shabby. Again, the fact that in the film script, and in the film itself, this scene is taken out, underlines its significance. In the film, the palace of King Abbas is decorated in a generic Islamic style, with minaret, green décor, distant domes and so on.

The Gong

Another subtle reference to the dominated position of the Uyghur people is found in the use of a gong (in the opera) to announce the entrance of a herald.³⁰² The gong is not traditionally used in Uyghur culture; Uyghurs use drums for such purposes. The gong, a common Chinese instrument, can be recognised as a symbol of Chinese authority. This gong introduces the announcement that Gerip has been declared a traitor, that his property is to be confiscated and he is to be exiled. He is later seen in chains. Here, the person of Gerip both symbolizes the Uyghur people as a whole, separated from their heritage and self-determination, and represents the whole generation of intellectuals like Zunun Kadir who had been treated in exactly this way during the political movements from the 1950s to the 1980s. In the film versions the gong is not specified or used in this way, possibly because it could be regarded as too obvious and provocative a symbol of Chinese authority. The herald still announces that Gerip and his family have been exiled because of their rebellion against the King, but the absence of the gong reduces (from Uyghur perspective) the colonial symbolism of this moment, and thus the focus is on the general issue of rebellion against oppressive authority, rather than a specifically invoked Han authority.

The New Garden

Further political symbols can be found in the King’s special garden that is built for Senem.³⁰³ In the film itself, the garden is named in Uyghur the “Remedy Garden”

³⁰⁰ Islamic school.

³⁰¹ Opera script, p.91.

³⁰² Opera script, p. 98.

³⁰³ Film Script, Scene 68, p.53.

[*charebagh* – a garden to cure or improve a situation]. Its name in the Uyghur film version invokes references from Islamic cultures that would be understood by Uyghurs, while in the Chinese translation of the script it is called the Imperial Garden (*Yu Huayuan*), leaving quite different interpretations to be made on its symbolism for these different audiences. In the opera, however, it is called simply the “new garden”.

Some comment about exclusiveness and isolation can be interpreted from the events that concern the Garden. In the film script King Abbas forbids anyone but his daughter Senem from going to the New Imperial Garden without his permission.³⁰⁴ The King says that the garden is being built to try to cure Senem’s bad health resulting from her sadness. It is reserved for Senem and an exclusive group, and is forbidden to Gerip and his supporters. If the King represents China in this context, then the Remedy Garden has something in common with the attempts to build a “New China” which principally benefits China’s Han majority. This can be seen to symbolize the PRC’s renewed campaign in the 1980s to build a “New China” which would be enjoyed by the Chinese, but perhaps not by Uyghurs.

However, the results are not as expected by the King, because the Remedy Garden is the place where Gerip and Senem meet and their enemies are confronted. The King’s attempt to maintain the Remedy Garden as a walled and isolated place fails, as the Mountain People (political rebels) invade. In the opera, King Abbas procures slaves from all quarters to help build the garden for Senem; then Gerip and his companions infiltrate the palace by pretending to be slaves, and then rescue Senem. In this way, the ruler’s arrogant use of slaves is seen to be the cause of his plans for complete control being defeated, because the rebellion comes from the slaves (disguised Mountain people) who are already inside the King’s walls. In the film versions, there is no mention of slaves. In the film, it is the rebel Mountain People who attack, and they attack from outside the walls.³⁰⁵ The political implication of rebellion from within the

³⁰⁴ There is a famous *Chahar Bagh* in Isfahan, which was the city of the Persian Shah Abbas I. (Gholamhossein Arab, *Isfahan*, Yassavoli Publications, Tehran 1999, p.9). In Navayi’s 1484 Perhad and Shirin story, it is Perhad’s father, the King of Hotan, who builds a special garden called *Chahr Bagh* to soothe his son Perhad who is pining for Shirin.

³⁰⁵ Film Script, Scene 87, p.65. Soldier: “Your Majesty – Gerip is leading the mountain people, storming the palace”.

walls is therefore missing from the film, although the theme of the Mountain People as rebels is retained.

Releasing the lion

Jelaleddin makes a comment³⁰⁶ when he hears that Zapar has released his father Sidik from gaol (before he himself is caught). In the film script, Jelaleddin says “The lion has forced open its cage – let it run to the place it ought to go”. This implies that the lion (Sidik, representing rebellion against the regime), having defied authority and forced its way to freedom, will now take actions and eventually face the consequences of those actions. There is some implication that the consequences could be bad. In the released film version, this line has become “The lion has come out of its cage – let it go where it wants to go”. Much of the force has been removed; because there is less suggestion of forceful rebellion, and there is now a more positive implication that the lion, now free, will achieve what it wants. The film script thus implies that, for freedom, force may be necessary, but is also dangerous. The final film as transcribed conveys a softer message that people must make their own choices. This is a different message to the Uyghur audience, but made in a way that is subtle enough to pass Chinese censorship. As the story later unfolds, Sidik (the “lion”) in fact becomes the leader of the rebel “mountain people”.

Mihrivān’s message

Gerip’s mother Mihrivān (who, as noted, is a symbol of the Uyghur motherland) sums up the situation at a point of the narrative that is looking gloomy for their family.³⁰⁷ In the original film script, she says “I’m afraid that the flower that is very beautiful is most likely to be picked. The sweetest fruit most easily drops from the tree. The most beautiful dream is most easily awakened, and a good deed is most easily worn away”.³⁰⁸ This indicates a criticism of the moral values of the time, as goodness appears to be punished. For Uyghur audiences, this could readily recall the long experience of seeing good or talented individuals removed or destroyed. In the film as transcribed, this sentiment is reduced to “Honey has bees, roses have thorns, happiness also brings worries. If you are in the garden of good fortune, don’t forget that every Spring also has

³⁰⁶ Film Script Scene 14, p 14.

³⁰⁷ Scene 23, p 20-21.

³⁰⁸ Scene 23, p.20.

its Autumn”. Now the message is a simple warning to all that an apparently positive situation may change. With this change in the text, Mihrivan’s speech is transformed from a cynical statement about politics to a remark about the mutability of fortune.

A savage and poisonous heart

A senior Court figure, Kasim, characterised as a principled and cautious man, privately expresses his outrage when he hears that Perman is intending to kill Gerip and his family on their way to exile. In the film script, Kasim says, “What a savage and poisonous heart”, in direct condemnation of Perman’s behaviour.³⁰⁹ However, in the actual film, he makes a more neutral observation on Perman’s murderous intentions: “He must have some backing, other wise he would not be so big-headed.” It might be noted that factionalism was a prevalent part of political life in Xinjiang and more generally in the PRC during the period of writing. Kasim’s role in the opera is minimal, and he generally supports the King, though he advises Abbas not to act too hastily. In a reminder of the cross-relationships between Uyghur leaders and other Central Asian nations, Shawazi makes a point of reminding the King that Kasim is related to Tulu Beg (a foreigner).³¹⁰

Dilalem

The film script introduces a new female character, not present in the opera – Dilalem, the female leader of an independent dukedom.³¹¹ Dilalem represents external support for the heroic characters, as she is not subject to King Abbas, but is able both to give advice and to make timely intervention to help Gerip and Senem. She does this for idealistic reasons. This has clear references to the wish of contemporary Uyghurs for foreign support, as they aspire to an improvement in their political situation but have little power within Xinjiang,. However, like many elements in Zunun’s writing, Dilalem’s role is ambiguous. On the one hand Dilalem has a seductive role in tempting Gerip to give up his love for Senem and accept love, power and safety with Dilalem, without

³⁰⁹ Scene 37. p.35.

³¹⁰ Opera, Act 2, p.92. It should be recalled here that Zunun himself had been exiled on charges that included “Revisionism”, which is political code for being too sympathetic to Soviet or Central Asian links.

³¹¹ There may be resonance here with Navayi’s 15th Century story of Perhad and Shirin, in which Perhad and his companion Shapur come across a kingdom called Mahinbanu that is ruled by a woman. (*Uyghur Edebiyati Tarihi*, op.cit., p 425.)

confronting King Abbas or his court. On the other hand, when her overtures to Gerip are rejected, she honourably farewells him and gives Gerip her support in his quest to be reunited with Senem. The character closest to this role in the opera is a *Hizir*, or holy sage with magical powers, who appears in a dream to Gerip and tests his wisdom through a series of riddles on themes (including a reference to the power of love as a sword that may split a mountain). When satisfied with Gerip's answers, the Hizir blesses him and promises that Gerip and Senem will soon be reunited. It may be noted that Dilalem's test of Gerip's resolve is more worldly in nature.

Dilalem's intervention still maintains the link between the love story and the metaphorical narrative of national identity. The film script includes some extended dialogue between Gerip, who is in exile and separated from his family, and Dilalem, who is both his host and his captor:

Dilalem is pale, and says quietly: "Don't think that Senem is the only one under the sky. There is also me, Dilalem. Senem only gave you pain, but I can give you love and power, and make you happy".

Gerip: "Your Majesty, love is painful".³¹²

This dialogue directly describes matters of personal love, but also metaphorically evokes the dilemma of political exiles who are offered a comfortable life in their new home – whether to accept comfort, or to continue to struggle for their motherland.

The romantic tension between Dilalem and Gerip provides another example of what might be political editing. In the published script, Dilalem says to Gerip "Your father used to come here often to share the joy of Spring with us....What is the problem; don't you want to share Spring's joy with me?"³¹³ It should be recalled here that Dilalem represents foreign support to the Uyghur national aspirations. In this context, the otherwise rather strange reference to the father's former relationship can be seen to recall earlier times when historical figures seeking Uyghur self-

³¹² Scene 59, p.49.

³¹³ Scenes 58, p.49.

determination (“Spring’s joy”) were supported by foreign powers – for example Yakub Beg’s relations with British support in the 1880s, and Ahmetjan Kasim’s relations with Soviet Union in the 1940s. This reference has been omitted from the actual film.

Later in this scene, Gerip advises Dilalem to “leave your wealth and power, and go to pursue your love where your dynasty and the sunset come together.”³¹⁴ Why is there such a specific reference to the West (the “sunset”) as the place where Dilalem should seek love? This location seems to point to East Turkistan, but there is some ambiguity as to who Dilalem, at this point, is representing. She may represent either outside powers, or Chinese who support the Uyghur cause. This interpretation would seem to be supported by the fact that in the actual film, these references to the West were taken out. Instead, Gerip’s advice to Dilalem is to “find love among her own people”. With this change, Gerip could be seen to be warning Dilalem (the “outsider”) to mind her own business and not become involved in the “internal affairs” of another country. This can be seen as consistent with the Chinese view that the East Turkistan issue is China’s internal affair, and foreigners should not interfere.

Hoja Daniel

A particular historical reference, that is not in the film script or the opera, can be found in the transcript of the released film, concerning a figure from the history of Uyghur nationalism name Hoja Daniel. When Zapar, disguised as a fortuneteller, catches up with Gerip in a village marketplace, he calls out typical cries of a fortuneteller. In the completed film, he adds a phrase that does not appear in the published script – “I will tell the fortune of Hoja Daniel.”³¹⁵ The story of Hoja Daniel has two connotations. One is that Hoja Daniel was a person who was able to achieve some Uyghur independence through political cleverness. Cooperating with the

³¹⁴ Scene 59, p.49.

³¹⁵ Baymirza Hayit, *Turkistan Devletlerinin Milli Mucadeleleri Tarihi* [History of the Independence Struggle of the Nations of Turkistan], tr. Abdulkadir Sadak from *Turkestan zwischen Russland und China*, Turk Tarihi Kurumu, Ankara, 1995, p.17. Hoja Daniel is a figure from Uyghur history who, through various political manoeuvrings, was able to establish rule over an independent East Turkistan c.1720. In achieving this, he and his father cooperated with the Jungar King Tsuang Rabdan (1697-1727) against other Uyghur rulers to gain power, and as a result the power was unstable and did not last.

powerful, neighbouring Jungars might be seen as similar to cooperating with Han in the modern context. However, since Hoja Daniel's success was short lived, the other connotation of this reference might be that collaborating with foreigners against your own people is not a good basis for long-lasting results. Either way, it is consistent with the kind of ambiguous imagery that we find in Zunun's writing.

The Wolf

The imagery of the wolf has dimensions that relate to Turkic cultural identity (discussed earlier), but also some more specific political reference. The wolf image is used in the film when Shawazi, Abdullah and Hatiche discuss the presumed fate of Gerip and his family after he has been exiled.³¹⁶ This scene occurs both in the film script and in the released film, but there is a difference in the words that are used in each case, and their implication. In the published film script, Hatiche comments that they may have been eaten by wolves on the road. This remark could suggest that any dissidents who venture into unsafe territory run the risk of being destroyed. Then Shawazi adds: "Yes, I hope they have been eaten by wolves, otherwise they might themselves become wolves and come back to eat us up." Shawazi's fear that Gerip's kind might become wolves is perhaps a reference to the possibility that nationalists abroad may take up more extreme positions and bring destruction to Shawazi and his kind. In the released film, this reference to Gerip's family becoming wolves is cut out. It is merely noted that "Gerip and his family had become food for wolves" along the way to exile. Without any reference to Gerip's group "becoming" wolves, the sense of threat to the authorities is removed. The remaining implication is only that for dissidents, going abroad involves the risk of being eaten by "wolves" – any kind of danger and exploitation.

In another scene, when a person is seen scaling Dilalem's fortress walls at night,³¹⁷ this action is associated on the film sound-track with the howling of a wolf (which is not specified in the script). Though this could be interpreted as a simple atmospheric sound effect, we should also remember the special significance of the wolf in Turkic symbolism, where it is associated with nationalism. There is also some ambiguity in

³¹⁶ Scene 66, p.52.

³¹⁷ Scene 49, p.44.

the imagery here, because although the film associates this image with sinister activity taking place in the dark, the person climbing the wall is Zapar, a Uyghur hero, and the action is therefore heroic. I also note that in the opera libretto, the description of the King Abbas' throne room includes the specific reference that the throne is decorated with a wolf-skin.

The challenge to the King

There is a some subtle change in the final scenes, between the three versions (opera script, film script and film transcript), that softens the degree to which the King's power is challenged. In the film script, at the moment when Shawazi and his supporters are exposed, Shawazi calls on his own guards to come to his assistance.³¹⁸ The implication is that he was prepared to mount a *coup d'état* against the King. This is consistent with an earlier remark in which his son Abdullah is openly scornful of the King's decree and claims "It is my turn to issue decrees now!"³¹⁹ In the distributed film, Shawazi's call to the guards is weakened and played down. This might be a deliberate ambiguity to deal with any political sensitivity regarding rebellion by a senior military official against the central government. In the opera version, Abdullah's arrogant words are different: "Princess, if you disregard my advice you will lose everything you possess – even your father's position can not be defended".³²⁰

The most striking and important difference between the opera and the film script is in the resolution of the narrative, in which very different political messages are conveyed. In the opera, King Abbas never admits his fault and remains determined to continue in his attempt to suppress dissent by force, even when his own daughter Senem has abandoned him and run away with Gerip to join the dissident Mountain People. The dissidents are seen, at the final curtain, forming their own happy community. In the film script, however, the King finally reconciles with Gerip and Senem, and even apologises for his errors. The unity of the Kingdom is preserved as the ultimate value, and the few corrupt plotters are punished. This latter ending would be very acceptable in the PRC ideology of the time of writing, when there was great emphasis on restoring

³¹⁸ Scene 87, p.64.

³¹⁹ Scene 81, p.62.

³²⁰ Opera, Act 5, p.135.

“national unity” and blaming the chaos of the late Maoist period on a few extremists who could be singled out and punished.

The personality of the ruler, King Abbas, develops from one that is simply dissatisfied with his life, to one that is basically good, but able to be misled by those around him. Increased prominence of the “Perhad and Shirin” story in the film highlights that idea that happiness can be achieved after trials and suffering.

Uyghur people’s response to Chinese rule, and cultural self-preservation

The Chinese rule of Xinjiang may be represented by Shawazi, the Head of the Palace Guard as well as an astrologer, who is corrupt. The name Shawazi is not of Uyghur origin.³²¹ Shawazi is written, in the Chinese translation, using the word “Xia” which is an ancient name for China [*Hua Xia*] as well as a Chinese surname. This can be seen to represent how Uyghurs view Xinjiang authority as something foreign.³²² In the opera version, the courtier Shawazi is successful in rising to the highest office after scheming to get rid of his predecessor, the good Vezir Hessen.

The King’s dream of a worthy offspring and contented life is disturbed by cruel and ambitious officials in all three available versions of “Gerip and Senem”. The corrupt officials perhaps represent the kind of corrupt officials Uyghurs would encounter in the administration of Xinjiang. The King himself is not aware of the corruption of his Court.³²³

Given that this section is considering the Uyghur people’s response to Chinese rule, I interpret the story as having current references to the situation in Xinjiang. If Abbas is taken as representing Chairman Mao and the Central Government, Shawazi might be considered to represent the Xinjiang government and its manipulative Communist cadres, mostly Han, who jealously guard their privileged positions in Xinjiang and do not trust any Uyghur. Vezir Hessen would then represent the Uyghur ideal of a just and

³²¹ Svetlana Rimsky-Korsakoff Dyer, *Shivazi – the life and works of a Soviet Dungan Poet*, Peter Lang, Frankfurt/New York 1991. There is a Hui poet by the name of “Shi Wazi” (meaning “tenth son” in Chinese). “Wazi”, meaning son, may here convey a meaning of “son of Chinese”.

³²² In earlier Persian versions of the story, the name used is Shapur.

³²³ At the time this was written, it was commonly understood throughout China and Xinjiang that Mao Zedong had been manipulated by his wife Jiang Qing and others close to him in the last years of his life

wise official who would sincerely promise to fulfill the historical cultural and political aspiration of the people. Such figures had arisen at various times over the preceding 100 years or so and are generally respected in Uyghur history: for example Yakub Beg of Kashgaria, Hoja Niyaz of the First East Turkistan Republic or Ilihan Tore of the Second East Turkistan Republic. From the 1920s onwards, the Communists, both Russian and Chinese, had courted the elite of Uyghur modern intellectuals, promising to cooperate in creating a just society, and offering self-rule in return. Such cooperation might be seen as symbolised in a “marriage agreement” that King Abbas makes with Vezir Hessen,³²⁴ betrothing his daughter Senem with Hessen’s son Gerip.

The assassination of Vezir Hessen is reported in different ways by characters in the opera, and characters in the later film. In the opera version, Vezir Hessen is reported to have fallen from his horse, and the fact that this was an assassination is only revealed later. In reporting his death, Abdullah’s friend Shemshi says that Vezir Hessen’s last words were “My poor son is an orphan”, and he then collapses and dies in the arms of Shawazi, the very man who had plotted against him. I would suggest that this scene could be taken to symbolize the death of the East Turkistan Republic, which left the Uyghurs as “orphans”, when the Three Districts government “collapsed” into the arms of its enemy, China.³²⁵

In the film versions the nature of the plot against Vezir Hessen is clear from the beginning. Sidik, the loyal head of the court prison, first raises with Vezir Hessen his concern about a disloyal plot against Hessen. In the film soundtrack Sidik says “In the past, we had people killing others for their own advancement,³²⁶ but now you have run

³²⁴ The parallel here would be the early promise by CCP that Uyghur and other minorities, if they co-operated with the CCP, would later have the choice of joining the Peoples Republic or of forming their own independent nations.

³²⁵ Saifuddin Azziz, *Omur Dastani*, vol 2, Nationality Publishing house, Beijing 1997, p 331. Describing the events when the leader of the East Turkistan Republic, Alihan Tore, was replaced (in 1945 following the Yalta Agreement) and the “Three Districts” government was forced to form a coalition with KMT-backed forces, Saifuddin says of the East Turkistan Republic group (including himself) that after the changes “We became orphans”.

³²⁶ Isa Yusuf Alptekin, (ed. M. Ali Tashji) *Esir Dogu Turkistan Ichin* [For Captive East Turkistan], East Turkistan Publication Centre, Istanbul, 1985, (preface). This work records the suppression and execution of many independence-minded Uyghurs by both Chinese and Soviet authorities during the 1940s and 1950s.

the country well, and the people have peace and happiness.”³²⁷ In the published version of the film script, there is no such reference to the past wrongdoing of officials. The addition of these significant words to the final version of the film could be taken, in the contemporary Chinese context, to reflect a climate more accepting of criticism of past wrongdoings of officials, as this was the period of transition from Gang of Four to Deng Xiaoping regimes.³²⁸ To Uyghur, it could also be a strong reminder of the much longer period of continual oppression that they had suffered under Chinese misrule.

The assassination of Vezir Hessen sets in motion events that destabilize society in Abbas’ kingdom, and put in danger the agreement of mutual help (symbolized by the marriage contract) and public support for a society based on positive values such as love and respect. The corrupt Shawazi and his associates identify Hessen as a threat. In particular, he is the obstacle to Shawazi obtaining the position of highest power as Vezir. For the politically aware Uyghur audiences, this can be seen to echo in some sense the situation in 1944 during the East Turkistan Republic, when coalition agreements with the Chinese were not honoured once the CCP had obtained its objective of political power in the region. Following this line of interpretation, the liquidation of Vezir Hessen would remind Uyghurs of the deaths of the leaders of the East Turkistan Republic in a mysterious plane crash, followed by further liquidation of core nationalists. After this mass liquidation, the Uyghurs, like Gerip in the play, became “orphans”.

Two significant lines, which emphasize the divisions between those in power and those suffering under the regime, are present in the opera as well as the published film script, but taken out of the released film version. One of Abdullah’s actions early in the film³²⁹ is to arrest Zapar, the hot-blooded rebel son of Sidik, and parade him through the streets as a lesson to the public. The wording used here may evoke some of the contemporary political atmosphere in Xinjiang, in which dissidents were

³²⁷ Scene 8, p.7.

³²⁸ Deng Xiaoping’s program offered a certain degree of economic openness compared to the ultra-leftist policies that persisted until 1978.

³²⁹ Scene 13, p 12-13 The figure of Abdullah, son of Shawazi, is clearly a villain in all three versions of the work. In each, Abdullah pursues Gerip and jealously seeks Senem for himself as a means to attain the throne.

being rounded up and severely punished to discourage others.³³⁰ In the film script, there is strong comment on this event, which relates these events to the general question of attitudes to authority. A member of the crowd (described as a “young hotblood”) says derisively of Abdullah: “Huh, what kind of hero is that? He is a poisonous snake!”, the implication being that he is treacherous and dangerous, making his career by exploiting power given to him by reason of his position in the elite. This condemnation would have had strong resonances for a contemporary Uyghur audience. In the next line of this scene, a group of courtiers (beneficiaries of the regime) say “God protect and extend the King’s powers.” Thus there is a clear division between those in power and those suffering under the regime. This means that the scene can be interpreted as a reference to political factionalism (for example, the Gang of Four), which would be acceptable to censors, or could be interpreted by Uyghur audiences as an reference to the oppressed condition of Uyghurs in Xinjiang.

At a point in the film when Gerip’s mother Mihrivan and sister Guljemal have been rescued in the wilderness by Sidik and his rebel Mountain People, Sidik and Mihrivan have a conversation about what the future might hold.³³¹ Sidik’s promise to Mihrivan regarding what action he intends to take is couched in different terms in script and film. In the script he says:

Honourable Madam, as sure as God is in the sky, I swear that I will bring back the sword of justice to those who have destroyed the good order that Hessen had brought to the people.

In the actual film dialogue, this becomes:

³³⁰ In Scene 13 there some difference in the words used by the Herald in announcing these events to the public. In the released film he says “To punish opposition to Shah Abbas, Abdullah Shapoor was given authority! Abdullah Shapoor rounded them all up in one night. Zapar is being put on display. All of you, take a lesson from this. You must accept the Shah’s command as supreme!” In the film script he says: “Let everyone know, and everyone remember, that the great King, in order to have rebels drowned in a sea of terrible anger, has authorised Abdullah. Abdullah has in one night eliminated the traitors. Zapar will be paraded on the streets so that all may remember.”

³³¹ Film Script, Scene 47, p.43.

It is good that you escaped from them. Honourable mother Mihrivan, our past has been destroyed by disreputable monsters, but God willing we will find the killer of Vezir Hessen and take revenge.

The film transcript version is more pointed in several ways. It explicitly approves of Mihrivan and Gerip's escape from the national authorities. It is more direct, and more personal in the reference to "our past" being "destroyed by disreputable monsters". Finally, it speaks of revenge, as well as justice. With these words, Sidik speaks more clearly with the voice of militant Uyghur sentiment. Such sentiment may have escaped political censorship because, once again, the reference is ambiguous and capable of different interpretations. A Chinese audience might take this reference to refer to the blame being heaped on ultra-leftists of China's own recent history for the "ten years of chaos" arising from the Cultural Revolution; while Uyghur audiences might find meanings related to the Chinese rule of their homeland.

Even clearer references to the politics of Xinjiang under the CCP can be found in the opera,³³² when a series of ordinary citizens complain, in song, about the state of affairs in the kingdom. A beggar sings:

The morality of this time is ruthless,
Hurting the hearts of the myriad population,
From ancient times, how many good people
Injustice strikes to Heaven, funerals, graves.

Such a song, set in a mythical past, could express injustice and grievance without appearing to directly criticise the present. I interpret this as the Uyghur people lamenting a long history of good people being destroyed unjustly. A travelling poet then contributes a song about "moral desolation":

This world's morality is desolate
To the beggar, I am the King,
The county capital looks like a lady
Married to a poor groom.³³³

³³² Opera, Act 2, Scene 2, p.98.

³³³ Ibid.

This image may suggest current conditions in Xinjiang. Not only are the people oppressed, but all of Xinjiang suffers. If the “capital” city is Urumqi, she is like a lady “married” to the whole of Xinjiang, which is the poor groom who must support the needs and demands of “the lady” Urumqi. As a result, the rest of Xinjiang is poor and backward.

This same market-place scene depicting social ills includes a brief image that can be interpreted as reflecting criticism of religious or political extremism. The *Ahun* (religious person) is described as whipping and cursing a blind woman. The *Ahun* depicted here may represent Islamic fundamentalism. Religion is shown in a very narrow sense, concerned only with ritual and observance or the rules of dress, which limit woman's freedom. The *Ahun's* whipping of the blind woman can represent the power of fundamentalist beliefs over the ignorant and naïve (metaphorically, the blind). Although Islam has been very important to Uyghur identity and cultural self-preservation, many urban intellectuals, including Zunun himself, are critical of social ills that arise from excesses and abuses of religion.³³⁴ In this scene, a Uyghur audience would have in mind not only religious fundamentalists, but also ideological extremists who had made their lives a misery over several decades of political campaigns in East Turkistan.

The scholar Jelalleddin is an important image of cultural self-preservation. He represents the older generation who pass on knowledge to the young, and also represents intellectuals whose aspirations are humanitarian as well as aspiring to the freedom of their nation. In the opera version, he educates his students, Gerip and Ilyas (his own son) in both intellectual and practical skills (particularly martial arts), preparing the next generation to be active in improving the position of their people. He has contact with Dawut, the rebel leader, who may be taken to represent dissidents. For these actions, he is targeted by the villains and undergoes persecution of the kind that would be familiar to all intellectuals of 1980s East Turkistan – false accusations, dismissal, and imprisonment.

Although Jelalleddin is attacked in the opera version for “teaching unsuitable things”

³³⁴ Zunun’s recollection “The Old School” recalls unhappy experiences.

to the youth, in reality he is punished for privately criticizing corruption and misuse of power in the Court. He becomes progressively more critical, and is driven to complain that “dangerous people” occupy high office. For this, the villains (Abdullah and his servant Shemshi) accuse him of scheming and spying. Thus in the opera version the intellectual performs the function of social critic, pointing out wrongs when they occur - and is punished for it by a repressive state. In the film versions of the story, however, Jelaleddin is initially a politically passive observer (and has no children). His interventions in the action consist mainly of calling on the authorities to observe the law (for example when he asks Abdullah to show evidence to support his accusations against Gerip).

In the opera version Dawut, the loyal supporter of Hessen, goes to the mountains to form an opposition base. This incident also can bring up ambiguous references. For Uyghurs, it would bring to mind those tens of thousands who had crossed the mountains, especially around 1960, to the other Central Asian Soviet republics to form Uyghur communities in exile. Zunun was intimately aware of this matter, as his own son and daughter had made this crossing into exile, and Zunun himself had been arrested and accused of trying to escape there.³³⁵ For Chinese audiences, however, the formation of an opposition base in the mountains might have equally strong significance, calling to mind the well-known history of the Communist Party’s retreat to bases such as Yan’an during their struggle against the KMT.

The role of Abdullah in the opera invokes the image of religious hypocrisy to portray a character who is not fully identified with the Uyghur people, and who is politically corrupt. Abdullah, the son of Shawazi (whom we have previously noted is probably not Uyghur), is of the ruling elite, but not of the people. In this context, his name and his image holding the prayer beads is part of a false identity. This might be a parallel with Xinjiang’s image as a Muslim/Uyghur place, but with rulers who are not Muslim/Uyghur. Progressive Uyghur intellectuals such as Zunun would not believe in fundamentalism, and would see it as holding back social advancement. The popular audience would see another level in this character. In spite of his overt religious statement in carrying the prayer beads (and in the moralistic language he uses to accuse

³³⁵ Zunun’s oral memoir op.cit.

Gerip and Senem), Abdullah clearly emerges from the narrative as deceptive, cruel, presumptuous, and greedy. He is jealous of the relationship between Gerip and Senem both because of their true love for each other, and also because he sees Gerip as a threat to his claims on the throne. Hypocrisy among powerful officials is a very familiar phenomenon in Xinjiang, and the character of Abdullah can be translated directly to refer to those Communist officials who use ideological language and symbolism to disguise their personal ambitions and abuse of power.

In the film, Abdullah is not seen carrying prayer beads, and this particular implied criticism of religious hypocrisy is absent. In the film script, he has a mother, Hatiche, who has some significant conversations with Shawazi and Abdullah that put a different set of values into the story. Hatiche urges her husband Shawazi to ensure that Abdullah, not Gerip, marries Senem. Her argument for this is that Gerip does not come from the right “background”. In the film transcription, she says “He is an outsider”.³³⁶ Written in 1981, this might well reflect the increasing grievance of Uyghurs about inequality between themselves and the Han in Xinjiang.

In the struggle between Shawazi (and his son), and Hessen (and his son), can be seen an allegory of the struggle, over two generations, for autonomy in East Turkistan. Abdullah, with his connection to the powerholders of the court, is confident that power will always be on his side. His father Shawazi assassinated Vezir Hessen, and now Abdullah plots with him and the Queen to prevent Gerip marrying Senem. I would suggest that Shawazi and Abdullah represent those who supported the successive Chinese central governments in suppressing Uyghur autonomy, both in the 1930s and 1940s, and in the modern era. Abdullah in the opera makes clear that he believes that King Abbas is bound to help him in his ambitions, because he and his father had “helped the King to become wealthy”;³³⁷ thus they hope to take advantage of the King’s greed to secure their own positions of power. In this context

³³⁶ Scene 10, p.10.

³³⁷ Opera ,Act 1, p.80.

Uyghurs might relate the story to the transfer of wealth and resources from Xinjiang to the central Chinese government.

The connections between Uyghurs and other Central Asian states may be evoked in an adoption depicted in the opera. When Jelaleddin is arrested, Gerip's mother Mihrivan accepts his daughter Guljemal as her adopted daughter. This action is strongly encouraged by the community. There are resonances here with Zunun's own experience when he and his family were in exile among the peasants of the Tarim basin, and received support and help from the local peasants - a form of "adoption".³³⁸ One could also see parallels with the situation of exiled Uyghurs in the Central Asian states, who were accepted and nourished by neighbours in the host countries who sympathised with their situation. In the film versions, however, the theme of adoption is removed. Guljemal appears as the sister of Gerip, not the daughter of Jelaleddin. With the removal of the theme of adoption, the reference to community mutual support is reduced.

In the opera, Guljemal evidently represents innocence and sincerity. When Gerip sets off together with Ilyas to rescue Senem, Guljemal is worried for him. She says "The beast swallowed my father (Jelalledin), now he wants to take my brother (Ilyas)". Guljemal characterises the dominant authority as "the beast", and expresses emotion that would be familiar to many Uyghur people, fearing the consequences as their family or supporters make decisions whether to challenge authorities or to accept their position submissively. Guljemal's expression of loss and threat is not present in the film versions.

Another element that is cut from the film versions is a lament, sung by Ilyas, for his lost friend Gerip.³³⁹ Ilyas, the educated son of Jelaleddin, is searching for Gerip disguised as a wandering fortune-teller. In his song we may read of the loneliness of Uyghur intellectuals and sympathizers, looking for friends to support them. The

³³⁸ This has been confirmed in my interviews with Zunun's family members.

³³⁹ Opera, Act 3, Scene 1, p.103.

*From both my eyes, flow tears of blood
The desert is covered with my footprints
I am singing and searching everywhere
Friend! Where are you now?"*

scene appears in the opera, but is cut from the film versions. It could be concluded that even such an innocent expression of loss as this song could be too politically sensitive to include in the film.

The symbolism of Jelaleddin's role in the film is somewhat different to what he represents in the opera. Jelaleddin is presented in the film without any known family, but in the opera has a son (Ilyas) and a daughter (Guljemal), both of whom have active roles in the narrative. The significant difference is that in the opera, Jelaleddin is thus portrayed as part of a continuing tradition,³⁴⁰ which would be taken on by his children after him. This is confirmed in the final scenes of the opera.

These scenes show Mihrivan, both eyes blinded from years of weeping brought on by hardship and persecution,³⁴¹ being aided by Guljemal and Ilyas as she mixes with the happy crowd of the Mountain People.³⁴² Mihrivan by this time seems to have assumed a broader symbolic role as a Mother, which in Zunun's writing is often a metaphor for Motherland or nation.³⁴³ If Gerip represents the Uyghur people and culture, and Mihrivan is the Uyghur Nation, this scene would portray for Uyghurs a reference to a Uyghur motherland that had endured many decades of discrimination and hardship, or poverty and backwardness, represented by Mihrivan's blindness. But the Motherland is aided and supported by the younger generation in the form of the pure-hearted Guljemal and the educated, patriotic Ilyas - and thus there is hope for the future. Ilyas is cultivated both intellectually and with practical skills. With these helpers on her side, the Uyghur Mother (nation) rejoices with those around her and is a welcome part of the world community.

The equivalent final scenes in the film show some significant differences. Gerip and Senem pass among a happy crowd, while Mihrivan, Jelaleddin, Alim and Zapar watch from an elevated position, and the servants Aghcha and Gulbanu stand smiling on one

³⁴⁰ The importance of the *ulema* (an Islamic scholar) in Uyghur culture should not be underestimated.

³⁴¹ We may recall that Zunun himself was blinded in one eye by persecutors.

³⁴² Opera, Act 5, p.138.

³⁴³ Sally T. Lieberman, *The Mother and Narrative Politics in Modern China*, University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville, 1998, p 76: "In the nationalist discourse of the early twentieth century the nation sometimes was allegorically represented as a mother in need of rescue and redemption by her patriotic sons". The Mother/Nation allegory is obviously not an idea exclusive to Zunun Kadir or to Uyghur culture.

side.³⁴⁴ The published script of the film specifies in the final directions that Gerip and Senem come before the blinded Mihrivan and bow to her in a gesture of respect (for the nation) that is consistent with the opera. However, in the released film Mihrivan is not blind, and Gerip and Senem are not seen to make this gesture of respect. Thus the symbolic emphasis on union between Uyghur people/culture (Gerip) and motherland (Mihrivan) is reduced.

It is not possible to be certain on the motivations of all the changes between the published script and the released film. We do know, from the statements of those who participated in the production, that there was active pressure for cuts and changes from the Chinese production team.³⁴⁵ We know from the credits of the film, and from the statements of a Uyghur assistant director Abdul Memet (who also played the role of King Abbas) that the Han director and others who had come from Beijing pressed strongly for certain changes. Some changes in the film reflect the re-inclusion of elements that had previously been in the opera version, but were left out of the original film script. At the same time, Uyghurs working on the production (in particular Zunun Kadir as scriptwriter) were to some extent able to alter content in ways that were meaningful to a Uyghur audience. The changes noted above seem to represent some combination of influences from both the interests of the Uyghur writers in adding value for their Uyghur audience, and the interests of the Chinese political cadres in softening any issues that might threaten the sensitivities of the Communist Party authorities or the unity of the Chinese state. Some may also reflect some technical requirements of film-making: for example to improve the dramatic effect or compress the narrative to suit the duration of the film. Elements from the opera version and the film script are brought together in the released film through these processes, particularly elements of cultural references that might be overlooked or permitted by Han authorities. Although only a few months passed between publication of the film script and the release of the film itself, a number of notable changes were made in the transformation from script to on-screen action and dialogue.

³⁴⁴ The positioning of the servants shows a recognition of continuing class differences, even though the servants (especially Aghcha) have made a significant contribution to the narrative.

³⁴⁵ . Conversations January 1994 with Abdul Mehmet [Ablimit], actor and assistant director on the production. Abdul Memet, a well-known Uyghur actor and director, is now resident in Australia.

The opera and film we have been discussing are very public forms of art, and they involved many contributors to their production and performance. One might assume that in this circumstance, Zunun might have less control over the outcome than he would with stories. However, when we see how many of the themes and devices Zunun used in other works are present in this film, we may conclude that either his influence was very strong, or there were others collaborating on the film who shared Zunun's ideas and approach.

Many significant changes occur in the content of the film script, as compared to the opera. Some may be attributed to the need for different dramatic effects in a film, but it seems apparent that many were made so as to meet the political requirements of the CCP. A film would receive much closer scrutiny by the party commissars than an opera in Uyghur, because of the wider influence it could have. Most obviously, the underlying message of the film script is that the King and Empire are basically well-intentioned, and willing and able to correct any mistakes in order to preserve harmony, in spite of tensions. Harm is attributed to a handful of corrupt officials, who are firmly dealt with. It is perhaps no coincidence that this was written in the year (1981) that saw the trial of the so-called Gang of Four,³⁴⁶ who were scapegoated for the harmful excesses of the past few years on the premise that Mao had supposedly been (like King Abbas) well-intentioned and eager to correct mistakes.

Some of the changes seem to be for political reasons, and others seem to reflect further input from the Uyghur writers to enhance the national flavour of the story. This reflects two kinds of political considerations – sensitivities regarding the relationship between East Turkistan and China, and sensitivities that reflect the relationship between rulers and ruled. The second kind of sensitivity was very important during the period 1980-81 when this project was under way because (as noted) it coincided with the post-Gang of Four period of rehabilitations and removal of cadres who were too closely identified with the losing faction of the CCP.

³⁴⁶ Mao's widow Jiang Qing, together with her chief collaborators known as the "Gang of Four" (Zhang Chunqiao, Wang Hongwen and Yao Wenyuan) were arrested in 1976, and given a show trial in the early weeks of 1981.

By contrast with the complex teamwork involved in film-making, Zunun's recollections of his youth, written in the 1980s, can be more clearly identified as personal statements. The stories that follow are from his collection "Recollections" (*Khatireler*) published in 1981.

Hessen³⁴⁷

Zunun's story "Hessen" (translation in Appendix 5) records adventures in the 1920s of a heroic Uyghur outlaw called Hessen, who had the reputation (something like Robin Hood) for helping the poor by stealing from the rich. His bravery and exploits made him a legend among the Uyghur people. Zunun does not explicitly point to the authorities as being Chinese, but he uses the Chinese titles and names of the individuals to indicate their identity. A reward for Hessen's capture is offered by the Chinese authorities but, when an attempt to capture him fails, the whole community is punished.³⁴⁸ The situation in which a whole family or community is punished for the crimes of an individual would be very familiar to Zunun's Uyghur readers in the 1980s or even today.³⁴⁹

Zunun describes the fear felt by the Chinese government in Xinjiang, which resulted in the double punishment of Uyghur outlaws, who were tortured to death.³⁵⁰ Zunun uses the description of this execution of a man who challenged the Chinese authorities as an occasion to portray the fearful application of Chinese power over Xinjiang, and the resentment of Uyghurs against a traitor among their own people.

³⁴⁷ Zunun Kadir, *Hatireler* [Recollections], tr Zhu Hua and Xia Yi, Xinjiang Renmin Chubanshe Urumqi 1991, p. 168

³⁴⁸ *ibid*, p.172 'One day Hessen was drinking tea at a teahouse in Chong Kuruk. An informer, seeking the reward, told the *Sengen* [*xian guan*], who immediately sent two officers [*lozung=lao zong*] and ten soldiers to the teahouse to arrest him. While he was wondering how to escape, one of the teahouse staff suggested he get out through a window of the cool room at the back. Hessen was able to escape the ten soldiers. The two officers and ten soldiers may have failed to catch him, but they arrested the workers, beat them up, smashed up the teahouse, breaking every breakable item and destroying the samovar.'

³⁴⁹ There are many examples in Zunun's writing that indicate how he detests traitors. His personal experience and Uyghur political history provide many examples of betrayal. In the story "Hessen", he describes the Uyghur traitor Kerimbeg, who conspires against Hessen as "a big fat man with a lust for money and favour from the government".

³⁵⁰ *Hatireler* *op.cit.* p.178 "Normally a criminal would receive a single punishment. But Hessen had his tendons cut, and finally was hanged to death in a cage. The *Sengen* hastily arranged to have his tendons cut, but being afraid that he might recover and continue his activities, the cowardly *Sengen* informed the *Jangjung* [Jiangjun =General] in Urumqi. The *Jangjung* ordered the further punishment that he should be tortured to death by hanging in a cage. This proclamation was posted on the outside wall of the prison. It was a day in late autumn."

Next day at sunrise I went into the street. The crowds were bigger than the previous, going group by group to the prison, and I followed them. The first and second courtyards were full of people. At the back of the third courtyard was a small dais where the *Sengen* would emerge from the inner court to stand in a place known as the *Da Tang* [outer court]. On each side of this outer court stood a statue of a lion with its mouth open, showing its teeth and staring furiously at the people. At the back of the *Da Tang* were a pair of double doors painted with a pair of dragons, also open-mouthed and sticking out their poison-red tongues.³⁵¹ The court was decorated with designs of snakes and scorpions, terrifying to the people....³⁵²

In the above passage, Zunun describes a scene which seems deliberately intended to inspire fear in the beholder. When a popular Uyghur hero is being destroyed, the physical decorations of the *Da Tang* (the Chinese emblems of lion and dragon) appear especially fearful. The elaborate ritual to humiliate the rebel is described further:

Then we heard a shout for the condemned to be brought out, and the soldiers of the execution squad on both sides shouted back 'Yes' in unison. A prisoner was brought out with a yoke [*takak*] chained to his neck. His hands and feet were shackled with chains. He was brought in front of the small table and made to kneel. It was Hessen. The *Sengen* read the order sent from the *Jangjung* [Chinese : *Jiangjun* = General], and the *Tongchi* [clerk] translated this into Uyghur. Then two executioners hung a sign on his back indicating that he had been sentenced to death...³⁵³

The titles of the officials carrying out this punishment are Chinese titles, thus emphasizing the foreignness of the regime that is imposing the punishment. This provides the context for Hessen's denunciation of the Uyghur who betrayed him:

³⁵¹ In the dual Chinese and Uyghur text edition of this story, the Chinese translation omits the term "poisonous" from this description.

³⁵² *Hatireler*, op.cit., p.182

³⁵³ *ibid* p.184

[The Uyghur traitor] Kerim Beg was standing to the right hand side of the *Sengen*.³⁵⁴ Hessen shouted at him, "Hey, you two-faced hypocrite! Kerim the running-dog! This time I didn't manage to escape, you were lucky! My only wish was to crush you to pieces! I did not achieve this wish". Everyone looked at Kerim with hatred.³⁵⁵

Hessen and "the people" are united in their attitude to the betrayer Kerim ("everyone looked at Kerim with hatred"). The crowd, sympathetic to the condemned man, follows the cart taking Hessen to the place of execution, and Zunun gives a detailed description of the executioners, under the instruction of the *Sengen*, setting up the cruel apparatus by which Hessen is to be choked slowly to death in a kind of wooden yoke in a cage.³⁵⁶ In summing up Hessen's death, Zunun confirms that betrayal is the heart of the matter: "This was how a brave man said farewell to an unfaithful world."³⁵⁷

This recollection from Zunun's childhood appeared to have been selected for description in order to provide some historical background of the pre-communist relations between Uyghur and Han. The description of betrayal, the trial process, torture and death, provides a lesson on the terrible consequences when Uyghur national heroes are betrayed. As noted in Chapter 2, the young Zunun had harboured dreams based on socialist ideals, by which the Marxist principles of redistribution of wealth would solve the problems of the Uyghur nation. By the time Zunun wrote this memoir of the life and death of Hessen, these ideals seem to have weakened. To select and retell a story as graphic as this in description of violent suppression of Uyghur by Chinese can be seen as a deliberate political act by Zunun, given the environment of the 1980s in which this story was written.

³⁵⁴ Chinese *Xianguan* is a government official in charge of a unit below provincial level.

³⁵⁵ *Hatireler* op.cit. p.184

³⁵⁶ "The executioner rolled up his sleeves and, with a cruel eye, hit the plank with a hammer to tighten the semicircle around Hessen's neck. The *tok tok* sound of the executioner's hammer shook people as if their own hearts were being hit. In the end, Hessen's neck had become as thin as a wrist, foam was coming from his mouth, his eyes bulged, and he turned blue.

³⁵⁷ *Hatireler*, op.cit., p.188.

On the Journey [Seperde]³⁵⁸

In Zunun's story "On the Journey" (translation in Appendix 6), he leads readers through a series of sketches of Uyghur life, with an underlying theme of the need to cope with a harsh environment. The physical journey that is described is an obvious metaphor for a journey through life.

Zunun begins his story of the journey with scenes that portray the family relationships of mutual responsibility in Uyghur society. Having lost both his parents, as a boy of seventeen he is taken in by an uncle who undertakes to train him to be a trader. Zunun learns the skills of processing animal hides and the business of trading in them, including (to his disgust) the fact that some traders gained advantages through dishonesty. His uncle then suggests that he gain further experience by joining wealthier traders in forming a caravan to travel through the mountains to the town of Manas and some other places near to the Soviet border.

Zunun enters into a kind of apprentice relationship to these experienced traders.

Through many incidents in this story, Zunun emphasizes the difference that an individual can make by acting positively, and change his own life, even with limited resources. This emphasis on individual skill, merit and resourcefulness is out of tune with the dogmatic emphasis on collective actions that had been part of his communist ideology in some 1950s writings.³⁵⁹ Zunun tells how he learned the social skills of making himself useful to the group, initially by keeping them entertained during boring periods of travel.³⁶⁰

As the journey progresses, Zunun's relationship with the senior traders changes. He begins with a very humble role as virtually a servant and cook, benefiting only from

³⁵⁸ Ibid, p.190.

³⁵⁹ By the time of writing, CCP policies were beginning to encourage the practice of individual crafts, trades and small business activities as part of Deng Xiaoping's economic reform program.

³⁶⁰ *Hatireler*, op.cit., p.198. "It was very boring sitting on the horses from morning till night in the desert. When I saw my travelling companions dozing off with boredom, and their heads nodding, I would tell them jokes and stories that I had heard from Granny Perizhan. The merchants greatly appreciated this and were pleased with me. As time went on they would show their appreciation by feeding me with navat (rock sugar). I too recognised that there were benefits to amusing them. They would be more likely to help me to make profitable trade. So I served them well at the rest stops, and told them amusing stories to revive them. I would embellish the stories that I knew and add to them from the new things I experienced or heard on my travels, telling them creatively."

the experience and material living support of his companions. Over time, as his contributions to the enterprise of the journey become more and more valuable to his companions, he is treated more equally in recognition of his story-telling skills. In the end, they even give him preferential treatment. The significance of story-telling as a cultural activity is something Zunun referred to in several of his works, and is discussed in Chapter 5.

Zunun's works contain several suggestions of the paramount importance of security in life, which in his own life experience was closely related to political and economic security. The story presents a conversation between Zunun and three of the traders in which each states what he believes to be the basis of happiness. One trader suggests that it resides in having a beautiful wife; the next says that it comes from being rich; and the third says it comes from power and prestige. Zunun himself (as he narrates) said that happiness is to be found in security, and had illustrated this point with a Uyghur folktale about how a simple and secure life is happier than the life of a powerful king who is constantly under the threat of danger.³⁶¹

Depicting the journey through life, Zunun often uses the device of landscape and physical environment to evoke the human situation. Behind the landscape are the elements of modern Uyghur history. Storms and snow evoke the fear, hardship and betrayal experienced by the Uyghur people. Every feature of the landscape, or animals, or natural occurrences, has some metaphoric meaning that represents the condition of the people.³⁶² A number of these devices come together in a passage in which the caravan is struggling up a snowy mountain pass. Zunun's group takes shelter overnight from the stormy weather with some Kazaks and a group of four donkey-drivers with a train of 50-60 donkeys loaded with salt, who express doubts that they could make their way across the mountains, having waited there for three days. The Kazak host warns Zunun's party that the road is not open, and suggests that they go back to an earlier stop

³⁶¹ Ibid, p.206: The King says, “ ‘.. Since I became King, I have been sitting under that millstone which hangs by a very thin hair... I live every moment with the anxiety that the thread might break, and I may be crushed to death under than heavy millstone...’ ”

So if you do not have security, it doesn't matter if you have a beautiful wife, gold and silver, as much money as you could carry on your back, or even if you sit on a royal throne. Even if you sleep on a velvet mat, you will feel as if you are sleeping on thorns.’ ”

³⁶² For a general discussion of metaphor in literature, see George Lakoff and Mark Turner, *More than Cool Reason: a field guide to Poetic Metaphor*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1989.

called Jing, and take the main road instead. Zunun records that they do not take this advice. The caravan attempts the snow-covered road as the weather gets worse.

One at a time, one horse would make the path, and the other three of us would follow the path it made. Finally the three traders' *yorga* horses³⁶³ had no more strength to beat the path. The traders were becoming anxious, and the howling of the storm assailed our frozen ears. Our eyes were covered with snow and ice. We could not move in any direction, and were left in a very difficult situation. My own ugly little horse began to open a pathway with its chest, and in places sliding on its stomach to open the way. Previously, the traders' horses had moved along skittishly, while my ugly horse plodded along slowly with its head down...

And here we were today, with my ugly horse, accustomed to hardship, showing its mettle when the four of us were in danger of our lives."

The central image here may reflect Zunun's experiences during his period of exile and labour reform. In my interviews with his family, I was told that in his darkest days, Zunun was helped by ordinary poor peasants. The Uyghur intellectuals, his former friends and colleagues, were being squeezed by the government and reduced to paralysis. Could this experience have led Zunun to modify his previous view that some tradition and custom are backward? Zunun had advocated in his earliest writings the view that education and hard work would improve Uyghur society, and he seems to have believed in the socialist idea that different cultures should be replaced with a common socialist culture. The well-bred and well-groomed "yorga" horses had not the strength to beat the path through the snow, while Zunun's ugly, little horse had the spirit to struggle to open the pathway with its chest, using the heat of its own body, just as in times of crisis ordinary people can be more prepared to make necessary sacrifices. Zunun may well be suggesting that the "ugly little horse" is those Uyghur peasants, lacking opportunity for education or polish, none the less had the capacity to struggle and overcome hardship in times of necessity.

³⁶³ In Uyghur, a *yorga* horse is one that is fast and with a gait that does not shake the rider.

All of this effort on the part of the horse and the traders is directed towards an objective – a single tree visible on the horizon. The tree is a strong image of a life that survives hardship, and may have symbolized to Zunun’s readers the persistent vitality of their own culture in the midst of hardship, as the Uyghurs aspired for self-determination and self-preservation. That tree, however, is difficult to reach:

Later that afternoon the storm became even heavier, and we searched constantly for the pass where we could cross the mountain. On the horizon we could see that lonely tree. If we could reach that tree, we would be safe. But the increasing snow finally buried the tree completely, and it was impossible to reach that spot.

Like the brief independence of the East Turkistan Republic in which Zunun had taken part, the tree has been buried by circumstances - although its life cycle is not necessarily complete. After the elimination of the East Turkistan Republic, the idealistic nationalists were left wondering what direction to take – like Zunun and his fellow traders on the snowy road:

We began to discuss among ourselves that if we worried about our possessions, we could lose our lives. There were only one or two hours left till sunset, and if we spent night out in the snowstorm, we would die. Our possessions were not more important than our lives, so we should link hands and make our way back.

But the trader Ibrahim did not agree with us: “If you want to go, you can go... If I die, I will die next to my goods.”

...The possessions meant more to him than his life. The three of us did not care for his possessions, but as it is said that a good companion does not desert his fellow traveller on the road. So we decided to take our horses, abandon the direction we had chosen, and return by a different route.

Again I would suggest an underlying political significance or allegory in Zunun’s tale of crossing the mountains. Among the Uyghurs, some would argue that the cause of self-

determination was hopeless, and that the only available choice was to accept the force of circumstances and become part of the Chinese state, at least for the time being. Others, like Ibrahim in the story, were so devoted to what wealth or security they possessed that they were prepared to die rather than risk losing them. For Zunun and companions the rational outcome, after debate, was that they would not abandon what they had. Rather, they would do their best to keep what they could of their heritage, while accepting the inevitable reality of the time. Thus they turned their backs on their previous goal (for the time being, at least). We may see in this Zunun commenting on the choice facing Uyghur intellectuals as to whether they should cooperate with the CCP for the time being. In order to protect the national heritage, it might be necessary to avoid direct confrontation with the Chinese authorities who, at this point, had overwhelming power.

A later section appears to evoke the political dangers faced by Zunun's Uyghur people, at a time when any challenge to the system could result in harsh punishment and disaster:

We were wondering what to do, looking in all directions. We saw from a distance that the salt train donkey-drivers, with whom we had spent the night in the hut under the hill, had followed our footsteps with their donkeys. In fear for their lives, we called from a distance to them, as loudly as we could, "Hey donkey-drivers! Don't come this way! It's dangerous - you will die!" The storm became even worse. The horizon was obscured, and we could not see whether they had heard us or not. The snow crust could not bear the weight of horses, but could have carried us walking, so it became even more difficult to keep our horses. I was so tired that I could hardly lift my feet out of the snow. So I went down on my knees holding the bridle, and led the horse moving forward on my knees. My companions pulled my horse's tail to move it forward, and the horse, using all its strength, pushed forward to open a way through the snow. My companions said "Hey Powerful One [*Janivar*], you are not beautiful, but you are *Dul-Dul* [a legendary horse]". This was a great compliment to my horse.

Here Zunun demonstrates the importance of concern for those who come after. The first lines here, I would suggest, symbolise the warning from Zunun of the danger and treachery that would face any other Uyghur seeking to reach the objective of self-determination (that is, the lone tree buried in the snow). However, the second part of the passage describes how those who persist, despite the most difficult conditions, are worthy of the highest praise. We may note that the praise is directed to the horse (not to Zunun himself), and recall that the horse is associated with ordinary, unpretentious people. Also, the praise is delivered by references to great models from Uyghur folklore, so the cultural identification is clear.

Zunun himself is so tired from the continual danger and struggle that he is down on his knees. But he continues to hold the bridle and does his best to lead the horse forward. His perseverance in the story mirrors the perseverance of those who had consistently opposed the CCP regime. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s there had been uprisings against the CCP government, carried out by the ordinary country people, not the educated elite to which Zunun belonged. These ordinary people had sacrificed their lives in very large numbers in defence of the identity and livelihood of their people. At the time of writing, Zunun had just returned from the years of exile during which he personally experienced the support of such people. Again, he pays tribute to the perseverance of his ordinary horse:

By its strength that day, my pitiful, enduring, mangy horse made me swear that I would value it more than my life until I should die, and look after it for ever....

In every situation, if man has hope and strength, no matter how bad the situation it can be overcome.

Another passage reiterates the difficulties and hazards of the journey, and again we can draw historical inferences:

At sunset [*namaz sham*] we entered Gursay. This road passes between two high mountains, with only two armspans of sky visible above. Among the stones on either side of this road we saw many dead sheep. Four or five flocks had been travelling to Karasu Kokemlik near Nilka, but had met with a terrible storm and died. The herdsmen had lost fifty percent of their animals. We arrived as it was

getting dark, and our lives were saved. Along the path we stepped over countless dead sheep, buried under the snow. Some sheep were still in their death throes [*can talasmak*]. I saw one black lamb, no bigger than a cat, sucking at its dead mother. As the milk did not flow, the lamb sucked more and butted the sheep's udder with its head. Witnessing this tragedy I felt even more grateful that our own lives had been saved from such danger. But pitying the lamb, I took it with us to the cave where we decided to spend the night.³⁶⁴

As Zunun makes his way through a hazardous landscape past the bodies of many dead sheep, these corpses along the way remind us of the Uyghur people who had been executed and died during political movements in China. It is significant that the “four or five flocks” are identified as having been on the road to Nilka. Nilka was the first significant garrison town that was taken from Chinese control by the East Turkistan forces in 1944, in the course of establishing the East Turkistan Republic. The political storms had destroyed these sheep. That they are buried under snow is also meaningful: Zunun is perhaps hinting that the many thousands of people of good reputation who had died during the political movements (such as the anti-counter-revolutionary movement, the land reform movement, the Three Anti movement and Five Anti movement)³⁶⁵ were hidden from the world’s view. But there is hope that, when the right conditions return, the snow will melt and the truth of their sacrifice will be fully revealed to the world.

The little lamb with the dead mother could perhaps be seen as representing the aspirations of the Uyghur people following the death of the East Turkistan Republic and the promise of self-determination. The lamb persists in continuing to seek nourishment from the dead mother, but none is forthcoming. The new generation does not understand why the milk does not flow, and butts the failed source of nourishment out of frustration. This may be Zunun’s reflection on the younger generation, perhaps even his own children, who were living in a deprived environment with little prospect for an improved future. Feeling keenly that the

³⁶⁴ *Hatireler*, op.cit., p.222.

³⁶⁵ As mentioned in Chapter 3.

young generation needs nourishment, he does what he can to help the black lamb.

In spite of all the the hazards of the journey, suffering that is both experienced and remembered, Zunun still includes in this narrative the evidence of hope, and of a world that could be aspired to:

After a short walk we came upon an extraordinary scene on the other side of Gursay. At the foot of the mountain on the righthand side, a cliff wound like a snake above a wide stream bordered by trees with very green leaves moving in the wind. Through the trees and branches we could see the river like a rope, and clearly see the stones under the water of that clear, fast-flowing stream. On the opposite slope, plum trees blossomed like a *bokke* (an embroidered Uyghur cap). All around, bees flew among the flowers. On velvety green grass by the water stood a Kyrgyz tent, with a few people cooking meat in a large pot. Round about many sheep and lambs were grazing. Seeing this scene, I could not restrain my delight, calling out,

“Look at that - between hell and heaven is only one arm's length!”³⁶⁶

Thus at the end of a hazardous journey there is peace, beauty, a fertile land and hospitable people to welcome the travellers. Zunun describes how the Kyrgyz group warmly welcomed these survivors from the storm. We should not see it as an accident that the two groups who showed hospitality to Zunun and his companions in the story are Kazak and Kyrgyz. The Kyrgyz group who welcome and feed them are the very group who had only just preceded Zunun's group on the terrible journey through the mountain storm, and had lost so many sheep along the way. Yet, after this sacrifice, they have reached a happier situation and are willing to share what they have with Zunun and his companions:

By the time we were fighting for our lives in the terrible storm, they had already reached this heaven. They had hung up some *halal* meat. A pot full of meat was cooking.

³⁶⁶ *Hatireler*, op.cit., pp.226-8.

We may see in this imagery a reflection of the historical parallels between the situation of Kazak and Kyrgyz peoples in the first two decades of the twentieth century (when they lost a struggle for autonomy against Russian and Soviet empires) and the fate of the East Turkistan Republic during Zunun's lifetime. Kazak and Kyrgyz nationalist organisations, particularly the Alash Orda, went through processes of negotiation and broken promises with the Soviet government that led eventually to their complete takeover and incorporation into the Soviet Union by 1920.³⁶⁷

Zunun's companions suffer from the after-effects of snow-blindness, but Zunun himself does not suffer, because he has used the Kyrgyz people's typical hat, equipped with fur flaps that protect the face in such conditions – that is, he is has been willing to learn from the experience of the Kyrgyz. The Kyrgyz host congratulates him on his wisdom, advises him to keep wearing the hat, and promises to find him a rosy-cheeked Kyrgyz bride. Zunun loses no opportunity to reinforce the bonds between the Uyghur and their fellow-Turkic kinsmen.

At the end of the journey, Zunun and his companions arrive at their destination of Gulja, where they conduct the trade that was the original purpose of their journey. There Zunun encounters merchants who try every possible means and use every available connection to try to get his goods at the cheapest possible price. At the end of the bargaining, Zunun finds he has earned 300 *som* for the difficult three month journey: then he discovers that the merchant who bought his goods has made the same amount of profit in only three hours. "So I still lacked experience in business", he states, "Without the benefit of real experience of life, I was taken in by insincere

³⁶⁷ Baymirza Hayit, *op.cit.*, pp.250-255. In late Tsarist times a Kazak Constitutional Democratic Party had been formed by intellectuals within the Steppe Governor-Generalate. Following the 1917 revolution, this party changed its name to *Alash Orda* and a 3rd Kazak Congress formed a government under the name of Alash Orda. They met strong opposition from both White Russian and Red forces. They entered negotiations with Josef Stalin, who at that time had responsibility for these matters in the Soviet government. Stalin on the one hand promised autonomy, and on the other hand systematically infiltrated and destabilised the Alash Orda with communist agents and nominees, often working through "Worker-Soldier-Peasant Councils" that took over local governments. In 1918, they formed a separate Soviet Kazak government, incorporating a Soviet-sponsored breakaway faction from within the Alash Orda. In 1919, as the Red Army conquered the steppes, the Alash Orda leadership negotiated a truce which involved dispersing their armed forces, allowing Soviet General Frunze to declare victory in December 1920. Once Soviet power was established, the leaders of the Alash Orda were liquidated in 1927-28 as "bourgeois nationalists".

words”. At the time of writing, Zunun had actually had a further fifty years of experience. He had had many more occasions to question whether he had been taken in by false assurances.

Finally, however, he concludes that the journey was worth while. The 300 *som* is put to a highly significant use:

None the less, with the money I had earned I could give a wedding for my brother. In this way, I saved my family from extinction. Our overturned cooking-pot once again began to steam.³⁶⁸

The continuation of his family suggests a link to the situation of his people. Zunun’s experience of hardship has been used to contribute to the cultural survival of his Uyghur people in their desperate situation, and save them from extinction.

The Road in Quest of Knowledge [*İlim izdesh yolida*]³⁶⁹

This account, written in the 1980s, traces an earlier part of Zunun’s life in the 1930s, when he had formed a strong ambition to gain an education that would prepare him for a full life in the modern world (translation in Appendix 7). In search of this education, he undertakes a journey along the highways of East Turkistan towards Urumqi, where he believes opportunity for education can be found. His journey takes place during the period when General Sheng Shicai had taken over control from the previous KMT governor of Xinjiang, and was being supported by the Soviet government. In fact, the formal education opportunities that Zunun seeks proved to be disappointing. The story of his quest for knowledge reveals, however, that the incidents along the way, and many experiences of life that he encounters, comprise a kind of education in themselves.

The story begins with a description of the old-style religious schools in Gulja, where one could be trained as a mullah, but would be offered no modern knowledge. It could take many years to memorise thirty chapters [*pare*] of the Koran. Zunun

³⁶⁸ *Hatireler* op.cit. p.244.

³⁶⁹ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., pp.601ff.

advocates modern education as preparation for practical life. He links the beginning of modernisation with the period of Soviet influence in Xinjiang (as discussed in Chapter 2). In return for Soviet support for a coup by Sheng Shicai against the Chinese governor Jin Shuren, Sheng undertook to follow a Soviet-style program of socialist reforms in Xinjiang. Zunun refers indirectly to events surrounding the first East Turkistan Republic that led to greater educational opportunity for young Uyghurs:

After the changes of April 1933 in Xinjiang, modern educational arrangements were put in place and modern schools were opened. This created the opportunities to learn, in a few years in these schools, knowledge suited to contemporary life and to various kinds of work. I greatly desired to study in such a school to gain this knowledge. I heard that various kinds of schools had been opened in Urumqi, and that people entering these secondary schools would be given clothing and living allowance. I began to save money for a trip to Urumqi.³⁷⁰

1933 was not only the time when Soviet influence greatly increased in Xinjiang through Sheng Shicai, but also the time when the Islamic East Turkistan Republic (IETR) was set up, led by Hoja Niyaz and based on Kashgar in the southern part of Xinjiang.³⁷¹ Zunun's reference here to "changes" is ambiguous. Some of his readers could have chosen to guess that he meant the IETR (which, while Islamic, was also socially progressive in its program) while others may see it as a reference to Sheng Shicai's program.

Zunun tells us that he was very much influenced by Russian literature, which he first encountered in translations to Central Asian languages in books sent back from Tashkent by his brother.³⁷² Zunun had much in common with Gorky, and it seems reasonable to assume that Gorky was an influence on his literary life. Gorky was the son of a carpenter, Zunun the son of a small trader. Gorky lost his father when he was

³⁷⁰ Ibid, p.602.

³⁷¹ Hoja Niyaz's Islamic East Turkistan Republic competed briefly with Sheng's regime for control of Xinjiang. Sheng was able to suppress the first East Turkistan Republic, with Soviet aircraft and other support.

³⁷² *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.602.

three years old, Zunun lost his mother at the same age. Both had childhoods that were full of difficulty. Both acknowledge the influence of an old woman – Gorky’s grandmother, and Zunun’s old peasant friend “Granny Perizhan”. Both had to find their own living from childhood on, and both, in early manhood, set out on journeys in search of knowledge and education. Gorky made the journey mostly on foot from Kazan to Moscow, similar to Zunun’s trip from Gulja to Urumqi. Both applied a literary style that was intensely observant of the life of the common people and their environment. Gorky carried in his bag manuscripts of poetry and prose sketches. Zunun also carried poetry with him and the manuscript of his stage play “The Hardship of Ignorance” (discussed in Chapter 2). Both became journalists in their 20s, and both are classed as “realist” writers.³⁷³ We can only speculate as to whether Zunun to any extent modelled his actions, as well as his writings, on Gorky.³⁷⁴

Zunun’s journey in quest of knowledge seems to form a kind of parallel to his career as a Soviet-influenced writer working within the Chinese system. At the beginning of his journey, Zunun spends some time trying to find transport to Urumqi that he can afford. After some adventures with a carter who gambles away everything at a wayside inn, he catches a ride with a merchant who is travelling to Urumqi with a Russian driver, a Uyghur accountant, and a truck load of cloth. Again the journey is fraught with difficulties; the Russian driver takes the truck too quickly into a river and floods the engine, stalling it.³⁷⁵ There may perhaps be a parallel here with the way Soviet support for Chinese authorities in Xinjiang, such as Sheng Shicai and the CCP, were hastily undertaken and often had inappropriate or disastrous results. If this interpretation is followed, then there is also a significance to the hard-working efforts of the Russian driver to repair the truck and recover from his mistake:

The driver went into the water up to his waist and tried all means to fix it, but could not get the motor going. The more he tried to repair it, the stronger grew

³⁷³ Frederic Ewen, “Introduction” to Avram Yarmolinsky and Baroness Maura Budberg (ed. and tr.), *The Collected Short Stories of Maxim Gorky*, Citadel Press, New Jersey, 1988.

³⁷⁴ Biographical facts confirmed in conversations with Zunun’s family members.

³⁷⁵ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., pp.613-14. “I threw my saddlebag onto the truck and climbed up to sit at the empty back of the truck. The truck proceeded, and we stayed overnight at Tallik. Next day we started at sunrise, and without stopping at Shiho we arrived by mealtime at Koytun Darya (river). It was in flood, with muddy waters flowing strongly. The Russian driver, a man in his fifties with a woolly

the flood, covering the vehicle and threatening the cargo of material. In this situation the merchant and his assistants got into the water to carry the fabrics to the side of the river. Because they had helped me and given me a ride, of course I could not look idly on such a calamity.

In this paragraph we might see Zunun realizing failures in the socialist cause in which he believed, but still trying to continue his cooperation with it.

We tried every means to pull our vehicle out of the water, without success. Eventually, we found a tractor and paid fifty *som* for it to pull the truck out of the sand.³⁷⁶ Our poor driver began to take his old vehicle to pieces, clean each part one by one, and put it back together. He worked regardless of rain or sun, using a cloth to clean the small parts.³⁷⁷ I lit a fire next to him from the wood I had collected, and the driver, going without sleep, lay on his back under the truck getting it back into order by the light of the fire.

In the story “Remembrance” (discussed in Chapter 3), a Uyghur man helps a Chinese driver repair a broken-down truck, and they go off together, with the Chinese driving the truck and the Uyghur sitting beside him.³⁷⁸ Although the scenes are similar, Zunun portrays a more sympathetic character in the case of the Russian driver. The Russian is hardworking, careful and eager to contribute to the general task with his companions, whereas the Chinese driver is a more silent presence who allows his Uyghur companions to help repair the truck, before driving off into a cloudy and ambiguous future. This may reflect the different conditions experienced by the Turkic nationalities in the Soviet Central Asian republics compared to the relatively less autonomous condition of Uyghurs in China.

beard covering his face, drove too hastily into the water, the flow rose over the front of the motor, and it got wet and stalled.”

³⁷⁶ This may represent the price paid by the Uyghur people in submitting to Soviet and Chinese hegemony in order to save their people.

³⁷⁷ The taking apart and cleaning of each piece may be a parallel with the cleansing of bourgeois nationalist elements such as Ilihan Tore and Yolvas Khan from the Three Districts Government around 1948.

³⁷⁸ “The truck Tohti was helping with was finally started by the Chinese driver. Tohti left with it. He looked happy - perhaps he was going to meet his family. The truck took off with a lot of noise. I stood there watching the dusty horizon until it faded from view.”

In the “Journey” story, when the truck gets going again, there is a further disappointment as they approach Sanchi.³⁷⁹ Zunun is told that the truck will not be going into Urumqi, because “Sheng Duban” (Governor Sheng) is stopping any vehicles that try to enter the town, and requisitioning them all for his own purposes in the south.³⁸⁰

When he finally arrives in Urumqi, Zunun finds that there may be an opportunity for him to join some other Uyghur students who are expecting to go to study in Tashkent. The program was part of the agreement between Sheng Shicai and the Soviet Union. Zunun’s hopes are soon disappointed, however:

Nearly a hundred students had come from all over Xinjiang. They could not go as planned in 1937, so they stayed on at the North Garden. This was because a number of people in the Education Department under Sheng Shicai had one after the other been labelled as “traitors” and imprisoned. The official sponsoring us to go to Tashkent had disappeared.³⁸¹

This was, apparently, the first indication for the young Zunun that his ideal of a new society and modern education would have to take into account the complications of politics. The education program that had seemed such a wonderful opportunity has suddenly not only disappeared, but become positively dangerous, due to shifts behind the scenes in Sheng Shicai’s relationships with the Soviet and the Chinese authorities. In spite of this, Zunun stays on in Urumqi, hoping to find a way forward. He involves other young Uyghur intellectuals in working on a drama he had written called “The Hardship of Ignorance”, and seeks permission to perform it in Urumqi. However, his next literary project brings him into direct contact with the political dangers that are becoming more and more severe.

After we had mounted this play ourselves, I went to the newspaper to see if they would publish my poem “Chimen”, which I had written sitting under a pumpkin

³⁷⁹ Sanchi is 30km from Urumqi.

³⁸⁰ During this period, the military governor Sheng Shicai was systematically looting the merchants and property owners of Xinjiang. For this purpose he was requisitioning all traders’ vehicles for his operations in the southern part of Xinjiang.

³⁸¹ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit. p.621.

trellis. The editors said that they would publish it if I received clearance from the editor-in-chief. But the editor-in-chief was busy, moving from place to place. I chased him for two weeks but could not meet him. While I was pursuing this business of mine, going between the newspaper and the Department of Education, I heard that Sheng Shicai had arrested poets and writers... and other well-known people. In the end I could not find the person I needed to clear my poem, because he, too, had disappeared. There was no place I could publish, and I lost my manuscript of “Chimen” because, afraid that I too could come to this disaster, I burned it....

The spring of art and literature had just begun to bloom. The autumn had brought a frost that would kill those leaves. I was also in the first spring of my first steps towards literature, and my first “Chimen” [grass shoots] were burned to ashes in these frosty days.³⁸²

Sheng Shicai’s reign of terror was tightening its grip on all writers or potential opinion-makers among the Uyghur population. Zunun’s own work “Chimen” was lost and, as far as we know, never recovered.

The students who had come to Urumqi full of hope that there was a door opening for them to acquire modern knowledge for the benefit of their people were now left waiting and wondering what the future could hold. As they wait, they come face to face with the creator of this situation, Governor Sheng Shicai himself; and Zunun makes no secret of his criticism of the man and his policies, expressing his disgust in strong and explicit terms. Furthermore he describes the outright threat to the lives of young Uyghurs at this time:

Here we were, with the snowflakes flying. Winter had arrived. About a hundred of us youth on the path to knowledge, like a caravan on the road, lit fires in parks and sat around them to pass the days.

³⁸² Ibid, p.624.

One afternoon by the fire Eli Hemrayiv was playing the *dutar*, Abdireshit was playing the *tambur*,³⁸³ Ahmetyar was playing the *dap* and singing. Suddenly a number of vehicles entered the park. Among these, four trucks carried a hundred soldiers armed with machine guns, automatic rifles, and slung with grenades at their waists. Between these trucks was a car, in which was sitting Sheng Shicai. When they arrived at the main stream about fifty paces away from us, Sheng Shicai got out of the car, went to the shade of a tree next to the stream, and squatted down there. This man, with his strong eyebrows and his flat face, took off his white gloves, dipped his fat hands in the rippling water, and played around with the pebbles in the stream. These were not the hands of a poet moved by the scenery, rather they were the hands of an executioner, coloured with the blood of our precious people. We stopped the music and froze. I even froze in the act of breaking a piece of wood across my knee.

...We were afraid to end in a graveyard, because a machine gun was aimed at us from the front seat of the trucks.³⁸⁴

These words were written in the 1980s, expressing strong criticisms of Sheng in retrospect. But there is no doubt that for any Uyghur reader the situation described would also reflect what they knew in their own present day, and the Maoism experienced by their generation; it was not simply a record of a past, pre-CCP situation. Though the central figure in this scene is Sheng Shicai, Uyghur readers in the 1980s would be able to identify with the physical and psychological terror, having faced it repeatedly themselves from that time to the present.

After a long wait, the 100 students are informed that they will not be sent to Tashkent to study, but instead will be placed in secondary schools in Urumqi or in teachers' college. Zunun is assigned to study in the final year of secondary school. He mentions that although they were all disappointed not to be able to study in Tashkent, they were

³⁸³ The *dutar* and *tambur* are both long-necked, metal-stringed musical instruments, the *tambur* having a smaller body than the *dutar*.

³⁸⁴ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.624-5.

pleased that a number of their own teachers were people who had returned from such study and had been exposed to the knowledge available in Western Turkistan.³⁸⁵

Zunun also provides a chilling example of the corrupting and destructive effect of the system of oppression that was being imposed in East Turkistan at that time:

Here I must mention the young Tatar man who had played the role of the orphan homeless beggar girl in my first drama "The Hardship of Ignorance", and played it so intensely that he brought the audience to tears.³⁸⁶ This young man, considering the advantages of clothing and other fringe benefits, chose to join the training course for security personnel. His future, compared to ours, was even worse. At that time, security officers under the hypocrite Li Yingqi were arresting many hundreds of intellectuals and well known people and imprisoning them as "traitors", then killing them secretly.

That young Tatar man who had entered security training for the sake of the fringe benefits was forced to step in the blood of innocent people being killed by a bloodthirsty executioner. Our poor actor, who had shown great talent in our drama, under the hand of the disgusting executioner had to play the role of a carter, transporting and concealing dead bodies who had been sacrificed in a horrible death. After he had done this task for a certain time, the bloodthirsty hypocrite Sheng Shicai, to conceal the evidence of his own murders, took him along with all those who had been involved in this purge and killed them all in a single night.³⁸⁷

This personal anecdote is, again, not simply the description of an isolated incident in the remote past. Zunun and all other survivors of the intervening decades, including the Cultural Revolution period, had lived through this scenario time after time, and seen person after person become victim of the machine that would sacrifice any individual in

³⁸⁵ Zunun names teachers who came from Western Turkistan as Hivizullahyup, Seyupullahyup, Hajiyup, Abdurahman Muhidi, Kadir Hessen, and Arupullah. (*Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p 626.)

³⁸⁶ Earlier in the story, he writes "I took on the job of directing, and played the part of the old man who is conservative, and who doesn't want his children to go to a modern school.... The role of the girl was to be played by a young Tatar called Mejit, who had himself grown up as an orphan. Mejit played this role with great emotion." (*Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.622.)

order to impose unquestioned power. Anyone who tried to use the system to their own advantage, like this young Tatar man, would themselves be likely to be the next victims.

The group of hopeful students that included Zunun had their hopes of a modern, Western education dashed, and they found themselves instead placed in a very inferior educational situation. The place where they were to study was described as a modern secondary school, but was in fact based on an old Chinese-style school. Zunun describes a very grim environment compared to what he had hoped for in Tashkent.

Our secondary school was at the Beimeng Rise.³⁸⁸ During the administration of Yang Jangjung [Governor Yang Zengxing] it was called the “Old School” [*Gudong Shutang*]. There were cells on two sides of the courtyard, with only an armspan separating them. The chimney pipes coming out from the windows of the cells used to fill the walkway with smoke. We would run bent over to our classes. About a hundred catties [*jin*] of coal was distributed to each cell for a week's heating, but it was only enough for four days. On the other days we could not sleep from the cold, so we were forced to break the lock of the store-room to steal extra coal, or to take out the windows from other classrooms so that we could steal the coal that was to be used in the stove for that room. For this, those students who had broken the store-room lock were punished and interrogated by the school discipline manager. We fought with our fists between classes over coal. In that severe cold when we could not sleep, there were incidents such as breaking up room tables and chairs to burn.

In 1937 there was a shortage of food. We had rice porridge twice a day, and were so hungry we could not study. When they gave us *moma* [steamed bread] only once or twice a week, we fought over it, and broke up the equipment and tables in the canteen in protest. Because of the poor conditions in the school, a saying grew up spontaneously among the students:

³⁸⁷ Ibid, p 627.

³⁸⁸ A location in Urumqi, on a small elevation.

"We will die from hunger or from smoke". If someone fell ill, we would ask "Is it from the hunger or from the smoke?" Because of the crowded conditions, many students became ill through catching a cold, bedbugs, lice and dirt, and had to leave. By the time the spring arrived, over twenty students had died of illness from the Uyghur class alone.

The state of desperation described by Zunun reduced the students, a highly motivated and qualified elite among the Uyghur youth, to a situation of constant fighting among themselves in order to survive. More than that, the conditions ensured that many of them did not survive. Even something supposedly benign and positive, such as education, could in these dreadful conditions be the cause of death. Numbers of the students died of illness and malnutrition, and others become identified as "bad elements" and "traitors" because of their desperate actions. In this dangerous political atmosphere, Zunun could only study for one year. He returned to Gulja, and taught in an orphanage for another year. However, the following year he was attracted back to Urumqi by hopes of another educational opportunity.

In 1939 I returned to Urumqi to sit an exam at the Saybang Rural Management Technical Institute. I was admitted to the animal husbandry department. At the end of a year's study, before the summer holiday, the students of our class decided to write to Sheng Duban [Sheng Shicai] requesting that Uyghur students should also [i.e. as well as Chinese students] be admitted to a new course in Agricultural Science [*Agrinum*] which was to commence in the following year. In that class they would teach me maintenance and repair of all kinds of agricultural machinery and tractors. People in that course would learn about technical knowledge and commerce. Secondly, people studying in that class would become officials in the offices of rural management. Those who studied animal husbandry, water management, and veterinary science would be working under those officials. For these reasons, our desire to study in this course became stronger, and we wrote a second letter. Without receiving any response, we went home for the summer holidays.

Thus, the jobs with managerial responsibility are all reserved for Han students of the Agricultural Science department, with the Uyghurs only allowed to be trained in the lower-level skills. The students register a complaint about this discrimination. Zunun's readers would have every reason, once again, to reflect that the practices of Sheng Shicai's era had not changed significantly in the intervening fifty years.³⁸⁹ In Zunun's case, there were further consequences to follow from the students' act of protest.

In 1940 I was not able to return to school immediately and stayed a further month in Gulja. Then I caught a truck belonging to the Urumqi Pharmaceutical company, paid a fifty *som* fare, and began my journey back. The truck arrived at Suydong [close to Gulja] and we went to get a meal. At the meal I met a young Tatar called Jüji who worked for the pharmaceutical company. After we had chatted a while, he signalled me to come outside. I went out immediately, and Jüji came close to me and said quietly,

"I left Urumqi yesterday. There's something I couldn't tell you in there in front of other people, so I called you out here. The situation in Urumqi is very difficult."

"What is the problem?" I asked seriously.

"Most of the students in your class were arrested about ten days ago."

"Why?"

"You wrote a letter to Sheng Duban - that's probably the reason."

"Where did you hear that we had written a request?"

"From your Discipline Manager Ablihay".

In those days we knew that personnel were sent from the security bureau to be eyes and ears in the secondary schools and to inform. We used to hear these stories. For that reason our school's discipline department would definitely have known about our letter of request to Sheng Duban. Because

³⁸⁹ In 1985 there were student demonstrations in Urumqi on the same issue of discrimination and inequality in education and job opportunities, and against Chinese transmigration into Xinjiang. Many were punished in labour camps, or by expulsion from universities and denial of certificates of qualification that they had earned (Baki, op.cit., p.71.)

our letter was a petition, most of the students had signed it. In addition, there was also an informer among the students. From Juji's bad news, I realised that this was not a matter of a few students disappearing in the middle of the night, but the ghastly situation of the entire class being arrested. I decided to abandon the idea of going to Urumqi to study.

Some recent materials suggest that Zunun, writing in the 1980s, would have had many contemporary incidents to remind him of the political suppression and spying that had been the basis of this earlier experience.³⁹⁰ In the 1980s, there were many incidents where Uyghurs were targeted by the public security organisations.³⁹¹ In 1983, many intellectuals were arrested in Kashgar.³⁹² In 1985, there were student demonstrations in Urumqi demanding democratic rights and equality. The students who participated were expelled from the universities and secondary schools, denied their academic qualifications, and exiled to labour camps.³⁹³

During that period there was also a vigorous and systematic process of replacing all Uyghur cadres in positions of real power with Han. According to Ablikim Baki, who was a cadre in the Writers' Association until 1990, in 1986 even assassination was used to get Uyghur cadres out of positions, so that they could be replaced by Han. Baki says that in 1988, the year before Zunun went to Kazakstan, over 400 local intelligence organisations were set up in Xinjiang specifically to monitor and supervise any suspicious student and teacher activity, with cells set up in every educational institution. These organisations operated independently of school and local administrations.³⁹⁴

Faced with this situation, it is likely that Zunun would soon have realised that no matter how hard he tried to improve his life through work, and through cooperating with the Chinese regime, it was not possible to achieve a fair outcome. The egalitarian ideals of socialism (that were the official policy of Sheng Shicai's government, as well as later of the CCP) were not being applied fairly between Han and other nationalities. In the story

³⁹⁰ See particularly Ablikim Baki op.cit., p.75.

³⁹¹ Ibid, p.58.

³⁹² Ibid, p.69.

³⁹³ Ibid, p.71.

³⁹⁴ Ibid, p.75.

of this journey, there seems to be consistent reference to Urumqi (the capital of Xinjiang) as representing the Chinese-controlled administration of the region, and of Gulja as representing hopes of Uyghur autonomy. The final words of his story of the journey in quest of knowledge show him returning to serve the East Turkistan Republic, with its capital in Gulja. Writing in the 1980s, Zunun could not safely make explicit reference to the ETR government, but we know from his biographical information that it was in the ETR government that he served at this time.³⁹⁵

Several common themes are apparent in these three stories that Zunun wrote in the 1980s. In subject, they are all reflections on childhood and youth, but they hold many allegorical references to later events that would be impossible to write about openly. In the values expressed, they each reflect, in different contexts, Zunun's essential belief in education and modernism (which he generally associates with Western, including Soviet, influence). There is a particular interest in the examples of progress shown by Uyghur and other Turkic writers and intellectuals in Western Turkistan. In contrast to his earlier embracing of socialist principles, in his later stories he holds the belief that economic and social conditions can be improved by individual effort, hard work and creativity.

Zunun's narratives present him surviving in these treacherous circumstances, learning the value of preserving life where possible, and learning to detest traitors, spies, and opportunists who sell out the interests of their people. The stories also present harmonious relationships between ordinary people who are portrayed positively as hard-working and self-sacrificing, and without any pretensions. Threads of Uyghur folk culture run through these memoirs, suggesting a wisdom achieved through everyday experience and a valuing of tradition. Zunun's interest in the promotion and revival of Uyghur culture is discussed further in the following chapter.

³⁹⁵ Zunun writes: "The next day I returned to Gulja. After that I couldn't return to the school [where I had taught]. First I joined the Ili District Uyghur Cultural Organisation's Arts Section as an actor and writer. Later, I worked as head of the Cultural Education Branch." (*Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.631.)

Chapter 5

Uyghur Culture: Nostalgia and Restoration

In the 1980s, Zunun wrote many stories and fables to revive Uyghur culture and social values, after the years of suppression in the Cultural Revolution.³⁹⁶ In this chapter I will consider stories that illustrate particular aspects of Zunun's contribution to the revival of Uyghur culture in this era. In the 1980s, when Zunun did most of his writing on cultural themes, generally in China traditional cultural values were being rediscovered, and historical and political events were commonly used by writers as the backdrop for cultural discussion of previously banned issues and themes. In this atmosphere, Zunun can also be seen as having used his own "nostalgia" for Uyghur Islamic culture, placing himself as an inheritor as well as a creator of a contemporary cultural canon. Zunun not only articulates Uyghur cultural values, but also uses them purposefully to evoke national feeling, consistent with his endeavour to advance his people however possible in their contemporary situation.

In the 1980s period of political relaxation, Han Chinese were able to avail themselves of increased opportunities to express their grievances, albeit under restricted conditions, through cultural as well as political channels.³⁹⁷ Supporters of Deng's reform and pragmatic officials saw that if long-term survival of the Chinese state were to be secured, then China's serious problems had to be faced (and this could involve some review, even criticism, of the way the Communist Party itself had operated). For Uyghurs, however, there was always a need to remain aware of the danger of being labelled a "splittist", "nationalist" or "counter-revolutionary". Uyghurs had a certain freedom to write on cultural and historical matters, so long as they did not touch on the contemporary period (that is, the Deng era). Therefore, in this period, many Uyghur writers and other intellectuals set about expressing their cultural views in ways that had been suppressed for a considerable period. It can also be said that there were some

³⁹⁶ Zunun's oral memoir (op. cit.) concludes with the words, "Until the end of my life, I would like to continue my work as a creative writer, in order to leave works to my people."

³⁹⁷ For example, "mass media historians" have played an important role in China since the late 1970s. From the mid- to late-80s, writers such as Liu Binyan, Su Xiaokang, Dai Qing...and others have had considerable popular impact... They created a semi-official, at times even unofficial forum for the airing of controversial questions..." see Geremie Barmé, "History for the Masses", op. cit., p.270.

consistent attempts to create a “meta-culture” by which the Uyghur people might assert their self-esteem and thus legitimise their ethnic and territorial integrity.³⁹⁸ A reinforced meta-culture was particularly important for the new generation of Uyghur youth who could be given some identity to hold onto, to be proud of, and to pass on in their turn. In the 1980s Zunun was among the Uyghur intellectuals engaged in this kind of project, seeking through his literature to enrich modern Uyghur life by writing about historical events and traditional Uyghur popular culture.

W.J.F. Jenner has noted that between the beginnings of Dengist liberalisation in the late 1970s and the clamp down in the 1980s there was continuing policy debate among the leaders, which was expressed publicly through repeated episodes of tightening the liberalisation policy and then loosening it. Jenner says, “There was a change of emphasis early in 1980 that required writers to consider other things beside the truth - the ‘Four Principles’ of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Thought, socialism, dictatorship of the proletariat, and leadership of the Party.”³⁹⁹ The governing slogan was ‘stability and solidarity’. Minority nationality affairs were on the literary agenda, as reflected in a satirical article quoted by Jenner which named four topics that were usually treated in predictable literary formula by conservative writers of the 1980s - “...the four formulae for works on agricultural co-operation, industry, minority nationalities, and the unmasking of enemy agents that Shao Hua and Si Ji put forward in November 1980”⁴⁰⁰. In this article, the authors suggested the formula for minority nationality “artistic” writings describing the early years of “Liberation” was:

The Liberation Army enters: the headmen are of two kinds, international spies creating division and confusing the people; and those caring for the poor and suffering. The sick

³⁹⁸ Anthropologist Nathan Light has focussed on these aspects of the period in a doctoral study completed in 1998. “Slippery Paths: the performance and canonization of Turkic literature and Uyghur *Mukam* Song in Islam and Modernity” (Indiana University Doctoral Dissertation in Folklore, 1998 - manuscript extracts particularly Chapter 6, p.275ff., published on author’s personal website <<http://www.utoledo.edu/~nlight/frntmtr1.htm>>).

³⁹⁹ W.J.F Jenner, “1979: A New Start for Literature in China?” op. cit., p.300.

⁴⁰⁰ Jenner cites Shao Hua and Si Ji, “Wenxue chuanguo shong de yishu he zhengshi [Art and Politics in Literary Creation]” *Wenyi Bao*, 11/12/1979, pp.51-57 and 74.

are cured, misunderstandings are cleared up, the spies are exposed; and unity of the nationalities is victoriously achieved.⁴⁰¹

The cultural policy struggles in China also had an impact in Xinjiang. For example, in 1981, *Xinjiang Minzu Wenxue No. 2* [Xinjiang Nationalities' Literature] includes a Chinese translation of an article by the Uyghur Tohti Beg, who writes that the respected Chinese anti-imperialist revolutionary Lu Xun (1881-1936)⁴⁰² had supported the Hoja Niyaz rebellion against Sheng Shicai in Xinjiang in the 1930s (which included the founding and defeat of the First East Turkistan Republic based at Kashgar). Tohti Beg bases his argument on an article by Wang Hua which in turn quotes Lu Xun's "*Wei ziyou shu*" [The False Freedom Protocol].⁴⁰³

In the same issue of *Xinjiang Minzu Wenxue* another translation appears of the Uyghur writer Keyim Israyil's article outlining Xinjiang's past contributions to world literature. It relates Xinjiang's position on the Silk Road to a role in bringing together Buddhist, Islamic and Christian cultures. The publication of these two articles in 1981 implies that the political climate allowed room for a limited expression of Uyghur aspirations for autonomy or even independence, by placing Uyghur culture as an independent entity among the cultures of the world.

This relatively relaxed climate seems to change by 1982, when *Xinjiang Minzu Wenxue* show no such support for nationalistic claims. By 1983, the tone of the content of this magazine has begun to show signs of "orientalising" Uyghurs rather than taking their standpoint. For example, a painting reproduced in the second issue of *Xinjiang Minzu Wenxue* for 1983 portrays a woman wearing an Islamic veil, but displaying a curvaceous body and naked arms in a manner that recalls the classic images used by Western artists when "orientalising" the Islamic East.

⁴⁰¹ Shao Hua and Si Ji, "Wenxue chuanguo shong de yishu he zhengshi" [Art and Politics in Literary Creation] *Wenyi Bao*, 11/12/1979, p.52.

⁴⁰² Feng Xuefeng, *Lu Xun de Wenxue Daolu: Lunwen Ji*, Hunan Renmin Chubanshe, Changsha, 1980, p.124.

⁴⁰³ *Xinjiang Minzu Wenxue*, 1981:2.

It might be suggested that in 1983 China was re-shaping its international diplomatic activities, and was seeking ways to use the links of its “minority” cultures as a basis to improve relations with the Middle East and Turkey. The second issue *Xinjiang Minzu Wenxue* for 1983⁴⁰⁴ reports a meeting of the Xinjiang Academy of Social Sciences on the theme of “Encouraging Uyghur Classical Literature”. It may be considered significant that at this meeting the Han Chinese representatives numbered 149, while the non-Han representatives (Uyghur, Kazak, Hui, Mongol etc) altogether numbered only eleven. During the same year, issue no.4 of *Xinjiang Minzu Wenxue* carried an article by Teyipjan Eliyop emphasizing that Xinjiang is part of a greater China, and calling for the promotion of friendship between China and Turkey.⁴⁰⁵

One of the cultural initiatives encouraged by Chinese official policy during this time was the revival of the Uyghur *mukam* musical form, and its promotion as a unique Uyghur creation.⁴⁰⁶ The purposes of this promotion can be questioned (for example, it would be likely to create some controversy between Uyghur scholars and other Central Asian scholars, who all share some common interest in the *mukam* form within their own national cultures). The cultural significance of the *mukam* is addressed later in this chapter.

These political factors were elements of the political climate under which Zunun was renewing his writing on Uyghur cultural themes after his return from exile in 1979.

Stories on Cultural Themes

Zunun Kadir is recognised among contemporary Uyghur scholars as a writer with a particular interest in folkloric themes and as a man with a profound understanding of the Uyghur folkloric heritage.⁴⁰⁷ This corpus of folklore itself reflects the multi-layered elements of Uyghur historical culture, containing as it does a rich residual pre-Islamic

⁴⁰⁴ *Minzu Wenxue*, 1983:2, p.4.

⁴⁰⁵ China’s diplomatic activity extended in later years to pre-empting, as far as possible, support from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Turkic republics for Uyghur nationalist activity. The “Shanghai Communique” of April 1996 was the result of a meeting of such states hosted by China, and contained key words about “non-interference in each others internal affairs; as well as cooperation on security matters, which have since been used to crack down on Uyghur supporters in the CIS states.

⁴⁰⁶ Nathan Light, op.cit.

⁴⁰⁷ Muhammet Polat, “Introduction” to *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.3.

culture, one that survived under the dominant Islamic culture. Here the term “residual culture” is used in the sense described by Raymond Williams when he wrote that “some experiences, meaning and values which cannot be verified or cannot be expressed in terms of the dominant culture, are nevertheless lived and practised on the basis of the residue - cultural as well as social - of some previous social formation”.⁴⁰⁸ In the case of Uyghur culture, this cultural realm incorporates Shamanist, Buddhist, Manichaeism and Confucian residues, all of which find expression within Islamic cultural traditions and under the contemporary influence of Chinese Communism. This chapter will consider a number of Zunun’s texts in which folkloric themes are employed to express elements of this residual culture. I will argue that Zunun's stories draw on the wealth of the residual folk culture to both formulate and respond to contemporary and emergent cultural and social issues.

The Tightrope Walker [Dar Oyuni]⁴⁰⁹

In “The Tightrope Walker”, published in 1984, we find an example of Zunun’s efforts to preserve elements of Uyghur traditional popular culture, including depictions of street performers, music and traditional foods. The story will be quoted at some length to illustrate this point. It begins with description of the atmosphere of Zunun’s childhood:

In the north part of the old city of Ghulja, in an elevated area, there is a cemetery belonging to the ancestors of the Hakim Beg’s of Ghulja, and inside this place was a domed tomb. The area around that tomb is known as “Altunluk” (the place of gold). In a valley to the west of Altunluk flows a river, and the area around this river is called “Sayboyi” (Riverside). At Saboyi there are trees with spreading branches. In Spring and Summer, many groups of people came there to enjoy themselves. In front of the Altunlukh was a sandy open area surrounded by water springs and some green grass pleasant for visitors.

⁴⁰⁸ Raymond Williams "Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory", in his *Problems in Materialism and Culture*, Verso, London, 1980, p.41.

⁴⁰⁹ *Hatireler*, op.cit., p.56.

One year in Spring time at Sayboyi a tightrope-walker performed. Big groups of people from the city walked towards Altunlukh. I also went, with my father, to see the tightrope-walking. The large area of the Riverside, the river bank, the bamboo groves, and the grassy swards and the surrounds of the high dome were all filled with thousands of people. By the bushy and grassy banks of the stream were a series of food stalls, tea stalls, food stalls and bakery stalls enclosed with straw mats or shaded by trees, and numbers difficult to count of vendors of samosa, kebabs, cold noodles,⁴¹⁰ buttermilk, beer and bread. Calls for customers competed with each other as all the vendors shouted out their wares. Sitting next to a large earth oven⁴¹¹ people were selling meat-filled buns.⁴¹² With their chest-hair showing from their collars, they put one hand up to their ear and shouted [a rhyme]... In the tea-houses, different musical instruments were being played, and lays⁴¹³ and melodies⁴¹⁴ came continuously. The owners of the shops competed with each other in inviting good musicians to attract customers, and they did not mind paying well... Apart from this entertainment there were dogfights, fighting rams, and cockfights, with bystanders betting on the outcome, standing on the side of whichever contestant they were backing, the losers paying the winners. Many people were gathered in these kinds of places.

The atmosphere is evoked in description of identifiable cultural elements, such as the *mukam* and the *nagme*, accompanied by descriptions of the charged energy of the crowd participating in this cultural event. The elements are described briefly, almost like a list, giving a sense of abundance and variety of experience all within a confined area.

Zunun's narrative is nostalgic, an evocation of the "good old days". The festive scene includes poets, musicians and other entertainers.⁴¹⁵ The tightrope-walker's performance

⁴¹⁰ *ashlempung*

⁴¹¹ *tonör*

⁴¹² *göshgirde*

⁴¹³ *mukam*

⁴¹⁴ *nagme*

⁴¹⁵ "In three or four places were bards [*meddal*]. I loved listening to folktales [*revayet*], forgetting to eat as I listened to the storytellers. Once my father lost me and looked everywhere, finally finding me in front of the bards. He pulled me by the arm, took me roughly out of the crowd and slapped my face. Instead of eating samosa, I ate his slap as a reward for my interest! But my father, realising I was hungry, bought me samosa anyway." (Ibid, pp.58-9.)

itself is placed in a setting of cultural vitality that focuses on youth, glamour and a crowd that express excitement in religious shouts and calls:

I heard the sound of *shenai* and the drums, and thousands of people quickly gathered in a large circle around the tightrope-walker. Addressing the audience, Hashim Haji announced that before the rope-walking there would be some acrobatics. The music started again, and the tumbling act began. Among Hashim Haji's apprentices, the best in balancing was Tohta Ahun. He was fifteen or sixteen years old, slim and pale. The best at tumbling was Turdi Ahun, about eighteen years old. He performed the most outstanding tumbling feats. Standing on a stool he could pick a plate from the floor with his mouth, then do two or three somersaults in the air coming down from the stool, then he would perform five or six somersaults in the air from standing on the ground.

The rope-walking now began. Tohta Ahun, the performer, wore red velvet trousers, a yellow turban on his head, and was barefoot. He held a long balancing-pole. Before he started out, he turned towards Mecca [*kible*] and his master, facing the same direction, recited the prayer [*munacet*] as a blessing on his apprentice. Then the handsome, red-clothed youth set out to walk the rope.

Below, the *dap*, the *dumbak* [drum] and *shenai* could be heard. The eyes of thousands of people were raised to Tohta Ahun as he walked on the rope in time to the music. If you looked up to the highest point of the rope, your hat would fall off.

The performer came to the scaffold at one end. He raised his right foot and placed it on his left leg, then standing there on one leg called out:

“*Yar pirim, shahi merdan!*” [My master – a great hero!]

He stayed at the scaffold for one or two minutes, walked up to the other scaffold, then walked backwards down to where he had started. Then he walked up again, and half way suddenly did the splits and dropped down onto the rope. This brought a gasp of surprise [*vay!*] from the crowd. Then he brought his feet together and swung upside down from side to side. He brought his legs together, sat on the rope, got up and walked back to his starting point. Again he walked up the rope, then placed a blindfold across his eyes and walked backwards down the rope again. Next he tied two china plates to his feet and, still blindfold, walked up the rope again. The audience was silent with trepidation.⁴¹⁶

There are elements in the story that would satisfy the orientalisising assumptions discussed earlier in Chapter 4, to the extent that that the Uyghur community is portrayed as superstitious and backward. For example, the onlookers seek contact with the popular hero to gain some of his virtue, in a magical way, for their own purposes:

Thousands of the crowd wanted to put their hands on him in honour. People were climbing over each other to have Tohta Ahun take a bite from a round of their bread. The owner of such bread would joyfully tuck the remainder away inside his jacket. Why was this? Because if someone's wife was slow to conceive, the eating of bread bitten by such a performer could assist them to become pregnant.

Although the story could be accused of fostering Han cultural stereotypes of the Uyghur, it also contains a particularly vivid metaphorical reference to Han colonialism, past and present. Zunun introduces the character called the “mad Young Master”,⁴¹⁷ and through this figure he presents the Uyghur experience of oppressive power and privilege being handed down from Han father to son, regardless of merit.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid, p.64.

⁴¹⁷ “*Sarang Shoye*” The name combines the Uyghur “*sarang*” [mad] with the Mandarin term “*Shaoye*” [young master]. Zunun often uses Chinese titles to indicate that an individual is Han.

In the midst of this excitement, two armed soldiers on horseback came to take him away. Why did this happen? The *Dotai*⁴¹⁸ [Governor] of the Ili district had a son who was cruel and licentious. He pressed some local young people into becoming a troop of private soldiers, dressing them in a ridiculous uniform, to form a personal army which he used to create violence and disorder in the district. For this reason he was known as “The Mad Young Master”. The two soldiers belonged to him. He wanted to meet Tohta Ahun, but people did not want him to go. Hashim Haji quietened the crowd, saying they should listen to what the soldiers had to say.

One of the soldiers said the Mad Young Master wanted to meet him and give him some presents. Hashim Haji said, “If we don't let Tohta Ahun go, the Young Master will stop us performing here. So we have to let him go.”⁴¹⁹

The Mad Young Master is a bully who uses or organises a gang of local youth who create violence and disorder (perhaps like some modern “militia” operations). However, the tale does not simply record these acts of oppression. It employs satire to depict a young Han overlord who, in spite of his power and privilege over the Uyghurs, does not understand them, and is easily persuaded to fear them. These points are illustrated in an anecdotal passage in this story:

I went along with the crowd. Young Master was in a tea room. He touched Tohta Ahun in various places, asked for a needle, and stabbed Tohta Ahun in the middle finger with it. Tohta Ahun gave a yell and began to bleed. Mad Young Master laughed and said,

"Oh, he's a living person... I had thought he must be a ghost!"

Hashim Haji said to the Young Master, with utmost respect,

"He is the son of Haji Merdan, and disciple of Hazireti Ali Shahi Merdan".

Young Master asked “Who is this Ali Shahi Merdan?”

⁴¹⁸ The Mandarin pronunciation is of this term is “daotai”, and the title is of Qing dynasty origin.

⁴¹⁹ *Hatireler*, op.cit., p.68.

Someone who was angry with the Young Master's bullying said,
 “Ali is the kind of hero who could cut a mountain in two with his *zulpukar*”.

Young Master asked “What is a *zulpukar*?”

The same man answered, “A *zulpukar* is the kind of sword that with one shake can become forty *gez*⁴²⁰ long, and with one stroke can kill forty enemies”.

The Young Master said, “Oh, so he is an apprentice immortal [*shenxian de dizhi*⁴²¹]!” He believed that this explained how Tohta Ahun could give such an impressive performance.⁴²²

The Uyghurs are shown here as being empowered and capable of exploiting the ignorance of the oppressors to create further mystification which induces fear and confusion in their enemy. Mad Young Master, however, is shown as ignorant of the culture of the Uyghurs among whom he is living, and keen to accept irrational explanations to explain the impressive achievements of the Uyghur (Tohta Ahun) rather than recognising him as a performer who has earned respect through his own efforts and qualities.

In the middle of his description of the tightrope walker's performance itself, Zunun makes a deliberate point of deviating from the main narrative to introduce a new element: a side-event that illustrates how an absorbing drama can also be the occasion for exploitation and loss. Zunun makes clear that he wants particular attention paid to this anecdote:

Next day we were keen to see the tightrope performance again. Tohta Ahun showed two or three different dangerous tricks... the performance created a great thrill of fear in the audience. With this event, I would like to draw attention to another event...⁴²³

⁴²⁰ *gez* is a traditional measure term – one *gez* is equal to 71 centimetres.

⁴²¹ Young Master here uses the Mandarin phrase to describe one who, through discipleship, is close to attaining the magical powers of an Immortal [*xian ren*].

⁴²² *Hatireler*, op.cit., p.68.

⁴²³ *Ibid*, p.74.

Zunun describes how an old farmer in the crowd had brought his grain to sell in the city and buy provisions. After selling his grain, he kept the money wrapped in a handkerchief. At a dramatic moment in the performance, when the performer hangs upside down from the rope, this farmer is so alarmed that he crosses his hands on his chest and calls “My god!” [*Yah Allah!*] Seizing this opportunity, a rogue steals the farmer’s money from his pocket. When the old man discovers his loss, he begins to cry and beat himself in distress.⁴²⁴

In this anecdote we may see a suggestion that cultural revival, though in itself valuable and fascinating, also may bring risks. The old man is robbed while his concentration is distracted by the cultural performance. The 1980s in Xinjiang (and throughout China) might be seen as times when revival of cultural freedoms were fascinating many people, but this was also accompanied by a rising wave of personal opportunism, especially associated with the private acquisition by officials (or other opportunists) of the assets accumulated in public enterprises by the collective efforts of the employees. The old farmer’s loss of his money, which was his reward for a long period of hard work, occurs when he is distracted by a dramatic performance that has no economic value to him.⁴²⁵ Given Zunun’s direct word drawing the reader’s attention to this event, I suggest that he had a point to make with it.

Zunun’s positive experience of witnessing the performance is somewhat undercut, however, by the reaction of the colonial authorities,⁴²⁶ who soon decide that these performances are a threat to social order. The scene is very familiar to Uyghurs of every generation:

⁴²⁴ Ibid.

⁴²⁵ He Qinglian writes in “China’s Pitfalls” regarding the abuse of power during China’s process of economic restructuring. In an interview in the *New York Times* of 6 November 1998, she refers to the widening chasm between rich and poor, and the wholesale plunder of state property that is one of the outcomes of China’s effort to shift from a state-run economy to a market economy. A parallel may be seen between the theft of public accumulated wealth (stored in state property) and theft of the old peasant’s bundle of cash in Zunun’s story.

⁴²⁶ As this story is set in Ili during Zunun’s childhood, the authorities were Chinese.

Tohta Ahun's performance was followed on another occasion by another performer. But then the government stopped such performances, because they were creating too much of a stir among the Uyghur people.⁴²⁷

Zunun records that there were no more such performances for “about ten years”. It is probably no coincidence that this period is of the same duration as the Cultural Revolution, during which Uyghur culture suffered its most severe repression. The process of cultural rehabilitation began gradually after the demise of Lin Biao in 1971, and after 1976 the repressive policies of the late Mao era were abandoned in favour of a return to policies that were more like the “Maoism” of the early 1950s.⁴²⁸ Changes were first seen in cultural and educational policies, including a more inclusive policy toward recognition of “minority” cultures. Evidence of this can be seen in the nature of material published in *Xinjiang Minzu Wenxue*,⁴²⁹ where the proportion of “minority” writers (published in Chinese translation) noticeably increased.⁴³⁰ In the 1980s, as part of the “socialist democratization” that was part of Deng Xiaoping’s drive for power, there was further impetus to “cultural revival”, including within nationalities cultures. However, this atmosphere of revival began to cool quite noticeably from as early as 1982.

In this context, the end of Zunun’s narrative of the “Tightrope Walker” makes a strong metaphorical point. After the ten-year suppression, there is a revival of the performance, but it is a pathetic disappointment.

There were no more such performances for about ten years, but then there was another one by a performer known as “Oil presser's Apprentice”. This man had been trained to perform on the tightrope when he was young, in the South. He

⁴²⁷ *Hatireler*, op.cit., p.70.

⁴²⁸ Meisner, op.cit., p.449.

⁴²⁹ *Xinjiang Minzu Wenxue*, Xinjiang Renmin Chubanshe, Urumqi, 1981:2 published translated works from nine Uyghur authors, whereas editions from 1986 and later contain usually one or even no examples of Uyghur writing, and are full of works by Chinese authors. It should be noted that in 1986 even the name was changed to *Zhongguo Xibu Wenxue* [Literature of Western China].

⁴³⁰ A similar effect may be seen in *Xinjiang Huabao*, a pictorial magazine, in which the imagery of Uyghur and other minorities acquires a dignity that distinguishes the imagery from the patronising social realist images of Maoist times (and also from the “orientalising” imagery that has been popularised since the late 1980s).

came with his equipment to the Ili district to perform, but the government did not allow him, so he sold his equipment to survive, and for some years he wandered around penniless and homeless. Eventually, he obtained a job as apprentice to an oil-presser. While doing this job, he mentioned to some people his training and expressed interest in performing again. A group of respectable local people obtained the necessary permission for him, provided money to buy equipment and lent some assistants to set up the show.

He was then able to begin putting on his act. He was over forty years old, skinny and cross-eyed. Many people were sceptical that he could perform. However, he threw himself into the task, wearing a red velvet costume, and doing all the tricks that Tohta Ahun had performed, such as walking blind-fold and tying plates to his feet, and in addition he even ran on the rope. But on the high pole, he could only achieve half of what Tohta Ahun had done.

Being older, this performer tired easily. When he came down after his show, his clothes were soaked with his sweat, and his whole body trembling on the point of collapse. People seeing him in this state would pity him - but the next day, he would start walking on the tightrope all over again.⁴³¹

There are many metaphorical elements in this short narrative. For example, it is stated that the performer named “Oil-Presser’s Apprentice” had actually been an apprentice to an oil-presser. This statement might have no particular meaning, but on the other hand, it could be seen to convey some strong metaphorical meaning. In Uyghur, as in English, the same word is often used for edible oil as for petroleum. The subject of “oil” was a very significant one in Xinjiang in the 1970s and 1980s, when Xinjiang’s significant petroleum reserves were beginning to be strongly exploited by the Chinese state. Many Uyghurs hoped that these natural resources would provide material and social benefits to the people whose land produced the wealth. Is the Oil Presser’s Apprentice a representative of those Uyghurs who hoped for such benefit? If so, it is

⁴³¹ *Hatireler*, op.cit., p.76-8.

made clear that their strenuous efforts were not going to produce the result that they hoped for, even though they would return day after day to the task of walking the tightrope. The situation described is pitiful, instead of the vigour of the earlier performance episode.

There is pathos in the scenario that on the surface celebrates Uyghur culture, but which concludes on a note of grimness and sadness. Instead of the performance rejuvenating Uyghur culture and creating a positive atmosphere of unity, we are left with the image of the star they had hoped for turning out to be a pathetic, skinny, cross-eyed performer. Past glories have faded. To some Uyghurs this might have brought to mind the Uyghur “leadership” chosen by the CCP who, despite any good intentions they might have had, were lacking both the appearance and the substance of strength and energy to cope with the dilemma (the “tightrope”) of playing to the expectations of two audiences: the CCP and the Uyghur people.

Going to the Book-reading

Zunun’s recollections of his youth frequently evince signs of nostalgia for remembered youthful experience of Uyghur culture, but the substance of the stories may equally contain messages that might stimulate a modern reader to reconsider some aspects of the past. In the story “Going to the Book-reading”, there are several important cultural references to the past, concerning the modes of popular education, the individuality of Uyghur cultural identity, and the place of Islam as a social influence in the Uyghur society of Zunun’s youth. As in many of his writings, Zunun here shows the importance of education to the Uyghur people. Education for them was not simply a matter of training in preparation for securing a better economic future, it was also a matter of prestige and pride to acquire knowledge:

When I was young one of the big mosques was known as the "Friday Mosque" [*jume mesjit*]. In this place the scholars [*ulema*] would translate and explain famous books written in Arabic and Persian. The apprentice scholars would read out the texts, and the senior scholars would provide commentary and explanation. This activity was known as the Book-reading [*kitap hanelik*]. If a scholar spoke Arabic well and would provide good explanations, he would

attract people like amber.⁴³² Countless numbers of people would come to this kind of reading, and would boast to each other of the scholarly readings they had attended, as a matter of status.⁴³³

The strong presence of Arabic and Persian influences in Uyghur culture is an important symbol of the separateness of the culture from that of China (and is one of the principal cultural arguments against the claim that East Turkistan has been part of China for two thousand years). Indeed, in Zunun's writings it is rare to find anything at all that implies any common culture or shared cultural values with China. While Zunun is obliged to remain close to the Party line on political issues, his writing consistently keeps cultural issues separate from politics as far as possible, and implies that Uyghur culture has its own integrity and independence from Han culture. Where Chinese culture is implicitly described (as for example in "Ghunchem" and "Hessen", where Chinese-language titles are used for bullying officials), it is portrayed as either alien or oppressive. This does not mean that Chinese cultural influence was entirely absent from Xinjiang, but it is significant that Zunun does not directly acknowledge any such influence.

The story "Going to the Book-reading" further presents the Uyghur people having a thirst for knowledge, and reminds Uyghur readers of the importance of the Islamic background of their culture. Where Zunun himself seemed to be consistently secularist in his earlier writings, his later writings seem to reflect a greater appreciation at least of the cultural and ethical role of Islamic institutions in traditional Uyghur society. This was permitted to some extent in the 1980s after many years of suppression. While religious institutions had to be controlled, there could be considerable tolerance of Islamic religion in particular circumstances. More than once, central authorities allowed official Islamic demonstrations in protest at published writings that were considered offensive to Islam⁴³⁴. In other writings, Zunun criticises the narrowness of

⁴³² "Amber" is used as the image here for attraction because of its properties of magnet-like attraction by static electricity when rubbed.

⁴³³ Zunun Kadir Eserleri, op.cit., p.507.

⁴³⁴ Dru C. Gladney, *Muslim Chinese: Ethnic nationalism in the Peoples' Republic of China*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1991. p.3. Gladney describes instances in 1984 and 1988 where even street demonstrations by the China Islamic Association were facilitated by police in Beijing and Shanghai.

the Islamic education of his own childhood⁴³⁵ – but in this instance, he points to the cultural and social value of the public Islamic book-reading as a stimulus to intellectual activity. He attributes these religious-based ethical discussions as having sown the seeds for his own life-long interest in intellectual and literary pursuits.

Without in any way endorsing a fundamentalist religion, in this piece Zunun shows appreciation for the institutional support for ethical debate that was, in the old society, a feature of the regular activity of the neighbourhood mosque. He shows the other side of Islamic teaching, which encourages contribution to the community, social responsibility, and charity as an important human value. In making this emphasis, he chooses to include two anecdotes that will be discussed here. Both are fables from which lessons of self-reliance and responsibility are to be drawn, encouraging the Uyghur reader toward hard work and positive action in asserting their identity as a community.

The effect of this social morality is not only to build a sense of community among Uyghurs, but also to challenge the CCP line that the only acceptable form of social cohesion is “socialist morality” is based on the organisation and philosophy of the Communist Party, which was being strongly promoted during the 1980s.

Zunun’s writing in the 1980s differs from his writings of the 1950s in its treatment of Islam. In the 1950s, religion was undergoing active suppression, and Zunun himself, as a secular intellectual as well as a political realist, rarely mentions religion during that period. The changes of the 1980s, perhaps also reflecting different perspectives developed during Zunun’s own period of persecution, resulted in some positive references to Islam beginning to appear in Zunun’s work, such as in the “The Book-reading”. Zunun describes how his father’s enthusiasm for attending these early-morning reading groups at the mosque inspired his own interest, as a child, in

⁴³⁵ “The Old School”, *Zunun Kadir Eserleri* op. cit. pp.471-88.

pursuing knowledge and following discussion.⁴³⁶ Zunun explicitly refers to the contribution of Islam to social development, and its beneficial effect on individuals' moral behaviour as well as their social and economic development.

I heard the Prophet Mohammed's saying that a good man was one who could contribute to the welfare of others, so I decided to be such a good man. When I saw a cart bogged in the mud, I would help to push it out. If anyone fell I would help them to stand up. If there was any obstacle on the pathway, stick or stone, I would move it to one side. A few times I had hurt my own toes on such obstacles....

From the book-readings I learned that a good person benefited the community, but a bad person caused loss to his community.⁴³⁷

Of particular interest is the anecdote in which the Prophet offers a destitute man a piece of rope rather than giving him food or money – the point being that positive help is something that makes a person productive and self-reliant, thus enabling independence, in contrast to negative charity that may create reliance on others. The poor man is empowered by the actions of the Prophet to achieve personal independence, rather than being content to subsist on welfare.

⁴³⁶ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., pp.507-8 “Book-readings followed the dawn prayers, and continued until the sun was well risen. My father would set out at the crack of dawn to whichever mosque was providing this activity, no matter how far it was. He loved listening to the readings, and would always find out where the readings were and who would be providing the explanations. When he returned, he would tell us all that he had heard. This made a very strong impression on me. When my father noticed how much I was interested in his talks, he said, “Although you are not yet an adolescent, since you are so interested, from tomorrow you may accompany me to the mosque to hear for yourself, directly from the scholars. You will hear marvellous words.” The next day I went with my father. We sat in the back row of the mosque, and I looked around at how others were performing their prayers [*namaz*] and followed their example until we finished the dawn prayers and the book-readings began. It was not yet full light. In front of the lectern [*mihrab*] there was a small table, and on the table a glowing lamp. The scholar set his back to the lectern and sat on the floor facing the audience with a solemn expression. The reader sat in a kneeling position with a pointing stick in his hand, and began to read the lines of the text very clearly. After he had read a few sentences, the scholar said "Hmm!", the reader stopped, and the scholar began to explain the meaning of the Arabic sentences. The great book we were listening to was the *Sehur Buhari*, a famous collection of sayings of the Prophet [*hadis*]. From that day on, I went wherever there was a book-reading.”

⁴³⁷ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op. cit., p 509.

A poor man with five young children, hearing that the Prophet was a compassionate person, came to ask him for help. He told the Prophet that his children did not have enough food or clothing. The Prophet brought four armspans of rope and gave it to him. The poor man did not understand what kind of help this was. Walking sadly on the street, he met another, wiser man. This man asked what was wrong, and the poor man, showing him the rope, said, “Look at this! I thought Mohammed was compassionate! I went to ask him for help, but he gave me this rope. My family can't eat this or wear it! Just think of it!”

The wiser man said “The Prophet is asking you to use that rope to make money to feed your family. You can go to the mountains to gather firewood, use this rope to bundle it up to bring to the town and sell for money to feed your family.”⁴³⁸

The story makes clear that it is undesirable, from the Islamic ethical point of view, to be passive and dependent. Zunun is mobilising the traditional moral teaching of Islam in order to remind his own readers of the 1980s that self-reliance may be a precondition for self-determination. As such, the statement, in pointing to self-reliance outside of the communist system, could be seen as subversive of the communist principle that all needs are to be met under the leadership of the Party.

At the Barbershop [*Satrashhkaneda*]⁴³⁹

The theme of traditional Uyghur culture continues in another of Zunun's reminiscences from this period, which concerns the status and strength of the oral literary tradition and storytelling in Uyghur traditional culture. Where the “The Book-reading” is set in the context of religion, at the mosque, “At the Barbershop” provides a contrasting secular environment, where the values and audience responses are less formal and more spontaneous. Zunun relates the wonder and joy of participating with a community of eager listeners in this ongoing process of transmitting stories to an illiterate audience, which is common to many cultures,

⁴³⁸ Ibid, pp.510-1.

⁴³⁹ Ibid, p.520.

including Uyghurs. Stories such as *Bulbul Guya* and *Jangname* (cited in Zunun's story) may have their origins elsewhere, but have become the common property of Uyghur society in the folk tradition, not belonging to any particular author. The literary writer Osman Ismayil comments that these stories reflect the Uyghur people's common understanding and their social sensibility, expressing their feelings and dreams.⁴⁴⁰ The oral storytelling passes from mouth to mouth and travels from place to place, readapting from era to era and reflecting, through change and renewal in its imagery and narrative, the concerns and experiences of the time and place.

Zunun's narrative places this story in a very strongly evoked physical environment:

Next to the Inn Gate [*Dengdervazi*] and police checkpoint [*karaulhani*] there was a small barbershop. In this shop was a barber with a goatee beard. He had a stooped back and was about fifty years old. His name was Niyaz. He had decorated his shop with all kinds of pictures, including pictures of many legendary heroes and warriors. Among them was *Bulbul Guya* – a creature with a human head on the body of a bird. This picture was large and colourful. Against the back wall of the shop was a wooden trunk and a shelf full of books of all kinds of war stories and mythology. I used this barbershop as a library. And I was not the only one to do this. All kinds of people came to the barbershop to drink tea and listen to book readings.

The ordinary working Uyghur, though illiterate, would show great interest in hearing the stories, and also give generous respect to a person who had the skill of reading.

Barber Niyaz himself was illiterate, but he was very interested in books, so he needed to listen to the reading of others. He would let no-one else touch his books, but he let me read for him. He looked forward to my arrival each day, and when I entered the shop his delicate fingers would work on the hair even

⁴⁴⁰ Osman Ismayil, *Helk Eghiz Edibiyati Hekkide Umumi Bayan*, [General Introduction to Oral Folk Literature], Xinjiang Renmin Chubanshe, Urumqi, 1998, p.210.

more energetically, indicating his joy that I had come. He would say, “Great! [*Hebelli!*], our son Bulbul Guya has arrived! Come on, let him have a seat!” He would put a tall stool in front of me and bring the book I had been reading the previous day.

“Here is the bookmark in the place where you left it yesterday. We were at a very exciting point. Bederaptar and Kemek Eayar were fighting. Start from there, son.”

I would begin to read, and he would get on with his trade. Kemek Eayar performed some somersaults and confused Bederaptar. He passed through several rows of houses and came to a place with a sign saying “Silent Angel”. He took out a box that weighed four *ser* [a small measure of weight], and that even if containing a man or a whole house would still weigh four *ser*. In a wink they captured the Silent Angel inside this box.

When I read this part, the barber's hands paused in his work. He said, “Great, great! [*Belli, Belli!*]. Good for Kemek Eayar!” Motioning with one hand in the direction of the book, he said, “Come on, come on! Read! What happens next?” He came eagerly in front of me to encourage me to read more quickly. The book I was reading was *Jamshed*, a collection of war stories.

This story suggests the importance given to scholars in Uyghur society. Famous scholars from history are given an almost mythical status and respect by even the uneducated Uyghurs.

Other books included the ballad of Rustam, *Aba Mussallim*, and *Kehirman Katil* [The Book of Heroes], in books the size of pillows. Among them some others interested me, such as *Chahar Dervus*, *Tut Name*, *Ming Bir Kece* [The Thousand and One Nights]. Those ones contained not just war stories, but magic and mystery. For example, in the book *Ibni Sina*, that famous scholar is described not as a historical figure, but as a great magician, in order to turn him into a myth.⁴⁴¹ At the time I was reading this book I also did not

⁴⁴¹ Ibid, p.134. Ibn Sina is the scholar famous in the West as Avicenna – particularly for his historical and scientific writings.

recognise him as a scholar, but thought of him as a magician. Barber Niyaz also very much enjoyed listening to this book. Because of this, when I finished that book I said to him, “After today I want to read *Abu Ali Ibni Sina* again”. The barber said with delight, “Do that, son! I’ll put rock sugar (*navat*) in your mouth!”, and he gave me a piece of rock sugar. I began to re-read the book.⁴⁴²

Zunun selects anecdotes that highlight the value placed upon the gaining of knowledge, and the willingness of people to sacrifice and endure great hardship in order to acquire it. He relates a legendary episode in Abu Sina’s quest for knowledge, where he arranges to be shut up with his brother for a whole year in a magical cave in Jerusalem, full of books, in order to read and gain special knowledge.⁴⁴³

“At the Barbershop” ends in a way which both echoes a common theme in communist propaganda, but also, in this special circumstance, implicitly denies it. He records that “After the Revolution of April 1933, we were able to read newspapers and magazines at the library. Before that time, we could only listen to stories of war at the barber’s or the cobbler’s.” Writing in the 1980s, his readers would have been used to reading time after time how things had improved “After Liberation” in 1949. But the time Zunun cites is the time of the First East Turkistan Republic revolution of 1933, which had nothing to do with China’s 1949 “Liberation”. In fact, the establishment of libraries in Ili in 1933 could have been under the Soviet-influenced programs associated with Sheng Shicai, which occurred in some parts of Turkistan at the same time as the first East Turkistan Republic was being established in Kashgar and other places.

⁴⁴² *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p 522.

⁴⁴³ *Ibid*, p 523-4. In this story retold by Zunun, Ibn Sina and his brother went to Jerusalem [*Kuddus*] in search of knowledge. They hear of a magic cave where the prophet David stored all his library before he died, and which opens only for one day of each year. The brothers prepare provisions of fried doughballs and candles, and hide in the cave so that they can spend an entire year absorbing the knowledge, then return to their native land.

The *Bahkshi* (Shaman) Woman [*Chokan Bahkshi*]⁴⁴⁴

On the question of distinguishing Uyghur culture from general Chinese culture, issues arise concerning the definition of “otherness”, on both sides. On the one hand, it could serve the purposes of the Chinese authorities to emphasize the otherness of Uyghurs in a form of “orientalisation”, as this could reinforce their claim to be bringing “progress” to Xinjiang. On the other hand, it could also be of value to Uyghurs to reinforce their own separateness from Han culture, as a means to assert their position in the power relationship between Han and Uyghur. This situation is noted as being a common feature of colonial relationships, and being both complex and ambivalent.⁴⁴⁵

In “The Bahkshi Woman”, Zunun portrays a multi-layered characterisation of Uyghur culture: shamanism, Manichaeism, Islamic tradition, and modernity. There is, on the one hand, a depiction of a distinctive cultural practice which reinforces the Han view of Uyghur “otherness”, and may well satisfy some Chinese preconceptions that Uyghur culture is “backward” and that the Han are doing Uyghurs a favour by seeking to “improve” Uyghur culture.. On the other hand, the Uyghur reader would find in this story a reclamation of Uyghur culture that had been suppressed over the long period of CCP government. Zunun’s treatment of the *bahkshi* woman shows much positive sentiment toward her social contribution to Uyghur society. At the same time, he does not leave the story as a depiction of Uyghurs as being captive to a primitive blind faith in traditional folk beliefs. He is very deliberate in adding a scientific explanation in modern psychological terms of the effects of the *bahkshi* woman’s performance on her audience, and on the patient. Zunun’s purpose in this may be to remind readers that the Uyghur are not as backward as they might be portrayed by the Han, but that they are a progressive people who value knowledge from all sources.

The oldest religious influences in Uyghur culture are the persistent elements of Shamanism, to which Zunun makes reference on many occasions. The shaman's main

⁴⁴⁴ Zunun Kadir Eserleri, op.cit., p.565. Translation in Appendix 8.

⁴⁴⁵ Clifford and Marcus, *Writing Culture*, op.cit., p.9.

functions are healing and divination, both often employing “spirit possession” or astral travelling by the shaman's spirit to a heaven or an underworld. A recent encyclopedia entry asserts that the term “shaman” is of Turkic origin.⁴⁴⁶ The name *bahkshi* is used in Uyghur to denote a shaman. Barthold suggests that the term is of Sanskrit origin, and originally indicated both Buddhist hermits and Uyghur scribes.⁴⁴⁷ Another suggestion is that it is a Tang-era borrowing from the Chinese *boshi* [court academician]. It was certainly a term well-known in the Mongol empire, as the man Kokochu (one of Chinggis Khan's closest associates) who was renowned as a sage with spiritual powers, was “honoured in accord with the manner of a *bahkshi*” by Chinggis Khan himself.⁴⁴⁸

The story is presented as a reminiscence from Zunun's childhood, which places it in the early period of the Chinese Republic - and a period when Uyghur culture was beginning to experience the first signs of modernism. The woman in this story lives in a culture that shows residual elements of a shamanistic and Manichean past, overlaid with Islamic tradition and modernity. Her skills relate to the externality of power in the universe, and she upholds the shamanic tradition of seeking transformation by going beyond the normal social limitations. Zunun's description of her begins with a powerful physical presence: “The *bahkshi* woman was a very beautiful woman. She had beautiful big eyes, strong eyebrows, long eyelashes, milky white skin, was of middle height, and around thirty years old”.⁴⁴⁹ The story tells of her performing in a healing ceremony, where she begins her spirit dance (*pire oyun*) ritual with an assertion of authority over the entire assembled group, as well as the sick individual she has come to cure. The ritual is accompanied by a set form of music, the *pire mukam*.

⁴⁴⁶ Funk and Wagnall (eds), *Microsoft Encarta Multimedia Encyclopedia*, 1994, says “The English term 'shaman' is itself derived from a Tungusic (Turkic) root found in Siberian languages, with the meaning of 'he who knows'.”

⁴⁴⁷ Wilhelm Barthold, *Turkestan down to the Mongol Invasion*, (3rd edition), translated and edited by T. Minorsky and C. E. Bosworth, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, New Delhi 1992, p.51. The suggested Sanskrit term is *bhikshu* (Buddhist monk).

⁴⁴⁸ Caroline Humphrey, “Shamanic Practices and the State in Northern Asia: Views from the Centre and the Periphery”, in Nicholas Thomas and C. Humphrey (eds), *Shamanism, History and the State*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1994, p.202.

⁴⁴⁹ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.565.

At the beginning of the spirit dance, the *pire mukam* began. When the singing finished, the *avush* rhythmic dance music began. She spread out her long hair, and her white silk dress hung down to the ankles. She began to dance around the centre pole (*tug*). As she spun around, her silk dress floated up and the hem reached out to touch the people sitting around the room. Her *bahkshi* skill bewitched everyone, her long black hair floating over her white floating silk dress and her high breasts, long fluttering eyelashes, bewitching eyes piercing through her eyelashes. As she spun, her beautiful figure and fair face showing through her tossing and flying black hair made one think of a legendary princess. Her dance was exuberant and exquisite. Many young men were unable to tear themselves away, and hung around the building where she was conducting the spirit dance. But the *bahkshi* woman paid no attention to those admirers who hung around her like moths around a flame. For this reason, she did not permit any lascivious or ill-behaved young men to come close to the house where she was conducting the spirit dance. She would only allow people of good moral character, non-drinkers who prayed five times day, faithful men, women and children like myself.

The shaman conducts her ritual with authority and discipline, and in particular she ensures that her practices reflect the chaste behaviour that Uyghur Islamic tradition expected of women. Zunun is explicit in pointing out that this *bahkshi* woman, in spite of her sensuous dancing as described above, is careful to remain chaste.⁴⁵⁰ In his description she is no charlatan and does not exploit people with deception. In her hybrid of shamanistic and Islamic cultures, she offers curative and therapeutic services to needy people. However, the sensuous nature of her dance is always on the border of eroticism.

Sometimes the *bahkshi's* beautiful dancing would bring erotic images into the minds of some watchers. For example, she would make gestures with her dance such as spreading her two arms wide open and bring them together again,

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid: The *bahkshi* woman chooses two blind men to play the *dap* [drum] and sing the *gazel* [lyric poems] while she dances, thus conforming to the Islamic morals that a woman should not dance in front of men.

symbolizing the gathering of something and giving back again. This represented gathering up the disease afflicting the sick person, and giving it back to the spirits.⁴⁵¹

The *bahkshi*'s ritual comes from the traditional past of the Uyghur people. There was a time when we believed in Shamanism. Her dance, apart from providing appreciation and enjoyment for people, also induced a magical, fearful environment for the conduct of rituals. Through this, she presented more than an ordinary dancer - she represented someone who knew the unknown, an authoritative, magical person.⁴⁵²

The *bahkshi* woman's ritual included a ceremony called Lighting the Torch (*Chirak Yekish*), in which the patient would be induced to look into the flame of a torch and visualise their illness in the form of monsters that the *bahkshi* woman would then banish from the place.⁴⁵³ Zunun notes the scientific and psychological basis for this ritual:

At this point, what kind of magic is the *bahkshi* performing? Through detailed visualisation and description, she is hypnotizing the sick person. By inviting the demons and jinns, who are known to her, into the darkened room, then questioning them, she creates an authority for herself which persuades

⁴⁵¹ Abdukerim Rahman, *Uyghur Folklori hekhide bayan* [Introduction to Uyghur Folklore], Xinjiang Daxue Neshriyati, Urumqi, 1989, p.481. In the shamanistic system there are good and bad spirits. A shaman may banish bad spirits in order to ensure that good spirits and good deeds continue to be present.

⁴⁵² Ibid.

⁴⁵³ Ibid, p 567. "All lights in the house would be extinguished. A large *nokcha* [torch made of a stick wrapped in oil-soaked cotton or rags] would be lit. The *bahkshi* would bring this before the sick person and ask them to look into the flame. The sick person would gaze into the flame with full concentration. The *bahkshi* would draw attention to a miraculous sight: "Look, did you see the piebald dog [*ala isht*] climbing over the wall, coming towards you? With tangled fur, a big brindle dog with its tail erect and its teeth showing, looking viciously at you. Do you see it?" The patient, without moving his gaze from the flame, would say "Yes, I see it."

"Now do you see in that corner back by the wall, a yellow-haired woman with hair awry, fire sparking from her red eyes, looking at you smilingly?"

"Yes, I see it" the patient would say.

"These are the devils and jinns that gave you the disease."

Then the *bahkshi* would hold the daggers and shout "Go away! Get out of this house! If you don't I will stab you". The *bahkshi* would stare around with eyes flashing and mouth foaming with anger.

the patient to see what the *bahkshi* is describing. The whole room is filled with solemnity and a sense of fear, and the *bahkshi*'s appearance adds even more solemnity to it. The audience in the room truly begin to believe that the *bahkshi* is in contact with jinns and demons.⁴⁵⁴

The *bahkshi*'s ritual continues with the patient required to circle around the central pillar until tired, when the *bahkshi* would again dance to the drumbeat, poking the patient with the point of a dagger to further exorcise the demons.⁴⁵⁵ Then she would involve the audience in calling upon Allah's intervention to help the patient, as the shamanistic practice is fully absorbed into the monotheistic Islamic theology of a merciful, God:⁴⁵⁶

She would hold the dagger in one hand and a whip in the other. She shook her whip, coming close to the children sitting in the front of the crowd, and pointing with her dagger and her whip would shout to us "Call on Allah!" She lashed the air above us, and we would call out "Allah!" in fear. If we did not shout strongly enough, she might touch us lightly with her whip. After that we would shout as mightily as we could. Once I was staring at the *bahkshi*'s flashing eyes and shining dagger, feeling she could poke me with it at any moment, while she was shaking her whip over us. My cheek was touched by the red tassel on the end of her whip. Startled, I yelled out "Allah!" louder than any of the other children. When the spirit dance was

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid p.568.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid. "Next the *bahkshi* used a rope tied to a central pillar and had the patient hold one end of the rope and circle around the centre until tired. Then the patient would be allowed to support himself holding on to the rope attached to the pillar. Then the *bahkshi* started the dagger dance to exorcise the disease passed by the jinns and demons. For this, she used a silver dagger with two or three small bells [*kongrak*] hanging from it. Synchronized with the rhythm of the *dap*, she would gently touch the patient with the point of the dagger, place by place, starting from the head and working towards the toes, and then from the shoulders to the tips of the fingers. With each touch she would shout 'Hey! Get out! Be gone! Get back to the ruined walls, get back to the ruined mills!'"

⁴⁵⁶ In the available texts, Zunun never defines a strong personal religious position, but from time to time, particularly in the 1980s, he applies Islamic images to support either positive ethical values, or distinctive Uyghur culture (eg. in his updated version of "Gulnissa", discussed in Chapter 2).

finished, the *bahkshi* came to me. “Were you afraid, you timid thing?” she said touching my cheek affectionately.⁴⁵⁷

Here Zunun focuses on the *bahkshi*'s feminine side. He uses her to indicate a protective and kind aspect of femininity. Although she was strict with demons, jinns, and ill-mannered people, she was gentle and affectionate to the innocent. One could see a parallel between the moral role of the *bahkshi* and that of Allah the Merciful - the good will be well-treated and the unworthy will be treated harshly. Zunun's own childhood experience reinforces this response to the *bahkshi*, as he goes on to point out:

As I had lost my mother at the age of five, I was deprived of mother love, so I was always very happy to meet any woman who showed me affection. So when the affectionate hand of the beautiful *bahkshi* woman touched my cheek, I felt caressed all over by a glow of warm mother's love. I looked on her as my mother, or more accurately, because she was quite young, as my elder sister. I used to help her to carry her drum, daggers [*henjer*], the chicken which she would pin to the wall with a dagger (but which miraculously did not die), the rope used for the pillar [*tug*], and porcelain bowls, spoons and cloth given by the household to the *bahkshi* woman together with money in payment for her services.⁴⁵⁸

Historically, most *bahkshi* are men, but Zunun writes about a *bahkshi* woman, not a *bahkshi* man. On many occasions, Zunun seems to use feminine qualities when he wishes to make general allusions to Uyghur society and its historical situation. The use of femininity here, as elsewhere in Zunun's writing, is a means to challenge state power structures.⁴⁵⁹ In “The Bahkshi Woman”, the female always maintains control of her situation. There may be in this portrayal of female strength some reflection of an idealisation of womanhood that was a feature of contemporary Chinese culture as well.

⁴⁵⁷ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.569.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁹ Most of Zunun's strong female characters are either victims or rebels. Examples discussed elsewhere in this work are the women Ghunchem, Gulnissa, Senem, Mihrivan, and Dilalem.

Sally Taylor Lieberman has noted that in China's early modernist period, following the May 4th Movement (1919),

...an idealized maternal figure became a staple of China's new literature... her image, voice, and movement were evoked in a sentimental linguistic register. Opposite her was the child, usually male: the infant: a new, as yet unformed being unfolding within her embrace; the schoolboy making his first forays into the world; or the adult-child yearning for, and sometimes finding, solace and strength in her love... The idealization of mother represented nationalism and modernity.⁴⁶⁰

The feminine a nurturing aspect as well as a challenging aspect, which Lieberman suggests was used in Chinese modernist literature "to discover a genuine human nature that could serve as the basis for more humane social relations in a future modern society... A modern society would foster the natural development of human personality and intelligence".⁴⁶¹

It is worth noting that in this story, the males who harass the *bahkshi* are not fully men, but adolescents, who make demands without understanding responsibility. This metaphor may apply to Zunun's characteristic portrayal of relations between the Uyghur people and the Chinese state apparatus. The colonial attitude to the colonised peoples can be viewed in terms of a male-female relationship, in which the colonised peoples are ascribed stereotypical labels as being weak, impulsive, emotional, easily seduced, greedy, selfish, dependent, and dangerous. However, in Zunun's story the female is able generously to express her feminine qualities (to the young Zunun) while protecting herself against exploitation (from Haydar):

Because of this (my assistance) she would let me go with her into the spirit dance, and fed me with cream, and stroked my hair. The *bahkshi* would never let in young fellows like Haydar the Spatchcock [*juje horoz*], who was two or three years older than me. On various occasions he deliberately bumped against her

⁴⁶⁰ Lieberman, op. cit., p.19.

⁴⁶¹ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op. cit. p.569.

and hung around. Many young fellows were intrigued by her beauty, but would never dare to flirt with her or even cross her path. But some bad characters, with jealousy like those who say that the peach beyond one's reach is bitter [*kol yetmigen shaptul, achchik*], would spread rumours about the *bahkshi* woman. The *bahkshi* ignored such gossip and went on her way. The slanderers had to bite their own tongues in frustration.

Despite harassment, the *bahkshi* woman is not deterred from her role, but continues with her appointed task. In the metaphor, Uyghur culture may be seen to remain vital and active, despite harassment or distraction by an “immature” colonial power that does not appreciate its significance beyond a superficial desire for gratification. He honours this cultural heritage through a process of description that is politically acceptable in the 1980s, whereas the *bahkshi* practices would have been frowned on in earlier Communist times as unacceptably “backward”, and any published descriptions would have needed to be critical. Zunun uses his description of the *bahkshi* woman's activities to explain how this customary therapy fitted into Uyghur community life. He depicts scenes of cooperation between generations, of spiritual vitality, and of community participation for which Zunun seems to feel some nostalgia. At the same time, he avoids seeming too uncritical of the supernatural shamanistic practices, by providing a “scientific” description of how the *bahkshi* ritual actually effects people.

Grandma Perizhan and Buhem

During the 1980s, in a period of relative openness, there was some opportunity for intellectuals to explore some broader themes, on more universal issues and containing a more universalist world view. Zunun may have been influenced to some degree by this atmosphere, combined with the soul-searching that he had undergone during his exile. He refers in his brief oral memoir to “utilising classical Uyghur legends and folk tales” as raw material for his writings. In several of his folk-based stories of this period there appear themes that are more holistic and universalist than in his more social realist writings. In the process, his work touches on the layers of Uyghur culture that are

deeper than the modern era, and also older than Islam. In this, we may see a certain degree of cultural commonality with China – particularly through Buddhism.

As noted in Chapter 1, Uyghur culture has been influenced by Buddhism, Manichaeism and Christianity as well as shamanism and Islam. In the story “Grandma Perizhan” there are two accounts of orally transmitted folk tales which show evidence of a Buddhist world view. One is the story of Hizir Peygamber,⁴⁶² which presents the Buddhist notions of relative reality - the importance of perception in developing personal reality from conditioning. Hizir Peygamber⁴⁶³ is a sage who has achieved transcendental awareness, and can see the delusion of ordinary mortals and comprehend things beyond time limits. Perizhan, the storyteller, concludes her tale with the remark “So look - ordinary people's lives are short, but according to the visionary Hizir's experience, the whole situation can be known only by such an immortal as Hizir. But everyone, in their own short lives, can have some experience in their own terms”.⁴⁶⁴

Although this story is expressed with Islamic language (the Hizir), the concepts (the circle of life, transmigration of souls, the constant of changeability) can be seen to reflect the older layer of Uyghur culture, which was Buddhist and Manichean for centuries before Islam reached East Turkistan in the 10th Century.⁴⁶⁵ Because of Turkistan’s central position in the roads joining China to Europe and the Middle East (to the West), and India and Persia (to the South), the indigenous cultures were affected by every major religious movement. Buddhism was established in oasis communities of East Turkistan from at least the 1st century AD,⁴⁶⁶ and Manichaeism (as described in Chapter 1) was established as the state religion of the Uyghur Kingdom in the 8th Century, around two centuries before Islam.

⁴⁶² See Appendix 9(a).

⁴⁶³ The name “Hizir Peygamber” reflects Islamic concepts - *Hizir* is an immortal sage who offers assistance to mortals, and *Peygamber* is a prophet-messenger (the same title is applied to Mohammed).

⁴⁶⁴ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op. cit. p 533.

⁴⁶⁵ Turgun Almas, op. cit., p.327.

⁴⁶⁶ Edwin Reischauer and J.K. Fairbank, *East Asia: the Great Tradition*, Allen and Unwin, London, 1960, p.144. Kanishka, ruler of the Kushan Empire that spread from North India to the Tarim Basin, was an ardent patron of Buddhism who championed the faith in Central Asia, from where it spread into North China.

Perizhan's story "Buhem"⁴⁶⁷ reflects the Buddhist notion that all phenomena are impermanent, and impermanency reflects change.⁴⁶⁸ In early Buddhist texts, existence is regarded as a constant flux of dynamic elements [*dharmas*] that are being created, destroyed, and interacting with each other. Key philosophical ideas are that all explanations are relative and conditional, and that the application of philosophy itself is provisional and without final validity. There are three essential states of mind: the perfect purity of a Buddha; the state of a man who has achieved philosophical insight; and the state of an ordinary many who is a slave of delusion.⁴⁶⁹ Perizhan's story can be seen as depicting the wisdom of Hızir Peygamber as a legendary example of an enlightened man who has achieved philosophical insight. Perizhan relates the story after the narrator has asked her for a story of personal experience of change. "Change" in this context can be seen to refer to continuous change within the cyclic framework of the "Great Vehicle" [*mahayana*]⁴⁷⁰, which is normally depicted in Buddhism as a circle of life.⁴⁷¹ Significantly, the key repeated phrase of the story "*Hem eyin guzeret*", is of Persian derivation, and means, literally, "I am in transition". Zunun explains it as meaning that "This too will pass".

Leelshah⁴⁷²

The story "Leelshah" (1947) is a combination of different aspects of Uyghur culture, where residual cultures mix with the dominant culture. The story has a structure that runs in four distinct cycles, and it can usefully be analysed in terms of both its form and its content. This piece is on the surface simply a legend, but it contains within it the complex philosophical inheritance of Uyghur culture. It evokes Uyghur memory of older, more egalitarian shamanistic views of male and female, animals and plants,

⁴⁶⁷ Zunun Kadir Eserleri, op. cit. p.534. Translation in Appendix 9(b).

⁴⁶⁸ The name "Buhem" means "This also".

⁴⁶⁹ B.C. McKillop, "Some Reflections on Zen Buddhism", *The Journal of the Oriental Society of Australia*, Vol.2, No 2, June 1964, p.8-9.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid, p.10.

⁴⁷¹ In this story the person who can comprehend deeply and see beyond limited time is a merchant. Few cultures allow high status to merchants, but that is not the case in Uyghur culture, where the experience, wisdom, and open-mindedness of merchants seems to be culturally valued. This is consistent with the respect shown for merchants in Manichaean texts as noted by Sam Lieu: "Apostles of Light are described as 'living merchants, the preacher of light and as who (shall) come up from (a country) with the doubling of his great cargo; and the riches of his trading'." (Prof. S.N.C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in Mesopotamia and the Roman East*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1994, p.37.)

⁴⁷² Zunun Kadir Eserleri, op.cit., p.715. Translation in Appendix 9(c).

dreams, symbolic representation of ideas, and the transitory nature of all things. Some of the story's elements reflect Buddhist and Manichaeian residual aspects of Uyghur culture.

The narrative of this story shares many common elements with Zunun's versions of the story of Gerip and Senem. The birth of the hero in each case is long-awaited by a ruler longing for an heir, and the birth itself is surrounded with some mystery – Leelshah developed from a worm, and Gerip is born after the King and Gerip's father have sworn a marriage agreement after seeing an omen in the form of a pregnant doe. Gerip and Leelshah are both, in some sense, orphans, in that while Gerip is a real orphan, Leelshah is raised as an adopted son. Both, therefore, depend on someone who is not their father. This metaphor is consistent with these key figures representing the situation of the Uyghur people, separated from their natural identity. Both Gerip and Leelshah are betrothed to an appropriate partner whom they love, but in both cases a wicked vezir to the father King plots to substitute his own son to usurp the hand of the princess (Senem, and Ipargul). These marriages, which are the major theme and objective of the narratives, both seem to represent the union of Uyghur people with their deserved future, which includes self-determination and cultural preservation.⁴⁷³

In each of the two stories, a foreign woman (Remzigul in "Leelshah" and Dilalem in "Gerip and Senem") offers love to the hero, and when that is not fulfilled, she nonetheless honourably supports the union of the true lovers. Both narratives also contain loyal, nurturing wetnurses and wise, cautious officials or sages who help the heroes overcome evil promoted by corrupt, self-seeking officials. Similarly, the link between education and fulfilment is portrayed in both narratives, as the pairs of lovers study together in the court schools [*medrese*]. The pairs of lovers also have to overcome substantial hardships, including exile, in order to fulfil their destiny. To overcome it, they need to apply hard work and mental curiosity, and in both stories their efforts are rewarded, with the help of friends and allies. The story unfolds thus:

⁴⁷³ In the context of this metaphorical meaning, we may see the marriage offers of the Vezirs' sons as, in both stories, representing the promises of autonomy that accompanied incorporation of the East Turkistan regime into China, rather than the granting of genuine autonomy or self-determination.

A King has everything except children, and is worried that he has no heir. One day a servant brings him a miraculously generated little worm that is giving off a white aura [*nur*]. The King dreams that an old white-bearded man holding a set of prayer beads [*tesbih*] who advises him to nurture the worm carefully. With this care, the worm changes into a baby boy. The King calls this baby “Leelshah” from the name of the worm, and raises him as his son.

Looking for a bride for this son, the King hears of a girl called Ipargul, born in a country called Gulistan.⁴⁷⁴ This girl also had a miraculous origin. The girl’s father was the King of Gulistan. His beloved Queen Gulbanu had failed to produce an heir after 20 years of marriage, and became ill with sorrow. One morning a gardener saw a pink rose with extraordinarily good perfume and a shining aura. The gardener advises the Queen “Press the rose against your breast, and I hope it will ease your sorrow!”. With this, Gulbanu went to sleep, and dreamed of a wise white-bearded old man who tells her the flower is a symbol of new life and, if nurtured, would have the effect of transforming the Queen herself into the baby that she so much desired. Following these instructions, the Queen turns into a baby girl called Ipargul [Fragrant Rose].

Leelshah's father sends his chief minister [*og kol vezir*] to ask the King of Gulistan for Ipargul's hand in marriage for his son, and the King agrees to the marriage.⁴⁷⁵ However, the vezir seeks a way to have Ipargul marry his own son, by sending the son, disguised as Leelshah, to meet Ipargul and propose marriage. The vezir plots to kill the King and Leelshah, and get hold of the royal seal. He poisons the King, who dies, then the vezir declares himself King, and issues orders for the arrest and execution of Leelshah. Under his rule, the kingdom becomes corrupt.

⁴⁷⁴ “Gulistan”, or “Land of Roses”, is a term commonly used in central asian literature to describe an earthly paradise. Sherpidin Omer (op. cit. vol.2, p.954.) says an epic poem “Gulistan” was translated into Uyghur in the 14th Century by the poet Seidin, based on a poem of the Turkish poet Mevlana Ghazi Mahsun. Eysa Yusup, *Aksuda 1945 yil*, [Aksu in the year 1945], Xinjiang Yashlar-Osmurler Neshriyati, [Xinjiang Youth Publishing House], Urumqi, 1988, p.328.) says the image of Gulistan was also used by the contemporary poet Lutpulla Mutellib (see Chapter 7) in his poem “*Uchkunlar Marshi*”, in which Gulistan represents the bright future of the Uyghur homeland.

⁴⁷⁵ Ipargul does not have a mother, as she is herself the transmigrated form of the childless Queen who had longed for a baby.

Leelshah had a clever wetnurse who had brought him up and was also his mother's closest friend. Finding that the King has been poisoned, they flee into exile to escape the bad vezir (who is now King). They arrive in the garden city of Gulistan. Leelshah goes ahead to investigate, and comes across Ipargul and falls in love with her. He contrives to join the royal school where she is being educated.

Leelshah's home country has been corrupted by the bad vezir (who has made himself King) and his cronies. This bad king dresses his own son as Leelshah, and comes to ask Ipargul to marry the false Leelshah, his son. The King of Gulistan (Ipargul's father) is suspicious of the suitor who has come seeking his daughter's hand (that is, the vezir's son disguised as Leelshah). He therefore arranges that the young man and his daughter should meet before the Friday prayers. He plans a competition before the wedding to include martial arts, culture, tradition, etiquette, philosophy and logic, in order to test the merit of the suitors. The King also plans that if the neighbouring King (the bad vezir) tries to force the issue, the genuine lovers would have a chance to escape to another country. Ipargul realises her suitor is not the real Leelshah. However, under threat from the bad King (vezir) to enslave the people of Gulistan by force, the King of Gulistan agrees out of fear to let the marriage with the false Leelshah proceed. However, the true lovers escape.

The escaping lovers arrive at a beautiful big green city, and Leelshah again goes ahead to investigate. He goes to the butcher shop to buy provisions, but the butcher happens to be a sorcerer, who immediately turns Leelshah into a ram (this sorcerer is a slave trader who turns young strangers into rams to sell them at a profit as slaves). The next morning Ipargul, realising that Leelshah has not returned, goes to look for Leelshah dressed (for safety) as a man and calling herself Leelshah. Having lost her horse, she takes refuge with a halva-maker. Her appearance and manner (still in disguise as Leelshah) causes the halva business to prosper. The local King has a daughter, Remzigul, who hears so much of this new young man that she is attracted to him. By digging a tunnel from the palace to the shop, she is able to establish a relationship with Leelshah (that is, the disguised Ipargul).

In this land is a wise Vezir who implements the King's justice by going out at night dressed as a commoner and mixing with the people, aiding the disadvantaged and punishing the bullies and the corrupt. This wise Vezir discovers the relationship between Leelsha and Remzigul. The King is angry but on the wise vezir's advice he permits the Princess to marry "Leelshah". After the wedding, the distressed Remzigul demands an explanation from Leelsha (Ipargul) what is the situation. Leelshah (Ipargul) says that she/he will tell the truth, on condition that she/he can be King for seven days, and after seven days return the power to the King. The King agrees.

Ipargul, acting as Leelshah acting as King, has all the people and animals parade before her. When the butcher and his ram (the true Leelshah) are brought before him, the ram cries human tears. Under threat of death, the butcher sorcerer is forced to change the ram back into Leelshah. Ipargul reverts to her female clothes. The King decides that Leelsha will be King, Ipargul will be First Queen, and Remzigul will be Second Queen. Ipargul and Remzigul become the King's Ministers.

Leelshah plans with his wisest advisers and defeats the bad King in his own homeland, and puts him to death. He makes his wise vezir King of that place. Leelsha returns to Gulistan, and rules the country with justice, and shares his happiness with his citizens.⁴⁷⁶

"Leelshah", like many other of Zunun's stories, is rich in historical and sociopolitical references. The particular feature of this story is its unusual richness in residual cultural imagery. The formal elements of "Leelshah" include associations with imagery that is shamanistic (animals and plants), Buddhist (impermanence and change), Manichaeian (conflict of light and darkness) and Islamic (Friday prayers, prayer beads [*tesbih*], the number seven, the struggle against evil [*jihad*]). In addition there are references to Uyghur cultural concepts (the significant number forty).

⁴⁷⁶ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op. cit., p.748.

The main narrative contains four main elements:

1. The miraculous birth of Leelshah (from the worm) and Ipargul (from the rose), in response to special nurturing by the King and Queen of each kingdom.
2. The plotting by a bad vezir to separate the lovers and take over Leelshah's kingdom, and Leelshah's exile.
3. The plot of the bad vezir, now King, to marry his son to Ipargul to take over Gulistan.
4. The danger, exploitation and transformation faced by Leelshah and Ipargul before they can recover their birthrights through hardship and perseverance.

The first theme, concerning reincarnation and rebirth, may reflect the Buddhist element of Uyghur culture. The second and third themes, focussing on the struggle between the forces of good and evil, recall Manichaeism. Although the fourth theme contains elements that are common to many cultures and philosophies (for example – that perseverance and courage are rewarded) there are also elements here that link this story to the Manichaeism myth of the war between good and evil forces.⁴⁷⁷ We can also find ancient sources for the concept of change or transformation. Uyghur culture, particularly the Tarim Basin places such as Turpan, was a cultural bridge between East and West, ensuring that the concept of change was deeply entrenched in Uyghur experience, and the evidence from manuscripts found in East Turkistan is that Buddhist and Manichaeism ideas were borrowed, absorbed and incorporated into folk culture through all the historic periods.⁴⁷⁸ Although the period of official Manichaeism in the Uyghur Kingdom was not very long, it was very significant in the establishment of a distinct Uyghur culture based upon settled and cosmopolitan life. After the 2nd Uyghur Empire (the Gokturk state) was established by Kutluk Bilge Kagan with its capital at Ordu Balik, the next ruler Boghu Khan (759AD) adopted and proclaimed the religion of Mani as his state religion, supported by a substantial Sogdian influence at his court.⁴⁷⁹

⁴⁷⁷ Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road: Gnostic Texts from Central Asia*, (Iranian Texts on Eschatology translated and presented), Harper, San Francisco 1993, p.244-45.

⁴⁷⁸ Klimkeit, op. cit., p 311: "...stories of Buddhist India must have been a special source of inspiration for the Turkish Manichaeans. We know that they employed various Buddhist stories for their own purposes"

⁴⁷⁹ Dr Hassan Ali Kasir (ed) Muzaffer Tashurek, *Türk Tarih Dersleri* [Readings in Turkish History], Denge Publishing, Istanbul, 1996, p.60.

Texts recovered from the Turfan region show that the eschatology and cosmology of Manichaeism were influential in Uyghur thinking and literature over a very long period.⁴⁸⁰ It is said to have survived among the Uyghurs for a thousand years after it had been stamped out as a “Christian heresy” in the West.⁴⁸¹ Islam spread into East Turkistan from the West in the 10th Century, but did not totally displace the religious and mythic ideas that were already there.

In narrative elements of the Leelshah story we can see some elements that may reflect eschatological myths in the Manichaean texts that circulated in Uyghur lands. I see particular parallels with a fragment known as “The two great principles of the *Sabuhragan*”⁴⁸² and “The collapse of the Cosmos”.⁴⁸³ This element of the Cosmic Drama central to Manichaean thinking focuses on renewal, which we can see reflected

⁴⁸⁰ Klimkeit, op. cit., p.225: “(Mani’s) eschatological words and images had a far-reaching effect on people in Central Asia, even beyond the Manichaean Church, leaving its mark both on secular literature as well as on Buddhist thought and imagery”.

⁴⁸¹ James M Robinson, “Preface” in Klimkeit, op. cit., p.xiv.

⁴⁸² Klimkeit, op. cit., p.244: “Then it will be the time of the Renewal of the cosmos of earth and heaven. And from the cosmos they will cause [the dead] to rise, and the righteous ones will ascend to [Paradise]. And the animals and trees and winged birds and water creatures and reptiles of the earth will disappear from the earth and go to [Hell].

Then wind, water and fire will be removed from that lowest earth, on which that House-Lord and the Wind-Raising God (the King of Glory) are standing. And that New World and the prison of the demons, which the New World-Creating God (the Great Builder) has erected will be fastened [to Paradise] and made fast...

And when that radiance and beauty of the gods rises up, then darkness will cover the whole world from the highest heaven to the lowest earth. And the sheath and arrangement of it (the cosmos, the old world) will become slack.

Then Mihryad (the living Spirit) will descend from the chariot of the Sun to the cosmos and a call will resound. And the gods who, in the different heavens, are lord of the house, lord of the village, lord of the tribe, lord of the border guard (the five sons of the Living Spirit) and vanquishers of demons, and who hold the world in order and vanquish Az and Ahriman, the demons, she-devils, demons of wrath, monster demons and archdemons...”

⁴⁸³ Ibid: “Then that House-Lord God who stands on the lower earth and holds the earths in order, that Wind-Raising God with him who raises up wind, waters, fire (the Kings of Glory) and the Village-Lord God ... with their helpers, will all proceed to Paradise. Then the earths will all collapse, one upon the other, down onto those four lower layers, the prison of the demons.

And the God in Female Form (the Mother) of God Ohrizd, will appear from the chariot of the Sun and look upon the heavens. And that Lord of the Land... and the gods had been struck down by Az and Ahriman and the male and female demons, they too in Paradise will again become as whole and like as their first creation by the God Ohrmizd, when they had not yet been struck down by Az and the demons. And that World-Bearing God who keeps the earths and the heavens well ordered leads them up to Paradise. Then the ten heavens and the one revolving circle of the zodiac with climes, thrones, houses and villages, tribes and lands, regions, guards and gates, months, days, double hours and the four earths, the prison of the demons and the upper earths with thrones and climes, mountains and valleys and excavated canals, and Hell, with Az and Lust, Ahriman and the male and female demons, witches, demons of wrath, monster demons and archdemons [when they are all] assembled and [imprisoned] therein, (then) the earths will all collapse.”

in many aspects of the Leelshah story. The births of both Leelshah and Ipargul are miraculous renewals, in which human life is created from a worm or a rose through the intervention of human love.⁴⁸⁴ The cited texts describe a renewal of the cosmos of earth and heaven, in which the righteous are rewarded. In the case of Leelshah, spiritual significance of the baby boy is emphasized by reference to the a miraculous light shining from his forehead⁴⁸⁵ (the term used is *nur*, which is the term used for a spiritual aura in Islam as well as in Manichaeism, equivalent to the Christian “halo”).

In the Manichaean eschatological scheme, there is separation of light from darkness, with light ascending with the righteous ones to heaven, while the earth is left in darkness. In Leelshah the bad vezir represents a “force of darkness”, who contributes to the collapse of all that is good in the Kingdom once Leelshah and his virtuous family have been displaced. The old text says “..the arrangement of the cosmos, the old world, will become slack”.⁴⁸⁶ The myth also refers to a significant female principle (the God in Female Form) who is the mother of the God Ohrmizd, who appears from the chariot of the sun.⁴⁸⁷ Leelshah’s story is in fact driven mostly by the intervention of females, namely Ipargul (who dresses as Leelshah and takes over his role almost until the end of the narrative), the old halva-selling woman (who provides sanctuary to Ipargul/Leelshah at the darkest time in the narrative), and Princess Remzigul (who offers love to Leelshah, and contributes to his salvation by harnessing the authority of her father, the King). It is through these female spirits that Leelshah is recovered and the spell bewitching him is broken.

The resolution of the narrative in a restored unity can also be related to the emphasis on reunion in the Manichaean myth: “(The Mother) and (the major righteous figures) they too in Paradise will again become as whole, and like their first creation...”⁴⁸⁸

⁴⁸⁴ Suffering Queen Gulbanu, through wisdom (she dreams of an old man offering her advice to nurture the weak) comes to nurture the special rose, and she also treats her servant gardener, an old woman, as her own mother. Through doing this, she also attains her own purpose and desire - rebirth as Ipargul. These two parts of the story reflect both shamanism and Buddhism.

⁴⁸⁵ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op. cit., p.717.

⁴⁸⁶ Klimkeit, op. cit., p.244.

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p.245.

⁴⁸⁸ *Ibid*.

Leelshah's story is a further example of Zunun's consistent commitment to positive action as an ethical virtue. The players are not passive or content to put up with their loss and suffering, but active seek solutions, find allies, and overcome difficulties created by evil forces. This positivism can be seen to be based in the final layer of Uyghur tradition: Islam. Where Zunun clearly rebelled against certain conservative aspects of traditional Uyghur Islamic practice (for example in his critical recollection of "The Old School" discussed in Chapter 4) he also makes positive reference to practical Islamic ethics in other stories such as "Going to the Bookreading".⁴⁸⁹ Here, the determined struggle for justice can be seen to relate to the Islamic virtues of aiding the poor and weak (for example, the "worm" that is adopted by the King), and of the struggle for justice, known as *jihad*. In this context, it is important to recall that *jihad* is only holy if it is truly just, and in Islamic teaching it is circumscribed by many ethical restraints (although the term is often abused for political purposes).⁴⁹⁰

The Leelshah story can also be interpreted in socio-political terms. From this viewpoint, Zunun may be reflecting, in Leelshah, the weak position of the Uyghur people in recent times. He may be referring to stronger powers that ought extend a nurturing hand to preserve the Uyghur nation and allow for the possibility of rebirth. In doing so, they would be acting in accordance with the cosmic rule.

At the political level, the plotting of the bad vezir/King against Leelshah's and Ipargul's fathers may represent the political experience of Uyghurs, in which hopes for self-determination came to nothing. It is particularly interesting to note that Leelshah and Ipargul, while travelling in exile, come to a "big green city". Green can be seen as a colour of Islam. In this city, Leelshah is victimised by a "sorcerer butcher", "a slave trader who turned young strangers into rams, to sell at a profit". This misadventure may represent the fate of some young Uyghur nationalists who became trapped into extremist positions and may have seemed less than human, accused of terrorism, but actually being victims of cunning butchers? Alternatively, the experience of dehumanisation could reflect Zunun's own history of exile and

⁴⁸⁹ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op. cit., p 507-511.

⁴⁹⁰ Ziauddin Sardar and Zafar Abbas Malik, *Muhammad*, Icon Books, Cambridge 1994, p.60.

forced labour in the Production and Construction Corps of the PRC, accused of being a revisionist, rightist and nationalist. The passage of Leelshah through the experience of being dehumanised in the form of a ram can be seen as an image of the situation of Uyghurs under total CCP control in East Turkistan. But the text does not end with this grim situation, because with assistance of courageous supporters Leelshah is restored to a fulfilling future. This happy ending may well represent Zunun's hope for a better future for the Uyghur people.

Zunun's poems

Zunun himself did not consider poetry to be his strongest literary form. In an early article he mentions that the poet, Lutpulla Mutallip,⁴⁹¹ recommended to Zunun that he concentrate on drama and prose.⁴⁹² Zunun's poetry and song lyrics show a combination of Chagatai style influences and socialist styles. Zunun mentions in his memoirs that he was influenced by Uyghur folk literature.⁴⁹³ We also note from his memoirs that he attended (Islamic) religious school, and that he studied and read classic Turkic literature such as the poetry of Navayi, Mesrep, and Abulkassim. Zunun also tells us that his writing was influenced by the great classical writers of Uyghur poetry and prose.⁴⁹⁴

Uyghur poetic forms fall generally into the broad categories of classical and popular. Zunun more commonly uses popular structural forms, but at the same time applies some imagery more associated with classical styles. A brief description of Uyghur both classical and popular poetic forms, and examples of Zunun's use of them, is in Appendix 10.

⁴⁹¹ Eminjan Ahmedi, *Uyghur Edebiyati Tarihidiki namayendirler* [Renowned individuals in Uyghur Literary History], Xinjiang Helk Neshriyati, Urumqi, 1996, pp.400-7. Lutfullah Mutallip was a popular socialist and nationalist poet, born in 1922 and executed by the KMT authorities in 1945, at the age of 23.

⁴⁹² "Bizning Mumberimiz" in *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op. cit., p.690.

⁴⁹³ In his oral memoir (Appendix 1) Zunun says "When I was a child, I used to tell stories during the long nights at the cobbler's shop of Emin Gutu: stories such *Jangname*, and *Mung Bir Keje* [The Thousand and One Nights]..

⁴⁹⁴ Zunun refers in his recorded memoir to being impressed with the works of Navayi, Heryda, Shahir, Yeshlep, Hoja Hapiz, Abdul Khasim's "Gulistan" and (in Persian) Ferdosi's "Shahname".

Some of Zunun's poetic themes develop the traditional concerns of pleasure, amusement, love, women, beauty, roses, birds and so forth. He wrote many short lyrical poems following the style of traditional oral literature as produced by ordinary, uneducated people and on everyday themes. Other poems develop the socialist themes of hard work, cooperation, attacking class enemies and building a new life. His poems rely strongly on a careful use of metre and rhyme; using a variety of metrical forms, most often applied in lines of between seven and eleven syllables. His works contain examples of the three main types of *koshak* popular poetry as described by Osman Ismayil in his contemporary text "General Explanation of Uyghur Oral Literature".⁴⁹⁵ These are the *koshak* (short verses of regular lines that may be sung to a variety of tunes); *nahsha* (connected sets of *koshaks* arranged to fit a particular tune); and *beyit* (extended rhyming verse, generally but not always in couplets, which is intended for recitation rather than song). Examples from Zunun's plays "Ghunchem", "Gulnissa" and "Toy" are considered in Appendix 10. Each of this form suits different social contexts: for example the *beyit* is normally associated with humorous dialogue.

Mesel (Fables)

Zunun made particularly strong use of the *mesel* (fable), which consists of a rhymed narrative, employing metaphorical use of animals and objects to illustrate human situations and the lessons that can be drawn from those situations. There is always an underlying meaning to be drawn from the story in a *mesel*, and Zunun's feeling for allegory and ambiguity seems to have been well suited to this literary form.

Mesel express philosophical ideas based upon popular and common experience, or arising from the lives of ordinary people, that point toward some ethical principles.⁴⁹⁶ The *Collected Works* contains several more of Zunun's poems that fit in the *mesel* category.⁴⁹⁷ All are written in verse, with a plot that illustrates a moralistic view such as

⁴⁹⁵ Osman Ismayil, op.cit.

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid, p.317.

⁴⁹⁷ *Koshchi bilen Chashkhan* [The Ploughman and the Mouse]; *Khagha bilen Kepter* [The Crow and the Pigeon]; *Yilan bilen paka* [The Snake and the Frog]; *Kakkukning Ghevilti* [The Cuckoo's Gossip]; *Hesel Here bilen kok chivin* [The Honeybee and the Blue Fly]; and *Kepinek bilen heriler* [The Butterfly and the Bees].

exposing hypocrisy, cunning, or exploitation - some with possible references to the condition of Uyghurs under colonial rule.

***Chuje bilen Senghizhan* [The Chick and the Magpie]⁴⁹⁸**

These fables are written in a metred and rhymed poetic form. I consider two examples of Zunun's *mesel* that illustrate the form and are also particularly strong in content. "The Chick and the Magpie" (*Chuje bilen Senghizhan*) presents a tale of savage bullying of a newly-hatched chick by a jealous and greedy magpie. As soon as the timid chick begins to venture into the farmyard in search of a few grains of nourishment, the magpie accuses it of threatening his authority and privilege. Saying that if this impertinence is allowed to continue, "our old domain will be scattered, I will turn to ashes in sunshine", the magpie savagely pecks the chick, leaving it covered in blood. We have seen Zunun frequently alluding in his writing to the issue of Uyghur nationalism and the fate of the East Turkistan Republic. In that context, this fable could be read as a powerful metaphor for the overwhelming and savage suppression of even the weakest Uyghur expressions of independence from Chinese authority.

This 48-line poem in free style⁴⁹⁹ portrays only two characters. They are described simply, but make a deep impression. In this *mesel*, we see Zunun using another genre to express a theme that he has used again and again in writings in almost every genre. As a fable, it leaves freedom for different readers to interpret the meaning according to their own experience. Nonetheless, the narrative of an arrogant, narcissistic power bullying an innocent, weaker party is unmistakable. For Zunun's readers, under Chinese colonial rule, the metaphor would be very consistently read as a reference to their daily experience of these colonial conditions. The special character of the *mesel*, for example when compared with a serious drama or other genre, is that the situation is described with satire and exaggeration, allowing satirical humour to have its effect in conveying the underlying message.

⁴⁹⁸ Zunun Kadir Eserleri, op. cit., p.701. Text and translation in Appendix 11(a).

⁴⁹⁹ The lines have between seven and fourteen syllables, generally in rhyming couplets, but also with two cases of triplets and two four-line rhyme sets.

Sunggülügüch bilen Bulbul [The Drain and the Nightingale]⁵⁰⁰

The Drain and the Nightingale [*Sunggülügüch bilen Bulbul*] is another *mesel*⁵⁰¹ which seems to present a metaphorical tale that can be identified with contemporary political events concerning the relation of Uyghurs and Chinese. In the “The Drain and the Nightingale”, I would suggest that the satirical target is those Chinese cultural policies that were seen by Uyghurs such as Zunun as an attempt to take over and assimilate essential elements of Uyghur culture, while splitting Uyghurs off from their Central Asian cultural affinities. The Drain suggests that the Nightingale should change its song to that of the inferior Thrush. In a similar vein, Nathan Light has recorded Uyghur art teachers and other intellectuals complaining that a Han scholar’s transcription of Uyghur *Mukam* had “changed the flavour (*purak*) of Uyghur *mukam* to Chinese”.⁵⁰² The Drain is described as arrogant and ignorant of the Nightingale’s song, but nonetheless the Drain exclaims “Where is there an advisor as good as me?” The 1980s were a period when there was renewed transmigration of Han Chinese into Xinjiang, including those with little understanding but placed in positions of control of Uyghur culture. Zunun’s *mesel* could strike a powerful chord with Uyghur resentment of this situation of cultural appropriation and corruption.

When there is thunder, the drain,
 That shaker, runs around,
 Lies with its legs in the air
 Thinking it is holding up the sky!?
 It imagines the sky is falling
 It is proud, and one day, arrogantly:
 “Where is an adviser as good as me?
 My form is more beautiful than the nightingale
 I deal quickly with difficult matters.
 Just because I can’t sing,
 They want to find fault in my great affairs.

⁵⁰⁰ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op. cit., p.704. English and Uyghur text in Appendix 11(b).

⁵⁰¹ This *mesel* poem is in 63 lines of between 9 and 12 syllables, mostly of ten syllables. The rhyme patterns are generally in couplets.

⁵⁰² Nathan Light, op. cit., “Give and Take: Genealogies in Uyghur Music and Art”, (extract of doctoral dissertation), p.8.

I will learn it in one hour,
We'll see if they don't call me a nightingale."
The drain came running up to the nightingale,
He boasted of what he had done:
"It doesn't know the value of goodness,
If I did not hold up the sky, who would have lived?
Without me, where is the solution to disaster?
I am troubled for the country, troubled.
The fool likes all kinds of songs,
That is why they say you are good.
I will try to converse with you.
Let's take this opportunity to try to sing
But don't shout too much, fellow countryman,
Mischief-makers will come running,
I do not like the language of naïfs,
You should sing the song of the thrush."
"With respect, the proposal is unacceptable,
It is appropriate for each bird to sing in his own tongue."
"I don't like the song so much,
But I'm saying I will try to sing it."
The nightingale laughed with mockery,
and answered in these words:
"It is said, if a grass-mat maker tries to be a halva-maker
His eyes will become rheumy.
If one could not persevere in one's skill
Will the task come to fruition?"
The world burned in the eyes of the drain,
He spoke with arrogant words:
"You naïvely did not appreciate me!
You failed to grasp my meaning,
Learn everything to gain status!
Don't you know that livelihood is one's first duty?
Sing your song – let me memorise it!"

“All right, don’t be angry, I will teach you”
 Oh! The nightingale sang with a pleasing voice,
 The green summer began to reverberate,
 The drain began to make the music unsteadily,
 Where is the voice coming from it?
 The garden turned on him in horror,
 For many hours he contorted and strained to perform.
 In reality, what was the drain’s voice?
 Had he ever sung that kind of song?
 A storm began in the air,
 The drain was taken aback and surprised,
 In the branches, he could not lie on his back,
 He jumped from branch to branch.
 The nightingale sang on bravely,
 As powerfully resonant as before.
 The birdsong sent waves through the air,
 Spreading love and aspiration to hearts.
 The nightingale has a road that is firm,
 It has roses blooming in the rosegarden.

In this fable, Zunun brings out with a sharper focus than in any other of his works the question of “voice”, which is central to the vocation of a writer. He is writing in the 1980s, at a time when official policies were a confused mixture of liberalised conditions for writers, but renewed determination in Beijing to consolidate “national unity” in relation to the minority nationalities. Zunun, as a seasoned professional writer at the end of a very long career, seems impatient with those who might think they can easily assume the role of being the voice of the people. The drain is characterised as self-important and extremely ridiculous in its assumptions that it can take on any role to further or enhance its status. This period of history was one of tension between those who had suffered and were in a period of rehabilitation, and those who had benefited from the ultra-leftist policies and were now trying to secure their positions in an environment where merit was being rewarded again. Zunun may have had particularly in mind the kind of officials, usually Chinese, who claimed to direct cultural progress,

without having any real skills or credentials to apply to that task. That role might also be applied to those Uyghurs who collaborate with the regime and achieve position and status through loyalty to the CCP authorities, carrying dirt like a drain, but claiming to hold up the sky.

The drain both exaggerates its own importance in “holding up the sky”, and is disdainful of people with other tastes or cultures, whom he calls “fools” who enjoy “all kinds of songs”. The drain thinks it is politically advantageous to learn how to make the noises that these “fools” will appreciate, while making clear that he himself hates the sound of the nightingale.⁵⁰³ The drain first suggests, patronisingly, that the nightingale should change its song to that of the inferior thrush. Not surprisingly, the nightingale rejects this idea. The drain is angry that his suggestion is rejected, not because of any concern for the common good, but because he is obsessed with his own status.

If we see these songs as representing the various freedoms and civil aspirations of the Uyghur people, as well as their culture (which would be consistent with all that we know of Zunun’s writing), then the drain can be seen to represent those authorities who pretend interest in indigenous people and their culture without any sincerity, and as a result produce only travesty. The drain is taken aback when its behaviour generates a hostile change in the climate, which it cannot handle comfortably “on his back” as he could do in his own environment. The nightingale, however, has the inner strength to carry on singing its own song.

⁵⁰³ As the nightingale and rose are popular images in Uyghur classical literature, the nightingale may here be taken to represent the voice of the Uyghur people.

Cultural Significance of the Uyghur *Mukam*

“Music in peace times reflects peace and happiness, because of the rule of temperance; music in turbulent times spells grievance and anger because of the rule of discord. Music in a conquered land is sad and meditative, reflecting the suffering of its populace”

from the Li Ji, quoted by Chao Chung in “The Communist Program for Literature and Art in China”.⁵⁰⁴

In considering Zunun Kadir’s writings on cultural themes, it is important to understand his references to one of the most significant elements of Uyghur culture over several centuries – the *mukam* form, and especially the codified Uyghur Twelve *Mukam*. The *mukam*, in its specific Uyghur form, is both an important creative resource in Uyghur creative arts, and an important symbol of Uyghur cultural distinctiveness and of Uyghur contribution to wider Central Asian and Middle Eastern culture. Some background to the development of the Uyghur *mukam* is provided in Appendix 12.

In the *mukam* and in other genres, there is a close link between music and poetry. In Uyghur culture, poetry has played an important role in defining the core national ideology and preserving the cultural identity through transmitting the cultural origins into the daily life of the people. The Uyghur writer Osman Ismayil traces the folk style of *koshak* poem to primitive work music: “Far back, our ancestors, after creating language, produced *koshak*. People in ancient times, while working, synchronized their work movements with voiced sounds, and thus began ancient music. To these sounds, they wanted to add their own ideas and feelings through creating simple *koshaks*.”⁵⁰⁵

During the 1980s we find Zunun including a number of references in his writings to the *mukam* as a spiritual or inspirational cultural element, as well as a subject for scientific enquiry. In his piece “Remembering Artist Friends”, he eulogises a recently deceased

⁵⁰⁴ Chou Chung, *The Communist Program for Literature and Art in China* in Communist China Problem Research Series, Union Research Institute, Hong Kong, 1955, p.1.

⁵⁰⁵ Ismayil, op. cit., p.372.

musicologist, Zikir Elpetta, who had devoted a large part of his life to creating music to fill in certain gaps in the Twelve *Mukam* music cycles. Zunun does not go into specific musical details, and there is no evidence that he had special training in this field.

Rather, he recalls a conversation in which he suggested to Zikir Elpetta that he would write an article on the *mukam*, at the same time as Zikir was working on his *mukam* project, in order to create more public exposure and discussion of the form. Zunun, writing in the 1980s, recalls that he had written about the *mukam* in an article called “A Few Words about Uyghur People’s Music” in 1945 or 1946.⁵⁰⁶ He recalls that “after Liberation” two *mukam* experts, Turdi Ahun and Rozi Tambur, came to Urumqi for the purpose of working on the Twelve *Mukams*. He also refers back to the period 1931-40 when Zikir Elpetta was an adviser on the major Uyghur musical play “Gerip and Senem” in which Zunun collaborated, and Zunun’s play “Ghunchem” among others.⁵⁰⁷

These comments by Zunun do not follow a clear time sequence. His statement that the *mukam* was developed “after Liberation” does not quite fit with his other reference to the usage of *mukam* in the version of “Gerip and Senem” that was performed 1931-40. Thus his remarks maintain political correctness at one level by giving the necessary credit to the improvement in culture “after Liberation”, yet at the same time he does not let the reader forget that the cultural value of the *mukam* was appreciated many years before any “Liberation” or CCP intervention.

The *mukam* is most basically defined as a musical system composed of a set of pitches and characteristic melodic elements (or “motives”) and a traditional pattern of their use, forming a system for the melodic and tonal construction of performances.⁵⁰⁸ In the Uyghur tradition, the *mukam* musical form is usually the basis for sung performance, which involves the addition of poetic or narrative lyrics to the performance. According to Nathan Light, the revival of the *mukam* as a cultural symbol was actively encouraged by the Chinese state authorities during the 1980s.⁵⁰⁹ One aspect of this was to encourage

⁵⁰⁶ We have only Zunun’s reference to go by on this article - the text itself has not been found.

⁵⁰⁷ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op. cit. In “Remembering Artist Friends” Zunun notes that Zikir wrote the music to two scenes that Zunun had written for “Gerip and Senem”. Zikir based seven songs on two tunes from the Twelve *Mukams*. This was the earlier version of “Gerip and Senem” (since lost) on which the later opera and films scripts (discussed in Chapter 4) were based.

⁵⁰⁸ Definition from *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1998.

⁵⁰⁹ Nathan Light, op.cit., Chapter 6, p.9.

the idea of the *mukam* as a unique Uyghur creation. In reality, the *mukam* is common to much of Central Asia and its form is found also in Arab and Indian cultures. The Uyghur writer Emin Tursun identifies the origin of the Uyghur *mukam* as being from the Kucha district, south of the Tien Shan mountains. He claims that it was the *mukam* forms from this area that later spread to influence the music of all Central Asia.⁵¹⁰

The Uyghur culture and the *mukam* are distinctly non-Han, and the *mukam* is recognised as a symbol of Uyghur identity and cultural difference from the Han. In this case, we may consider why its promotion would have been encouraged by the Chinese government as Nathan Light states.⁵¹¹ The answer may be found in the way that the *mukam* was specifically promoted as a uniquely Uyghur creation. In the 1980s, China was re-entering global politics and asserting political influence beyond its borders, particularly in Central Asia. One of its objectives could have been to limit the relationship between the Uyghur of Xinjiang and the Turkic peoples of the then Soviet Union. By encouraging the Uyghur to claim ownership of this important cultural element that is found throughout Central Asia, it is possible that Chinese tacticians saw the advantage of sowing some competitiveness or hostility between the “brother nationalities”.

In practice, this policy may have worked in quite a different way. It provided Uyghur intellectuals with a means to apply Chinese policies in a way that suited their own advantage. Promotion of the *mukam*, while in accordance with CCP policy to promote *mukam* in Uyghur culture, served to assert the distance between Han and Uyghur music

⁵¹⁰ Tursun Emin, “Discussion on the Formation of the Uyghur 12 *Mukam*” in Abdurusul Omer (ed.), *Uyghur Oniki Mukam Hekkhude* [“Concerning the Uyghur Twelve Mukam”] Research Committee on the Uyghur 12 Mukam, Xinjiang Helk Neshriyati, Urumqi, 1992, p33-4. In Tursun’s view, just as the Uyghur nationality’s ethnic makeup is composed of many different tribes, so Uyghur music also has many historical layers. Tursun analyses Uyghur cultural strands coming from both the nomadic ancestors, and the settled ancestors of the oasis towns. On this analysis, he sees the “dulan” tunes from the Ili region and Hotan as being influenced by nomadic lifestyle and creativity, while Kucha and Kashgar tunes are more oasis-based. In addition, the ancient Suli people of the Kashgar region, people of the Tarim basin (for example, Turpan) and the Tocharians and Kushan all made contributions to the creation of Uyghur ethnicity, and their music became part of Uyghur music.

⁵¹¹ Nathan Light, op. cit., p.2, p.5.

by clearly demonstrating that they had radically different forms and origins.⁵¹² Further, the recognition of the importance of the *mukam* points to the strong connections between the Uyghur musical tradition and the wider Central Asian musical tradition.

Zunun wrote of the Han composer and musicologist Wan Tongshu having worked on transcribing the Twelve *Mukam*. Nathan Light records that a modern Uyghur musician, Huseyin Kerim, told him recently that Wan's transcriptions had given the *mukam* a Han "flavour" (*purak*). Husayin said that this was inevitable, as

It is like drawing a face – the person draws it according to the details that he knows. If he is a Kazak, the face looks like a Kazak, if he is Han, it looks like Han....Most Han look with horror at the difficulty of Uyghur songs, and if they do learn a song, it sounds Han.⁵¹³

The contemporary commentator appears to speak with a greater frankness. Considering the differences between the political climate of the 1980s and that of the 1990s, it can be assumed that Zunun's writings on the subject of the Twelve *Mukam* were carefully measured to suit the CCP political agenda of his time of writing. Therefore, as well as promoting Uyghur culture, he seems to have been trapped, at least partly, in the position of promoting the Government's policy. This provides yet another example of his continuing dilemma – how to manage his national identity while working within an official structure designed to promote the building of a Greater China and the absorption of the Uyghur land and culture within China.

The promotion of the status and importance of the *mukam* is an important element of Zunun's writings on cultural matters. In the writings of Zunun and of other Uyghur scholars,⁵¹⁴ it is clear that the work on the theme of the *mukam* is a significant item in maintaining cultural difference from China, within the context of government policies

⁵¹² In doing this, the *mukam* becomes a major item of Uyghur identity not shared by the Han, who are therefore more clearly identified as "other".

⁵¹³ Nathan Light, *op. cit.*, p.8.

⁵¹⁴ Other scholarly materials on this topic are found in Abdushukur Muhammet Emin, *Uyghur Klassik Muzik Oniki Mukam* [Uyghur Classical Music: the 12 Mukam], Minzu Chubanshe, Beijing 1980, and Kurban Barat (ed.), *Mukam Textleri* [Texts of the Mukam], Xinjiang Yashlar-Ösmürler Neshriyati, Urumqi, 1986.

that aimed to create a “Chinese” culture that would absorb and include Uyghur culture as a “minority” element. This is achieved not only through the recognition of particular cultural symbols, such as the *mukam*, but also by identifying the origins and sources of contribution to the development of the *mukam*.⁵¹⁵

Conclusion

In a changing and uncertain environment of cultural policy, Zunun was again faced with the dilemma of balancing his Uyghur identity with his official identity in the structure of the CCP’s New China. It is clear that the many disappointments of his long working career, especially the seventeen years of labour camp, had changed some of Zunun’s assumptions about the place of Uyghur culture in forming the future of his people. His hopes that the state would provide education, equal opportunity and economic development for his people, and his advocacy of a secular world view, were changed by the experience of repeated betrayals by the socialist system that he had wanted to support. His life among the suppressed peasants of the Tarim may have persuaded him of the deep value of common history, popular culture and real life experience, that together made up the foundations on which to build a genuine modern Uyghur identity. He could take advantage of a policy climate of the 1980s where there was some relative relaxation in the permitted scope of cultural writing. From this background, Zunun devoted much of his creative energy to writing on cultural themes that would help strengthen Uyghur identity in the face of ever-increasing pressures for sinicisation.

Zunun’s lifelong dilemma once again is manifested in on the one hand cooperating with Chinese authorities to survive and write, and on the other hand to continue contributing as best he can to the survival and development of his Uyghur community.

⁵¹⁵ See Appendix 12.

Chapter 6

Zunun Kadir's Language: Identity and Metaphor in the Socialist Context

From the materials available for this study, I would argue that Zunun Kadir saw the Uyghur language as one of the key elements of cultural heritage that should be used to reinforce Uyghur identity through deliberate cultivation and development. At the same time, he worked in the context of a general Chinese cultural policy that placed considerable emphasis on the use of particular words with particular (sometimes changing) political meanings. Thus Zunun's profession required him to think carefully about the choice of words as being a nuanced political act. His interest in Uyghur identity did not mean simply drawing upon the language of the common people, although this was a large part of his approach. In different forms of his literary output, he drew out the various strands of language, such as Chagatai and other, modern cultural influences, that had over the years contributed to the distinctive Uyghur vocabulary.

To understand how Zunun used Uyghur language, it is necessary to appreciate some of the cultural elements that make up the background to this language, and the way in which Zunun drew upon those cultural resources. In relating Zunun's language to his dilemma of maintaining cultural integrity and identity while working within the CCP regime, I will provide some analysis on usage of key words and phrases from the 1960s and 1980s, using the methodology by which Raymond Williams distinguishes two senses of words in relation to formation of culture and in relation to cultural reality.⁵¹⁶

Historical Background of Modern Uyghur Language

Research into Uyghur literature requires some understanding of the development of the literary language. Sultan Mahmut Kashgarli, a professor and Uyghur language specialist in modern Turkic dialects at the University of Istanbul, traces the development of Uyghur through four stages: Old Uyghur (from Seventh to Tenth

⁵¹⁶ Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A vocabulary of Culture and Society*, Fontana, London, 1976.

century AD); Middle Uyghur (Tenth to Fifteenth Century AD); Recent Uyghur (Fifteenth to early twentieth century AD) and Modern Uyghur (of the contemporary era).⁵¹⁷

Old Uyghur is written in a script adapted from Sogdian, and contains numerous vocabulary items that have either disappeared or substantially changed in usage or pronunciation. Middle Uyghur is characterised by the continued use of the old Uyghur script, together with the progressive introduction of Arabic. "*Kutadgu Bilig*" ("The Wisdom of Royal Glory") by Yusuf Khass Hajib was written around 1077AD in Uyghur script, whereas "*Divani-Lugat-il Turk*", a trilingual dictionary and encyclopedia written by Mahmut Kashgari around the same date of 1077AD, is primarily in Arabic script. This period produced many great works of scholarship and literature that were influential in surrounding cultures, particularly the whole Turkic world. Islamic influence also brought the renewed enrichment of Persian and Arabic words.⁵¹⁸

Recent Uyghur reflected a fuller Islamisation of the culture, with the exclusive use of Arabic script for the Uyghur language. Literary expression became richer and more sophisticated, with greater availability of synonyms and alternate expressions of meaning. In the later part of period, Russian and English influences and phrases began to enter the language, reflecting the contact with the imperial outposts of those cultures to the west (that is, Russian) and the South (that is, 'British' India).

Modern Uyghur continued to develop as a sophisticated literary language, with complex grammatical and vocabulary options available for subtle expression. From the 1920s, the Russian language, and (at an accelerating rate since the Chinese Communist takeover in the 1940s) the Chinese language and vocabulary became a greater influence, particularly in the political, social and ideological spheres.

Contemporary Uyghur writers often use the term "the Uyghur language" synonymously with "Turkic language". Central Asian Turkic people and Anatolian Turks share a

⁵¹⁷ Sultan Mahmut Kashgarli, *Modern UyghurTürkçesi Grameri* [Modern Uyghur-Turkish Grammar], Orkun Publishing House, Istanbul, 1992, p.4.

⁵¹⁸ Ibid.

common origin in the Huns, according to studies by western scholars as well as Chinese written sources.⁵¹⁹ Since the 1980s various Xinjiang Uyghur scholars, such as Turgun Almas and Ibrahim Mutti,⁵²⁰ and Xinjiang University materials have supported this view. The Gokturk state, which developed from the Huns, has left important inscriptions (known as the Orkhon inscriptions⁵²¹) which describe the Uyghur as part of the Gokturk state. Under the Gokturk, the Turkic language was noted as including Oghuz, Kipchak, Karluk and other variations.⁵²²

In the 8th century AD, Uyghurs mixed with other local cultures in the Tarim basin and Kashgaria. According to Ibrahim Mutti, over the centuries the Uyghur Turks absorbed Tocharians, Sogdians, Sarks and others into the Uyghur genetic background.⁵²³ In the 10th century, the Karakhanid empire united the different Turkic tribes and accepted Islam as a state religion – bringing the influence of Arabic language into the culture (as noted above). Following the Mongol invasions, the Mongols used the Uyghur as an administrative elite for the administration and education of their imperial territories, including China. The Mongol imperial elite became substantially Turkicised, especially in the Chagatai era in Central Asia.⁵²⁴

According to the Russian scholar Baskakov, the early Chagatai language is the common base for different Turkic language variants such as modern Uyghur and Uzbek.⁵²⁵ The contemporary Uyghur academic Sherpidin identifies Chagatai literature as being the same thing as Hakaniye (Court) literature (13th-20th Century) in modern Uyghur scholarship,⁵²⁶ and this was the basis of the common literature of Central Asian Turks.⁵²⁷

⁵¹⁹ M.A. Czaplicka, *The Turks of Central Asia in History and the Present Day*, Curzon Press, London, 1973, p.14.

⁵²⁰ Ibrahim Mutti, *Ili Makalileri* [An Ili Anthology], Minzu Chubanshe, Beijing, 1990, p.15-16.

⁵²¹ Rivan Janim and Hasan Ali Kasir, *Edebiyat Dersleri* [Readings in Turkish Literature], vol.1, Denge Publishing, Istanbul 1996, p.141. Stone inscriptions dating from around 720 AD were discovered in 1889 in the Orkhon Valley near the old capital of Karakorum, now in north central Mongolia. The inscriptions were in both old Uyghur and Chinese, allowing for the first translations of the ancient script.

⁵²² Mutti, op. cit., p.206.

⁵²³ Ibid, p.255.

⁵²⁴ Dr Baymirza Hayit (tr.), *Turkistan Rusya ve Chin arasinda* [Turkistan between Russia and China], (from the German original by Abdulkadir Sadik), Otagh Yayimevi, Istanbul, 1971, p.1.

⁵²⁵ Mutti, op. cit., p.207.

⁵²⁶ The Hakaniye period can be counted as beginning with the Chagatai ruler Sultan Sayid Khan (1504+).

⁵²⁷ Sherpeddin Omer, *Uyghurlarda klasik Edebiyat* [Classical Literature of the Uyghurs], Xinjiang Qingnian Chubanshe, Urumqi, 1988, p.133.

In the Sung dynasty, an Imperial ambassador Wang Yan, who came to the Uyghur kingdom in 1081⁵²⁸ recorded that the same Turkic language was spoken in Jungaria, Turpan basin, Kucha and Kumul.

Descendants of the Chagatai Sayid Khan ruled in East Turkistan until the end of the 18th century.⁵²⁹ Mutti notes that the modern Kashgar dialect is very similar to Chagatai language.⁵³⁰ From the later part of the 18th Century, the Ili region became more influential (possibly as a result of growing Russian influence in the region). In the 19th century many farmers from the southern regions such as Kashgar, Yarkand, Turpan and Kumul migrated to the Ili region to open up new agricultural land. This population mix affected Uyghur dialects and created the basis for standard modern Uyghur.

Mutti suggests that modern Uyghur literature began in the second half of the 19th century, with representative works by Sadir Pehlivan,⁵³¹ Nazigum,⁵³² and *Mayimhan*.⁵³³ The modern Uyghur literary language retains some influence from Chagatai, with the inclusion of Arabic and Persian words, but follows mainly Uyghur grammatical structure. Another innovation of the modern period has been the greater use of ordinary popular Uyghur language in literature.⁵³⁴

⁵²⁸ Mutti, op. cit., p.214.

⁵²⁹ Sherpeddin Omer, *Uyghurlarda*, op. cit., p134.

⁵³⁰ Mutti, op. cit., p. 208.

⁵³¹ Tursun Yasin, *Sadir Pehlivan*, Xinjiang Qingnian Chubanshe, Urumqi, 1988, pp.28, 54, 68.

According to the author, Sadir Pehlivan (1798-1871) was a Uyghur hero from the Ili region who began making poetry from the age of 10. Because of criticisms of the Manchu-Chinese government, he was imprisoned from the age of 15. His reputation as a hero and poet grew during his periods in jail. His determination to help his people and inspire them to rise against Chinese rule increased, and his poems spread throughout Xinjiang, becoming popular songs. When hunted by Manchu collaborators, he was protected by loyal Uyghur people. His poems are still popular.

⁵³² Akbarjan Bauudin, "Nazigum" in *Ittipak* journal, published in exile in Central Asia, April 29 1995, p.6. The author writes that Nazigum (1800-1870) was a female poet heroine of the Uyghur, originally from Kashgar. Following a suppressed uprising against the Manchu in Kashgar, Nazigum was among many Uyghurs exiled to the Ili region. She twice ran away from forced marriages to Manchu husbands, and finally was publicly executed. She wrote many songs showing determination to struggle against injustice and oppression, and is recognised as a symbol of a Uyghur woman sacrificing herself for freedom and struggle against colonialism. Her story was written by many writers including Bilal Nazim.

⁵³³ Kashgarli, *Contemporary Literature*, op. cit., p 167-174. Kashgarli discusses the novel by Ziya Samedi based on the life of Mayimhan, a woman from a peasant background brought into the court. After witnessing many evil doings in the local court (a puppet of the Manchu regime), eventually she turns against the court official for whom she is working, and sacrifices her life.

⁵³⁴ Mutti, op.cit., p.228.

The influence of Navayi (1441-1501) on the development of modern Uyghur literature is important because he promoted the idea of Turkic peoples valuing their own language in writing high literature. He also criticised unjust rulers and corrupt elites, advocating that people should not give in to corruption, nor accept poor conditions fatalistically, but should work to create a better fate. Zunun has explicitly acknowledged Navayi as an important literary influence. Navayi employed symbols such as the rose and the nightingale to represent (at one level) love between people, or love of God, and (at another level) to represent the aspiration for higher purpose and the desire for humanitarian virtues such as freedom. Uyghur metaphoric devices were used to convey more than one layer of meaning in written communication.⁵³⁵

Zunun Kadir has stated that his inspiration as a writer began when he read Soviet and earlier Turkic literature from the Central Asian republics. He mentions the work of Navayi as one of the influential classics in his literary life. Zunun seems not to have been unique in this regard. Kashgarli, a Uyghur scholar from Xinjiang, now a professor in Turkey, notes that “the formation of the new Uyghur literature was influenced by such trends as the development of important traditions encountered in the folk and classical Uyghur literature, and influenced by the literatures of the other Turkic peoples and other nations.”⁵³⁶

Zunun’s Linguistic Heritage

It is useful to consider some of the historical elements that contributed to Zunun’s language and how Turkish, Persian and Arabic lexicons combined, over different periods, to enrich literary Uyghur language. This is particularly the case in the development of a modern literary language from the earlier Court language, Hakaniye.

Influence of *Hakaniye* Court language

In the early modern period of Uyghur literature, writers such as Zunun were participating in a transition towards popular language and away from a long literary

⁵³⁵ Omer, op. cit., p.491-2.

⁵³⁶ Sultan Mahmud Kashgarli, “The Formation of modern Uighur literature and current developments”, *Central Asian Survey*, vol.12, no.4, 1993, pp.577-583.

tradition in which the language of literature was distinct from the language of common usage. This transition had begun in the nineteenth century. The literary language is normally given the name *Hakaniye*, meaning “court” language. The contemporary Uyghur linguist Tursun Ayup has explored the links between Hakaniye and earlier Uyghur language claiming that dialect used in Kashgar is the historical Uyghur language, based on the definitions of the 11th Century Uyghur scholar Mahmut Kashgarli, who states that the people of Kashgar used the Hakaniye language.⁵³⁷

Differences between Hakaniye and popular Uyghur language.

Hakaniye literature, described by Sherpeddin Omer as the continuation of Chagatai literature (13-20 Century), is the basis of the common literature of Central Asian Turks. With a common overlay of Islamic culture throughout Central Asia, the Turkic high literature (whether Hakaniye or Divan) was influenced by a Persian and Arabic lexicon as well as some elements of literary style.⁵³⁸

The contemporary Uyghur scholar Abdurup Polat has compared the proportion of Turkic vocabulary in texts of early Chagatai, then of Navayi (15th Century); and then of the final period of Chagatai (Hakaniye) literature in the 19th Century.⁵³⁹ The examples show that the proportion of Persian and Arabic lexical borrowings is highest in the Navayi text, which he says is typical of the high period of Chagatai literature. The early text example shows fewer Arabic and Persian words. Of the 19th Century text, Abdurup Polat observes that there is a substantial decrease in Arabic and Persian words, and that Uyghur vocabulary increases substantially. “The language of these texts”, he notes, “is closer to the living language of the people, and we can feel deeply that it is close to modern literary Uyghur language.”⁵⁴⁰

⁵³⁷ Tursun Ayup, *Turki Tillar Tahkikati* [Research in the Turki Language], XUAR Academy of Social Sciences Research Group, p.19. Tursun Ayup also notes that some scholars (eg. Baskakov) have questioned the links between historical Uyghur and the modern languages of East Turkistan, but Tursun considers that the case is strong based on linguistic evidence.

⁵³⁸ Sherpeddin Omer, *Otra Esir Uyghur Klasik Edibiyatir* [Uyghur Classical Literature of the Middle Ages], Xinjiang Renmin Chubanshe, Urumqi, 1996, p.34.

⁵³⁹ Abdurup Polat in *Turki Tillar Tahkikati*, op. cit., p.210.

⁵⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p.218, "When we look at works from the second half of the 19th Century, the lexicon of those works compared to the lexicon of works from the Navayi period is as different as the sky from the earth. In other words, the lexicon of those works shows substantial decrease in Arabic and Persian words. Characteristics of pure Uyghur language increased manyfold."

Examples can be found in Appendix 13. Abdurup further comments that the Chagatai lexicon is based in the Old Uyghur. During the Chagatai period there were certain phonetic developments but, if these are set aside, the Uyghur basis of the language remains intact in the Chagatai period.⁵⁴¹ Even when there is extensive use of Arabic/Persian words, such as in the Navayi period, the Uyghur words continue to be used in parallel.⁵⁴²

Abdurup's assertion that the Chagatai lexicon is based on the old Uyghur is further supported in an essay by the Uzbek scholar Abdurahmanov:

A similar situation is observed in the case of the Uyghur ethnic group. For this reason, such an ethnic group might appear as the basis of formation for various Turkic-speaking peoples – for example from the Uyghur ethnic group formed not only the contemporary Uyghurs, but the Uzbeks, Kazaks, Kirghiz etc. And the same may be noted concerning literary monuments: some of these conditionally termed “Uyghur” relate to the history of formation not only of the Uyghur language, but of other contemporary Turkic languages as well, since their speakers' ancestors were included in the ancient Uyghur ethnic structure.⁵⁴³

Thus, according to the work of these contemporary scholars, by the end of the nineteenth century the Uyghur literary language had become very much closer to the spoken language, with a strong predominance of Turkic vocabulary.

The popularisation of the literary language was also influenced by the spread of literacy, and the beginnings of modern education in East Turkistan. After 1898, a modern education movement called “Jadid” was started in Uzbekistan by Atshil-Murad Oghli

⁵⁴¹ Examples of basic vocabulary that persists in this way are *ata* (father); *ana* (mother); *ini* (younger brother); *yash* (young); *koz* (eye); *kash* (eyebrow); *kirpik* (eyelash); *burun* (nose); *khulak* (ear); *yuz* (face); *chish* (tooth); *sakal* (beard); *tuk* (fur); *til* (language, tongue); *yurek* (heart); *soz* (word); *ayak* (shoe); *ilik* (hand); *et* (meat); *yaghach* (wood, tree); *su* (water).

⁵⁴² Examples of this kind include *chach* = *zulukh* (hair); *altun* = *zer* (gold); *kumush* = *sim* (silver); *tash* = *hejer* (stone); *tagh* = *jebel* (mountain); *ay* = *khemer* (moon); *kun* = *shems* (sun); *koz* = *cheshme* (eye)

⁵⁴³ G.A. Abdurahmanov, “The ethnogenesis of the Uzbek people and the formation of the Uzbek language” in Nazarov and Denis Sinor (eds), *Essays on Uzbek History, Culture and Language*, Indiana University, Bloomington, 1993, p.7.

Miriy. Kashgarli notes the influence of this movement in Xinjiang. Progressive intellectuals, such as Abdulkadir Aziz,

... used 'Jadidism' as a step to free the nation from the oppression of the Chinese governor-generals and their Uyghur collaborators, the feudal landlords. As a result of this struggle, some reforms were undertaken. First, the type and language of education at Medrese (religious schools) was changed. Arabic and Persian were replaced by Uyghur as the language of instruction; secondly, the old method of education, which was not compatible with Uyghur daily life and practices, was changed. New text books for new subjects such as mathematics, physics, history and grammar were prepared and used in the schools. A new (modern) school was opened in Artush in 1914 by the committee which was headed by Ahmet Kemal, who had been invited from Turkey.

New printing houses (three in Kashgar and one in Gulja) were opened between 1899-1920, and many books on different subjects were published. Kutluk Haji Shevki published a newspaper called *Ang* [Enlightenment] in Kashgar in 1918. The Chinese governor stopped its publication for a while, but Kutluk Haji Shevki published another newspaper called *Yeni Hayat* [New Life] in 1933. The newspaper *Ili Dikhanlari* [Ili Farmers] was published in Ili in 1927 and the newspaper *Shinjang* was published in Urumqi in 1933.⁵⁴⁴

Orthography and Sinicisation

After 1949, reforms of the writing system were a component of the CCP's programs for political and cultural transformation in East Turkistan. In the space of thirty years, there were five different policies on Uyghur orthography, each of which disrupted the continuity of education and literary heritage, due to changes in the scripts used for writing the language. Throughout this period, Zunun continued to use the Arabic orthography in which he had been educated.

⁵⁴⁴ Kashgarli, *Formation*, op.cit, p.578.

In the early 1950s, the Chinese government had neither the resources nor the experience to tackle the question of orthography in East Turkistan, and the issue was managed under Soviet influence. The first attempts at reform occurred in Alma Ata, Kazakstan. The editorial board of the journal *Kazak Eli* convened a consultative conference to discuss the development of a unified orthography for the Uyghur literary language. An alphabet based on Arabic was established, published in the Soviet Union, and exported to Xinjiang. Notably, at this time the Turkic peoples in the Soviet Union were all using the Cyrillic alphabet.⁵⁴⁵ One effect, therefore, would be to inhibit unification of cultures between the Soviet and Chinese parts of Turkistan. Mahmut Polat notes that Zunun read translations of Gorky into the Tatar language, and a range of other Central Asian Turkic writers. Zunun also read the work of Uyghur writers living in the Soviet republics, such as Omer Muhammad and Nur Israil. His creative work developed under the influence of oral literature, the classic literary tradition and foreign writers.⁵⁴⁶

In 1950 Stalin issued a policy guide called “Concerning Marxism in Linguistics”, which was accepted by the CCP as the basis of their policy toward minority languages. However, China was beginning to develop its own policies. In 1951 the Chinese Academy of Sciences sent a delegation including Wang Jun to the North West to report on the conditions of minority languages in Xinjiang. In the same year, a Study and Instruction Committee for National Language and Writing was established in the Cultural and Education Committee of the State Council. This created a XUAR Language and Writing Research Committee. Eventually, in 1954 the committee published a report “Uyghur Literary Language”, which was largely based upon the 1951 Alma Ata resolution, with the exhortation that the Uyghur should “adopt the experience of the Russian, Chinese, Soviet Uzbek and Kazak” peoples. This should be seen in political context: during this period a debate over the status of Xinjiang was being conducted in Beijing. In 1955, the Autonomous Region structure, dividing East Turkistan into a large number of overlapping ethnic entities, was adopted.⁵⁴⁷

⁵⁴⁵ Cuiyi Wei, “An historical survey of modern Uighur writing since the 1950s in Xinjiang, China”, *Central Asian Journal*, vol.37, no.3, 1993, pp.257-8, 261.

⁵⁴⁶ Muhammet Polat, *Some characteristics of Zunun Kadir's creative work*, mimeograph monograph, Xinjiang Renmin Chubanshe (undated), p.3.

⁵⁴⁷ Cuiyi Wei, op. cit., pp.266-268.

In 1957, with the encouragement of the Central government, Xinjiang authorities initiated a proposal to Cyrillicise the Uyghur orthography. This was to bring the Turkic nationalities of East Turkistan into orthographic conformity with the Soviet Turkic peoples. On February 9, 1957, the *Xinjiang Daily* published a “Resolution on writing reform”.⁵⁴⁸ However, this whole proposal was abruptly repudiated during the “Anti-Rightist and Local Nationalist” campaign later in 1957, and many intellectuals were punished, including Ziya Samedi, the president of the XUAR Language and Writing Research Committee. Samedi had advocated the Cyrillic alphabet over the Arabic one. Ziya Samedi noted, in his final report to a conference of 170 writers from Xinjiang and Soviet Central Asian republics held in Urumqi in June 1957, that many “contradictions” existed in Uyghur literature, but these were not “antagonistic contradictions” and therefore (in the spirit of the Hundred Flowers movement) should be allowed to resolve themselves without direct intervention of the authorities. In fact, this speech of Ziya Samedi was itself later criticised as containing “serious political error” when Ziya Samedi himself was under criticism.⁵⁴⁹ Another element of this rejected reform proposal was that the central dialect would be adopted as the basic dialect for the Uyghur literary language, and the Gulja (Ili) pronunciation would be the standard pronunciation.⁵⁵⁰

Mao’s Great Leap Forward included a policy shift on minority issues. In 1958 the CCP adopted a phonetic alphabet based on the Latin alphabet for Chinese, and later for minority languages as well. From 1960, all aspects of Soviet influence, including the Cyrillic alphabet, were systematically weeded out of all official policies.⁵⁵¹ In 1960, Saifuddin Aziz, as governor of the XUAR, said that one of the crimes of the local nationalists had been to resist the introduction of new Chinese terms, and to prefer to continue to use “foreign” Russian ones (Chinese terms, supposedly, not being “foreign”). This illustrates the official government policy of sinicisation of Uyghur and other minority languages.⁵⁵²

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid, p.271.

⁵⁴⁹ Michael Friedrichs, *Die Uyghurische Literatur in Xinjiang 1956-1966*, op. cit., p.81. While Samedi is not quoted specifically on the subject of orthography, a major theme of this meeting was the issue of “nationalism”, and the beginning of association of “revisionism” with Soviet influence.

⁵⁵⁰ Cuiyi Wei, op.cit., p.277-80.

⁵⁵¹ Kashgarli, *Grammar*, op.cit., p.45.

⁵⁵² Cuiyi Wei, op.cit., p.292.

In December 1959, a language conference in Urumqi adopted a 33-letter pinyin alphabet for Uyghur. Of these 33 letters, 27 were adapted from the Chinese *Hanyu Pinyin* orthography, and seven additional letters were added for particular sounds used in the Uyghur language. Experimental teaching in schools began in 1960. In 1964, this version of *pinyin* for Uyghur was formally adopted by the PRC State Council in Beijing.⁵⁵³

During the *pinyin* period, young children did not learn the Arabic script, and consequently were cut off from the literary inheritance of their parents. Parents could not read what their children were studying and writing. Children could not benefit from the writings of their elders, and a whole generation was cut off from its cultural heritage apart from what was selected by the authorities for reprinting in the new script.

While these developments were occurring, Zunun was under increasing pressure on ideological grounds, so much so that he attempted to escape to the Soviet Union in 1961. From 1962 to 1979 Zunun was prohibited from writing. Nonetheless, his experience during these years, including observation of the changes in language policies, became part of his literary resource when the time came for him to be able to write again, in the 1980s.

In 1965 there was another attempt to reform the application of romanised script to Uyghur language, using a *pinyin* romanisation system.⁵⁵⁴ Rudelson attributes this to “the Chinese desire to eliminate Soviet influence in Xinjiang, and more important, to sever ties between indigenous peoples of Xinjiang and their kinsmen across the Sino-Soviet border”.⁵⁵⁵

In the 1980s, there was some debate as to whether the Uyghur language should readopt the Arabic script, with its thousand years of literary heritage. The counter-argument among Uyghur intellectuals was that the roman script was already better

⁵⁵³ Kashgarli, *Grammar*, op.cit., p.43-4.

⁵⁵⁴ Cuiyi Wei, op.cit., p.295.

⁵⁵⁵ Justin Jon Rudelson, *Oasis Identities - Uyghur Nationalism along China's Silk Road*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1997, p.102.

known by the current generation, and was more useful for access to the modern technical world, and also for links with Turkey, which had adopted a romanised script in the 1920s. This final argument seems to have been counter-productive. In the new climate of closer relations with Turkey, the Chinese authorities appear to have become concerned at the prospect of publications from Turkey circulating widely in Xinjiang, and they decided to abandon the Roman alphabet and return to Arabic. In 1983 the official orthography for Uyghur reverted to Arabic.

Thus from 1950 onward the Uyghur people experienced several chaotic writing reforms one after the other, adding to the difficulties of developing literacy and of maintaining continuity in literary culture. Over the same period, many Uyghur intellectuals, including Zunun, were sent to forced labour education camps, or left the country.⁵⁵⁶

Sinicisation

In language reforms encouraged by the CCP there was an explicit objective to use language reforms to bring minority nationality languages closer to Chinese. In December 1957 the State Council ratified “Five Principles for Designing Letters for Minority Writing Systems”, which required minority languages to be written in scripts as close as possible to *pinyin*, in “letter styles and orthographies as closely identical as possible”.⁵⁵⁷ In December 1959, when the XUAR government published its official decree on the “experimental” promotion of pinyin-like script, official policy toward terminology also changed. Where previously Russian borrowings had been favoured, Chinese ones were now to be used so as to “increase similarities” among the nationalities of PRC and “strengthen national unity”.⁵⁵⁸ When promotion of pinyin was reinforced by a further XUAR government decree in 1965, special care was taken to include letters used for transliteration of Chinese loan-words in Beijing phonetics, so as “to promote the common characteristics of national languages”.⁵⁵⁹ From the 1950s the PRC government has encouraged introduction of increasing numbers of Chinese words and phrases into the Uyghur language.

⁵⁵⁶ Among the leading intellectuals who left during this period were Assur Vahid, Yusupjan Muhlisi and Ziya Samedi.

⁵⁵⁷ Cui Yiwei, op.cit., p.287.

⁵⁵⁸ Ibid, p.291.

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid, p.294-5.

Sultan Mahmut Kashgarli has given some interesting examples of the process of sinicisation in vocabulary that took place in the 1950s and 1960s. The natural rules of Turkic language grammar favour the creation of new words, where required, by the addition of suffixes to existing root words. But under Chinese authority this capacity was employed, with official encouragement, for adoption of Chinese root-words into Uyghur, leading to a disproportionate level of unnecessary new Chinese vocabulary at the expense of the local language.⁵⁶⁰

Keywords

To illustrate Zunun's linguistic choices, I will consider key words in passages taken from his texts. The usage of particular words reveals preoccupations of the social and political atmosphere of the time of writing. I apply the term "Keywords" as used by Raymond Williams, in his book *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*.⁵⁶¹ Williams distinguishes two different senses of words: at the first level, there is some central formation of values in a culture. At the second level, usage reflects the reality of the culture – the actual way of life in the relevant society.

In Zunun's work, we can identify usage of words that works at both levels. A pattern can be seen in which keywords from 1950s-60s texts give more weight to central formation of values, whereas keywords from 1980s texts are more directed to the second level of meanings, by which actual Uyghur society is evoked in certain usages of words and phrases. The Uyghur way of life, Uyghur tradition, and Uyghur way of thinking are emphasized in Zunun's choice of keywords that have strong associations. I focus on a few examples which best demonstrate this two-level effect.

⁵⁶⁰ Kashgarli's example sentence: "At the factory in many groups we worked steel to make spare parts". The pre-1950 Uyghur version of this would be:

Fabrikaning turluk grupalarinda polatni ishlep zapas parchigha aylandurduk.

The official version during the late 1950s to early 1960s was:

Gongchaglarning jianlerinde lingjianlerni jiagongkilip peijianlerge aylandurduk.

In this sentence five of the six root words are direct imports of Chinese vocabulary, with Uyghur grammatical suffixes attached. The sentence would be completely incomprehensible to most native Uyghur speakers who had not learned the new Chinese words. (Kashgarli, *Grammar*, op.cit., p.64.).

⁵⁶¹ Williams, op.cit., p.12.

This kind of analysis does not presume that words have meanings that are fixed over time. Anna Wierzbicka says words have no fixed meanings, because meanings change. However, if words were always fluid in meaning, and without any “true” content, then change could not be observed. Therefore, words do, at any given time, have identifiable and “true” meanings.⁵⁶² With this kind of dynamic analysis, we can see in Zunun’s writings from different periods and different political climates, how keywords are being used with occasionally different meanings. They reflect Zunun’s dilemma as a Uyghur writer trying to negotiate a writing style that conforms to the demands of a central value-forming process that is beyond his control, while also retaining words and concepts that are of value to his Uyghur readers.

From two texts from 1960, “Writers and Artists should join the masses of the workers, peasants and soldiers for the long term” and “Let’s go to the Front Line of Rural Development!” (discussed in Chapter 3, see Appendix 14(a) and (b)) I note the following keywords:

Chairman Mao [*Mao Jushi*]

Yan’an [*Yenen*]

Socialism [*sotsyalizim*]

Kible

Letting all flowers bloom equally, letting all voices sing competitively [*Hemme güller tengshi ichilsun, hemme bes-beste sayrisun*]

Multinational Socialist Literature [*köp milletlik sotsyalistik edebiyat*]

Leadership of the Party [*Partiyening rehberligi*]

Help of our Han (*Hanzu*) brothers [*Henso kherindashlarning yardimi*]

Masses [*helk*]

Line [*Lushien*]

Team [*Dui*]

Troop [*koshun*]

Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought [*Markzizm-Leninizm-Maozedong idiyesi*]

New literature [*yengi edebiyat*]

⁵⁶² Anna Wierzbicka, *Understanding Cultures through their Keywords*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1997, p.31.

These words all carry the weight of organised campaigns to centrally form values and to mould people to “socialist” CCP values.

“Chairman Mao” [*Mao Jushi*]: In Chinese literature and ideology, the cult of Mao reached a peak in 1958-59 associated with the anti-Rightist and Great Leap Forward campaigns.⁵⁶³ It was in this atmosphere that Zunun wrote “Writers and Artists should join the Masses of the Workers, Peasants and Soldiers for the Long Term”.

“Yan’an” [*Yenen*]: During the period of writing, as during the late fifties, Mao’s talks to cultural workers at Yan’an (discussed in Chapter 3) was cited by officials and writers alike as the principal authoritative text concerning literary and cultural issues. Thus the term “Yan’an” itself assumes a shorthand meaning that implies “cultural correctness” of the Maoist kind.

“Socialism” [*sotsyalizim*]: This term is used with special meanings in the context of a CCP-controlled cultural and political elite. Raymond Williams notes that in addition to the more liberal usage of the term, there is a popular meaning of “socialism”. The popular description that he offers seems most appropriate in the usage context of a Marxist-Leninist system such as the CCP regime around 1960:

...a competitive, individualistic form of society – specifically industrial capitalism and the system of wage labour – was seen as the enemy of truly social forms, which depended on practical cooperation and mutuality which in turn could not be achieved while there was still private (individual) ownership of the means of production. Real freedom could not be achieved, basic inequality could not be ended, social justice could not be established, unless a society based on private property was replaced by one based on social ownership and control.⁵⁶⁴

In Xinjiang (East Turkistan), apart from elite understandings of the Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong Thought ideological framework, there were among Zunun’s target

⁵⁶³ D.W. Fokkema, *Literary doctrine in China and Soviet Influence 1956-1960*, Mouton and Co., London, 1965, p.194.

⁵⁶⁴ Williams, op.cit., p.286-7

readership some less educated Uyghurs whose popular understanding of “socialism” would be less analytical, and perhaps more like a religious belief. Their experience, often bitter, led them to avoid questioning the leadership and policy that were imposed upon them, and thus allowed “socialism” to be defined by leadership that demanded blind faith from the masses.

“*Kible*” (the direction of Islamic prayer): This is an example of a specifically religious term that has been transferred into an ideological context that is explicitly atheistic, and then used to give a religious force to secular principles. Religious terminology was a natural part of vernacular Uyghur language, and Zunun occasionally used it even in his works concerning socialism. “Let’s go to the Front Line of Rural Development!”, a socialist-oriented propaganda piece written during the anti-Rightist and Great Leap Forward campaigns (1957-59), provides the following example of the use of this religious term:

..That is why we should possess a dialectical materialist world view, the era of the freedom of the proletariat, and taking Mao Zedong Thought as the *kible*.⁵⁶⁵

Michael Friedrich quotes other examples at this period of the term *kible* being appropriated, even by Han writers, to apply religious associations to guiding role of Marxism-Leninism in the Great Leap Forward.⁵⁶⁶

“Letting all flowers bloom equally, letting all voices sing competitively” [*Hemme güller tekshshi ichilsun, hemme bes-beste sayrisun*]: The standard English translation of this famous phrase is “Let a hundred flowers bloom, let a hundred schools of thought contend”. The Uyghur translation is more literal, other than replacing “hundred” as “all” – which is a legitimate interpretation. We may consider that a Uyghur writer would have been very careful, even timid, in translating the words of Mao at this time, and reluctant to take much initiative in interpretation, in case this became the cause of political criticism against him. Such phrases would normally have an official

⁵⁶⁵ Zunun Kadir Eserleri, op. cit. p.657.

⁵⁶⁶ Friedrichs, op.cit., p.113.

translation. The Uyghur literal translation, however, does give a strong sense of emphasis on equality and competitiveness.

“Multinational Socialist Literature” [*köp milletlik sotsyalistik edebiyat*]: The people of Xinjiang were categorised into thirteen separate “nationalities” during the period of Sheng Shicai,⁵⁶⁷ and further subdivisions were introduced under the CCP so that a contemporary “General Survey (Xinjiang)” lists 47 different nationalities.⁵⁶⁸ In the Xinjiang context of Zunun’s usage, this term embodies the dilemma between the recognition of different “nationalities”, and the demand that they all accept membership of a single “socialist” China.

“Help of our Han (*Hanzu*) brothers” [*Henso kherindashlarning yardimi*]: This phrase is rarely if ever used elsewhere in Zunun’s works, but appears in this specific piece. During the anti-Rightist movement, every Uyghur writer was vulnerable to the accusation of being nationalist. It was state policy that minority writers should refer to Han friendship and Han leadership to “enhance the unity of China”. “Leadership of the Party” is also synonymous to leadership of the Han brothers. In other stories where the Han nationality of characters is significant, it is never explicitly described. Instead, Zunun gives signs in the narrative that indicate Han nationality – eg. in “Remembrance” a character appears as Han because a Uyghur character begins to speak to him in Chinese [*hanzuche*⁵⁶⁹].

“Line” [*lushien*], “team” [*dui*]: Here two common Chinese terms are used directly in the Uyghur text that supports CCP policy. It is out of keeping with Zunun’s well-established preference for Uyghur words, which are readily available for these ideas (*luxian* = “yol”; *dui* = “gurup”). The choice of the Han words appears to be a deliberate device to give the impression of loyalty to Chinese rule and Party policy.

⁵⁶⁷ Hayit, *Turkestan between Russia and China*, op.cit., p.335.

⁵⁶⁸ XUAR Renmin Zhengfu Waishi Bangongshi [External Affairs Office of the Peoples Government of XUAR] (ed.), *General Survey: Xinjiang*, Xin Shijie Chubanshe [New World Press], Beijing, 1989, p.28.

⁵⁶⁹ The phrase *hanzuche* is itself a modern sinicisation used only in PRC era to describe the Chinese language. The former Uyghur term *khitaiche* resembles the Russian name for Chinese, and was discouraged under PRC policies for sinicisation of minority nationality languages.

“Troop” [*koshun*]: One of the broad features of the Great Leap Forward was the “militarisation” of language in literature, applying terms such as “troop”, “front”, “weapon” etc to essentially civilian subjects.⁵⁷⁰

“New literature”: [*yengi edebiyat*] “New” [*yengi*] is listed by Friedrichs as “the third main Uyghur keyword of the Great Leap Forward”, which was applied to almost every aspect of life.⁵⁷¹

A further text from 1960, “A Family Finds Security” (discussed in Chapter 4, see Appendix 14(c)), includes a number of keywords that make relatively stronger references to traditional culture, although they are used for the purpose of value-formation. Keywords selected from this text are:

Commune [*gongshi*]

Evil eye [*köz tegidu*]

Evil tongue [*til tegidu*]

Amulet [*til tumar*]

Tomb-ritual [*mazayi-mashayi*]

Sufi [*Ishan*]

Shaman [*shaman-dahan*]

Bahkshi

Destiny [*teghdir*]

Liberation [*azatlik*]

Kindergarten [*ballar baghchisi*]

Working hard [*yahshi emgekkıkıp*]

Happiness [*behit*]

Security [*hatirjem*]

Equal [*tegh hukuk*]

Overthrow of feudalism [*feudallık tüzümini aghdurup*]

These key words point to the effort to change values from superstitious past customs to putting faith in the value of contributing labour to the commune.

⁵⁷⁰ Friedrichs, op.cit., p.114.

“Commune” [*gongshu*]: In earlier works, Zunun had used the term Uyghur term “*cooperatif*” (obviously a western borrowing) in place of the Han phrase. But here, following many criticisms and self-criticisms, and realizing his own dangerous position, he can be seen to use Han terminology.

“Evil eye [*köz tegidu*], evil tongue [*til tegidu*], amulet [*til tumar*], pagan”: In this era, all these words are used with connotation of backwardness, primitiveness, and ignorance.

“Sufi (*Ishan* - teacher); shaman; *bakhshī*”: These terms also are used to connote backwardness and primitiveness at this time, but also are implied to carry additional meaning associated with lying, cheating and exploiting.

“Destiny” [*teghdir*]: In Zunun’s writing, destiny is not used to imply a fixed fate, but rather to a future that people may change, or at least should try to change.

“Kindergarten”: This term, translated literally into Uyghur as *ballar baghchesi* (children’s garden) represents modernism and the liberation of women from being confined to working in the home. It also represents new ways of bringing up children, and valuing them more highly. In the Chinese context, it is a symbol of socialist modernity, but one that Zunun is happy to support.

“Happiness [*behit*]; security [*hatirjem*]; equal [*tegh hukuk*]; overthrow of feudalism [*feudallikh tüzümini aghdurup*”]: All of these relate to “revolutionary romanticism” as described by Fokkema – the aim to shift attention from a harsh present to some better future.⁵⁷²

These above examples, which reflect the ideological climate of their time, make a strong contrast to some examples of Zunun’s writing in the 1980s, when the ideological limits for a writer were, for a time, less constraining. During this period,

⁵⁷¹ Ibid, p.113.

⁵⁷² Fokkema, op.cit., p.159.

Zunun wrote several pieces in the style of “*chochek*”, an oral folk tradition of story-telling (discussed in Chapter 5).

Zunun’s writing in the 1980s reflects a cultural climate that allows the writer more latitude to include positive references to traditional aspects of the culture, including customary behaviour, history and traditions. The final set of keyword examples is taken from “Leelshah”, “Granny Perizhan” (which includes the tales of “Hizir Peygember” and “Buhem”), and “The Bahkshi Woman”. “Leelshah”, “Hizir Peygember” and “Buhem” (discussed in Chapter 5) are written in the form of *chochek* folk tales, and share a structure based on oral literary frameworks of Uyghur culture. I have selected the following keywords:

In the olden days [*burunkhi zamanda*]

Plough [*kosh - sapan*]

Sweat [*terlep*]

Suffering [*ah urusiz, gem*]

Just King [*Adil Shah*]

Queen [*hanish*]

Servant [*didek, hizmetchi*]

Worm [*kurt*]

Sage [*Hizir*]

Aura [*nur*]

Rose [*gul*]

Nightingale [*bulbul*]

Land of Roses [*Gulistan*]

Love [*ashik*]

Ipargul [Fragrant Rose]

Bahkshi

“In the olden days” [*burunkhi zamanda*]: This typical opening for an oral tale does not place the narrative in a specific time or place. It calls up associations of traditional storytelling, not of contemporary communist literature.

“plough [*kosh - sapan*]; sweat [*terlep*] ”: the meaning of these agricultural references was different in the 1980s to their meaning during the propaganda writings of the 1960s. As well as recalling the agricultural background of the ordinary Uyghur people, they also recall the harsh experiences of physical labour which Zunun and others of the intellectual classes had had to endure during long periods of exile.

“suffering” [*ah urusiz, gem*]: This is a powerful word which is strongly associated with being alive, whether a King or Queen or ordinary person, it is the experience that everyone shares in their own way, at their different level or in different times. It has strong links with the Buddhist background to Uyghur culture. On the level of contemporary politics, “suffering” is acceptable in CCP politics as evidence of the results of feudal exploitation and the need for socialist reform.

“Just King” [*Adil Shah*]: this term is also used by Navayi and in classical literature. In classical Uyghur literature, the Just King symbolises free thinking and defence of liberty.⁵⁷³ The concept of the Just King in Uyghur literature goes back at least to the 11th Century, when it was explored in a book of political wisdom, *Kutadgu Bilig*, presented to Taughach Bugra Khan, ruler of Kashgar and Balasaghun.⁵⁷⁴

“Queen” [*hanish*]: while representing wealth and honour, also subject to desire (such as the childless queen in Leelshah strongly wanting offspring), or fighting against, or entangled with, an evil force (Ipargul and Gulbanu, also in Leelshah). There may be some sense of Manichaeian world view in the roles assigned to “Queens” in this conflict between good and evil.

“Servant” [*didek, hizmetchi*]: a servant can be seen as a hired worker (in Communist context, a victim of the ruling class); or (in the case of a Vezir) the servant of a ruler, who benefits from his position; or of God (in traditional values, all pious people would be considered servants of God).

⁵⁷³ Sherepidin Omer, *Uyghurlarda*, op. cit., p.264.

⁵⁷⁴ Yusup Khass Hajib, *Kutadgu Bilig* [The Wisdom of Royal Glory], (tr.) Robert Dankoff, Univ. of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1983, p3.

“Worm” [*kurt*]: The place of animals that play a magical role, as in the example of the little worm in Leelshah, draws from animism and totem worship in primitive Uyghur belief systems.⁵⁷⁵ The important influence of the supernatural is in conflict with the materialist foundations of Communist ideology, which entirely rejects the supernatural.

“Sage” [*hizir*] and “aura” [*nur*]: These words draw on the religious vocabulary of folk literature. The Hizir appears in *chochek* genre as a magical seer and helper. The hizir’s support must be earned by the efforts and service to others of the hero or heroine.⁵⁷⁶ Again, Zunun’s 1980s use of these terms contrasts with earlier times in which he tended to avoid supernatural elements.

“Rose” [*gul*], “Nightingale” [*bulbul*]: These terms are used in classical Uyghur literature to represent lovers. Often the two terms represent a pair of lovers. At a second level, they also represent freedom.⁵⁷⁷

“Land of Roses” [*Gulistan*]: This term is used in “Leelshah” as a place name. It is actually the title of a classical Uyghur literary work by Sheh Sadir, which Zunun says he read. While it is originally a Persian concept, Navayi used this theme in the 15th Century and it recurred through the history of Uyghur literature. Use of this term provides a link with a mythic past that was culturally meaningful for Uyghurs.

“Love” [*ashuk*]: the word is not simply used for affection between individuals, but since the rise of humanism in the 15th century has conveyed a sense of humanist social attitudes. This can be seen in the work of Navayi (eg the concept of the “Just King”).

“Ipargul” [Fragrant Rose]. Though the name of one of the magical characters in “Leelshah”, Ipargul evokes a reference to a historical figure Ipar Han. Ipar Han was born in 1734 into a ruling Uyghur family from Kashgar. Her father and husband were both killed in the Chinese/Manchu invasion of East Turkistan. Ipar was taken to Beijing

⁵⁷⁵ Osman Ismayil, op.cit., p.276.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid, p.267.

⁵⁷⁷ Sherepidin Omer, *Uyghurlarda klasik Edebiyat*, op. cit., p.264.

to be a wife of the Qianlong Emperor. According to Han sources, she is recorded as being beautiful, virtuous, and loved by Qian Long, but refused to submit to him, using a dagger to protect her chastity. Finally she was ordered killed by the Queen Mother.⁵⁷⁸ Zunun uses the name Ipar Gul in *Leelshah*. In Uyghur naming conventions, the *-gul* respect suffix literally means a rose, and is usually applied to a young unmarried woman, while the *-han* respect suffix literally means “ruler”, and is usually applied after marriage⁵⁷⁹ in a sense similar to the English “Mrs” (from Mistress). Thus the names Ipargul and Iparhan are almost the same. Iparhan’s resistance to the Manchu Court has great significance for Uyghur readers as a parallel to their resistance to Han domination. However, the legend of Iparhan can be read by Chinese readers simply as a romantic tale of individual virtue (Xiang Fei is characterised as being loyal to her murdered husband rather than being a nationalist).

Zunun’s works seem crafted with very careful selection of vocabulary, taking into account not only the plain meaning of a word, but also the symbolic meanings that a word may bring to add further levels of meaning to a passage of writing. As previously discussed, Zunun’s technique frequently is to present one overt layer of meaning that could pass the scrutiny of the authorities, but to load the writing with further levels of meaning that can reach his intended Uyghur audience. In the differences between the key words used in the late 1950s and those appearing in the 1980s we see that the 1950s texts are loaded with socialist-ideological lexicon, whereas the 1980s texts carry strong reference to Uyghur traditional culture and contemporary events.

There is an evident difference also in attitude to the supernatural. In the 1950s writings, superstition and magic are presented in line with Communist doctrine as bad and exploitative, described as “fooling” and “cheating” the poor citizens. In the 1980s, Zunun could write of the “*Bahkshi* woman” in terms that celebrated the contribution of folk religion and related arts and crafts as a valuable part of national culture.

⁵⁷⁸ Prof. Meng Sen, “Xiang Fei kaoshi” [Examination on Xiangfei], original publication by Peking University (1937), reprinted in *Studies of Xiang Fei drawn from the Qing Historical Records*, Kashgar Shifan Xueyuan, Kashgar, 1982, p.72.

⁵⁷⁹ Rudelson, op.cit., p.79.

Zunun's use of *chochek* form

Another element of Zunun Kadir's use of Uyghur language resources is his use of the *chochek* narrative form. The genre is defined by the modern Uyghur scholar Osman Ismayil as "an interesting story passed around among the people....Without a fixed location or particular time limits, with a complex cast of characters, using colorful descriptions, made by ordinary working people and expressing their life and aspirations".⁵⁸⁰ This traditional Uyghur story form is used by Zunun extensively in the later part of his writing career (for example, he identifies "Leelshah" as a *chochek*). Zunun seems to have taken up this style of narrative not in the literal sense (ie. a story orally "passed around among the people"), but rather in the sense that he used the *chochek* language style, and story elements that might resonate with folktales already known by the people, while developing his own original narrative and publishing it in written form. In *chochek*, the time and place of particular events is not clear. Zunun begins "Leelshah" with the introductory phrase "In the olden days...[*Burunkhi zamanda...*]", which is a phrase typical of the examples of *chochek* provided by Osman Ismayil. Zunun continues "...there was a great king whose country was prosperous and wealthy..." Zunun does not name the country or the time of the events. It is clear that his intention is that the story be read as a *chochek*. As the tale develops, Zunun frequently refers to characters by their description: "the King", "the Queen", "a loyal servant", which are generic descriptions again typical of the *chochek* genre. Although they do not have specific names, Zunun does distinguish them clearly by their personalities and behaviour, ranks, age, sex and other descriptive elements. All these devices are typical of the oral nature of the *chochek* in its popular form.

The *chochek* may be partly legend and partly fantasy. In "Leelshah", Zunun employs the devices of magic transformation by which the *leel* worm can transform into the son and heir of a childless king and queen. The special worm is able to become the object most desired by a King and Queen. The imagery draws on highly traditional elements of folk culture, such as the worm emanating a "white aura" [*nur*] from his forehead after being transformed into a baby. Another typical character of traditional oral literature is the *hizir*, a wise, purehearted old man with a long white beard. Osman Ismayil has

⁵⁸⁰ Osman Ismayil, op. cit., p.210.

noted that these characters with supernatural powers exist in many different genres of Uyghur oral literature, and remain in use to the present day.⁵⁸¹ In “Leelshah”, Zunun has a *hizir*-like character visit the Queen in a dream. The Queen dreams of the old man in Mecca, being entertained by the King of Mecca, holding prayer beads [*tesbih*]. These images are overlaid on the story “Leelshah”, and would be very familiar to Zunun’s readers.

Another element of folk language and imagery in “Leelshah” is the repeated use of the numbers “seven” and “forty”. Both these numbers have significance in Uyghur culture. The number seven has a significance going back well before Islam, into Zoroastrian and Manichaean literature. Professor Abdukerim Rahman has pointed out that the number seven acquired additional significance with the introduction and dominance of Islamic culture.⁵⁸² In the context of Islam, the number seven is significant for the number of days in the week, and the weekly day of prayer (Friday). There are seven Arabic prayers [*sure*] that accompany festivals of fasting and sacrificing. Seven days after a death, there is a feast. Boys are circumcised after seven years of age.

The number forty is not religious, but cultural in significance. “Forty” is used in Uyghur as a general concept representing “many”, “a lot”, or “unlimited”. Prof. Abdulkarim Rakhman traces this usage back to an old Uyghur concept of the major number ten, extended in four directions to represent the cosmos, forming the number forty. The number forty then is used, in old Uyghur, to represent the limitless cosmos.⁵⁸³

Another important traditional phrase in “Leelshah” is “*Adil Shah*” [The Just King], as noted in the keyword discussion in this chapter. Throughout Uyghur classical literature, there is a recurring theme that only a Just King could bring stability and prosperity to

⁵⁸¹ Ibid, p.213.

⁵⁸² Rahman, *Örp-Adetleri*, op.cit., p.167.

⁵⁸³ Nurmhammet Dolati (ed.) *Khedemki Uyghurlarning Tarihi Destani Oghuz Name* [Historical Epics of Old Uyghur: Oghuz Name], Beijing Minzu Chubanshe, Beijing 1997, pp.41-61. The classical Central Asian epic *Oghuz Name* provides examples of this usage for a general concept of extensiveness:
 “After forty days, he grows up”
 “After forty days, they arrive beside the mountains of Buz Tag”
 “He erected a pole of forty arms’ lengths.”

the people. The phrase has a special resonance for Uyghur readers in the modern age, based on their familiarity with its use in classical literature.

Zunun's Sentence Structure

As we have observed in commentary on Zunun's writing in different decades, Zunun's work can be seen to reflect his time and his circumstances. The way in which he handled his continuing dilemma was different in different times and different political climates. Nonetheless, it is possible to observe and decode underlying messages in his writing in each period. In his prose, Zunun often uses a sentence structure that establishes a three-part link between some physical or external act or situation (the "stimulus"); a psychological response on the part of a character or narrator; and a consequent action ("physical response"). Frequently this structure is used to express a theme of insecurity in the face of challenging situations which, I suggest, is a fundamental element of Zunun's sense of the situation of the Uyghur people. In Appendix 15, I provide three examples (one from the 1940s and two from the 1980s) which were written in different political circumstances and literary genres.

In the development of Uyghur literary style, the Chagatai (Hakaniye) style was characterised by an increase in the use of adjectives and elaborately descriptive phrases. Tursun Ayup, in comparing Iddikut Uyghur to Chagatai, says that the "old adjective phenomenon (from Turfan Uyghur) which had played a passive role, reached a higher level and became formal".⁵⁸⁴ We can see a reflection of this in Zunun's sentences, where several descriptive phrases, referring to the subject of the sentence, may be inserted before the main subject. A sentence may also contain one or more phrases describing the object (as exemplified in Appendices 15 (a), (b) and (c)). In this context, the use of conjunctions is important. An approach used in modern Uyghur linguistic study⁵⁸⁵ for structural analysis of sentences, including some explanation of the role and origin of conjunctions, is outlined in Appendix 16.

As Zunun grew up in the Ili region, his native dialect was the Ili dialect. With the

⁵⁸⁴ Tursun Ayup, op.cit., p.32.

⁵⁸⁵ *Turki Tillar Tahkikati*, op.cit.

extension of Russian political and cultural influence in the 1940s and 1950s in the Ili region, the modern cultural centre of East Turkistan shifted from Kashgar (with its inheritance of conservative culture and formal speech patterns) to Ili (with traditions of a more direct and blunt manner of speech, and more open to Western influences).⁵⁸⁶ Intellectuals of that region, including Zunun, were influenced during that period by Western (especially Russian) literary ideas. Zunun's work was deeply influenced both in style and in content by the Western realist genre, but his language is essentially Turkic Uyghur in terms of its lexicon and grammar. At the same time, Zunun remained open to new vocabulary and he was willing to adopt non-Uyghur words that had become part of normal Uyghur usage.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed some different ways in which the Uyghur language of different periods influenced Zunun Kadir's choice of literary strategies, in the context of his continuing dilemma as a nationalist writer within a CCP literary establishment. We have noted the historical complexity of the Uyghur language, which both enriched the language and cultural heritage, and also produced a clear consciousness of the need to preserve an "authentic" Turkic language as the foundation of Uyghur culture. This issue became even more intense during Zunun's working life as a writer, with the CCP and PRC policies of sinicisation and socialisation presenting powerful challenges to Uyghur language and culture.

By means of examples taken from different periods of his writing, I have demonstrated some of Zunun's strategies of language use under different political policies and social constraints. Though outward forms of his expression were to some degree dictated by his changing environment, Zunun remained fairly consistent in his application of strategies to include messages that could be decoded by readers familiar with the Uyghur language.

⁵⁸⁶ My father was from Ili, and my mother was from the South (Kucha), and provided the basis for this comparative observation.

Chapter 7

The Legacy of Struggle: Zunun Kadir's reputation

Previous chapters have discussed individual works by Zunun from different periods of his life and have placed them in their political and social context. This concluding chapter will consider his achievement in relation to other writers who worked in Xinjiang during the same period and under similar conditions. It will also consider evaluations of Zunun by writers, literary critics and commentators from within the same cultural environment. In this chapter I will refer particularly to four Uyghur writers who were Zunun's contemporaries, and with whom some comparisons can be made; I will then introduce the observations of some other Uyghur writers about Zunun Kadir. Finally, I comment on Zunun's funeral and two memorial events that will bring us to a final summation of his life, his work and its significance.

As noted in previous chapters, the existence of a writer in East Turkistan during Zunun's working lifetime from the 1930s to the 1980s was one of high political and personal risk. Many writers were killed, imprisoned or exiled (Zunun himself was sent to a labour camp for 17 years), and any writer who managed to be published over a long period thereby demonstrated a considerable ability to adapt to a changing and erratic political climate, which included the need to confine his or her writing within the bounds of safe topics and themes. My examination of Zunun's writings has provided examples of his continual dilemma in how he could find ways to balance the varied purposes of his writing with a very real need to survive, and of the strategies he employed to deal with his dilemma.

Zunun Kadir was not unique in facing this situation, and neither was he unique in both experiencing success and suffering punishment. Many Uyghur writers of Zunun's generation had similar experiences, though some did not survive as well as Zunun, or at all. The four that I have chosen to mention here are selected because in each case their experience had some connection with Zunun's experience, and yet each of them had very different outcomes in their literary careers.

Zunun's contemporaries

The four examples noted here are Lutpullah Mutellip, Ziya Semedi, Turghun Almas and Teyipjan Eliyup. These writers all shared certain things in common with Zunun. They were all supporters of the Second East Turkistan Republic; they had early careers as teachers and reporters involved in the progressive affairs of the Uyghur people; and they were all, at different times, either killed, exiled or imprisoned by the Chinese authorities. Three of them tried to observe CCP orthodoxy. They all promoted the improvement of Uyghur culture along with economic progress and modernity, and the work of each of them shows, in different and sometimes subtle ways, the conflict between Chinese political aims in Xinjiang and the interests of the Uyghur people. Each of these writers appears to use his work to engender the awakening of a political and social consciousness among the Uyghurs that might overcome their long-standing deprivation of cultural, economic and political rights and opportunity. Three of these writers survived in an increasingly harsh political environment to serve their audiences through several decades.

These writers, like Zunun Kadir, took considerable personal risks to make their contribution to the formation of modern Uyghur literature. Three of them survived the three successive regimes in East Turkistan from the 1920s to the 1980s: the Stalinist-influenced regime in East Turkistan under Governor Sheng Shicai, the subsequent KMT regime and the CCP regime. The flexibility that they required to exist under those regimes apparently did not extinguish all of the high ideals that had motivated their early careers. In the context of modern China much of their writing can seem quite orthodox. Nonetheless, all the caution and subtlety they employed, using Maoist rhetoric and socialist ideology among other strategies, could not save them from eventually being denounced as “nationalists”.

Their varied literary outputs under these harsh conditions contributed significantly to the preservation of Uyghur society and the formation of contemporary Uyghur literature. The existence of a contemporary literature in turn provides an important validation and record of a distinct Uyghur culture, nationally and internationally. Furthermore, these writers, who had been exposed in different degrees to Marxist social and cultural theories of the Soviet or Chinese variety, are likely to have been conscious of their own work in terms of its “contribution” to social progress.

Raymond Williams explains this utilitarian view of literature in Marxist cultural theory when he includes literature among the cultural “practices” that form a given society: “The literature is there from the beginning as a practice in the society. Indeed until it and all other practices are present, the society cannot be seen as fully formed. A society is not fully available for analysis until each of its practices is included.”⁵⁸⁷

Lutpulla Mutellip (1922-45)

Despite the fact that Lutpulla Mutellip was ten years younger than Zunun, in his writings Zunun refers to the younger author respectfully, and comments how he sought L. Mutellip's advice in his literary work. The Uyghur academic Sultan M. Kashgarli says L. Mutellip “elevated contemporary Uyghur poetry in form as well as meaning” through his creative spirit. L. Mutellip wrote drama and prose as well as poetry, and had a reputation for being well versed in folk literature and Chagatai literature. He published many articles and literary critical articles, and is best known for the poems “Answer to the Years” (*Yillarga jevap*) and “Imagined wish” (*Heyalchan tilek*), works that made him famous when published between 1943-4.⁵⁸⁸ His poems were generally on themes of patriotism and liberty, and although he was associated with the Second East Turkistan Republic regime in the Ili region, he also worked at different times in Kashgar (after 1941) and Urumqi (1942) on behalf of independence for the whole of East Turkistan. He was responsible for establishing an “East Turkistan Young Flame Union” (*Dogu Turkistan Genc Kiviljimlar Birligi*) to promote self-determination and modernisation in Uyghur society. He was denounced⁵⁸⁹ to the Chinese authorities, and was executed in 1945. While Zunun was engaged in similar activities in Gulja at this time, he was not as prominent and

⁵⁸⁷ Raymond Williams, “Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory” in *Problems in Materialism and Culture*, Verso, London, 1980, p.44.

⁵⁸⁸ Kashgarli, *Contemporary Literature* op.cit., p.142. Some collections of Lutpulla Mutellip’s works were published after his death. (This followed some political reinterpretation by the Xinjiang authorities that concluded Mutellip had been “revolutionary” rather than “nationalist” - [author]). These include *Yillarga Cevap* [Answer to the Years], Alma Ata, 1951, and later Xinjiang Peoples Publishing House, Urumqi, 1962; *Muhabbet ve Nefret* [Love and Loathing], Urumqi, 1956; *Davanlar Ashkanda* [Crossing the Pass]; *Samsak Akam Kaynaydu* [The Rage of Brother Samsak]; *Borandin kiyinki Aptap* [Sun after Storm]; *Chimen ve Pehlivan* [Grass and the Hero]; *Koresh Kizi* [A Girl of the Struggle]; *Tahir ve Zohre* [An epic love story]; and *Chimengul sahnede* [Chimengul on Stage].

⁵⁸⁹ Kashgarli, *Contemporary Literature*, op.cit., says “by the traitor Nur Hekim”.

escaped the early death that ended Mutellip's creative contribution to Uyghur culture. L. Mutellip's nationalistic purpose, and his use of metaphor and allegory to convey it, are well illustrated in his poem "Imagined Wish".⁵⁹⁰

No wavering, friends, my aspiration stays high,
 I won't pull down the sleeves I rolled up for the struggle.
 The brave gardener won't let his garden wither before time,
 Nor neglect his nurture and let the flower, the rose, fade.
 My imagination kicks and stamps like a child
 Demanding to suck the breasts of the treasured mother.
 Among delicious thoughts, looking at the sky
 With reflective eyes, I see corners in the light
 My coy darling sleeps, why does she not move?!
 If she waits for light, open the window of light!
 Write heartfelt lyrics, mix them with hope
 When a flame of love burns the heart.
 From old, I was a melancholy young dreamer
 Because I listened to my grandmothers legends of Samavi⁵⁹¹.
 In the deep ocean of love, I am a wave,
 How could I satisfy my thirst from a small pond?

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid, p.149. "*Hiyalchan Tilek*
Tengirkimaymen dostlar tileymen ali tileklerni
Chushurmeymen kuresheke dep turgen bileklerni.
Mert bagven ghazang kilmaydu vakitsiz baghni
Terbiyesiz soldurupl gul chicheklerni.
Hiyalim huddi telpunuop turgen bir sebi bala,
imish uchun kedirdan anadiki kosh emcheklerni.
lezzetlik hiyal arasida bakip asmanlarga,
Tepekkur kozubilen korumen roshen bujeklerni.
*Canan naz uykuda yetip nichuk tolganmas?!
 Ashigi kutup tursa echipo yoruk rujeklerni.*
Nimishka yazmay tilek arilash mangluk liriklarni'
Soygu Ishki ortep koydurse yureklerni
Ezeldinla hiyalchan mugluk bir yigit idim,
Tigshigachga momam agzidin Samavi chocheklerni.
Soygu degizi chogjurligida me kaynam tursam,
Ussuzlugum kandak kansun ichip kichik kolcheklerni."

⁵⁹¹ The Samani dynasty originated in what is now northern Afghanistan around 819 AD, and ruled a substantial Central Asian kingdom from Bukhara from 875-999. Its territory included Mirv, Khorasan, and eastern and northern Iran. (in Uyghur language, the "-vi" and "-ni" suffixes are sometimes interchangeable). "Samavi" is also the name of a form of Sufi dancing associated with the Dervish sect (*Concise Dictionary of Uyghur Language*, Minzu chubanshe, Beijing, 1992, vol. 3, p.442.).

This poem of Lutpulla Mutellip uses some imagery similar to that used by Zunun Kadir. The figure of the gardener and the garden, which recurs several times in Zunun's work, is used in the above poem as a metaphor for commitment to a homeland, including the need to "nurture" its potential in order to deliver its blossoms and fruits. Zunun's "Rudupay" (discussed in Chapter 2) tells of a garden that must be tended, and describes the evil parasitic monster pretending to be a virtuous gardener. The idea of "nurture" is continued with the images of mother and child, with the child (in this case) representing the Uyghur people, frustrated by the difficulty of getting the proper nourishment from their motherland. As we have seen, the mother/motherland metaphor is used frequently in "Gerip and Senem" (discussed in Chapter 4), and also appears in "The Journey" (also discussed in Chapter 4) with Zunun's description of an orphan lamb, lost in the snow, trying to suckle at its dead mother's teat.

Ziya Samedi (1914-2000)

Ziya Samedi's career closely paralleled that of Zunun Kadir, a significant difference being that he escaped to Soviet Turkistan in 1961, whereas Zunun was imprisoned at about the same time and only went to Kazakstan in 1989, at the very end of his life. In 1936, at the time when Zunun Kadir was travelling back and forth between Gulja and Urumqi in pursuit of an education, Ziya Samedi (then aged 22) wrote a musical drama on the theme of Gerip and Senem. Around this time, Zunun was writing his early play "The Hardship of Ignorance", which he describes in his recollections referred to earlier (although the text of the play is no longer available). In 1937, when Zunun became a member of the Anti-Imperialist Union, Ziya Samedi was also active in politics.

S.M.Kashgarli records that Ziya Samedi was arrested and jailed by Sheng Shicai, remaining in jail until Sheng departed from Xinjiang in 1944. While Ziya was in prison, Zunun added two scenes to Ziya Samedi's original libretto of "Gerip and

Senem”⁵⁹². Zhang Shirong says “Gerip and Senem” had been performed and popular in Urumqi, Aksu, Kashgar, Hoten and Kucha between 1939 and 1944. In 1945 it was banned by the Chinese authorities and a number of those involved in the production were arrested or had to flee.⁵⁹³

When Ziya Samedi returned to public life in 1944, he became a member of the Three Districts Government in Gulja. Zunun also worked for that government as a reporter and literary worker. In 1946, Ziya Samedi took part in a Coalition Government based on the “Eleven-point Agreement” between the ETR government and others, including the KMT government. When the agreement was not implemented and the coalition failed, Ziya returned to Gulja together with Ahmetjan Kasim's ETR group.

After 1950 Ziya, like Zunun, was a Soviet-oriented intellectual who remained a productive author under the CCP regime.⁵⁹⁴ Ziya Samedi became Chair of the Department of Culture and Education in Xinjiang in 1956, as well as Chairman of the Writers’ Union (of which Zunun was a member). That same year he attended an “Asian Writers’ Congress” in India. In 1957, during and after the Hundred Flowers campaign, Ziya came in for criticism and punishment, particularly for a speech in which he maintained the importance of writers “strengthening attention to their individual literary inheritance, both classical and folkloric” (referred to in Chapter 6). This contradicted the “anti-nationalism” campaign that was running in Xinjiang at this time. Ziya Samedi had invoked Mao's concept of “non-antagonistic contradiction” and referred to the presence of such contradictions in Uyghur literature and literary discussion.⁵⁹⁵ Despite arguing in Maoist terms to defend himself, Ziya Samedi was nonetheless branded and

⁵⁹² The epic story of “Gerip and Senem” has been worked over by many authors, each borrowing from his predecessors (in the tradition of the oral epic). Zunun refers in his “Recollections” to hearing ‘songs from Gerip and Senem’ performed at a *meshrep* when he was still a child. The “stage opera” written by Ziya Samedi was rewritten and added to by Zunun, but later banned and lost. In the late 1970s, while Zunun was in exile, Ali Azziz put together an opera based on ‘earlier work’ (according to Zileyhan, this was mostly Zunun’s work.). In turn, Zunun’s credited work on the film script (1981) is based on that opera. It is beyond the scope of this research to separate in detail the contributions made by each writer to the various treatments of the epic story.

⁵⁹³ Zhang Shirong, “Translator’s note”, op.cit.

⁵⁹⁴ Ziya Samedi in 1945-6 wrote *Surluk minotlar* [Minutes of Fear] and *Hitay zindanlarinda* [In Chinese Prisons]. In 1951-2 he wrote *Zulumga zaval* [Decline of Injustice] and in 1953 *Ili Deryasi boyida* [By the Ili River].

⁵⁹⁵ Friedrich, op.cit.,p.81.

condemned as a “bourgeois rightist and nationalist”.⁵⁹⁶ Kashgarli says that during the Anti-Rightist Movement of 1958-9, Ziya Samedi and four of his colleagues were accused of being a “Gang of Five Nationalists” and faced five months of criticism meetings, in which they were accused of “selling Xinjiang to western Imperialists”, and of being counter revolutionaries and enemies of the people. Ziya Samedi was relieved of his various positions, and in 1961 he left for the Soviet Union. Having settled in the Soviet Union, Ziya continued to write works with a Uyghur nationalistic flavour, which he could do in Kazakhstan without being punished by the authorities. After 1961 Ziya Samedi’s literary works included the novel “Mayimhan” (about a 19th Century Uyghur heroine), the novels “Secret of the Years” [*Yillar Siri*], “Gani Batur” (about a hero of the ETR), and “Iparhan” (about the Uyghur princess taken by force as concubine to the Qing Emperor Qianlong), among others.⁵⁹⁷ All of these writings dealt with the theme of resistance to Chinese colonialism.

After Ziya had been criticized during the Anti-Rightist Movement, in 1958 Zunun Kadir was sent to Tashkent to attend an Afro-Asian Writers’ Conference representing Chinese writers.⁵⁹⁸ There is a possible hint in this series of events of CCP use of competitiveness between intellectuals, perhaps as a means of control. During field study in Xinjiang 1998 I was told by Uyghur writers that Ziya Samedi and Zunun Kadir had been competitors. The historical evidence shows that they worked together for similar objectives and using the same methods - but Zunun does not mention Ziya Samedi anywhere in his works or oral memoirs. It is clear that even today Ziya Samedi remains unacceptable to the CCP. Indeed, one Uyghur intellectual complained to me in private conversation that he had been commissioned to write a book about Uyghur writers, but after many years of work, the manuscript was rejected for publication by the Chinese authorities because he included references to Ziya Samedi among the Uyghur writers. We may speculate that if Zunun Kadir had emigrated to Kazakhstan in 1961 (as he was accused of trying to do) he might (like Ziya Samedi) have been classified as a traitor by the Chinese authorities, in which case his works would have been suppressed in Xinjiang.

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid, pp.87-8.

⁵⁹⁷ Kashgarli, *Contemporary Literature*, op. cit., p.171.

⁵⁹⁸ Zunun described this event in his recollection “The Friendship and Peace Display”(*Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit.,p.654.)

Instead, Zunun endured his seventeen years of labour camp, and upon his return from exile continued to try to work within the PRC system. Though this may have demanded many compromises on his freedom of expression, he nonetheless was able to make some significant contributions to modern Uyghur literature during the period from 1979 until his death.

Turghun Almas (1924-)

Turghun Almas is a writer who was twelve years younger than Zunun. He was a friend and colleague during Zunun's last creative period after 1979. The two were neighbours in the Writers' Association housing compound. Zunun admired Turghun Almas' work, and they often discussed literary works and issues together.⁵⁹⁹ Turghun Almas is currently best known for three historical books on the peoples of Turkistan (*History of The Huns, Old Uyghur Literature, and The Uyghur People*) which, after publication in 1986-89, were subsequently banned⁶⁰⁰ and criticised in 1991. The record of the official criticism sessions indicates that the Propaganda Department of the Communist Party Committee of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region attacked Turghun Almas on the grounds of his assertion that Xinjiang has a history as an independent state, and his claim that there had been war between Chinese and Turkic peoples in the region.⁶⁰¹ A 1993 internal CCP paper on "Anti-Separatism Struggle and its Historical Lessons since the Liberation of Xinjiang", attributed to Zhang Yumo, accused Turghun Almas of

taking a vow to fight for the independence of East Turkistan... He even wrote counter-revolutionary articles such as 'Our Great Motherland - East Turkistan' and 'Our Cruel Sufferings and the way out of them' to viciously attack the Chinese Communist Party's general and specific policies in Xinjiang, and to slander more than twenty years of accomplishments after the region's Liberation.⁶⁰²

⁵⁹⁹ Zunun's family showed me some video footage of Turghun Almas and Zunun Kadir discussing literature together.

⁶⁰⁰ "The Uyghur People" was removed from bookstores one week after publication in February 1990 (Rudelson, op.cit., p.157.)

⁶⁰¹ Feng Dazhen (ed.), *"Weiwuer Ren" deng San Ben Shu Wenti Taolunhui Lunwenji* [Papers of the Discussion Meeting on Problems with the Three Books: "The Uyghur People" etc.], Xinjiang Renmin Chubanshe, Urumqi, 1992, pp.2-7.

⁶⁰² This 20-page article has circulated among Uyghur activists outside China, and was published in English translation on the Internet home-page of Dr Erkin Sidik, a Uyghur resident in USA.

Kashgarli says that the Chinese authorities blamed Turghun Almas' books for stirring up Uyghur nationalism that led to the "Baren Incident" (a serious uprising against Chinese rule in April 1990). Turghun Almas was expelled from his position in the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, his books were banned, and he was placed under supervision. Turghun Almas remains well known and respected by Uyghurs at home and abroad.

In some ways the life of Turghun Almas follows a similar pattern to that of Zunun Kadir and Ziya Samedi. He was born in Kashgar in 1924, and after secondary schooling he attended teachers college between 1939-1942. During this time he came to the attention of the public as a writer with his poem "We will not turn back" [*Kaytmaymiz*]. He was promoted from teacher to headmaster in Kashgar in 1942, but was imprisoned by the Chinese authorities in 1943.⁶⁰³ After his release he resumed work for the Uyghur Independence Movement. He was arrested again in 1947 and released in 1949. After the CCP takeover he worked in a newspaper "Forward" [*Alga*]. In 1953 he became Head of Xinjiang [Literature and Art Union Writers Association]. 1956 he visited the Soviet Union and Central Asia as a member of a Chinese writers' delegation.⁶⁰⁴

In 1959 Turghun Almas was accused of being "Pan-Turkist", a rightist, and a nationalist, and was exiled to undergo hard labour. In 1967, he was again imprisoned as a "nationalist". In 1977 he was rehabilitated and brought back to Urumqi, where he resumed writing. He published an anthology of poems, *Before Dawn* [*Tang Seher*], and contributed many other works before the major publication of his three historical books *History of the Huns*, *Old Uyghur Literature* and *The Uyghurs* in 1986-89,⁶⁰⁵ which led to his current situation of enforced silence.⁶⁰⁶

Turghun Almas' situation, in the end, was different to that of Zunun Kadir because his writing of national history explicitly confronted the political orthodoxy of the

⁶⁰³ While in prison Turghun Almas wrote "*Tutkun*" [Captive] and "*Azatlik Meshlesi*" [Torch of Freedom].

⁶⁰⁴ During this period Turghun Almas works included "*Kizil bayrak*" [Red Flag], "*Pichak*" [The Knife], "*Tarim Shamallari*" [Tarim wind], (1956), "*Leyligul*" (1960), and many more poems and epic poems.

⁶⁰⁵ Kashgarli, *Contemporary Literature*, op.cit., p.221-2.

⁶⁰⁶ Since completing this thesis, I received news that Turghun Almas died in 2001.

Chinese authorities, which claims historical sovereignty over East Turkistan. Zunun's historical references, by contrast, are to historical culture, using mythic settings, and thus require interpretation to decode the nationalistic messages. The strong official reaction to Almas' historical works may have been counter-productive to the Chinese cause. Rudelson notes,

“The fact that the government has taken such strong measures to attack Turghun Almas' work is evidence that it is widely known among the Uyghurs and is considered dangerous by the government. By distributing the (critical) pamphlet throughout the region, the government's efforts achieved the opposite of their intended purpose: many more Uyghurs were exposed to Turghun Almas' ideas in the pamphlet than could have obtained copies of the original banned book, and many found Turghun's historical account very compelling.”⁶⁰⁷

Teyipjan Eliyup (1930-1989)

The principal link between Teyipjan Eliyup and Zunun Kadir concerns the filming of “Gerip and Senem” in 1981 by the Tianshan Film Studio. While both Zunun and Teyipjan Eliyup were invited to assist with the development of the script, my interviews in Xinjiang in 1998 indicated that Teyipjan was less flexible than Zunun in his approach to cooperating with the Chinese authorities in regard to the project. At some point, Teyipjan left the project and as a result is not even mentioned in the credits, while Zunun continued to collaborate in bringing “Gerip and Senem” to the screen (as discussed extensively in Chapter 4).

Teyipjan Eliyup was born in Korgas county of the Ili region in 1930. He started to write poems at the early age of 15, and was a supporter of the Three Districts Government. In 1948 he wrote two works advocating freedom for the South of Xinjiang:⁶⁰⁸ “Wait for Me” [*Kut meni*] and “To my warrior brother” [*Jengchi akamga*].⁶⁰⁹

⁶⁰⁷ Rudelson op.cit., p.159.

⁶⁰⁸ At this time, the ETR ruled the Ili region independently of Chinese authority, while southern Xinjiang remained under Chinese rule.

⁶⁰⁹ Other examples of his works noted by Kashgarli (op cit) are “*Wentenimni Koyleymen*” [Praise for my Homeland], “*Tugumes nahsha*” [Endless Song], “*Sevgi duyulari*” [Feeling of Love], and “*Shark nahshasi*” [Song of the East].

Under the CCP regime in Xinjiang, Teyipjan visited Central Asia, Korea, and Macedonia where, at an international poets' conference in 1982, he was awarded a prize for his poem "The Neverending Song, [*Tugumes nahsha* ⁶¹⁰]:

Every night I sing the song,
This is the road I cannot leave,
I walk in search of my goal,
Troubled; I have not yet reached it.

One night, while I was singing,
Wandering along that road,
Suddenly a door creaked open;
An old man came out angrily.

"You shout that song every day,
Are you crazy? Why don't you sleep?!
You give others no rest,
What kind of endless song is this?!"

⁶¹⁰ Kashgarli, *Contemporary Literature* op.cit., p.233:
"Tugumes Nahsha"

*Her ahshami nahsha eytimen
Bir kochidin egip ketelmey
Bir pellini kozlep mangimen,
Evarimen tih yetelmey.*

*Bir kun ahshimi hahsha tavlislam,
Eshu kochini men egip mengip.
Tuyuksuz birdin ishik gichirlap,
Kayipla ketti bir bovay chikip.*

*Nahsha eytisen kunde chakirap,
Sarag musen uhlumaydighan?!
Ya ademge aram bermeysen,
Kandak nahsha bu tugumeydighan?!*

*Kayima bovay, senmu bir chagda,
Yash idingghu uhlumaydirghan!
Senmu eytip tugutelmigen,
Shundak nahsha bu tugumeydighan!"*

“Don’t be angry, old man,
 You also were young and sleepless!
 You also sang without end,
 This is the same song, it will not end!

The poem may be interpreted as a dialogue between restless youth and old age. As I understand it, “Neverending Song” refers to the long history of the modern Uyghur struggle for independence. In this reading, the young poet stands for Xinjiang; the old man stands for China, and the goal is independence. Read in this way, Teyipjan seems, through this poem, to be appealing to the Chinese to remember that once they, too, were seeking for their national independence, and that they also tirelessly sang the song of self determination. Now Uyghurs sing that same song, and will continue to sing it until their goal is reached. The opening of the creaking door may suggest the comparatively relaxed situation of the early 1980s, but it is immediately followed by the singer (Uyghurs) being faced with an angry old man (China) complaining bitterly against the “Neverending Song” of the Uyghur aspiration for independence.

In 1984, while holding a position as General Secretary of the XUAR Writers and Artists Union, Teyipjan was also invited to a seminar in Eskishehir, Turkey by the Turkish Minister of Culture. During this visit he appeared in a Turkish TV program, and wrote poems about Kemal Ataturk, expressing the love and admiration of the Uyghur people for Ataturk. Teyipjan Eliyup died of cancer in 1989.

I would argue that Teyipjan’s poem “Is that right?”⁶¹¹ is also a work laden with ambiguity, open to interpretation on more than one level. What may be read on one level as a love poem, may also be taken to be making a powerful point at another level

⁶¹¹ Uyghur text from Kashgarli, *Contemporary Literature*, op. cit., p.231.
Meyli mu?

*Kelmek bolup, sen kelmiding bolsa yalغان meyli mu?
 Veslingge imkan bermiding, koydurse hijran meyli mu?
 Kormeyin simi bigam idim, anade tarircem idim,
 Baglap akide me sanga, bolsam perishan meyli mu?
 Ishking uruk, konglum zemin, yashim yigin, ahim shamal,
 Eyleop ekinni perverish, ach kalsa dikan meyli mu?
 Aldighining tulke, koydung meni hem kulkige,
 Aldamchi yirtkuch aldida, harlansa insan meyli mu?*

about longing for national identity and autonomy, and about disappointment with authorities who had betrayed the hopes placed in them. It reads:

You said you would come, and you did not,
 Your word was a lie, is that right?
 You did not give a chance to union,
 Separation burns, is that right?
 Before seeing you, I was right, free and comfortable,
 Attaching myself to you, I am ruined, is that right?
 My love is a seed, my heart is soil, my tears are rain, my sigh the wind,
 If a gardener sows, but starves in the end, is that right?
 You trapped me for the fox, left me to be ridiculed.
 To misuse people in front of that cunning beast, is that right?

This poem, and the previous references I have made to the lives and works of Zunun Kadir's contemporaries, are provided here to illustrate that the key elements of Zunun's lifelong dilemma as a writer were common to other writers of his time. Each individual, according to his circumstances and values, had to form his own strategy in balancing the need for personal survival against the desire to publish writings that express personal truths of the Uyghur cultural and political situation. Lutpulla Mutellip met an early death, Ziya Samedi went into exile in middle life, Turghun Almas faced several periods of punishment before being silenced and prevented from publishing, and Teyipjan Eliyup died of cancer, perhaps embittered by a sense of betrayal (as the poem "Is that right?" would suggest). No 20th Century Uyghur writer of serious intent could expect to have an easy life given the conditions in Xinjiang, and Zunun Kadir's life was no exception to that circumstance.

Evaluations of Zunun

In discussing how other Uyghur intellectuals have evaluated Zunun, account should be taken of the different dynamics that may influence and pressure a contemporary Uyghur intellectual in the judgements he or she may make, or at least in the way in which he or she may frame such judgements. For example, Communist-educated Uyghur cadres may have many incentives to stay within the "cadre" system, but may also be frustrated that their personal opportunities for advancement are blocked by the absence of political

autonomy for Xinjiang Uyghurs. In this context such cadres may be motivated to support the case for greater self rule, in part by exposing the arrogant style of cultural assimilation practiced by the politically dominant forces, and by reasserting traditional cultural values.⁶¹² Balanced against this, they are likely to avoid expressing their views in a way that could attract criticism or punishment from the political authorities who are vigilant against any kind of “nationalism” or “splittism”. Dynamics of this kind are likely to apply when Uyghur contemporary literature is discussed and criticized.

Uyghur intellectuals may also need to refer to political guidelines in assessing Uyghur literary work and authors. For example, in a 1985 article the literary academic Muhammet Polat suggests the following criteria as being suitable for the evaluation of works of literature: 1) Experience of life; 2) Ideological grounds; 3) Artistic ability; and 4) Language.⁶¹³

The inclusion of “ideological grounds” in this list is a sign that, from Polat’s perspective, all writing is inherently ideological. This signal implies that while the other three criteria (taken separately) could imply scope for creativity and self-expression, in reality they will be applied in an ideological context. From reading examples of Muhammet Polat’s criticism, I would interpret that by “experience of life” he actually means, in the Maoist sense, the author’s experience of physical labour, peasant life, and upholding basic CCP production policy. “Ideological grounds” means conformity to Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought (as interpreted in the CCP policy of the day), and in Xinjiang this includes a special emphasis on supporting the “unity of the Chinese state”. “Artistic ability” can also be interpreted in ideological terms, as the socialist realist aesthetic could demand creation of characters to typify or symbolize social ideals or contradictions.

The “language” criterion can be applied simply as a tool of the above mentioned functions. However, the “creative” skill in the use of language can also be a

⁶¹² Edward Allworth, *The Nationality Question in Soviet Central Asia*, Praeger, New York, 1973, p.169. Allworth describes, in these terms, a parallel situation in Central Asia under Soviet rule.

⁶¹³ Muhammet Polat in Mahmutjan Islam (ed), *Uyghur Edebiyatida piruza* [Prose in Uyghur Literature], Xinjiang Peoples Publishing House, Urumqi, 1985, p.84.

dimension that carries the dynamic of ambiguity in a writer's work, as we have discussed repeatedly in regard to Zunun Kadir's own work. Thus, even though criteria set by the state may exist, there is always some scope for a dynamic between the expectations of the state and the output of individual writers, and this is the space in which Zunun and other Uyghur writers could operate in subtle ways to manage their dilemma. This would apply equally to the literary critic as to the original writer.

Generally in China during Zunun's working life, literary criticism was used primarily for political purposes: works would be classified as "good" or "bad" according to whether they served the political programs of the time. Thus much of the literary criticism was itself superficial and could make only a limited contribution to fostering aesthetic sensibility or cultural depth. In Xinjiang, the ongoing theme of Uyghur autonomy (which provided the subtext of so much serious Uyghur writing, including that of Zunun Kadir) was less subject to changing political fashions, because all Chinese regimes, and all shades of CCP ruling groups, have considered Uyghur nationalism or "splittism" to be dangerous or criminal. The main differences over time concerned "revisionism" (that is, pro-Soviet views and sentiment) that was added to the list of ideological faults at the time of the Sino-Soviet political split, which came to the surface during the Great Leap Forward (discussed in Chapter 3). Zunun Kadir and Ziya Samedi were two of the many Uyghur writers of their generation whose works were criticised for "revisionism" because they were judged to be pro-Soviet.⁶¹⁴

The political dangers associated with literary criticism may be one reason why there is relatively little detailed critical analysis available on Zunun Kadir. Interviews with writers and academics during the period of field work undertaken for this study, and reference to the published works that are available, provide a general confirmation that Zunun Kadir is considered to hold a very significant place in modern Uyghur literature. The comments do not really apply the ideological criteria of merit

⁶¹⁴ In fact, the Soviet model of Central Asian autonomous republics was very attractive to autonomy-minded Uyghur intellectuals, as offering greater hope for long-term national survival, compared to the Chinese policies which seemed to be directed at long-term colonisation and permanent assimilation into China.

suggested by Muhammet Polat (above), which might suggest that these criteria reflect the viewpoint of ideological cadres rather than of practising academics or creative workers. The available sources instead focus on Zunun's contribution to Uyghur writing style and craft; on the depth and direction of his subject matter; and some comments on his personal character and standing among Uyghur writers.

All available sources draw attention to and are appreciative of Zunun Kadir's skill as a writer, and the contribution he made to the development of Uyghur writing. Abdukadir Jelaledin, an Associate Professor of the University of Urumqi, described Zunun as "one of the pioneers of modern Uyghur prose writing... (He) demonstrated his skill through creativity and multi-layered meanings".⁶¹⁵ The Chinese translator of "Gerip and Senem", Zhang Shirong, confirmed the view that Zunun was "a pioneer of prose and drama writing in Xinjiang".⁶¹⁶ In one of a collection of Ili-related articles, Nurmuhimmat Zaman classes Zunun Kadir as "one of the founding writers of modern Uyghur literature in the 1930s and 1940s".⁶¹⁷ Professor Azad Sultan makes a more specific point in relation to contemporary Uyghur drama, saying that Zunun Kadir was "a pioneer prose writer, who applied realist writing to creative drama... (He) greatly influenced the development of the dramatic art form."⁶¹⁸ S.M. Kashgarli (who, as an expatriate, writes without the constraints of scholars working within the PRC) notes Zunun's particular use of metaphor to draw attention to Chinese colonialism, and also that "his language is vivid and clear."⁶¹⁹ The combination of these comments on Zunun's particular skills as a writer gives a picture of a writer who is appreciated for his clarity and realism, but also one acknowledged to have made significant use of metaphor and multi-layered meanings.

Uyghur writers also have particularly noted the richness of influences and personal experiences that Zunun Kadir drew upon, and his ability to employ a variety of influences in his contributions to maintaining and developing Uyghur culture.

Nurmuhimmat Zaman notes the influence of Soviet Uyghur literature upon Zunun, and

⁶¹⁵ Associate Professor (Pedagogy) Abdukadir Jelaledin of the University of Urumqi, interviewed by author in June 1998.

⁶¹⁶ Zhang Shirong, "Translator's Note" op.cit.

⁶¹⁷ Nurmuhimmat Zaman, *Ili Anthology* op.cit., p.199-200.

⁶¹⁸ Azad Sultan, op.cit., pp.93-4.

⁶¹⁹ Kashgarli, *Contemporary Literature*, op.cit., p.203.

credits Zunun with being “one of the early Realist writers” in Uyghur.”⁶²⁰ Enver Abdurehim supports Zunun’s lasting contribution, saying that “His works have deep meaning and will never be erased from our cultural history”.⁶²¹ He attributes Zunun’s strength in part to what he asorbed from “contact with the cultural essence of humanity”, of which he lists the Chagatai masters Navayi, Meshrep, Abdulkasim, Sheyhi Seyid and Ferdosi; Russians Pushkin, Tolstoy, Gogol, Chekov, and Gorky; and Soviet Uyghur writers such as Sedirdin Eyni, Abdullah Tokay, Omer Muhammedi, and Nur Israyil. Azad Sultan, by contrast, nominates Zunun’s writings about the 1930s, “a period in which the Uyghur people faced hardship and mental torture”, as the background upon which Zunun “built a strong foundation for contemporary (Uyghur) drama.”⁶²² Prof. S.M. Kashgarli (who publishes in Turkey, with comparatively more freedom than available in China) refers to Zunun’s work as having “a higher meaning”, as Zunun “... uses literary metaphor to express multiple meanings with strong Uyghur national flavour.”⁶²³

On the question of the cultural significance and “meaningfulness” of Zunun’s work, I consider it particularly significant that the Han writer and translator Zhang Shirong quotes the response of other Han readers of Zunun’s work (translated into Chinese) who said that “his technique was from the heart, his creativity surfaced from deep down, that is why his writing had deep meaning”. Zhang’s point seems to indicate that the humane qualities of Zunun’s work struck a sympathetic chord even with Han readers who experienced it only in translation, and without the background to interpret specific Uyghur cultural or political messages.

Some of the critics touch briefly on Zunun’s personal character as they evaluate his contribution to Uyghur literature. Kashgarli evaluates Zunun Kadir as “a patriotic nationalist Uyghur who obtained respect and love of the Uyghur people... also a great thinker who had a gift for understanding his people”. Zhang Shirong notes particularly that “Zunun Kadir did not follow political trends, apart from some pieces in 1960. He did not seek political advantage by writing political texts. I admire his integrity and see

⁶²⁰ Zaman, op.cit.

⁶²¹ Enver Abdurehim, op.cit., p.204.

⁶²² Azad Sultan, op.cit.

⁶²³ Kashgarli, *Contemporary Literature*, op.cit.

him as a model for myself to strive for.”⁶²⁴ Coming from a Han literary cadre who has worked in Xinjiang for many years, this is significant praise.

To find negative criticism about Zunun is very rare. All available comments portray him as a man of personal integrity held in good standing in his community. I would not discount the possibility that he had severe critics or even enemies, but no material is available to support that possibility. However, there is some evidence that Uyghur intellectuals, living in a climate where they may be subject to divisive tactics of control, may be reluctant to criticise any of their number who have achieved high standing.

This factor was one element of an episode concerning criticism of Zunun's article “Red Rose” [*Kizilgul*] as discussed in Ehed Turdi's book *A story of a Sage [Bir evliya hekkide khisse]*.⁶²⁵ Ehed Turdi mentions that he was neighbor of Zunun in the residential compound of the Writers’ Association from 1986. He discussed with Zunun the piece “Red Rose”, which Zunun had written in 1962 (reviewed separately in Chapter 3). Ehed Turdi notes “there was much criticism among members of the University literary department. Anyone who read this story could not avoid criticising it.”

Turdi’s former classmate Ablimit Ismail, a Professor in the Literature Department of Xinjiang Pedagogical University, wrote an article titled “A red rose with no fragrance”, criticizing Zunun’s story. Turdi says,

A few of us looked at the article, and recommended he should send it to *Xinjiang Literature and Art (Xinjiang Edebiyati Seneti)*. Ablimit Ismayil gave the article to the editor, but the editor returned it, saying that ‘the article was good but we wanted to protect Zunun Kadir, so we are returning it to you without publishing it’.⁶²⁶

Ehed Turdi then describes his discussion with Zunun about this article, which he told

⁶²⁴ Zhang Shirong, “Tranlator’s Note”, op.cit.

⁶²⁵ Ehed Turdi, op.cit., p.286.

⁶²⁶ Ibid, p.297.

Zunun that the article complained “Red Rose” lacked “colour” (*sic*) and lacked “literary representation”. Turdi said to Zunun, “In the end, the editor discussed your earlier stories and said that if one takes away Zunun's name from “Red Rose”, no one would believe this story was written by Zunun Kadir.” Zunun Kadir's reaction to this criticism, according to Turdi, was

Well done, Ablimit Ismail! I had heard of this situation and was unhappy with the editorial department. With censorship, how could our literature develop? What was the (Literary Review) editorial department afraid of? There could be two reasons for this: they may have considered that I have a big name; or the other possibility is that they have their own hand in this: it was they who ordered me to write that story! A piece of writing made to order is not literature, it is a commodity.⁶²⁷

From the above quotation, I would suggest that Ehed Turdi appears to note the deficiencies in this particular story by Zunun, but Turdi's purpose in reporting this exchange actually is to criticize a system that interferes with writers' freedom of expression, and that substitutes political commodities for real literature in the work of a writer. The criticism of Zunun remains on the surface, as Turdi points out that no one would believe Zunun would write a propaganda piece “if he did not sign it”. With this anecdote, Ehed Turdi suggests that it was cadres of the “editorial department” who pushed Zunun to write, and to sign, this propaganda piece.

Overall, there is no question that Zunun Kadir's work is held in high esteem among the Uyghur reading audience, which extends widely and is not limited to an educated elite. Ehed Turdi describes how, during the 1980s, the editorial group of the literary journal *Tarim* held meetings all over Xinjiang, and Zunun was taken to these meetings as a literary Master, to meet younger writers and poets. Ehed Turdi describes a particular 1985 visit to a remote county near Hotan, where the ordinary local people showed such love and respect for Zunun that when a local singer sang a song from Zunun's drama “Gunchem”, “The singer's warm sincere, courteous treatment melted the long years of (Zunun's) deprivation from respect, consideration, friendship and love, and the pain and

⁶²⁷ Ibid, p. 298.

anger in his heart brought tears to his damaged eyes”. Ehed Turdi continues, “At that time I was inspired by this master and his long and difficult creative life. I felt that his work will always occupy the highest place in our literature.”⁶²⁸

Abdukadir Jelaleddin concurs that Zunun is “..one of the most important Uyghur writers of the 20th Century... even though he did not leave a large body of work”.⁶²⁹ Azad Sultan, with his focus on the drama genre, notes that Zunun’s dramas “Ghunchem”, “Gulnissa” and “Toy” have been staged continuously for over fifty years, and assesses that Zunun “lit an unquenchable beacon (guiding us) to our people’s artistic treasure”.⁶³⁰ Zhang Shirong makes a strong statement, departing from more common patronising approaches by Han scholars to “minority” cultures, when he asserts, “I think Zunun’s talent and literary genius are at the same level as Mao Dun and Guo Moruo”,⁶³¹ two Chinese realist writers held in the highest esteem within the literary world of the PRC. Along the same lines, S.M. Kashgarli says, “Zunun Kadir’s work became a record of the life of the Uyghur people. His work will take its place in Uyghur literary history as a glorious fruit of Uyghur national culture.”⁶³²

Since Zunun seems to have been held in high regard by his peers, a question arises as to why he seems to have chosen that his life would end, and he would be buried, far from his home. His final visit to Kazakstan in 1989 was undertaken when he knew that he was very ill. It was Zunun Kadir’s wish that his body not be taken back to Xinjiang for burial.⁶³³ There could be various reasons for this, including the Muslim custom that a body should be buried promptly. However, taking into account that Zunun had been convicted by the Chinese in 1962 of trying to escape to the Soviet Union following his bitter disappointment with the CCP regime (see Chapter 3), and that he had witnessed many cases of Chinese determination to eliminate any figures or reputations that could have symbolic meaning for the Uyghurs (for example, the treatment of Ziya Samedi), it

⁶²⁸ Ibid.

⁶²⁹ Jelaleddin, op.cit.

⁶³⁰ Azad Sultan, op.cit.

⁶³¹ Zhang Shirong, op.cit.

⁶³² Kashgarli, *Contemporary Literature*, op.cit.

⁶³³ Zunun’s wife Zileyhan, interviewed in 1992.

is arguable that Zunun's final act was a deliberate protest against Chinese rule over East Turkistan.

The events immediately following his death also give us some clues as to what Zunun foresaw. There are video-recordings of two memorial ceremonies for Zunun Kadir. One is in Almaty, Kazakstan, where he died, and the other is of a ceremony conducted by the Xinjiang authorities in Urumqi, with representatives of the Writers' Association and Zunun's family in attendance.

There is a marked contrast between the two memorial events. The Kazakstan ceremony takes place at a cemetery in a rural setting. There are official representatives from Kazakstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgystan and Tataristan, who each make moving speeches praising Zunun's contribution to literature, particularly Uyghur literature. The event is simple, sad, sincere and moving, and focussed on appreciation of Zunun Kadir and specifically his contribution to the Uyghur people. Even a total stranger unfamiliar with Zunun's work would understand from that ceremony that an important literary figure was being commemorated. This funeral was organised by Ashur Vahit, an important modern Uyghur figure who had worked along with Zunun Kadir in the East Turkistan Republic days. Vahit overcame great difficulties to raise funds for the erection of a bronze statue of Zunun to mark his grave.⁶³⁴

By contrast, the funeral in Urumqi was conducted soberly in a hall decorated with many floral wreaths and attended by representatives from a wide range of Chinese organisations, who presented their flowers labelled with the name of their organisation. There was much reading of lists of attendees and formal condolences, but only a minimal reference to Zunun's literary contribution to the Uyghur people. The highest spoken praise was that Zunun "wrote good works... which improved our prose writing", and that he "deserved to be held in high esteem".⁶³⁵ It was a ceremony for Zunun, but entirely lacking in any spontaneous spirit. There appeared to be no opportunity for any

⁶³⁴ This information provided to me by various relatives of Zunun Kadir in Urumqi, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakstan during 1988.

⁶³⁵ [Unidentified] cadre on videotape record of the ceremony.

attendees to say what they felt about Zunun, to reflect on the meaning of his works, or to commemorate what Zunun had done for the Uyghur people.

These two contrasting video records may indicate, symbolically, why Zunun's identity seems so consistently to be Turkic and Central Asian, rather than Chinese. Zunun's personal life showed modesty and humility, but he may also have recognised the importance for Uyghur people of having some symbolic figures and cultural icons to look up to, in a period when, all around them, their culture was being eroded and pushed aside. He may also have known that the creation of such symbols would be opposed by the ruling authorities. He may well have wanted to leave a personal memorial, more tangible than the words of his literary output, as a symbol of achievement and aspiration for his people. In many of Zunun's works, there is metaphoric reference to freedom and hope lying "beyond the mountains", which in the real world could refer to the Turkic nations of Central Asia that are "beyond the mountains" from East Turkistan.

Even though Zunun was never actively a threat to the authorities, he suffered great hardships because of his writings, and the intense struggles over the political future of the Uyghur people have continued to affect those associated with him even after his death. Ashur Vahit, the former ETR activist who organised Zunun's funeral in Kazakstan, was later killed by an unidentified gang who broke into his house, beat the 70-year-old so severely that he died later in hospital, and stole all the documentation on Uyghur culture and history (particularly the East Turkistan Republic) that Vahit had in his house. Zunun's statue still stands by his grave, but it has been defaced with graffiti and the grave is not well kept. Uyghurs in Kazakstan say that they are afraid of spies and retribution.⁶³⁶

Zunun Kadir can be seen to have progressed through his working life from an early position as an idealistic socialist, toward a position that was increasingly pragmatic, still committed to social progress, but placing greater importance on the role of culture and tradition in preserving the identity of his Uyghur nation. Through most of this

⁶³⁶ At time of writing, there were continuing reports from international news agencies of Chinese government pressure on Central Asian governments to hand over Uyghur nationalists, whom they characterise as "terrorists" or "criminals".

development he seemed able to find ways to express his Uyghur nationalism and to advocate forms of social modernisation that would preserve the essential elements of Uyghur culture. At different stages he faced challenges in maintaining an official position within the structure of a Chinese regime, while seeking to maintain his credibility with his Uyghur readership. My study suggests that he coped with this dilemma by adapting to the demands and pressures of the time, while successfully maintaining his Uyghur identity and communicating this to his readership. Zunun Kadir remains held in high regard by the Uyghur audience. His work is especially appreciated by Uyghur intellectuals for its multi-layered meanings that tactfully support Uyghur nationalism, humanitarian values and the development of a modern Uyghur literature based on the deep, diverse and distinctive heritage of the Uyghur people of East Turkistan.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Oral Memoirs

a) **Translation of Zunun Kadir’s oral memoir – tape recorded in Urumqi shortly before Zunun left for Almaty, Kazakistan (date unknown - probably in 1988.)**

Source: Tape given to me by Zunun Kadir’s widow Zileyhan, 12 June 1998.

“I was born in June 1912 in Dorbujin County, in Tarbagatai District. My mother died when I was five and my father died when I was thirteen. After my father died I was working as an errand boy for other families. I came to Gulja when I was three, together with my family. I started at an old-style school when I was seven. When I was 10 years old, I started at a modern school. Later I started to work at share-farming in joint venture with peasants on land that had been left to us by my father. I worked for Abliz Bey as a *pirkaschi* [purchaser] in a sheep-skin business.

In 1935, I went to a teacher training school for six months and finished with a high distinction. After that, I was a teacher in Gulja for two years, in Beytullah primary school. I went to Urumqi to study, and after I returned I taught in Hayriye School for orphans for two years. In 1937, I hitchhiked to Urumqi to study, facing many difficulties and incidents on the way. I studied there in a High School for two years and in Higher Technical College for another two years. In 1937 I became a member of the Anti-Imperialist Union. I learned about the new cultural and theatrical movement. I learned stage décor and lighting technique. In 1942 in Gulja I used these skills to work in theatre. I was Deputy Director of *Uyghur Akartish* [Uyghur Enlightenment].

In November 1944, I was a reporter covering the Three District Government military affairs. I was a member of a Youth Organisation and a literary reporter for “*Köresh Yoluda*” [The Road of Struggle]. In 1945, *Ittipak* was the journal of the “*Tinishchilik ve Helkchilik*” [Peace and the People] organisation. I was assigned to this journal along with others, and was the secretary and chief editor of this journal.

From 1951 to 1954, I was a teacher in Gulja Girls Middle School, teaching literature. From 1954 I returned to Urumqi and worked in the Cultural Affairs Bureau Department

of Creative Literature [*Medeniyet Özertlik Edebi İjadiyet bölümü*]. From 1957 to 1963 I was Deputy Chairman of the Writers and Artists' Union [*Edebiyet Senetchiler Birleshmesi*]. In 1958 I became a member of the All-China Writers Association [*Memliketlik Kurultay vekili*] and a member of the Autonomous Region Peoples' Congress [*Junko Yazghuchilar Jemiyeti Azası*].

In 1935 I wrote "Chimen" – a poem written in five sections and in rhyming couplets [*parmak veznisede*]. I took it to Urumqi in 1937 to get it published. But during that period, Uyghur intellectuals were being arrested and killed by Sheng Shicai's regime. I became afraid, so I burned my manuscript of "Chimen".

Soviet influence on Uyghur intellectuals was strong at that time. I read translations of Gorky into the Tatar language – "Arkhip Bovay" and "Liyonka".

In 1936 I wrote "The Hardship of Ignorance" [*Jahaletning Japasi*]. In this drama an uneducated, ignorant old man sinks into superstition and becomes sick, and his daughter becomes a beggar on the street. His son runs away from the father and goes to Urumqi to become a doctor, and returns to save his family. This was the first drama that I had staged.

When I was a child, I used to tell stories during the long nights at the cobbler's shop of Emin Gutu: stories such "Jangname", and "Ming Bir Keje" [the Thousand and One Nights].

While I was studying in the old school, I was influenced by Navayi, Sepenlya, Heryda, Shahir, Yeshlep, and Hoja Hapiz. Their poems affected me. Abdul Khasim's "Gulistan"... and I was introduced by my older brother, who knew Farsi, to Ferdosi's "Shahname". After the October Revolution, books started to come from the Soviet Union. I was introduced to Sadirdin Ayni's work. Among the modern Uyghur writers the work of Binisrael, Turdi Hessen, Albek; Ibrahim (especially the descriptive style of their stories) influenced me. I read through all of the Turkic language systems, such as the works of writers in Tatar, Kazak, Kirgiz, and Turkmen. Other than these I also read translations of Pushkin, Chekov and Gogol. Gorky's work influenced me deeply. My story *Magdur ketkende* was written under Gorky's influence. Gorky's story "Izigil

Momay” was the inspiration for my Magdur Ketkende. I was also influenced by Sadirdin Ayni. My interest in literature was originally sparked by Soviet literature.

My works include “Hardship of Ignorance”, “The Partisan’s Road” [*Partizan Yoli*], “When we Met” [*Uchrashkanda*]; “Gulnissa”; “The School” [*Mektep*]; [*Shikasida*]; “The Wedding” [*Toy*]; “Good News” [*Hosh hever*]; “There’s a way for everything” [*Her ishning yoli bar*]; and “The Decree” [*Perman*].

We collected over one thousand ballads, and published them in a book.

Among my essays are:

“Children” [*Ballar*]; “Who is for the People?” [*Kim helkichi*]; “Who is a Reactionary?” [*Kim eksiyetchi*]; “The Ploughman and the Rat” [*Koshchi bilen Chashkan*]; [*Arkhiv Bovay*]; and [*Helyonka*].

In 1963 my five act, seven scene drama of “Gerep and Senem” written in Gulja, as well as my novel “Rage” [*Gazep*], were destroyed. Our literature fell like an autumn leaf. After the fall of the Gang of Four, under the leadership of our Party, our literature blossomed.

Before the revolution of 1933⁶³⁷ there was no printing in Xinjiang. After then we had it. After the October Revolution, a New Uyghur Literature movement came to Gulja from the Soviet Union. In 1934 in Gulja the “Ili River” [*Uyghur Title*] newspaper started. Its Chinese name was the “*Yijiang*”. The intellectuals before our time published poems and all different kinds of articles on many different themes. Those older generation intellectuals awoke the people, and the people received their work with great enthusiasm. In 1935, under that influence, I started to take up my pen.

Sheng Shicai destroyed this literary movement.

⁶³⁷ First East Turkistan Republic.

In 1944, Ahmetjan Khasim himself especially encouraged printing and publishing endeavours, and he asked the writers to encourage the people's enthusiasm.

In the Cultural Revolution this literary movement was destroyed.

In 1962, because of my faults, I was removed from all my official duties. My wife Zileyhan also lost her job. All my family were sent together with me to the Tarim, about 40 kilometres east of Aksu, to a farming place. While I was undergoing labour reform, the Cultural Revolution began. During this time I was beaten by Red Guards, my teeth were broken by them, my whole head and face were covered in paint, my works were hung around my neck, and I was paraded around the streets to be humiliated. When they painted my face, paint got into my eyes, and I became blind in one eye. My wife Zileyhan and my children all suffered. When my children came to school age, there was no opportunity for them to study, so they went without education. All my rights were taken from me. I spent seventeen years of horrible life.

Our great Party corrected the mistakes of the Cultural Revolution in 1979. Our family of eight came back to Urumqi. With the good policies of our Party, I began to write again. Together with others, I wrote a film script for "Gerep and Senem". One of my prose stories, "Gerep and Senem", I turned into a musical drama of five acts. Together with the director Abdullah, we wrote the film script.

I published a book called *Recollections [Hatireler]* with seventeen topics. I wrote some legends, copied from classical legends and stories, and a further ten stories that I collected from Kyrgyz and prepared for publication. Together with Kadir Mehmet, we collected 2000 riddles. In order to leave some record, I began to write the second and third volumes of my recollections. Until the end of my life, I would like to continue my work as a creative writer, in order to leave works to my people."

b) My Interview with Zileyhan – (wife of Zunun Kadir) 12 June 1998

"I am Zileyhan, Zunun Kadir's wife. We married in 1953 in Gulja. Zunun had many virtues. He had a good sense of humour, was good-hearted, and modest. He loved his

people and especially was very loving and caring towards disadvantaged people. His conduct toward our family life was consistent with his nature, and very loving.

When we married I was twenty-two years old, and he was forty-two years old. In spite of the age difference, we had mutual affection and respect. This feeling grew even stronger with time.

In 1962 in Gulja there was the “exodus” incident. Many people ran away at that time. He was detained by the government and brought to Urumqi under the accusation of trying to escape. They conducted many criticism meetings in Urumqi concerning his escape. The authorities decided that all of us should be sent to the Tarim desert district.. I said to the cadres, even if he ran away, I did not. If he is guilty of escaping, it is not my fault. I did not do anything. I had young children who needed schooling. He should go by himself, and let me stay here with my children to educate them. I did not do any crime, so I should not be punished. I lost my job. They did not accept my plea, and all of us went to exile for 17 years. We farmed at the Yashlar Meydani [Youth Centre] Commune near Aksu. I went there with my three sons, who were seven four and one year old. Later I had another three daughters.

When the Cultural Revolution started, all of us were treated in the same way. The place where Zunun worked was at about the distance between Gulja and Suidung⁶³⁸. We went there on foot. His condition broke my heart. What did he eat? He drank *umash* [corn flour porridge]. When I say porridge... he seldom had time to cook it, just to mix a bit of flour with boiled water. His work was digging irrigation canals. The rest of us worked at farming. We grew cotton, wheat, maize, and so on. My gynaecological health deteriorated with this hard life. Even when I was sick, I still had to go to labour. I was not allowed to rest, because I was the wife of a “traitor”. Because of my love for Zunun and for my children, I not only survived myself, but also helped Zunun to survive. I would save things for Zunun to eat.

In public criticisms Zunun was beaten, and his face was covered with blue oil-based paint. Some of the paint got into his eyes, and he became blind in one eye. So with his

⁶³⁸ Suidung is a town west of Gulja on the road leading to Jinghe, 300 miles west of Urumqi.

bad health and blind eye, he was still sent to dig in the canals. Because of his condition, he would sometimes fall down, and the bosses would blame him for not working diligently, and beat him. If I were to tell you of the horrible life we lived in the Tarim, not just seven days and nights, but a whole month would still not be enough.”

DT: *Someone told me his teeth had been broken because officials claimed he had ‘wolf’s teeth’, is that true?*

Zileyhan: “No. When he was beaten all over his face and head, and was bleeding, someone in the crowd asked ‘are we struggling by force [*elem koreshi*] or by the pen [*kalem koreshi*]?’ The Red Guard leader answered, ‘This is a struggle of the pen. If we were having a struggle of force, we would be killing you in no time.’ Responding to this conversation, Zunun wiped some blood from his face and showing his bloody hands to the crowd said, ‘Is this the ink of the struggle with a pen?’ The officials considered that this showed arrogance, and they beat him in the mouth until his teeth were broken. The Red Guards asked the public to join in the beating.

He was so sick, he had dysentery and couldn’t stand, so he would crawl around to do work. I found some chicken meat to restore him, but I was not allowed to give it to him. Many people in our situation died, and are all gone. If God does not want you to die, you don’t die. Many wives in our situation could not stand it, and divorced their husband. Because of our love for each other, we endured seventeen years of harsh life together.

In 1979, we came back to Urumqi but there was no place for us to live. We lived on the street for ten days. When it rained, we sat on our belongings under an umbrella. I asked Zunun to demand his rights, but as usual he said ‘They can see us. If they wanted to do something, they would do it.’ After ten days, I went myself to see the officials. We were given a place to live.

I will stop here – there are so many things to tell. And when there is a suitable time I will tell you.

(Zileyhan paused here for a while, then continued)

Zunun kept his sense of humour. We were ordered to collect human manure door to door. Zunun would collect and carry it. He would joke at the door, ‘I hope you have eaten well, so I can collect more shit from you!’ He would make people laugh. The officials also ordered us to look after pigs. This is difficult for us, because we are Muslim. This job should be done by non-Muslim people like the Han. But they forced us to do it. If we refused, we would get into even bigger trouble – so we had to look after the pigs. We had one shared room and all slept on the *kang*⁶³⁹, and the pig and piglets slept on the floor. The room stank. At times like this we survived because of our love. If one of the piglets died, we would be fined a large amount, so we had to look after the piglets better than ourselves. There were also some advantages to looking after the pigs. They provided food for the pigs which was better than what they provided for us. So I would exchange some of our food for the pigs’ food. This situation contributed to our survival – I looked after the pigs as well as our family.

DT: *You said Zunun’s workplace was quite distant – how did he get there and back?*

Zileyhan: “He didn’t come back – he stayed there by himself and would come back to see us about every two months..

DT: *When he was in Tarim, was he able to write?*

Zileyhan: “No – how could he? There was no possibility for him to write. He was not permitted to write. His written materials were burned. Where he stayed there was no water and no electricity. No fresh water to drink - just a lake which was polluted and full of worms. We drank that water, but had to strain the worms out of the water, then boil it and drink it. I hear that now the commune has better conditions – they have brought electricity. But when we were there, there was no such thing.

After we came back, Zunun was sick, but he wanted to go to Almaty to see his daughter, and he died there. The Chinese Government sent people to bring back his body, but I did not agree. So from Kazakhstan they phoned the Chinese Embassy in Moscow, and

⁶³⁹ brick sleeping-platform, with provision for heating by a fire underneath it.

the Chinese agreed that Zunun could be buried there. Zunun himself had asked to be left there. His funeral was big in Kazakistan. Representatives from Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakistan all attended and made speeches. I have film that I can show you.

My children did not have good education, because the commune where we were located did not have good teachers, even though they had a primary school. They did not learn anything. Our sons were daily humiliated by their schoolmates. They would say to them, 'You are bad elements, and the sons of bad elements. Don't come to this school.' After three or four humiliations like this, they did not want to go to school. My daughters were born in Tarim. I sent them to Charibo (Aksu) to study elementary school, staying with other people. They also did not have the opportunity for higher education.

Myself, I lost my job because of Zunun. I was a Secretary in Gulja Theatre. Later the government said it was all a mistake, but our family had been destroyed and our children left with no education. It is too late to do anything now."

Appendix 2

“Ghunchem”⁶⁴⁰

A play in three acts and five scenes.

Translation:

Cast:

Ghunchem - 17 years old, hard working girl

Nurum – 20 yrs old, young man in love with Ghunchem

Zoruhan – 50 years old, mother of Ghunchem

Meshrep – 30 years old, servant of Shang Yo

Patemhan – 48 years old, mother of Meshrep

Turghan – 25 years old, farmer

Amantay – 20 years old, son of Shangyo’s herdsman

Azinbaghi – 50 years old, a poor farmer

Yakub – 35 years old, a poor farmer

Omer Shangyo – 45 years old, a landowner

Shervan – 38 years old, wife of Shang yo

Sayit – 17 years old, son of Shang yo

Basit – 40 years old, head of fifty

Hashimbay – 45 years old, a landowner and trader

Act 1

Ghunchem’s courtyard, inherited from her father. At the back of the courtyard is an apple orchard, separated by a woven fence. On the left one can see the door and window of the house, and in front of the house a flower bed and pumpkin trellis. Ghunchem is preparing apple paste for drying. She sings a love song.

The apples are almost ripe

Every branch carries a delicious load

⁶⁴⁰*Zunun Kadir Eserleri* op cit p. 249.

My beloved is sulking with me
Like a cloud covering the moon

Should I go over there
Or will he come to me?
If a lover needs her beloved
He will come to me with a happy stride.

Ghunchem: Last night's wind brought down many windfall apples.

Zoruhan: What are you doing my daughter? The vegetables are covered with weeds.

Let's weed the vegetable garden.

Ghunchem: Many apples fell in the wind - I want to make dried apple.

Zoruhan: Don't do what is not necessary – you can do that later when you are free.

First, let's do the urgent weeding. If we let the weeds cover them, all our efforts will be wasted.

Ghunchem: I'll finish this in no time. Later, when you have a temperature and I give you some compote, you will say I have done well.

Zoruhan: You are right, daughter. We have no other fields, so we have to look after our vegetable garden. First, we must think about the things that will fill our stomachs. The apple trees need watering. The orchard needs maintaining. Those two spoiled sons of Omer Shangyo have come and stolen our green apples. I'm sick of it!

Ghunchem: Yesterday during the storm I went out to have a look. I saw Snotty Seyit stealing chickens! I hit him with a big clod of earth.

Zoruhan: Don't kill him by mistake.

Ghunchem: He was swearing at me and came to hit me, so I hit him with a stick, and he cried.

Ghunchem: If you tolerate them, things get worse. You must teach them lessons.

Zoruhan: Remember last year he brought four delinquents and stole all our remaining apples. I went to complain to the Head of Fifty, and he said go to Shangyo, who

said he would fix him. Nothing happened. “If the child is a thief, and the father is a judge⁶⁴¹”, our grievance can achieve nothing.

Ghunchem: It’s good that my father left us this orchard, otherwise how could we survive?

Zoruhan: Yes, though your father was poor, he was a man who would never take advantage of others, with a good conscience, and hard-working. His hand was skillful.⁶⁴² When your late father planted trees, they all survived.

Ghunchem: Oh? So my father was a gardener?

Zoruhan: Yes, he was very skilled in the garden. He treated those apple trees like his children, and raised them with great care. Alas, there are so many bad people in this world who have no conscience about treating others badly. They would steal the young grafted trees that he had planted, or even just deliberately pull them out and throw them away. It upset your father greatly.

Ghunchem: They have such a lot of land and they don’t make a garden in it, yet if others make a garden, they are jealous of it. These people have poison boiling inside them.

Zoruhan: That Basit, the Head of Fifty, also has that poison in him. Since long ago, he has not liked us.

Ghunchem: Did we cut his barley before it was ripe?⁶⁴³

Zoruhan: Because one day your father, in front of a crowd, called him “a servant of the Beg, and foot-licking lackey of the rich”. Since then, they haven’t liked us.

Ghunchem: Well done, Father!

Zoruhan: Basit said the other day, “You didn’t help with the pest extermination⁶⁴⁴, you didn’t pay the remaining taxes on barley, hay and your cart. There is not much water in the stream, we can’t give you water.”

Ghunchem: In exchange for the irrigation stream, they took many cartloads of wood branches from our orchard. We don’t have many fields, how could they charge

⁶⁴¹ “*Bulangche bolsa balisi Sorakchi bolsa dadisi*”

⁶⁴² lit. “like a rose”

⁶⁴³ “*arpisini ham orghanmikenmiz*” - a Uyghur phrase meaning “What wrong have we committed against him?”

⁶⁴⁴ *hashar*

so much tax for this orchard? We told them that we don't have money, and gave them two hundred eggs and five chickens instead.

Zoruhan: These were not enough, because there is still quite a lot of unpaid tax. Basit is saying we should sell the orchard land and give them eighty *tenge*⁶⁴⁵ – that would pay off our debt. Thieves!

Ghunchem: People with hundreds of *ho*⁶⁴⁶ have plenty of water to irrigate. We have only a few spans of orchard – why is there not enough water for us?

Zoruhan: We don't have a man at home, so they bully us, the devils. I wonder where Nurum is? We haven't seen him for quite a few days.

Ghunchem: Today it is fifteen days since he came.

Zoruhan: I wonder what he is doing?

Ghunchem: I heard that he is working with the family cooperative.

Zoruhan: If he is working with that cooperative, how can we get him to help us?

Ghunchem: You should bring him and get him to help us with the irrigation channels.

Zoruhan: Yes, I have things to say to him. It's getting late. I should go and look for him. Ghunchem, you cultivate the flower bed. If Nurum comes, we will bring the water in.

Ghunchem: Very well. Come back quickly mother. Wait a minute – we are out of tea leaves. (She gives her mother four eggs) Exchange these for some tea.

Ghunchem (reflecting to herself): She is keeping this secret. What my mother wants, and what I and Nurum want, are all the same. I wonder if Nurum is offended with us. He seems to be distancing himself a bit. No, I haven't done anything to offend him. I always pay attention to my mother's advice. He doesn't say anything. I wonder if this is the reason? Nurum is very sensitive.

A breeze blows and a nightingale sings

Oh nightingale! What a cool breeze. In this kind of beautiful garden, if Nurum and I worked together all day, we would not notice the days passing.

⁶⁴⁵ unit of currency

⁶⁴⁶ unit of land area

She goes to the flower bed, begins to cultivate it, and sings.

Through the orchard a breeze blows memories of you
 A nightingale singing among the roses shows you to me
 I have my eye on you, Nurum, and my heart thirsts for you
 I call out 'Darling, Darling!', day and night, watching the road for your arrival.

We grew up together, beloved, in this neighbourhood
 We fell in love and exchanged promises on the grass
 It was a time of enjoyment and working together
 I miss you in the morning, among the fields.

Zoruhan and Nurum enter. Ghunchem, with a flower tucked in her hair and a weeding tool in her hand, comes through the fence to welcome them.

Nurum: How are you Ghunchem?

Ghunchem: How are you?

Zoruhan: Sit down son. I am tired. If I walk even a little my heart pounds and I am short of breath. Ghunchem, make some tea.

Ghunchem smiles at Nur

Ghunchem: Mother, did you bring some tealeaves?

Zoruhan: The traders have no conscience – they gave me just this small quantity.

Nurum: Aunt, who did you get it from?

Zoruhan: How many shops are there in this district? From that Hashimbay's shop.

Nurum: He is an old crook. He is constantly looking out for someone to drop into his trap.

Zoruhan: God give him some compassion! As they say, if there is no nose between the eyes, one eye would eat up the other! If there is no fairness among the people, there is nothing you can do. Let's change the subject. I have things to say to you. Look, Nurum – you shouldn't be going here and there all over the place.

We are also on our own. You don't have anyone except us. I am getting old and I am also getting sicker.

Ghunchem is listening from the orchard.

Your mother before she died said to me, "My son will be all alone in the world. First I leave him to God, and second to you. Make him your son".

Zoruhan's eyes fill with tears as she speaks.

You are grown up, and Ghunchem is also grown up. I want to get you two together, but I don't have much money, and you also are not working or earning properly. I hear that you help this one and that one for free.

I could get you two married simply, but since Ghunchem is my only daughter, and you are also an only son, there would be gossip among the people that you were going to other people's wedding parties, but doing nothing for them in return. You should stay in some long-term work⁶⁴⁷ to earn enough money for a wedding party - things like lamb, rice, and oil. We can use the orchard crop to buy sweets and cloth for gifts. There are a few things left by your mother, and we also have a few things tucked away. With all this, I would like to put you two together with a wedding where everyone can say "That was really nice". Ghunchem, if the tea is ready, bring it.

Ghunchem: I'll bring it soon.

Zoruhan prepares a low table with a cloth. Ghunchem brings in cream tea⁶⁴⁸. Zoruhan pours tea for Nur

⁶⁴⁷ *changgong* (Chinese term)

⁶⁴⁸ *etken chay*: Uyghur term for tea made with scalded cream and salt.

Zoruhan: Nurum, drink your tea. I want to go and ask whether there is a job for you in this district. Nurum, after drinking your tea, please open the channel to irrigate the orchard.

Nurum: Very well, Aunt.

Ghunchem: Drink, Nurum. Have some cream. You forgot all about us.

Nurum: As long as you don't forget me, that's all right.

Ghunchem: "I am cruel. I don't know how to miss someone. So for many days past I have been escaping..."

Nurum: You have become very good at sarcasm. Day and night I think about you.

Ghunchem: Listen to someone being clever with words.

Nurum: What do you mean, clever? I am telling the truth. I have only one happiness these days, and that is you. My heart feels younger when I think of you. I want to sit and look at you all day.

Ghunchem: Oh? Then why are you keeping your distance from us? Did I hurt your feelings?

Nurum: You didn't hurt my feelings. Money is the problem. Ghunchem, I need to earn money.

Ghunchem: While there is life, there is a living, where there is food, there will be means to cook⁶⁴⁹. Money, money! We are not opening a shop!

Nurum: Your mother thinks differently.

Ghunchem: My mother loves you more than she loves me.

Nurum: Yes, I know. We all think the same thing, but your mother has this mountain that is difficult for us to cross.

Ghunchem: She is not keeping me from you.

Nurum: I didn't say that she is stopping us from seeing each other.

Ghunchem: Then what do you mean?

Nurum: The fruit is ripe, the flowers have bloomed, but the gardener himself can't enjoy the flower or taste the sweet fruit. If the fruit gets a worm, that will be the end.

Ghunchem: Nurum, you are talking nonsense. Who is stopping the gardener from taking the flower and eating the fruit?

⁶⁴⁹ lit *kazan* - Uyghur term for a broad cooking bowl like a wok.

Nurum: Your mother. (He takes a flower from the table and throws it at Ghunchem)

You temptress! You pretend not to understand anything!

Ghunchem: What did my mother do?

Nurum: She said not to pick the flower unless I had a silk handkerchief to wrap it.

Ghunchem throws back the flower: You are very mischievous! (she goes into the room)

Nurum: What is she doing? She knows everything. What can this poor girl do? If she wants to speak to her mother, her mother stops her. If she wants to say something to me, she knows all the problems and is embarrassed.

Ghunchem comes back with a tobacco pouch and embroidered handkerchief

Ghunchem: Here something for your silk handkerchief! Wrap your flower in it! Each time you smoke, remember who made this pouch.

Nurum: Thank you – why did you bother? (puts the gifts in his inside pocket)

Nurum: Let me do that irrigation job. (exits)

Ghunchem clears the table: Poor Nurum, he is embarrassed. My mother is so keen to observe social customs. She competes with others, saying “I’m not less than them”. She sold our fields of five or six *ho* for engagement presents. As Nurum says, since we don’t have any money, a big wedding is like an impassible mountain.

She goes into the house. A cuckoo sings. Nurum sings, in the orchard:

⁶⁵⁰ A cuckoo came and perched
on a branch of a green tree
It was my beloved
My heart is burning

⁶⁵⁰ *Kakkuklar kelip khondi*
Yasharghan tireklerde
Yarimni korividim
Ot ketti yureklerde

Echilde sunuk konglum
Kipkizil kizilguldek
Kachanghiche yurermiz

Ghunchem is listening

My broken heart has blossomed
 Just like a red rose
 How long must we wait
 Like the Cuckoo and the Zaynep⁶⁵¹

Ghunchem: (thinking) It's a funny song, but Nurum sings well and he also plays *dutar*⁶⁵² very well. Before my mother comes I'll get him to play the *dutar* a little. (She runs to the orchard) Nurum! Come here! I have something to tell you.

Nurum: Say it – I'm listening.

Ghunchem: No, come here, then I'll tell you.

Nurum: What is it – I'm here.

Ghunchem: It's something funny. Come to the grape trellis and I'll tell you.

Nurum: What is it!

Ghunchem brings the *dutar*, with beads and an amulet hanging on it

Ghunchem: The strings of this *dutar* will tell you what I want to say.

Nurum: You temptress!⁶⁵³ You tricked me!

Ghunchem: I didn't trick you. We haven't heard your song for a long time. Play the *dutar* for me!

Nurum: If you dance, I will play.

Ghunchem: All right, I'll dance.

Kakkuk bilen zeynep tek

⁶⁵¹ Bird which in Uyghur legend love the cuckoo.

⁶⁵² long-necked lute-like instrument with metal strings

⁶⁵³ *Sheytan*

⁶⁵⁴Breeze in the morning
 Rose bushes moving
 Ghunchem's figure like a cedar tree
 Would not let the nightingale perch

My beloved's orchard is full of apples
 We did not pick the apples
 Or enter into the road of love
 I'm oblivious to everything else.

There is a poppy in my beloved's garden
 I wonder if she willing for me
 No matter whether or not she is willing
 I will be the beggar for her love

Ghunchem stops dancing and becomes serious

Nurum: What is the matter, Ghunchem?

Ghunchem: After saying all that, you ask what is the matter?

Nurum: What did I say?

Ghunchem: Are you still testing me? Are you distrustful?

Nurum: What do you mean untrusting? I don't understand.

⁶⁵⁴ Seherde shamal chiksa
Gul shahi eghang laydu
Ghunchemning boyi zive
Bulbul konduralmaydu

Yarning begi almilik
Almilarni uzmiduk
Eshkhi yolgha kirip
Hichnimini sezmiduk

Yarning beghida leyli
Magha barmikin meyli
Bolsa bolmisa meyli
Men yarning khelenderi

Ghunchem: The poppy is the beloved's garden? I wonder if she is willing for me? Do you want me to cut open my heart to show you my willingness or should I swear and oath?⁶⁵⁵

Nurum: You are upset about that? It's a folk song! I didn't make it up about you!

Ghunchem: Then why are you singing it and looking at me?

Nurum: I sang for love, and to tease you. (He goes to Ghunchem and puts his hand on her shoulder) Look at me Ghunchem.

Ghunchem (looking away): Don't touch my shoulder!

Nurum puts *ketmen* on his shoulder, looks at Ghunchem, and sings:

⁶⁵⁶My rose, Rosebud, ⁶⁵⁷ my rose, Rosebud
 Why are you inclined to sway
 Always your nightingale is in suffering
 Bloom, my Rosebud!

Nurum walks toward the orchard

My rose, Rosebud, my rose, Rosebud
 Why do you burn me so much?
 You did not stay with me a little
 Bloom, my heart, Rosebud.

Ghunchem splashes water on Nurum and runs away. Nurum chases her.

Nurum: What would you do if I started splashing water on you?

Ghunchem: That's all right. It is a game for the one who can take it.

⁶⁵⁵ Literally the Uyghur phrase is "Should I step on bread?"

⁶⁵⁶ *Gulum ghunche, gulum ghunche*
Nime kayrilisen munche
Pighanda bulbulung daim
Echilsangchu Gulum ghunche

Gulum ghunche, gulum ghunche
Nime koydurusen munche
Kheshminda turmiding bir dem
Mening konglum echil ghunche

⁶⁵⁷ "Ghunche" means Rosebud.

Nurum: I hope Speckled Puppy won't come⁶⁵⁸.

Ghunchem: That's enough – don't complain.

Shangyo (from outside): Zoruhan! Hello, Zoruhan! Is anybody at home?

Ghunchem: Hello? Who is that? (She runs into the orchard)

Shangyo: Nur, you are here. How are you?

Nur: Fine, thank you (older brother) Shangyo. Are you well yourself?

Shangyo: Thanks to God, I am well. Where is Zoruhan?

Nurum: She went out a moment ago. She said she was going somewhere.

Zoruhan (enters): Greetings (she bows) What brought you here, Shangyo?

Shangyo: I was passing by and decided to pay you a visit. How are you? Are you well?

Zoruhan: Things are not too bad, Shangyo. We are surviving. (to Nurum) Sit down, son.

Shangyo: Good, good. Where did you go, Zoruhan?

Zoruhan: As I am getting older, I am concerned about these young ones. I wanted to find a job for Nur, but there is no opportunity.

Shangyo: We are distantly related. While we are here, why should Nurum have any concern? We will be parents to the orphan.

Zoruhan: Thank you, Shangyo, for those words.

Shangyo: Our property⁶⁵⁹ in the upper district needs a boy to work. Lazy Turghan is there, and he is on a yearly contract. Anyone else would let him go, but if I let him go, then I will need two young men. There is immeasurable waste going on up there. Nur should go there to represent us and manage things. We could make a good annual contract. What do you say?

Zoruhan: I don't know. What does Nurum himself say?

Nur: Shangyo'kam is saying that he will be my father.⁶⁶⁰ OK, I will work for him, but I don't want a yearly contract. I want to be a long-term employee.⁶⁶¹

Shangyo: The time of the long-term employee is over, isn't it?

Nurum: It's up to you. If I work until the snow, I am counted as a long-term worker.

⁶⁵⁸ “*alakuchuk*” (Speckled puppy) is a Uyghur idiom for someone becoming annoyed or sulky.

⁶⁵⁹ Uyghur *zangzi* from Chinese *zhuangzi* – a rural village or hamlet

⁶⁶⁰ *atadarchilik*

⁶⁶¹ *changgong*

Shangyo: Very well, let's say six months.⁶⁶²

Zoruhan: Six months? What will be the wage, Shangyo?

Shangyo: Other people pay, for eight months' work, eighty *tenge*, two *ho's* worth of wheat, and a set of clothes. Since Nur is a relative, I will discount two months work and pay the same amount to Nur. As the saying goes, "What drops from the vest pocket will be caught in the boot"⁶⁶³. If you get a little advantage, that doesn't matter.

Zoruhan: Yes, that's right. Do you think that eighty *tenge* could buy a smallish cow?

Nurum smiles

Shangyo: Why does he need a cow? If you want, I will lend you one of my cows and you may milk it.

Zoruhan: I am just wondering...

Shangyo: If you want one to milk, three or four of my cows have calved, and you can take one of those to milk.

Zoruhan: Oh no, one should not take another's livestock – there could be an accident and endless trouble.

Shangyo: If you look after it well, and there is enough milk left for the calf, what trouble could there be?

Zoruhan: Last year our back neighbour Saki planted melons jointly with Hashimbay. Hashimbay gave them a cow to milk, but its calf died. This is still causing trouble for them.

Nur: That trouble has been fixed now.

Zoruhan: How was the problem solved?

Nur: "My cows give birth in their second year. The calf that died last year would have itself produced a calf this year – so you should pay for the original calf and also the calf it would have had" – that is what he said. So he got poor brother Saki to sell some of his property, and got a pregnant three-year-old cow⁶⁶⁴ from him.

⁶⁶² It seems that a contract of less than a year does not count as *changgong*.

⁶⁶³ It was not uncommon for people to keep money in the side of their high boots.

⁶⁶⁴ *gunjun*

Shangyo: I know, it is a matter of time. Cows do produce calves younger than three years. If he paid his debt last year, on time, he would have got away with a good calf himself. The passing of time, that was the trouble.

Zoruhan: Probably he wanted to pay back on time, but couldn't. They beat him up several times on the street. Since they beat him up, he shouldn't charge him.

Nur: He beat him up because he wanted the money, and really intimidated him that way.

Shangyo: Let's stop the nonsense. Let's talk about our own affairs. If you are afraid of borrowing the cow to milk, we'll give you a cow in autumn for Nur's wages for his work.

Zoruhan: Yes, that's a good idea, Shangyo.

Shangyo: What would I lose. I give things away even to the unworthy. Nur is one of our own – if he works hard, there is a share-farmer who has a beautiful daughter, and I will marry the two of them, and they can look after everything.

Zoruhan pretends not to hear: Nurum, I wonder if the kettle has boiled? Could you have a look? (Nurum goes out)

Shangyo: Don't bother – I don't feel like drinking tea.

Zoruhan: You don't come often, have some tea before you go, Shangyo.

Shangyo: We were at the wedding and a wake down the street. On top of that, Lozung came from the city, and your Head of Fifty invited us, we were there. As the old saying goes, "eat meat while you have teeth". We have been eating up to now, where could I fit the tea?

Zoruhan: Even if that's the case, there is a saying that "a poor person's food is a remedy for toothache".

Shangyo: But our teeth are strong – there is not need for such a remedy, Zoruhanim.

Zoruhan: Even if you gnaw bones, are they still sharp?

Shangyo (smiles sarcastically) Leave the empty talk, let's go and look around the apple orchard.

Zoruhan: Fine, let's go and have a look.

Zoruhan and Shangyo go into the orchard. Ghunchem is angry.

Ghunchem: I wish you would eat your head!⁶⁶⁵ Why does he stare, like a hungry wolf. I am busy with my own things, and he is complaining to my mother that I don't come out to greet him. "Your daughter is not well behaved". I don't care if he is a Shangyo or Beg, I don't have to suck up to⁶⁶⁶ him. People suck up to get favours. What favour would I want from him? Do I want to be a rich man's wife?⁶⁶⁷

Nurum: Ghunchem, you look angry. What's the matter?

Ghunchem: No, nothing. You are going away again, Nurum.

Nurum: I don't want to separate from you for a moment, but you know the wishes of the oldies⁶⁶⁸.

Ghunchem: Can't you work somewhere else than with Shangyo?

Nurum: At the moment, there is no other job, and time is passing – I have no choice. As long as we are healthy, five or six months is not so long.

Ghunchem: That's right, do as my mother wants. Let's not upset the old lady.

Zoruhan comes in.

Zoruhan to Nurum: So you are going to Shangyo's. If you don't annoy them, do what they want, you might get something better. He himself said so, and you have heard him.

Nurum: I heard.

Zoruhan: If that is the case, don't get involved with unnecessary matters. Don't get into mischief – you don't lose anything by saying "You're right, yes sir".

Ghunchem: If he always says yes, all of them will climb on his neck⁶⁶⁹.

Zoruhan to Ghunchem: Be quiet! I didn't speak to you. My daughter, you are becoming cheeky. I am bringing you up with such difficulty, you wouldn't understand. (to Nurum) Finish your work as soon as you can and bring back something substantial. You know the situation. If I had enough land, water, and a plough

⁶⁶⁵ "*beshingni yeydighan*" A common curse, particularly in Ili area, wishing a person's death

⁶⁶⁶ *hoshamet*

⁶⁶⁷ "*Agchahenim*"

⁶⁶⁸ *momay*

⁶⁶⁹ bully or exploit - this phrase recalls the story "Rudupay" of the parasitic monster.

and furniture, I would not send you to be employed at another person's door. My dear son... oh!...God!... Your mother used to love you so much. I also pray for you in every prayer⁶⁷⁰.

Shangyo enters: The apple orchard is very good this year. Hey! Ghunche girl! Where is the bowing? Where are my greetings? Is this the respect to show the father of this place? Silly, don't hide from your own relatives!

Zoruhan: Hoy Ghunchem! Give greetings to father Shangyo – this is not acceptable!

Ghunchem comes out unwillingly, bows and goes back again.

Shangyo: Hey – girls should be well behaved. Good behaviour and morals are the virtues of a person. (to Nur) Yes, Nur, what decision have you made – are you going now?

Nur: Yes, I will.

Zoruhan: Nurum, come here. (she goes with him to the orchard)

Shangyo to himself: This woman has two good things – one is the apple orchard, and the other is a beautiful daughter. I should have them both. I did not notice up to now how she has grown. In this world one doesn't get old if one keeps with women and eats and drinks well. This woman wanted to give her daughter to Nur. It is a good thing that I now have Nur in the palm of my hand. If I deal with this woman, the girl and the orchard will be mine. We will cook it in its own oil. We can make a residence for this beautiful girl in this flowery orchard. If necessary I can put in some money. Where else can the widow and the orphan turn?

Zoruhan comes out.

Zoruhan: I hope we have not been keeping you waiting.

Shangyo: Good, good. I have a horse in the Head of Fifty's courtyard. I'm leaving, and Nur should follow me when he can. Good bye.

Zoruhan: I'll see you off

⁶⁷⁰ *namaz*

Shangyo and Zoruhan come out. Nur is at the back of the orchard, singing to the tune of *Shazadehan*.

⁶⁷¹I decide to go, darling
 I go, telling my greif
 By saying my beloved is left behind
 I go crying blood in the desert

Ghunchem comes out holding a stem of roses and a rosebud

The bird flew from my hand
 Today, whose guest is he?
 Don't harm my darling
 Today his heart is sad and broken

Act Two, Scene 1

Scene – the Shangyo's courtyard. On the left hand side of the stage there are columns and a carved wooden verandah. Several doors and windows can be seen. On the right hand side is a peach orchard and further in the distance there is a shed⁶⁷² full of hay. Behind that are trees and gardens. In the courtyard is a single large old tree. It is autumn, and if possible there should be a trellis hung with ripe grapes.

Shangyo and his wife Shervan are in conversation.

Shervan: Enough, enough! Don't get me started!

⁶⁷¹ *Menketer boldim yarim
 Erzim bayan eylep kitey
 Mihriban yar kaldi dep
 Chollerde kan yighlap kitey*

*Khorghayum uhti kolumdin
 Kayda mihmandur bugun
 Dehli bermanglar yarimgha
 Kongli perishandur bugun
⁶⁷² pesheyvan*

Shangyo: Why are you so on edge?

Shervan: Hey! Which mouth of yours is saying that!

Shangyo: It is allowed for a man to marry four women. I only have two wives.

Shervan: What about that one you are hiding in Baytokay? You think I don't know anything? I know what a snake does underground!

Shangyo: Who told you – it's not true!

Shervan: If it is not true, then why do you go there every six days?

Shangyo: Even it is true, I still don't have four.

Shervan: It is about twelve! You have married girls and divorced them. Now you have three wives. You should be reasonable, your beard has begun to turn grey. How could you still have the desire?

Shangyo: Don't pay attention to the grey beard. (he taps his chest) Look at my heart! My heart still beats like a 20-year old's! Just look at that rooster in the courtyard – even it can get more than ten hens to follow it! You can call me the White Rooster!

Shervan: That is a fowl, and you are a human.

Shangyo: Look at me. I am a man like a mountain. You don't think I'm better than a chicken? If I have married nine girls and divorced them, then let it be ten! If I have three wives, then let it be four. It is a round number to count.

Shervan: No, I will not allow any more. I am not a housekeeper wife of yours, come from a lower background, or a peasant. I grew up in the city, daughter of a Beg. I did not fuss when you married two women in addition to me. I will not accept any more. My youth and my beauty are withered like a rose in this Hell.

Shangyo: Very well. If you prefer, I will divorce the one in Baytokay, and you can arrange Ghunchem for me. I will buy you some gold jewellery. Your gold bracelets are not heavy enough. I will get bracelets made from two *ser*⁶⁷³ of gold for you.

Shervan: My jewellery and silk dresses are more than enough. If I want more, I can sell the crops from the farm and the animals from the mountain

⁶⁷³ a unit of weight measurement

pastures – I can buy them myself. The time has passed when you can deceive me with that kind of thing. Now I know what to do. I also own these hundreds of *ho* of land. I am also the boss!

Shangyo: You just talk. If you keep spending the wealth it will finish. That is why one should increase in one direction while spending in another direction. I am talking about Zoruhan's orchard. It is the only orchard in this district, and we should acquire it. That woman is already sick, and she won't get better. If her daughter is in our hand, you can make her work like a slave and her orchard will be added to our property. Why don't you understand my plans?

Shervan: I know your plan. With one stone, you want to hit two birds.

Shangyo: Well done! That is right, you are a clever woman!

Shervan: You can make that plan with a different arrangement.

Shangyo: How? What arrangement?

Shervan: We will have Ghunchem as a daughter-in-law, not as a wife. Things would be much easier.

Shangyo: What are you talking about?...

Shervan: That shut you up – what do you have to say?

Shangyo: If I have a heart for her, how could you do that?

Shervan: What kind of crazy heart do you have, when your heart goes to whoever you see?

Shangyo: Enough! Watch your mouth! Let's think about these matters.

Shervan: There is nothing to consider. Leave that nonsense about heart right there.

You should be responsible in what you say. I will arrange the rest.

Shangyo: You did not consider my wish! For now, let's keep the lid on the pot. There is another matter. Nur will prevent your plan. Nur and Ghunchem love each other.

Zoruhan wants her daughter to marry him. What are you going to do about that?

Shervan: Who would look at that bad-tempered beggar? Anyone with any sense will know Ghunchem would be wasted on that derelict⁶⁷⁴.

Shangyo: Yes, if we say we will marry Ghunchem to Seyit, the community will support us. Nevertheless, until Ghunchem marries Seyit we should not let Nur know.

⁶⁷⁴ lit "naked".

After marriage⁶⁷⁵ a woman is a man's slave. If someone makes a fuss about a woman who is already married to someone else, he will burn his own tongue.

Meshrep enters

Meshrep: Brother! Basit the Head of Fifty is at the gate.

Shangyo: Call, let him come in.

Meshrep leaves, Shervan comes in, the Head of the Fifty enters and greets.

Basit: Shangyo, I came to bother you at an inconvenient time.

Shangyo: You look like a knight.⁶⁷⁶ Basit, take a seat. The more often you come, the better. You never come empty-handed.

Basit: But this time I do come empty-handed, Shangyo. That is why I apologised for bothering you at an inconvenient time.

Shangyo: Nonsense – you have received quite a substantial sum for raising Hasimbay's calf into a full-grown cow, haven't you?

Basit: Oh, that miser!⁶⁷⁷ He talked a thousand bags of words, but only gave me twelve *tenge*.

Shangyo: Where is my share? Bring it out!

Basit: You know, I borrowed quite a lot to entertain Lozung⁶⁷⁸. Now and then you should be lenient with me – next time we will make it up.

Shangyo: You unprincipled bastard!⁶⁷⁹ Not only depriving me of my benefit, you even give whatever you got to Lozung to eat!

Basit: It will not harm you if I become closer to Lozung. I give you more benefits than the other Heads of Fifties.

Shangyo: Have you fixed a share of the barley and hay taxes?

Basit: We got only two *tenge*, where the farmers got four *tenge* for each *ho* of barley, and each hundred bales of hay.

⁶⁷⁵ *nikah*

⁶⁷⁶ *sepahi*

⁶⁷⁷ *pishshik*

⁶⁷⁸ A Chinese official.

⁶⁷⁹ *haramzade*

Shangyo: Other Heads of Fifties gave three tenge, and kept three for themselves.

Basit: Under my hand, there is a troublemaker.⁶⁸⁰ His troublemaking is the reason that it is like this, this time. “The government gave twelve tenge for a ho of barley and a hundred bales of hay, the rest went to whose pocket?” They were wanting the lot!

Shangyo: They should be flogged for interfering with government business. You are like a soft rag. Why didn’t you get your Heads of Tens to tie him up and bring him here? I would punish him by hanging him from a tree. If you don’t punish them and intimidate them, others will follow and make it even worse. Look at that! Shamelessly asking whose pocket the money went to!

Basit: Yes, he said that quite boldly.

Shangyo: Do you think it was cheap for me to become Shangyo? I had to feed an army! I spent lots of money.

Basit: Tell me about it. You have to give horses and money to the *Daren*, *Lozung*, and *Beg*.

Shangyo: Yes, who except the people are going to pay back all that money I spent?

Basit: Yes, the country owes it to us.

Shangyo: I got to keep six tenge of the twelve tenge for the barley and hay, plus a hundred tenge in taxes spread around the country. If I make it 150 tenge, then charge people for solving their problems, then I can pay it back. Otherwise, where can I get my pay? Will it come from the other world?⁶⁸¹

Basit: Well done, well done. Well spoken! Brother Shangyo, the ignorant peasants just don’t understand.

Shangyo: Another thing. If I don’t let them know who I am, how can I be Shangyo?

Basit: Well said. You should control them. Those who show disrespect for very important people like you in this place and gossip behind Your Excellency will of course not respect me! You know, when that Yakub paid twenty tenge cart tax he complained and spoke rudely to the Head of Ten. In

⁶⁸⁰ *kokeme*

⁶⁸¹ *dive*

winter he refused to use his cart for coal, and made a big fuss. He is learning from Azinbakhi. Azinbakhi is responsible for the behaviour of those troublemakers – Azinbakhi is very good at talking.

Shangyo: Those bastards haven't tasted my wire-tipped whip! On what basis does Yakub dare to speak up? Is he getting rich?

Basit: How could he become rich? Through his own stubbornness he is still poor.⁶⁸² He had two pieces of land, but sold one to pay taxes.

Shangyo: Then why does that parasite⁶⁸³ speak so boldly?

Basit: He has a horse and cart. Maybe that's why he makes so much noise.

Shangyo: Huh, we will see. Let's change the subject. Today, don't you have any profitable information for me?

Basit (with a forced smile): If I don't have any today, I will have tomorrow. How could anything profitable escape from you? Let people develop the crops, and increase the saleable goods in the district, and then we will act.

Shangyo: Let's hope so. I'm not interested in empty words.

Basit: I assure you, you will be saying that you were glad you made Basit Head of Fifty.
(He gets up)

Shangyo: Why are you in a hurry? Sit down. Polo⁶⁸⁴ is being cooked.

Basit: Oh, I forgot...

Shangyo: You forgot what? Tell me..

Basit: No, it's nothing important. I was in Hashimbay's house drinking *kimiz* from the pastures. We had two bowls each, then the Mezzin's wife hurriedly took me to Zoruhan's place.

Shangyo: What happened there?

Basit: She was on her death bed. Her daughter said tearfully, "My mother asked several times about Nur. She has things to tell him before she dies. Bring him back! She is waiting just for him" Mezzin said "You are Head of Fifty, go and ask Shangyo if he can give Nur three or four days' leave so he can come and help out the old lady. Her daughter is alone". So he sent me here.

⁶⁸² lit: "his coat doesn't cover his knees"

⁶⁸³ *rudupay*

⁶⁸⁴ pilau

Shangyo: He can't come. Now is the harvest, Nur doesn't have time to scratch his head.

Tell her I will help out.

Basit: Fine, fine, Shangyo will manage things himself. Don't worry, I will tell them.

Basit leaves

Shangyo: Wait, Basit, there is another matter to discuss. I think we should arrange

Zoruhan's daughter to marry our Seyit. I have discussed this with Shervan.

Basit: That is a very good idea. She is lucky if she is to be your daughter in law. Her head will be in the clouds.

Shangyo: But that woman wants to have her daughter marry Nur. One should consider Seyit. There is one thing you should understand – Nur and Ghunchem love each other. Because of this, we should fix her marriage⁶⁸⁵ in front of the community at Zoruhan's funeral. Ghunchem should be taken into our care. You should put your effort to support this.

Basit: Of course, with my life.

Shangyo: If that is the case, we should not let Nur know about this.

Basit: OK, but it will pass from ear to ear in no time and will get to the upland farm.

Shangyo: What can we do about this?

Shervan comes out

Shervan: Why do you worry about that?

Basit: Shervan, you were listening?

Shervan: You were saying you need to bring in three or four horses from the mountain pastures. Send Nur to do that.

Shangyo: I hadn't thought of that. Call Nur.

Shervan: He is getting firewood (she goes to the garden to call Meshrep. From outside, Meshrep can be heard saying "Yes, sister, what are you saying?")

⁶⁸⁵ lit. "tie her head"

Shervan: Call Nur

Basit: Shervan is very farsighted!

Shangyo: If you say that in front of her she may become arrogant.

Basit: Being a lady⁶⁸⁶ really suits her. I think that other ladies could not utter a sentence in front of her!

Shangyo: Quiet! Enough.

Nur comes in holding a sickle⁶⁸⁷ and sweating.

Shangyo: Have you finished cutting the bushes?

Nur: No, I have half finished.

Shervan: Why so slow? Aren't you working fast?

Nur: I started with the first call of the *turgay* and had worked up to now , cutting without a rest. I collected all the wood from the hedges bordering the eight ho of gardens, beforee you would have time to say "sup". I am not a magician⁶⁸⁸

Shangyo: Don't learn to be sarcastic. Learn to eat halal⁶⁸⁹ bread, Nur.

Basit: A halal job is good. It is not easy to be able to earn a bite of bread from others.

Nur: Is there anything more I can do for you?

Shangyo: "What job can I do?" You are a hired hand. You won't dance for us, you will labour.

Nur: Let's talk about how I laboured all summer. (points to the hayshed) Under that shelter are 15,000 bales of hay. Who gathered and stored it there? Who harvested the endless wheat crop? Who grew it? Who ploughed it, harrowed it, winnowed the grain and drove the cart? Do you think, Shangyo'ka, all this is dancing? These crops piled up like a mountain are done by me, getting up early morning and working until all are asleep. If still I can't satisfy you, then settle my account and I will quit.

Basit: No, no! Don't take it to heart! Shangyo wants you to become accustomed to hard work, to be a good man.

⁶⁸⁶ *aghchalik*

⁶⁸⁷ *orghak*

⁶⁸⁸ *jadiger*

⁶⁸⁹ *halal* means permitted or legitimate act or thing.

Shervan: Well, well! Are you trying to scare us by threatening to quit? There are many people like you who don't know how to manage themselves and can't find a job!

Nur: Enough, sister Shervan. Shangyo'kam's words are enough, without you adding your poison.

Shervan: Really! Where did you learn that foul language?

Nur: From you.

Shangyo: Enough! Stop talking this nonsense!

Basit: This kind of talk has no end. Let's discuss what you are to do.

Shangyo: Nur, go now to the pasture, and bring back four of the horses that came from the farm, put them with the horses here and mix them with the unbroken colts.

Time is passing. Harvest and threshing will be demanding.

Nur: I am also human. Without speaking deviously, speak directly – I will understand.

Shangyo: Enough, go without further argument.

Nur: Which horse should I take?

Shangyo: Use the horse from the farm.

Shervan: Let him bring back three or four lambs.

Basit: Well said – he is going to bring *kimiz*.

Shangyo: Tell that Kazak Savdan to bring the lambs and *kimiz*. Then... what was his son's name?

Nur: Amantay.

Shangyo: Amantay should come and help with the harvest. If he argues, tell him I will fire him and get another stockman.

Nur shakes his head unhappily and leaves

Shervan: All kinds of trouble can come from this evil face. Did you hear how boldly he spoke?

Basit: That breed have been stubborn from of old.

Shervan to Shangyo: I don't know why he lets him get away with it, why spoil a servant. My view would be to give him a beating, takes his clothes and kick him out.

Shangyo: So it's true that women have long hair and short intellects. If he is bad but his strength is good, and I kick him out, are you going to do all the jobs he does? If any one should be kicked out, that parasite Meshrep, who is quite useless, should be kicked out.

Shervan: Oh, Meshrep is better than all of them. I wish others considered our interests as much as Meshrep does.

Meshrep enters.

Meshrep: Mezin said Zoruhan has died – tell Shangyo.

Shangyo: Where is he.

Meshrep: He has gone.

Shangyo: Gone?

Meshrep The daughter is crying that Nur needs to be there. Mezzin said to tell him as well.

Shangyo: All right, don't you bother with it. Go and turn over the brushwood in the garden. (Meshrep stands there) Get out! Why are you still standing there? (Meshrep goes out into the garden.) I have to spend money for a one-day funeral for Zoruhan. (to Basit) You help to buy some funeral materials.

Basit: OK, I'm ready.

Shervan: Don't under-record the money you spend, and show the community how much more you are spending.

Shangyo: We don't need your lessons to succeed.

Shervan: I know how much you know.

Basit: Up to now you still don't understand Shangyo'kam. Shervan aghcha, our brother is tricky.

Shangyo: If I could not manage such a matter, how did all that wealth come to this house? She is sitting inside the house, and doesn't appreciate how sharp I am.

Basit: Yes! (pats Shangyo's shoulder). Shangyo is tricky! He can pull things out from a place that is locked.

Shervan: There is a saying that a woman makes a man a real man.

Shangyo: Don't flatter yourself!

Shangyo and Basit go out. Shervan enters the house. Seyit enters.

Seyit: (tapping an egg on his teeth) Ah! This one is like a stone! Not only thirty eggs, I would have given a hundred eggs if he wanted. I had to have it. (he tests another egg that is coloured with onion-skin dye) This is a famous egg, but it makes a “pok! pok!” sound. I exchanged this one too for thirty eggs. I will bet without fear on 200 with this kind of eggs, even if they want to hit the round end. Ha ha! (He snuffles) There won’t be any eggs to match this. (He goes in the direction of the garden) Meshrep! Hey Meshrep! (Meshrep enters holding a sickle) I have exchanged this for thirty eggs!

Meshrep: Why is it so expensive?

Seyit: Have you ever in your life seen an egg as hard as this?

Meshrep: They cheated you, silly. You are happy with this one? The other eggs of yours are harder than this one.

Seyit: What do you know, crazy. When you hit it, it feels like its going to break your teeth. This one will defeat 500 eggs!

Meshrep: Boasting is useless. Come here and try it out. I’ll take the red one.

Seyit: OK, here. (gives the dyed egg to Meshrep) You hold and I’ll hit.

Meshrep: You said it is worth 500 eggs, so you hold it

Seyit: No, no! You hold.

Meshrep: What are you saying, rich boy. You say things and can’t live up to them.

Seyit: Stop! Stop! I’ll hit. Otherwise you will dig your fingernail into it.

Meshrep: Hit.

Seyit: Open up your hand more – where am I going to hit?

Meshrep: Bullshitter! Here! Hit! (Seyit hits softly) Hit harder, coward!

Seyit hits strongly and his egg breaks.

Meshrep: Ha! The egg worth 500 is finished!

Seyit: Evil face! Crazy! (sniffs) You poked it with your fingernail!

Meshrep: You bad sport!⁶⁹⁰ You exchanged thirty eggs for this one, this is how you spend the money your mother gives you, snotty-nose!

Seyit: *Humsi!*⁶⁹¹ Why do you call me snotty, you beggar!

Meshrep: You couldn't even spend easy money properly, but come back having lost it all to others.

Seyit (showing fist) You *humsi!* I'll make a bracelet out of you and put you on my wrist!

Meshrep: Oh, you are a hero! Seyit the brave! Instead of thinking of hitting me, clean your snot, snotty-boy.

Seyit (turns to pick up a flail): I'll kill you with one blow!

Shervan enters

Shervan: Oh my god, what is going on Seyitjan! (holds him)

Meshrep: That rich boy....

Seyit: Leave me alone, I want to kill him and pay for his blood! (hitting his chest) I'll pay it myself!⁶⁹²

Meshrep: What would you do if you were left alone! I am not a chicken that you steal from someone, kill and eat.

Shervan: Enough, enough.

Seyit: You are spoiling him. A servant should act like a servant.

Shervan: What did he do to you?

Seyit: He swore at me.

Shervan: Ok, don't be angry, I will fix him. You go down town to pick up your new clothes. If it is finished, bring my new velvet coat as well. Go and fetch your pony – Meshrep will saddle it for you. Go on. (pretending to be angry with Meshrep) Why are you not doing your work? Wasting time instead of turning the brushwood? Do you want me to beat you? (Seyit goes toward the garden)
Meshrep, don't annoy Shangyo'kam and Seyitjan. If you keep annoying them, you will expose our secret. I will be rude to you in front of them, and you say

⁶⁹⁰ *chidimas*

⁶⁹¹ "hermaphrodite"

⁶⁹² Seyit is referring to practice of paying blood-money to the family of someone who is killed, and boasting that he will take that responsibility

you are sorry, you didn't realise.. and so on. You know, I don't let anyone hit you (she acts flirtatiously). Since it's like this, let things go on without making noise. The rest we keep to ourselves.

Meshrep: I swear, I'm taking it just for you. If I didn't think of your sweet words I wouldn't stand every day in this hellish compound, suffering scorn and insults.

Shervan: If you listen to me I will let you have your wish.

Meshrep: I told you I am ready for whatever you say.

Shervan: Then go and prepare Seyit's pony and tell him "Brother, I like you.." Send him to the town. I have something to tell you. Seyitjan is coming.

Meshrep: What does she want to tell me? From what she says, I think she likes me. She is saying, if you listen to me, you will reach your wish. People talk about fairies – I never saw one, but heard from visitors. I think this Shervan's beauty would probably match a fairy.. (He smiles)

Seyit: I tied the pony to the verandah – saddle it.

Meshrep: I'll put on the silver harness and velvet saddle cushion, nicely. When you enter the town, you will enter with dignity, Seyitjan.

Seyit: It seems my mother disciplined you – you are tame now..

Meshrep: Your mother is a lady who disciplines all the women of the district, do you think she would spare me? She really scorned that I would hurt her son.

Seyit: You needed that. You should take the growth off your nose⁶⁹³.

Meshrep: Seyitjan, don't scorn me. I'll give you some good news.

Seyit: What kind of good news?

Meshrep: Black hair, eyes like stars, beautiful eyebrows, rosy cheeks – a rosebud. They want to marry her to you.

Seyit: That Ghunche? I don't want to!

Meshrep: She is beautiful (he cleans some stains off Seyit's clothes). Now you are going to be a bridegroom – you should dress well, without stains, otherwise your wife will not like you. I will prepare your pony so beautifully that girls will

⁶⁹³ "be more humble"

wonder where this prince comes from. (He goes to the garden)

Seyit: I don't want to marry a low-class beggar's daughter. You all don't understand, what kind of parents really know their son's heart. Did I ask for marriage? My friends my age are not thinking about marriage, just playing in the street. If they insist I marry, then I should get the girl from wherever I want. In the town, among my mother's community, there are many beautiful girls. If I marry, I will marry one of them. Girls who wear silk dresses, golden jewels, hands as soft as feather – not a girl with a cotton dress and head scarf, a sunburnt country girl like Gunche.

Meshrep enters: Seyitjan! Let's go, have a look how I combed it to a shine, and gave it a crest like a king's crown. Go, you will thank me.

Meshrep takes Seyit out. Shervan, dressed up and wearing a hat with jewels and gold flowers, comes out.

Shervan (adjusting her skirt): I think this dress suits me quite well, but it seems the starch is finished. I can see it from all sides, even though the mirror is quite big. I need to buy another stone mirror to put on the other wall, so I can see whether my dresses suit or not. (She goes out into the garden) Meshrep! Hey, Meshrep!

Meshrep comes: Yes, older sister.

Shervan: Did you send Seyit?

Meshrep: Yes, I made him really happy.

Shervan: You are clever. Go to Hashimbay's shop to get some tea. Tell him Shangyo'kam has gone to the city, and Shervan'aghcha says she will pay when they come.

Meshrep: What ever you say. I always say yes, but you look down on me.

Shervan: If you listen to me I will not look down on you.

Meshrep: How can I say all the time, yes, yes?

Shervan: Don't be stubborn – go and come back (She pushes him out). This idiot is also starting to rebel. He needs something else.

[Curtain]

Act 2 Scene 2

Some time has passed, the scene is same Act 2 Scene 1. Ghunchem is sitting on the verandah and sings with melancholy:

⁶⁹⁴Every day you are reaping
Your wrist never tires
When I come to your mind
Doesn't your heart burn?

Didn't we say we would go?
Didn't we say we would burn?
Our condition was a red apple
Shouldn't we bite it together?

Ghunchem is sitting holding her knees, resting her chin on her knees. Patemhan comes in with two pails of milk.

Patemhan: Dear daughter, you are sitting there sadly again. If you keep on being sad you will get sick.

Ghunchem: Patimde, my heart is already bruised from top to bottom.

Patemhan adjusts Ghunchem's hair: You should come over to visit us from time to time, to cheer yourself up. Would that be nice?

Ghunchem: Oh, Patimde, let alone going to a farm, just going to the Garden, they follow me like ghosts, these *hazazul*.

Patemhan: My God – you are not their slave that they have bought!

Ghunchem: I am like a ram caught in a net. Those elders of the community, not saying a word. Dear Patimde, look at what brother Meshrep is doing?

⁶⁹⁴ *Orma orisen kunde*
Talmaydu bileklerin
Men yadinggha yetkende
Khoymeydu yureklerin

Barayli demepmiduk
Yanayli demepmiduk
Shertimiz kizil alma

Patemhan: What about him?

Ghunchem: He is acting as a guard on me. He is your son, you should say something strong to him.

Patemhan: Yes, I have felt for quite a while that he is dancing to the tune of the Beg and Aghcha, now he has started to harm you orphans, the devil! I will speak to him. The poor should support the poor. If he is taking part in making you suffer, I don't have a son like that! (She looks around anxiously and then says secretively) The witch Shervan has confused his head – I know! (She shakes her head)

Ghunchem: You are right. She is capable of everything bad. Does Nurum know what Shervan is doing?

Patemhan: Yes, he knows. I told him all the secret goings-on. He said you should not worry too much, and be patient for a little while more. There are three or four days work left. He said he has not been idle.

Ghunchem: Why is his job not finished?

Patemhan: It is not easy to harvest seven or eight crops, piled high as mountains. The old saying is that “taking a harvest is like taking a city”. At the farm yard I have been baking bread, milking the cows, making the tea – I am also tired to death. (She shows her torn dress). After harvesting so much crop, they should say “Take two or three sacks of grain and sell them to buy some clothes”.

Ghunchem: Asking grain from these greedy people is like asking breath⁶⁹⁵ from the dead, asking a cure from a ruined wall.⁶⁹⁶ To buy clothes, you can only use your wages from your work.

Patemhan: They gave me nothing for five or six years. They said they hired Meshrep on a yearly basis, but being a woman I could work just for my food.

Ghunchem: That is why I call them greedy.

Patemhan: Yes, you are right. I worked day and night, but I could not please Henim or Begin (she gets up) I had better go quickly to make tea for Nurum. If Aghchahanim sees me, she will be angry.

Chish liship yimepmiduk

⁶⁹⁵ lit “a lung”

⁶⁹⁶ “*oluktin opke, eski temdin khokhakh*” Uyghur expression for an impossible request

Ghunchem: I wonder which harvest place Nurum is working at today?

Patemhan: Nur, Turghan, and Shangyo's stockman's son Amantay today are transporting the grain. (quietly) They trust each other, and they think about you all the time.

Ghunchem: Patemde, let Nurum find an opportunity to come and see me. Please tell him!

Patemhan: All right, don't worry.

She leaves, and Ghunchem sits thoughtfully. Shervan comes out, yawning as if just woken up

Shervan (looks at the pails): That footloose woman – where is she?

Ghunchem: She went back to the farm.

Shervan: Only this much milk from all those cows?

Ghunchem: How would I know about your cows' milk?

Shervan (taking offence): Oh! Sensitive, are you? If you didn't know in the past, you should know now.

Ghunchem: I won't stay here.

Shervan: Where are you going to stay?

Ghunchem: I want to go to my own house.

Shervan laughs derisively: You are counting your dumplings⁶⁹⁷ before they are cooked.

You are dreaming. Let me tell you for your own good – forget about Nur. You will become a member of this household. Don't curl yourself up like a hedgehog. It would be better to work and run around, to learn to eat well-earned bread in this household.

Ghunchem: You also shouldn't say eight without counting⁶⁹⁸. I will never adapt to your ways.

Shervan: In this house, we could train a devil to adopt our ways. Where do you think you can go?

Ghunchem: I can go to my own house, and work freely in my own orchard to get my own bread.

⁶⁹⁷ *Chochure* a small hand-made round dumplings like ravioli, usually cooked in a soup.

⁶⁹⁸ This phrase means to assume an outcome prematurely

Shervan: You are dipping your bread in goose soup while the goose is still flying.

Ghunchem: I am not a slave sold to you.

Shervan: I will show you what you are. (She goes quickly into the room)

Ghunchem: I will marry your snotty rich boy over my dead body. As long as Nurum is alive, he will not leave me with you cruel people as a slave. (She sighs) God let us light the light of our departed father and mother, and work together happily in our own beautiful garden.

She becomes sad again. Shervan comes out holding a sealed document.

Shervan: Oh yes, you are an illiterate peasant. Open your ears and let me read it to you. (She reads) “Contract: 24th of the eighth month of the year 1332 Hejira.⁶⁹⁹ I am Ghunchem, the daughter of Sidik Ahun. Before the elders of the community I make this contract in my own words. Upon the death of my mother Zoruhan, the father of the place Omer Shangyo spent 230 tenge and also spent 125 tenge giving a seventh-day wake. For these expenses I will transfer as security⁷⁰⁰ to the possession of Shangyo’aka my inheritance from my mother and father being the house, land and orchard. This will be under his care until I finish my debt to him, and until then I will follow his guidance. I will not go anywhere without his permission.” (Shows the document and signature) This is your own signature. This is the signature of the scribe. Hashimbay has stamped it as a witness. Here is the stamp of confirmation from Alim Ahun. You came under our control a long time ago.

Seyit and Basit enter, talking

Basit: Seyitjan, your pony’s trot is great. My horse couldn’t keep up with it.

Seyit: I didn’t let it go as fast as it could. If I really let it go, quite good horses would have trouble keeping up with it. Meshrep! Hey, Meshrep!

Meshrep: Seyitjan, you’re back from the city.

⁶⁹⁹ Hejira, Arabic HIJRAH, "flight," or "emigration", is the starting date of the Muslim era, taken from the Prophet [Muhammad's](#) migration in AD 622 from Mecca to Medina.

⁷⁰⁰ *rehne*

Meshrep walks toward the outside. Ghunchem walks toward the house.

Shervan: Hey, precious one,⁷⁰¹ take this milk and boil it.

Ghunchem comes back and takes the pails into the room. Basit and Seyit come in, whips in hand. Seyit is wearing squeaky boots. He turns back and looks around.

Seyit: Hey, Meshrep, make my coins a little higher.

Shervan smiles to Basit: Poo! You made Seyitjan handsome!

Seyit: Don't make fun of me.

Shervan looks at Seyit's fur hat: Very well made.

Basit: Look at the boots. Walking around town with that squeaking, everyone looked at him.

Shervan: Probably they thought you were Hakim Beg's son.

Basit: Seyitjan should thank me. I have run around between tailors, cobblers and hatters, and worn out my boots.

Shervan: Yes, he should thank you. All of us have worked hard for him.

Seyit looks at his boots and pulls at his jacket: You are all boasting about your effort for the clothing that even a beggar can have.

Shervan: We are not boasting. We are happy that you are a young man like a tree. We will also have a wolfskin overcoat, like your father's, made for you. What are you thinking? Whatever we have, we are saving for you.

Basit: Yes, he is the only son. (looks at Seyit) Seyitjan, if you listen to your mother and father, you will be the master of everything.

Seyit: Enough! Enough! You've started again eating my ear and brain. (walks out with his boots squeaking)

Shervan shakes her head toward Basit.

Basit: I tried hard to convince him, but he is not willing.

Shervan: What is he saying?

⁷⁰¹ lit "blue beads dropped from the sky"

Basit: He said My father wanted to marry me to someone from the city. My mother causes all the trouble. How can I face others if I marry a poor orphan girl?"

Shervan: He is right. This girl's background is not suitable for us, but there is a reason that Seyit has to marry her.

Basit: If he is not willing, what can we do Shervan'agcha.

Shervan: Tell him I am not expecting him to marry her forever, just to marry her and he can divorce her the next day. Then we can find someone from a suitable background to marry him.

Basit: All right, all right. I think I should get a fur overcoat if I can convince him, Shervan'agcha.

Shervan: Yes, of course Basit: I hope Seyitjan is not going somewhere. I will follow him until evening.

Basit leaves, Shervan goes into the room. From a distance can be heard Nur's song:

⁷⁰²It has been quite some time
I could not see my beloved
We played and worked together
I could not kiss her lips

Ghunchem hear the song and walks slowly toward the garden

My beloved slender Ghunchem
My compassionate bright eyes
Ah, ah! I long for you
I can't be the answer to your trouble

⁷⁰² *Bir nechche mehel boldi*
Men yarni korelmidim
Bille oyniship ishlep
Levige soyelmidim

Omrukhim Ghunchem boyum
Mihriban cholpan kozum
Ah urup hesrette seni
Derdingge derman bolmudum

Nur comes in from the garden side.

Ghunchem: Nurum!

Nur; Ghunchem! Are you well? How are you?

Ghunchem: You know the situation here?

Nur: Patemdem told me everything. It is very bad that you came here.

Ghunchem: The deceiving Shangyo brought me here, saying before the community “a young girl should not live alone in a big compound, I will act as her father during the 40 days mourning of her mother’s death. She should stay with us”. But now, Shervan is going to make me her daughter-in-law and a slave. They want me to marry their son within three or four days!

Nur: That witch – she is dreaming.

Ghunchem: My God, you have not seen the garbage in this household. The other day Shangyo and Agchah were yelling at each other. I wondered what was going on and I listened. The bastard, supposedly acting as my father, said: “If my son doesn’t want her, I will get him a wife from the city. You should arrange her for me as a junior wife”.⁷⁰³ How can I endure such shamelessness?

She begins to cry, holding Nur’s shoulder.

Ghunchem: I can’t stay with people like this. Nurum, my heart is broken!

Nur (angrily): They are wolves in human shape! He strokes Ghunchem’s hair) As long as I live, I will not let you be bullied by those blackhearted people. I have almost finished my work. Tonight I will settle my account with Shangyo, and tomorrow we will go back to our own orchard.

Ghunchem: Nurum, there is another problem with that.

Nur: What is it?

⁷⁰³ *tokal*

Ghunchem: Shervan said “You are under our control, and cannot leave here. Your orchard is also under our control – here is the document you signed”, and she showed me a sealed contract.

Nur: Did you sign that kind of document?

Ghunchem: The day after I came here, Shangyo invited five or six of the community elders, and in front of them he said, “So that your mother may have peace in her grave, we drew up this contract for the expenses of her funeral and her seven-day wake. Press your finger on it”. I did put my finger to it, but how could I know that the document would tie my head down?

Nur: How much money do they record on that document?

Ghunchem: Over three hundred tenge.

Nur: Three hundred tenge? It must be a lie.

Ghunchem: They are saying that my orchard is the security for that debt.

Nur: Where is the money from the sale of the house and furniture? The cheats! Let’s check the accounts, then everything will be clear. (From the direction of the orchard, two stones fall, one after the other) Someone is coming down. There’s something strange going on.

Nur goes toward the verandah to hide, Ghunchem goes into the kitchen. Hashimbay comes under the tree and disappears again. Shervan comes out of the house and walks in a flirtatious way toward the orchard. After some time there are loud voices and the sound of a horse. Shervan comes close to the tree, then holds onto Nur (who has come after her).

Shervan: Hey, footloose, what are you doing here? (Nur pushes her over) Oh! Oh!

Nur: Footloose is your name, you bitch!

Shervan: I hope your tongue dries out. Oh, my head!

Meshrep comes running: What happened? What happened?

Shervan: Meshrep, catch this evil face.

Meshrep tries to catch Nur. Nur shows him his fist.

Nur: You stay out of this, you demented one.⁷⁰⁴

Meshrep steps back: Oh! Oh! Look at his attitude.

Nur: Have you seen what your bosses have done? Look, it is all in the open. The scandal is out! They have been caught!

Shangyo arrives back from the city, together with the tax bailiff, who carries a sword.

Shangyo: What is going on? What happened here?

Nur: Shamelessness.

Shervan (holding her face with her hand): I hope your tongue dries out, you shameless one. (to Shangyo) He is evil! I told you to fire him earlier, and you didn't listen! Now we are in this situation and scandal!

Shangyo: What is it?

Shervan: I came to the orchard to collect some leftover peaches, and this blackfaced one was hiding, and suddenly came out and attached me, and as I was running away, he caught me and hit me! (She weeps) It was lucky that Meshrep came, otherwise he would have killed me!

Nur: My God! (he is astonished)

Shangyo: You ungrateful scoundrel! What were you doing?

Nur: Investigate the whole situation before taking action, Shangyo'ka.

Shervan: This bastard wants to slander me to save himself.

Nur: My God! Look at this! How skilled she is in creating calamity!

Shervan: Meshrep, you talk!

Shangyo: What did you see?

Meshrep: I was cutting hay for the horses and heard some noise. I came to the orchard, and saw Nur holding older sister.

Nur: (interrupting) You sold-out running dog! (looks at Shangyo) There are people here. Take me to a room and ask me privately, and I will tell you everything.

Shangyo (to Shervan) You go inside, I will talk to this mischief-maker alone. (Shervan goes in) Meshrep, fetch Basit, and tell him that someone has come from the

⁷⁰⁴ *aljighan*

district office⁷⁰⁵ to arrest those who have not paid their taxes. (Meshrep goes)

You are innocent. Your job is at the farm. What are you doing here?

Nur: I have finished my work at the farm and came back to settle the account, take my wages and we will go.

Shangyo: “We” will go, not “I”? You don’t have anything on me.

Nur: Where is my pay for the whole summer’s work?

Shangyo: During the summer, you took twenty tenge for cigarettes. Driving the horse too fast, you broke a cart. You lost four sacks of wheat to a thief – you are responsible for all of this – what more do you want? If you want to settle accounts, prepare your own money to pay me back!

Nur: It is clear what you are doing, just as you also weaved and patched my aunty’s accounts.

Shangyo: Never mind your aunty’s affairs. Look after your own, you spoiled liar.

Meshrep comes in.

Nur: Shangyo’ka, first wipe your own forehead, then speak.

Shangyo: What did you say?

Nur (sarcastically) I said whatever Your Excellency says.

Basit (to Nur): Hey, ungrateful! Hold your tongue and don’t be disrespectful!

Nur: Respectable Head of Fifty, you should talk about reasonableness to the person who is supposed to be acting like a father – to Shangyo’kam – that would be justice.

Shangyo to Meshrep: Bring rope (Meshrep agrees and goes into the kitchen). I will show this liar what is justice.

Yayi: He is arrogant. One should discipline him properly.

Meshrep brings rope.

Shangyo: Tie up this blackheart.

⁷⁰⁵ *Yamul*, from Mandarin “*Yamen*” – the district court and prison.

Basit and Yayi try to tie up Nur. Nur pushes Yayi away and knocks Basit down with one punch.

Nur: What did I do to deserve being tied up? Is it for my whole summer's work, or for exposing the shamelessness of your wife? Or to hide the trap you have prepared for Ghunchem? Hey Shangyo, the one who has a black heart is plain to see, and it will be exposed in front of all the people!

Shangyo: Cowards! What are you waiting for? Tie him up! (He approaches Nur and whips him)

Yayi (draws his sword): You thief! Don't resist!

Nur: Come and do whatever you can!

All together subdue and tie up Nur.

Shangyo: Take him, tie him to the tree. (Nur is tied to the tree)

Nur: Whatever you may do, the truth can be bent, but not broken.

Shangyo: Hit the mischief-maker! (Yayi whips Nur) Ghunchem comes out of the house)

Ghunchem: Nurum! (she holds Yayi) You murderer! Are you going to kill him? What did he do?

Shangyo to Meshrep: Hey, take this girl into the house!

Meshrep grabs her, but she shakes him off

Ghunchem: Father Shangyo! Let go of Nurum! (she cries)

Nur: To beg is worse than death. There will be a time when we can claim our monument!

Shangyo: Get lost! (to Ghunchem) Don't come near this shameless one (to Meshrep) What are you looking at? Take her inside the house!

Meshrep pulls Ghunchem by the arm into the house. After a while, Ghunchem comes out of the house and secretly goes out of the compound.

Nur: Curse your shamelessness, injustice, slander, corruption and adultery – and even worse your trickery in pasting those words on other people!

Shangyo: Hit him in the mouth! (He and Yayi both beat Nur with their whips)

Nur: Beat us, tyrants, drink our blood!

Basit: Nur, hold your tongue! Don't get yourself beaten to death unnecessarily.

Nur's head falls down and he is quiet. Basit stops Shangyo hitting him.

Basit: That's enough, don't kill him.

They stop beating Nur

Shangyo: Just you wait, I will let you know who I am, you recalcitrant, and you will realise who you are up against! (to Basit) Basit, run and tell the young man from the District Office to bring that Azinbaghi and stubborn Yakup, and send them together with this troublemaker to the Sengen's Office, to prison.

Basit: Very well, Shangyo. We will go now. (to Yayi) Do you have shackles and manacles?

Yayi: Yes, everything is ready in my saddle-bag.

Shangyo: Collect a good amount of transportation expense money from the community for Lozung and this young man.

Basit: We never offend them. (Yayi and Basit leave)

Shangyo (pointing at Nur): Wait, I will show you. I will let you rot in the prison.

Shangyo goes into the house. There is melancholy music. Ghunchem comes from outside, fetches a bowl of water from the kitchen, and carefully takes it in front of Nur.

Ghunchem: Nurum, Nurum, raise your head, I brought you some water – drink (she holds the bowl to Nur's mouth)

Nur: Ghunchem, did you see? Realise who these people are. We must run away from here.

Ghunchem: Let's run away (she tries to untie Nur) I went to the farm to tell Amantay and Turghun (she looks toward the orchard). They are coming.

Nur: Well done. If they had taken me to the prison, it would have been difficult to escape.

Ghunchem: Amantay, come here. They tied him up very tightly.

Amantay: My God, dear Nur. Your rich brother tied you up. What crime did you commit? (he unties Nur, while Turghun keeps watch)

Nur (massages his wrists and looks at the house with disgust): Friends, remember who is our friend and who is our enemy. Today they showed us.

Amantay: We also suffered from the boss. Another year he beat my father severely because four lambs were taken by wolves.

Ghunchem: I hope he dies spitting blood.

Amantay: He uses my father to look after the stock, and also forces me to work. There are lots of poor people like us.

Turghun (comes closer to Nur): Stop talking. There is nobody around. Amantay, take Nur to your place.

Amantay looks at Ghunchem: What are we going to do with this sister?

Turghun: It is not good if she runs away together with him just now.

Amantay: Are we going to leave her alone?

Turghun: We will arrange the horses, and take her in the evening. Ghunchem, go inside. No-one should know we have been here. You two leave separately and quietly from here. I will keep watch.

Nur: Very well Ghunchem, stay well until I see you.

Ghunchem: Goodbye Nurum. Save me from here as soon as possible. (tears fall)

Amantay: Sister, we will not leave you in the claws of a wild animal.

First Turghun, then Amantay and Nur, go out through the orchard. Dogs bark. Basit and Yayi com with Azinbakhi and Yakup with chains on their necks and handcuffs on their wrists.

Basit: I'll call Shangyo (goes toward the house)

Azinbakhi (to Yayi) It is painful. Could you loosen my wrists a little?

Yayi: Shut up, old man, or you will be beaten to death unnecessarily.

Azinbakhi: Do you have no compassion at all? I am an old man.

Yayi : You will see compassion at the courthouse.

Shangyo and Basit come out of the house.

Shangyo: So, stubborn ones, this is what you have come to?

Azinbakhi: This is your gift to us (shows wrists)

Shangyo: Not paying taxes on time, making mischief against government rules, and creating gossip amongs the community: this is the result.

Azinbakhi: Thankyou, Shangyo, for your just administration.

Shangyo: You are in a hurry to thank me. (approaches Yakup) Yes, young man with horse and cart, why did you steal water?

Yakup: Who stole water?

Shangyo: Why are you tapping water more than your share?

Yakup: Water just runs without stopping. People like you, with long hands, have hundreds of ho of land. People like us, short hands, with only six ho of land dried out - how could anyone endure it?

Shangyo: For people like you who defy tradition, and are thieves, their crops should be allowed to go dry.

Yakup: Look, Shangyo – when poor people’s crops are drying out, people who cut their water and sell it to other people – are they the thieves, or are those who run around to get some water for their dried out crops? You should clarify this.

Shangyo: We will clarify. Clarify that bold people like you beat their own heads.

Azinbakhi: Yakup, don’t be simple. Our just Beg has clarified it for us very well, with these chains.

Yayi: Shut up!

Shangyo: Chase those parasites to the city. Tomorrow I will go to the Sengen’s court myself, and will give the information to Lozung myself. And take along that mischief-maker... (realises that Nur is not there) Hey! Where is he? Meshrep! Meshrep!

They are looking around as the curtain falls.

Act Three

Scene 1

Omer Shangyo's Courtyard, as in Act 2. It is early evening, shining stars are visible. Light shows from the flower-boxed window of the sitting room, and a black lamp on a lamp holder is high on the verandah. In one part of the courtyard is an earth stove with a wok on it. Beside this are three teapots and a samovar is boiling. Meshrep waits by it. In front of the courtyard entrance Shangyo, Basit and Hashimbay are in discussion.

Hashimbay: So there is no sign of Nur, Shangyo'ka?

Shangyo: Since they have escaped, it would be good if they disappear entirely, the bastards.

Hashimbay: You are giving away the girl, as well as marrying your son.

Shangyo: Let's change the subject. Yes, Hashimbay, the community has gathered.

Basit: Mezzin has arranged representative fathers for Ghunchem and Seyit⁷⁰⁶

Hashimbay: If that is the case, we should bring the young man soon.

Shangyo: Run, Basit. You go.

Basit: Yes, I will go and tell them.

Shangyo: Hashimbay, you prepare the items for the marriage ceremony. Meshrep, go and fill the guests' teacups again.

Hashimbay: I can't see Sweetheart.⁷⁰⁷ (He looks inside). It would be good if I meet Shervan'aghcha today (He takes out from a small box three or four *nas* and spits them out)...Actually, it was Agcha who arranged this marriage. Shangyo, who steps over anyone in front of him and kicks anyone behind him, even he has been tamed by her. This woman is a calamity!

Shangyo brings out cotton, cut into a few handkerchiefs, material for a dress, a few envelopes containing money.

⁷⁰⁶ At the time of a marriage, both bride and groom are supposed to have a formal representative (*ata futkuzmak*)

⁷⁰⁷ "Janan" - he means Shervan.

Shangyo: Give this material and money for the ceremony to preacher Ahun. (He hands it to Hashimbay) This is for Lozung Beg, and these are for his two guards.

From a distance, singing is heard

Hashimbay: You are conducting this wedding in a very stingy way, Shangyo. You should at least have given Preacher Ahun and Lozung each a fur coat.

Shangyo: We will do it. This is not the end of all weddings. For the last three or four days we have been feeding the whole community.

Hashimbay: Of course, you have a respectable place in the community, so you should do things in a big way.

The sound of dap, drum and song can be heard.

Shangyo: They have arrived. Stop the other conversations.. These two are for Muazzin, the rest get a handkerchief each.

The sound of song and music gets closer.

⁷⁰⁸ I admire and am bewitched by you
This day and that day
If I lie down at night, I can't sleep.
In the black of night.

A group of young men playing dap and drum, calling out congratulations⁷⁰⁹ come

⁷⁰⁸ *Mestun heyran boluptimen*
Shu bu kunlerde
Yatsam keche uyku kelmes
Kara tunlerde
Hey hey olen, hey olen Gul kayda bar, yar yar
Bir yahshigha, bir yaman, her jayda bar yar yar

Hey hey olen, hey olen bar mu hayat
yar yar
Karchugidek boylaringa boldum seyyat yar yar

⁷⁰⁹ "barikallah" (good on you!)

onto the stage.

Hey hey sing, hey sing, where is the rose? Darling, Darling
 A bad person for a good person, this can happen anywhere
 Hey hey sing, hey sing, is there Life? Darling, Darling
 You are the apple of my eye, my joy to see, Darling, Darling

Hizim: Dance, looking at each other!

The dancers look at each other, making faces

1st young man sings:

⁷¹⁰Your hand, that beats the rabbit,
 Hey hey sing, hey sing, what can I do, Darling, Darling
 I take the dagger and cut up my heart, Darling, Darling,
 Hey hey sing, hey sing, the snow comes, Darling, Darling
 My Darling comes wearing an autumn overcoat, Darling, Darling
 The autumn coat carries a big debt, Darling, Darling,
 Young bachelors have many troubles, Darling, Darling ,
 Footprints come down the curving road, Darling, Darling,
 The girl comes covered up in a brocade overcoat, Darling, Darling
 Red red onions have many layers of skin, Darling, Darling,
 Young bachelors have many friends, Darling, Darling,
 Black black crows gather at the threshing-floor, Darling, Darling,
 The young bachelors regret their unfulfilled wish, Darling, Darling

⁷¹⁰ *Toshkan sokkan kollaringdin*
 Hey hey olen, hey olen, men ne khilay, yar yar
 Hancher elip yurekni pare khilay, Yar yar
 Hey hey oilen, hey olen, kar kelidu, Yar yar
 Bergi hazan tonni kiyip yar kelidu, Yar yar
 Bergi hazan tonnung bergi tola, Yar yar
 Oylenmigen yigitning derdi tola, Yar yar
 Egim egim yollardin iz kelidu, Yar yar
 Kimhab tonga purkunup khiz kelidu, Yar yar
 Khizil khizil piyazning pusti tola, yar yar
 Oylenmigen yigitning dosti tola, Yar yar
 Khara khara karghilar hamandidur, Yar yar
 Oylenmigen yigitler armandadur, Yar yar

Basit comes out

Basit: People have begun their courtesy visits.⁷¹¹ Young man, go closer to the guest room door, and stand there.

Best Man: Get Seyit Beg in the middle of the group

Hizim: Hey best man, push Seyit Beg's hat down a bit.

They all go noisily into the verandah area of the courtyard. Meshrep comes out holding a teapot and approaches the stove

Meshrep: (to himself) Would a beautiful and clever girl like Ghunchem become the wife of a rich man's snotty and rude son? No, I think Nurum is not that easy. He has a big heart. Today he will not miss the opportunity to come from wherever he is. I noticed that he came here the other day at midnight. I think probably he is planning to take Ghunchem and run away, but Ghunchem has been locked up for the last few days. I didn't tell sister Shervan that Nur came. My mother scorned me, saying "We are poor working people. Nur is also a working man. Why do you take the bosses' side to harm them? It is shameful to work to harm orphans." Since then I stopped following them around.

After the marriage ceremony, the community come out offering congratulations.

Drummers and musicians walk out saying "Let's go and bring the bride".

2nd Young man: Seyitjan's heart is beating. (to Seyit) don't worry, we won't be spying on you!

1st young man: Don't go to sleep tonight!

Hizim: If he goes to sleep, we will make a hole in the roof and pour water on him

Seyit: Do that if you want to die.

Hizim: We have seen boastful people, Groom! Today, don't call out "Mother"!

⁷¹¹ *pete*

2nd young man: If you don't say "it's up to you", this person, who can make a hole in the wall to get millet and make a hole in the ice to get fish⁷¹², will give you some trouble today.

Everyone laughs.

Hizim: When they asked did you want to marry her with your own free will, you insisted on saying nothing, Seyit, so I called out "Yes" on your behalf.

1st young man: Oh, then Hizim got married.

2nd young man: If you say this, this mischievous guy may go to the wedding bed!

(laughs)

1st young man: But Seyit ate the salty bread.

Basit: Now youngsters, enough talking nonsense!

Hizim: Don't break up. All of you go to the best man's house. Let's stay there and keep on having fun until the bride is brought here.

The young men go off.

Shangyo hurriedly comes out of the house : Meshrep, open up the side door to the garden, the community will leave by the side door.

Shangyo goes in. Meshrep goes toward the garden. From a distance is heard the sound of drums and wedding songs. After a while, Turghan and two other people bring in a trunk, bedding, and a few bundles of other things. Patemhan and Turghan look at each other meaningfully. Turghan indicates with his eyes and other signals that he is ready.

Patemhan: Have a fair journey. I hope your work progresses; I hope your face is bright, I hope your daughter-in-law's steps will be lucky, I hope her steps and the road are fair.

⁷¹² this expression means someone capable of looking after themselves in all situations

She speaks to the people who brought the bundles. They tie scarves on their wrists, then they leave. Turghan realizes that Patemhan is coming, so he stays back from the others.

Patemhan: Now Turghan, how is your business?

Turghan: It is OK. We have prepared Shangyo's three horses and taken them to the old wall at Gozlek.

Patemhan: Where is Nur?

Turghan: Nur and Amantay are hiding in the orchard. Have you got that other business done?

Patemhan: Yes, I am appointed as the bride's assistant.⁷¹³

Turghan: Good, well done!

Patemhan: My God, if they hear what we are planning to do, Shangyo will drink the blood of all of us!

Turghan: Don't worry, we will make sure that you are not held responsible.

Patemhan: Whatever happens, you must be very careful. I will bring Ghunchem before Seyit comes into the room.

Turghan: Well done.

Turghan leaves. There is the sound of a crying girl, and horse and cart, and people making a noise. Two men enter carrying Ghunchem on a carpet, together with three or four women. Shervan, wearing a decorated jacket, a hat with a gold pin and a trembling gold flower waits proudly with a few other women at the entrance to the verandah. A big fire of brushwood has been lit in the courtyard. Patemhan and three other women each hold a corner of the carpet on which Ghunchem is sitting and call out "Chin".

⁷¹³ *kiz yengisi*

⁷¹⁴Don't cry girl, don't cry, its your wedding
 The place of flowered brocade is now your house
 Don't cry, don't cry, you'll be happy
 The young man, apple of your eye, will be your friend
 Don't cry girl, be happy, it's your wedding
 The golden bodied handsome young man is your confidant
 Don't cry, girl, you will be lucky
 The golden flowered place will be your throne
 Don't cry girl, today luck is brought to you
 A golden nail is fixed in your place
 There's water in the ewer, but it's not warm
 The mother of the girl may be stepmother, because she doesn't cry.

The two men holding the sides of the carpet on which Ghunchem sits take the carpet over the fire and around it three times, then carry her inside the house. The rest of the people follow. The music expresses waves of sadness of the bride, as well as mystery. Nur cautiously comes next to the tree and listens.

Nur (sarcastically) "Don't cry girl, be happy in your marriage, golden figure, handsome young man is your confidant!"... Huh! Those devils! Who is whose confidant! The crooks' snotty son never can be a 'golden-bodied handsome young man' for Ghunchem. (Patemhan comes out and looks around) Patimde! Patimde!

Patemhan: Is that you Nurum?

⁷¹⁴ *Yiglima kiz yiglima toyung boldi*
Kimhab gulluk koshuge oyung boldi
Yiglima kiz yiglima hosh bolursiz
Karchogdek yigitke dost bolursiz

Yiglima kiz, hosh bolgin toylishingdur
Altun boylik gul yigit sirdirshingdur
Yigilma kiz yiglima behting bolur
Altun gulluk koshuge tehting bolur

Yiglima kiz sanga bugun beht ekiptu
Koshkenge altundin mih kekeptu
Aptuvida su koysam ilimaydu
Kiz anisi ogeymikin yiglimaydu

Nur: Hm (He beckons with his hand and Patemhan goes next to him.

Patemhan: Are you ready?

Nur: It is ready, we are waiting Turghan is keeping a look out, and Amantay is hiding in the peach orchard.

Patemhan: Ghunchem is upset and very anxious. She is a bit sick, and crying.

Nur: Does she know that we are here?

Patemhan: She knows, I gave her all the information.

Nur: Patimde, we rely on you tremendously. How are things inside the house? Has it quietened down?

Patemhan: They are all now eating and drinking soup.

Nur: This is the opportunity, isn't it?

Patemhan: No, now there are still many people on the verandah as well as in the guest room. Shangyo and Lozung are in the inner room. His two guards are on the verandah, sniffing around like hungry animals.

Nur: Those nuisances!⁷¹⁵ Aren't they returning to the city?

Patemhan: Lozung is going to stay with Shangyo.

Nur: They will soon collapse from smoking hemp.⁷¹⁶ You should bring Ghunchem out.

Patemhan: Be patient for a while. Probably they are having the *butkha* soup, and waiting for people to leave.

The people who took Ghunchem into the house come out again. Nur hides himself.

Patemhan is a little suspicious, and goes to the verandah.

Basit (seeing off departing guests): Aghcha invited you all to be her guests tomorrow.

Departing Guest: All right.

The stage is quiet. Nur looks less strong. In the sky, the moon slowly comes out from behind a cloud.

⁷¹⁵ *teriktaplar*

⁷¹⁶ *neshe*

Nur: She should have come out by now.

Amantay arrives: What's happening?

Nur: Quiet... they are coming out!

Patemhan brings out Ghunchem in her wedding dress.

Ghunchem: Nurum! (she throws herself into Nur's arms and begins to cry)

Nur: Dear Ghunchem! (strokes her hair) Don't cry! I will defend you with my life.

(Ghunchem is coughing) What is the matter? You are coughing!

Ghunchem: My heart...

Nur: Ghunchem, you will be safe. We will leave this place that has become a hell for us, and we will live happily in the mountains.

Patemhan: My dear children, don't linger here, get away! (Turghan comes)

Turghan: We will tie you up, Patimde, so you won't get into trouble.

The sound is heard of the young men bringing Seyit.

Patemhan: That's a good idea. They are bringing Seyit, be quick, tie me up and go.

Turghan: Amantay, tie the sister-in-law's hands. Nur undo your belt!

Amantay ties Patemhan's wrists with rope and gags her mouth with Nur's wide cotton belt.

Amantay: Oh! We are tying the hand that cooked for us! (ties Patemhan to the tree)

Ghunchem: Dear Patemhan, I will not forget all your good deeds. Goodbye. If we live, we will see each other again one day.

She kisses Patemhan and both cry. The noise of the group approaching comes closer.

Turghan: It's dangerous! Run away! Amantay, you go ahead around the field. I will follow after!

Music plays

Nur: Goodbye, compassionate Patemhan, may you have good health.

Ghunchem: Goodbye!

They leave. Patemhan remains, shaking her head. Some noise is heard, and the sound of music grows. Three of four young men and Seyit come from outside.

2nd young man: I tied it (the head-scarf) strongly with two or three knots. She won't be able to untie it with her hands – tell her to untie it with her teeth!

Best man: When she uses her teeth to untie the scarf, you kiss her cheek. With that, the ice is broken.⁷¹⁷

1st young man: You should say, also things will be warmed up between you two.

Hizim: If you are rough with her, like with us, you will freeze her heart, then if you regret and try to improve things, it will be too late.

Best Man: Let's take Seyitjan to the girl.

When they come to the door, they are stopped by a chaperone.⁷¹⁸ The young man gives her some fabric and some money, does some bargaining, and then she lets them into the house. In the distance, dogs bark. Tense music is playing. Then inside there are sounds of the young men rushing out in disorder.

Best Man: Where is the girl?

Hizim: If she is not in the bridal chamber, she must have taken her life somewhere else.

Best Man: Anyone going to kill her! Taking her life somewhere! Be careful what you are saying!

Hizim: Listen, don't talk big just because you are Hashimbay's brother. I mean that she has run away!

1st young man: Don't argue – search for the girl!

⁷¹⁷ lit. "faces are opened"

⁷¹⁸ "yengei" literally "sister in law", but in wedding custom a young married woman who explains sex life to the girls and provides proof that she has married as a virgin.

Shervan comes out with the bridegroom's chaperone.

Shervan: Meshrep! Hey, Meshrep! Where are you?

Meshrep (rubbing his eyes) What? What is going on?

Shervan: What were you doing sleeping? Where is your mother?

Meshrep: I don't know. I went to sleep in the kitchen.

Shervan: Search! Find her! (Meshrep leaves) Where have those scandalous ones gone?

(Shervan searches everywhere. Best man notices Patemhan)

Best Man: Come here, here is her *yenge*, tied up.

They gather round Patemhan. Shangyo comes out with two guards with swords.

Shangyo: What happened? What is it?

Shangyo: Untie her! You bad woman, where is the girl! Who tied you up!

Patemhan doesn't say anything...

Shervan: You loose woman... answer!

Patemhan still doesn't speak.

Hizim: She is in a state of shock – are you going to keep asking Patimde!

Shangyo: What are you doing here?

Hizim: I am the rose⁷¹⁹ of thirty boys, Shangyo'ka!

Shangyo: Get out of my courtyard, or I'll show you who you are

Hizim (talking to himself as he leaves): Clever girl, she'll find her place.

Shangyo to bridegroom's chaperone: Where were you? ...Speak! Is your mouth
stuffed with hay?

Chaperone: Patemhan took Ghunchem out to the toilet.

Shervan: This is Nur's doing. He was watching Ghunchem, the bastard.

⁷¹⁹ In the *meshrep*, the leader of the group of young men is called the "rose" (*gul*)

Shangyo: By God's pardon!⁷²⁰

1st Yayi: Yes, they tied up this woman and kidnapped the girl.

2nd Yayi: They were afraid she would call out, so they gagged her mouth.

Shangyo: I will show you, Nur! I'll drink your blood! Meshrep, call Basit. All the Heads of Tens must get their horses. Run quickly! (to the Best Man) You run and call brother Hashim (to Yayi) You also prepare the horses. I'll get a warrant from Lozung. We must catch those bastards and pull them out wherever they dig in, by God's pardon! (holds his beard) What a scandal this is?!

Shangyo looks around angrily at everyone. Shervan looks poisonous, and the others are all nervous as the curtain falls.

Act 3 Scene 2

Omer Shangyo's courtyard, autumn, yellow leaves here and there fallen. Ghunchem is very sick with tuberculosis. On her wrists are the scars of being tied up tightly, and on her face the bruise of a whip has not yet disappeared. She sits on a mat on the verandah, her back to the wall, singing:

⁷²¹Do you think I am alive?

I am in living death forever

My beloved, who is living dead

I burn in his fire

If I sleep in the ground when I die

Who is going to remember me?

⁷²⁰ *estaghpullah*

⁷²¹ *Sen tirik demsen mini*

Mengu tirik olgendimen

Titik olgen yarimning

Otida koygendimen

Men olup torakta yatsam

Kim meni yad eylisun

Dostlerim ghemkin bolup

Dushmanlerim shad eylisum

My friends become grieved

My enemies will rejoice

Ghunchem: Ah! Life! My late mother! Why did you bear such an unlucky daughter.

You did not think that your daughter would be left to these black days. If you thought that, you would not have delayed my wedding to Nurum for the sake of a big wedding party. It's all right. Don't be sad, mother. Sleep peacefully in your grave. What kind of life does Nurum have in prison?.. It's a pity, such bad fate.

Shervan comes out with Patemhan, dressed up.

Shervan: There is no fool like you on earth. With your ways, how many days were you locked up in the barn with no food, sleeping with the cows? You were pulled around like a dog, tied to a tree, whipped – and still you wouldn't stop talking about Nur?

Ghunchem: Nur is my nightingale, I am his heart, a bleeding rosebud. As long as I can speak I will not stop talking about him.

Shervan: Be careful that your tongue is not cut out!

Ghunchem: There is nothing to fear any more. If you cut out my tongue, I will think of him with my heart.

Shervan: If it weren't for my intervention, father Shangyo would have had him shot, but now he is left alive, for life in prison. You were let off only with a beating and did not even go to prison.

Ghunchem: It would be better if I had died, rather than being tortured in your hands.

Patemhan (winking behind Shervan): Don't argue with your seniors, daughter. Since you are sick, you should behave appropriately to the situation.

Shervan: This cursed one is not even grateful to be alive. (Ghunchem coughs) Take a blessing from your father Shangyo, go down at your husband's feet, and repent of your wrongdoings – then you might get well.

Patemhan: These youngsters are naïve – they don't understand the basis of good and bad. Her situation is getting worse day by day. She is weak, we should put some bedding under her and a pillow for her head.

Shervan: Would this loose woman even recognise kindness?

Patemhan: If she doesn't know, then God will know. Please be lenient with her, aghcha.

Shervan: Take bedding and pillow from Seyit's room. I will go to Hashimbay's house for a negotiation tea.⁷²² This is a time of betrayal. Meshrep should watch the courtyard well.

Patemhan: All right, I will tell him.

Shervan goes out. Patemhan goes inside and fetches bedding and pillow, and gets Ghunchem to sit on the bedding and lean on the pillow.

Ghunchem: Dear Patimde, you should not have done this.

Patemhan: You are suffering, my child. Stretch out your limbs on the soft bedding and get some comfort.

Ghunchem: In the end, I am not going to recover from this illness, Patimde. I wish I could see Nurum. (Her eyes fill with tears).

Patemhan: These stone-hearted people don't notice your tears. Your grievance one day may reach God, and you may see Nurum. Don't be sad, daughter, look after yourself. (She sees the scabs on Ghunchem's wrists) My God, there are such cruel people in this world. How could anyone tie a girl so tightly that it injures her. Your poor mother used to put a bracelet of red beads on this wrist, look now it is all covered in scabs. If only you had succeeded in running away, you would not have faced all this difficulty.

Seyit (holding a bird-cage containing a red-legged partridge) Meshrep! Hey Meshrep, where are you! Quickly!

Meshrep: What's going on. You are yelling as if you've caught a golden rabbit.

Seyit: Great news! (hold the cage up high) Today my partridge chased away Barat's partridge.

Meshrep: That's all? I thought you had brought down a mountain full of outlaws.

Seyit: I regret sharing my pleasure with you, you beggar.

⁷²² "meslehet chay"

Patemhan: Hey, rich boy, he is not on the street begging, that you should call him a beggar! For a piece of bread the two of us, mother and son, work day and night.

Seyit: What do you expect? Are you going to eat our bread for nothing?

Meshrep: Seyitjan eats free bread, and all day he is fighting dogs, playing with goshawks⁷²³ and fighting partridges.

Patemhan: The old saying is true: “My father is the Sheikh of tombs, I am the Sheikh of unearned things”.

Seyit: If that were written on your forehead, it would be like that for you as well.

Meshrep: Touch your forehead, Seyitjan. Even though I am illiterate, let me see where it is written. (He pretends to study Seyit’s forehead carefully)

Seyit: It’s not written outside – it’s written on the skull.

Meshrep (touching Seyit’s forehead) There is nothing – it’s totally blank, isn’t it?

Patemhan: Stop talking such nonsense, it is blasphemous.

Seyit: Go away, you don’t know anything. (he pushes Meshrep’s arm, and sees the pillow Ghunchem is using. He gives the bird-cage to Meshrep, and goes to take the pillow away from Ghunchem.) Who gave my feather pillow to this half-dead thing?

Patemhan: Your mother.

Seyit: It’s not true. My mother won’t allow this low creature to put her head on my pillow. (Ghunchem coughs).

Patemhan: Whatever the situation, she is your wife.

Seyit: This loose woman who ran away with Nur? I divorced her a long time ago. I never even touched her fingertips. She is not my wife, she is a slave of this house. (to Ghunchem) Isn’t that true, eh? Say something, half-dead!

Ghunchem (angrily) I have no tongue to speak with you. Take your cursed pillow. Tie it around your head! (she uses all her strength to throw the pillow at Seyit, then collapses. Seyit picks her up by the collar and makes her kneel)

Seyit: You tubercular half-corpse! I’ll choke you to death like this!

Patemhan (pulls Seyit’s hand): You are the one who caused her to get TB, are you going to kill the poor girl now! Leave her alone, you bitter person.

⁷²³ *khorghoy* A bird of prey that is trained to hunt.

Seyit: I'm letting her go. (he pushes her down from the verandah to the ground) Now you can get better! (he laughs).

Patemhan: Oh my God! What can I do? (she runs down and holds up Ghunchem) You cruel thing! After what you have done you are still laughing? Don't just look, bring water!

Seyit: Would I bring her water? (he comes down) I will fix her now.. (he pulls Ghunchem by the hair braid to the tree)

Patemhan: Oh my god, he is going to kill her! Meshrep! Hey Meshrep! Come quickly!

Seyit: This is your place. You can lie on the soft autumn leaves (he pushes her with his knee a couple of times, and she faints)

Patemhan: You jackal! (she slaps Seyit's face)

Seyit (squeezing Patemhan's collar): You don't know how to hit someone. Here you are! Here! (while he is hitting Patemhan, Meshrep comes out)

Meshrep: You snotty! Leave my mother alone! (he separates them and pushes Seyit down)

Seyit (whimpering): Just wait, you hermaphrodite, I'll take the arrogance out of you!

Patemhan: I hope God punishes you cruel people!

The voices of Shangyo and Basit are heard approaching. Patemhan and Meshrep are afraid.

Shangyo: Basit, look, go and bring together the money from the sale of Yakup's cart.

Basit: Yes yes, Shangyo.

Shangyo: What is going on here?

Seyit: These two beggars have been beating me.

Patemhan: Respected Shangyo, look at that poor weak thing. I said, "Don't do it my child, it is a sin", but he didn't listen, he choked her and threw the sick child from the verandah, pulled her around and kicked her, and reduced her to this condition.

Shangyo (to Seyit) Why did you do that?

Seyit: They gave my bedding to that diseased person to lie on, making my bedding dirty. I wanted to take it back, and she threw it at my head, to beat me and swear at me.

Shangyo (to Patemhan): Who gave her this pillow – was it you?

Patemhan: No, it was not me. Shervan took pity on her and she told me to.

Shangyo: Unlawfully, and regardless of honour, she trampled on the fortune and happiness that came to her. There is saying, “a dog is loyal, a wife is treacherous”. Better to show compassion to a dog than to her.

Patemhan (to herself): A crow doesn’t pick out the eyes of a crow.

Seyit: This witch is taking her side (points to Ghunchem). She is calling us cruel.

Shangyo: Cruel? You loose women also are malevolent. (pointing at Ghunchem) With women like her, treacherous to their husband and unclean like you, any place they step will loose it’s prosperity. Get out of my house! (looks at Meshrep) And you, parasite, get out of here as well, together with your mother. (to Seyit) Throw their things out. (Seyit walks into the house, Shangyo following him) Never come to my house again, you ungrateful pair!

Meshrep: Coming to your house is the same as coming to Hell!

Patemhan: My god, he is talking about unclean women, so women like Shervan are clean and bring prosperity!

Meshrep: I know what kind of woman Shervan is. Her dirt is covered with shimmering gold.

Patemhan (rearranging Ghunchem’s dishevelled hair, feeling sad): My poor helpless daughter!

Seyit brings out an old saddlebag⁷²⁴, an old overcoat, a pair of sandals, and throws them in front of Meshrep.

Seyit: Take your things, you beggar. (He goes in, Meshrep puts his things in the saddlebag and goes over to Ghunchem)

⁷²⁴ *horjun*

Patemhan: You have been badly bullied, my daughter, my beautiful, clever, misty black eyes. Look at me – you are going to be separated from us, too. Open your eyes, lets look at each other! (her eyes fill with tears)

Shangyo comes out: Hey loose woman! Even a dog goes when it's ordered to! Why are you still here? Go away!

Meshrep (pulling Patemhan) Let's go, Mother. We worked here for over ten years, and in the end we are turned into dogs. Let's go!

Shangyo: Enough of your cheek. Get out of here, trespasser!

Meshrep: After working here all these years, are we going to go empty-handed, Shangyo'ka?

Shangyo (takes two steps forward) What? What did you say?

Meshrep: Aren't you going to give me what is due to me?

Shangyo: I fed you, I clothed you, I brought you up. For this, you twister, you are still asking for your due? Get lost! Otherwise I will show you.

They leave sadly. While going out, Patemhan looks at Ghunchem.

Patemhan: Goodbye my poor daughter. Our day will come, too.

Shangyo: Get out of here! (Patemhan and Meshrep leave) With beggars like you, for every one who leaves, a thousand more will come. Look at the ingratitude! You wanted to say a lot! (to himself) Its true that if one looks after people, they'll have you bleeding from mouth and nose, if you look after animals, they'll have you enjoying fat.⁷²⁵

He goes in. Sad music plays. Evening falls. Stars and then moon become visible in the sky. Wind blows in the tree, and some leaves fall on Ghunchem. From a distance, a dog howls. Ghunchem slowly raises her head. Her hair is messy, her eyes fearful, she looks around anxiously.

Ghunchem: Water! Water!

⁷²⁵ “*Adem balisini baksang agiz burningi kan etter , hayvan balisini baksang agiz-burnungni yagh iter*” – the second phrase means literally “have your mouth and nose oily”.

She licks her lips and stretches out her hand, then again drops her head to the ground. From outside come the sound of horses galloping up and whinnying. There is a knocking at the gate.

Seyit: Who is it?

Voice: It is us! Open the gate!

Seyit: Who is 'us'? Who are you, what do you want at this time of night?

Voice: We are from the courthouse, and we have important business. (Seyit opens the gate and two soldier with guns and swords come in.)

1st Yayi: Is Shangyokam at home?

Seyit: Yes

1st Yayi: Call him!

Seyit: What's the hurry? (goes in)

2nd Yayi: Is that Shangyo's spoiled son?

1st Yayi: Yes, he is an idiot.

2nd Yayi: That beautiful girl brought back from the Kazak's place is married to him.

1st Yayi: We are still having problems from that event. (Shangyo and Seyit come out)

Shangyo: What is it, this time of night?

1st Yayi: Nur and his friends Turghan and Amantay have escaped from prison.

Shangyo: When did he escape?

1st Yayi: Two days ago – seven or eight of us are looking for them.

Shangyo: How could they get away from such a secure prison?

1st Yayi: We gave them to Si Loye, and it seems he took it easy.

Shangyo: If it is not directly handled by Lozung Beg, everything goes like this!

2nd Yayi: Begim had a talk with Daren about this matter – they had a dispute with Si Loye.

Shangyo: What are these morons going to do about it?

1st Yayi: We have information that these thieves came to this district this evening.

Shangyo: This district?

1st Yayi: Yes. Someone saw them. We can't do anything without the help of the Head of Fifty.

Shangyo (to Seyit) Run, take these men to Basit's house, collect the Heads of Tens, and have them search the district. (to Yai) Young man, do your best to find these escapees. I will reward you well.

1st Yai: Begim also gave strict orders that we must catch them today, wherever they are.

Seyit and the two Yai leave.

Shangyo: This is a dangerous situation. (looks at Ghunchem) All this calamity comes from you! (he goes inside)

Ghunchem sighs and slowly raises her head a little, running her hands through her messy hair, almost dying. Nur comes in cautiously from the garden side.

Nur: Who is that?

Ghunchem sighs: Nurum...(she stretches out one arm)

Nur: Is that Ghunchem? (He rests her head on his chest and caresses it) Dear Ghunchem, I heard from Patemhan how much you have suffered. (The moon goes behind a cloud.) The hay in the hayshed is on fire. I will take you away, and let this nest of snakes and scorpions burn down. Look at me, open your eyes, Ghunchem!

He lifts Ghunchem's head and realises that she is dead. Sad music plays. Nur takes off his hat and sadly covers her face with it. He stands up. Turghan and Amantay come and stand by Nur, holding rifles.

Turghan: What happened?

Nur: She died in my lap. (All three lower their heads in silence.) Such a pity, this rosebud withered before it had a chance to bloom.

Amantay: Withered rose bud.

Friends of Nur, a few farming people, Meshrep and his mother sing together

⁷²⁶So much separated from Reshit,
 Rosebud withered before it bloomed,
 The world is blind to the poor,
 That is the condition of the times.

Turghan: Brothers! We must revenge this cruelty! Let's take revenge!

Let this story make us resolute,
 Our rage shall be our magic sword,
 Break the throne of oppression,
 Let Justice become the people's lover.

At the back of the stage appear the flames of fire, and in the red aura of the flames, Nur carries Ghunchem's body forward a few steps, as the curtain falls.

⁷²⁶ *Uzuldi reshitdin unche*
Echilmay tozidi ghunche
Jahan yoksulga kore boldi
Zamanning kheulukli shunche

Khissas bizge karar bolsun
Ghexepler zulpikar bolsun
Pachaklansun zulum tehti
Adalet elge yar bolsun

Appendix 3

“Gerip and Senem” – the opera.⁷²⁷

Translation:

Cast:

Gerip – 18 years old son of Vezir Hessen

Senem – 18 years old, daughter of King Abbas

Jelaleddin – 68 Court Scholar, teacher of Gerip and Senem

Mihrivan – 45, mother of Gerip

Ilyas – 20 yrs old, son of Jelaleddin and classmate of Gerip

Guljemal - 14, daughter of Jelaleddin, adopted by Gerip’s family

Aghcha – 55, Senem’s wetnurse, a widow

Abbas – 63, King of the Abassi Empire

Hessen – 50, Vezir of the Abassi Empire

Kasim – 60, high official of the Abbasi Empire

Shawazi – 65, Inspector-General of the Palace, astrologer, later Vezir

Abdullah – 35, Chief of the Palace Guard, son of Shawazi

Dawut – 40, Vezir Hessen’s groom

Batur – 35, brother of Dawut, leader of mountain people.

Shemshi – 45, Abdullah’s confidant, military officer

Zamire – 20, Lady in waiting to Senem

Court dancing girls, Maids, Mountain people, townspeople, soldiers and guards, slaves, hunters.

Prologue

Eighteen years before the main story. A summer day, in a valley between two mountains. The King is out hunting.

(In the hunting pavillion,) Expensive carpets and wolfskins on the seats, covered by embroidered cushions. A line of court officials on either side of the King. Bows hang on the walls, a washing basin and towels hanging. Trees surround the place. Snowy mountains in the distance. Below these are beautiful grasslands covered in wild flowers. Shemshi and other attendants are making a fire to barbecue a sheep.

A bugle calls.

Shemshi: Did you hear the bugle call? It must be His Majesty returning from his hunt.

Kurban: Strange! Why are they coming back so early today?

Shemshi: They must have filled their bags with the hunt.

The King enters and there is excitement among the court officials.

Abbas: Today there was not very good hunting – I don't know how it went for Vezir Hessen.

Kasim: Why didn't you shoot that pregnant doe?

Abbas: Because it was a sign of fate.

Jeleddin: Vezir Kasim, His Majesty means that Queen Ayim is pregnant, and this is a good thing. If the King had killed the doe, it would not have been good. That is why His Majesty spared the doe.

Kasim and Shawazi: His majesty is very kind.

Abbas: As a king, I have everything. I should be happy, but I do not have a child, so I am feeling miserable.

Kasim: I hope your wish will be fulfilled.

Shawazi: We hope the Queen will be safe.

Abbas: *Sake*, bring wine.

(From the distance, the sound of a galloping horse arriving.)

Kasim: Vezir Hessen is returning.

Abbas: How is it that you also did not catch anything?

Hessen: Your Majesty, you may laugh, but I saw a gazelle and was going to shoot it, until I realised that it was pregnant, so I could not shoot.

Kasim: Isn't your wife also pregnant?

Hessen: She is – if someone hurt my wife, how would I feel? So I forbore to kill the doe.

King Abbas: Your situation is the same as mine. Recently I had a dream.

Hessen: What did you dream, Your Majesty.

Abbas: I dreamed of two birds. One is a bird with a good luck feather, the other is a golden phoenix. Both were flying above me, but I could not catch them. Who can interpret this dream?

⁷²⁷ Zunun Kadir and Ali Azziz, *Ailipu yu Sainaimu* [Gerip and Senem], (tr)Zhang Shirong, Xinjiang

Shawazi: If one dreams about this bird, it is good luck. You Majesty dreaming of a pair of birds must signify double happiness.

Jeleleddin: Probably two birds represent two children. It seems there will be the birth of two children, one a handsome prince, and the other a beautiful princess.

(Abbas laughs)

Shawazi: Your Majesty will have a handsome, clever prince who will continue your dynasty for a thousand years.

Hessen: Lets drink to the safe birth of our children.

Abbas: In the dream of two birds, I and Vezir Hessen have experienced a sign. I think it would be good if I and Hessen made a marriage agreement.

Hessen: Thank you, Your Majesty. I will be very happy for such kindness.

Abbas: Vezir Hessen is my sharp sword toward the outside, and my right arm toward the inside of the kingdom. Inspector General Shawazi, bring the pen, and let us write the agreement made by God.

Kasim: What if they are both boys?

Abbas: Then they will be brothers.

Shawazi: What if both are girls?

Abbas: Then they will be sisters.

Jeleleddin: And if one boy and one girl?

Abbas: Then they will grow up to be a couple.

Kasim: Your Majesty, you truly deserve the name of a wise and able King of Persia – reincarnation of Roshivani.

Shawazi: Your Majesty is made of grace and virtue.

Abbas: If anyone turns back from this agreement, he should be despised by all men and rejected by the laws of heaven.

Officials: Amen.

Messenger: The queen has given birth!

Abbas: Is it a wolf or a fox?⁷²⁸

Messenger A: It is a princess.

Officials: Congratulations!

Messenger B (to Hessen): Congratulations – Madam has given birth to a prince.

Qingnian Chubanshe [Xinjiang Youth Publishing House], Urumqi, 1981.

⁷²⁸ The Chinese translation carries the footnote: “In Uyghur custom wolf represents boy and fox represents girl”.

Abbas: Reward the messengers for this good news. One girl, one boy. As Shawazi said, I will have a son. This is God's will.

Hessen: Thank you, God.

Abbas: Let us celebrate for forty days and nights.

Hessen: Your Majesty – I will go on ahead.

Abbas: Yes. Shawazi will go with you.

Kasim: Start the music.

Song:

White flower, green leaf, beautiful garden

As the crown of a kingdom is filled with gold and silver coins

I long for news from you until the light of dawn

I am restless with pain and anxiety, while you sleep sweetly

My life is separated between doomsday and your love

As business partners separate having divided the profit

Achieving the goal is difficult, who has reached their goal?

Drowsy eyes, dark night, the horse walks with the difficulty of a cripple.

King Abbas throws coins to the people. Shemshi approaches with a worried look.

Shemshi: Your Majesty, Vezir Hessen has met with an unfortunate accident.

Abbas: What??

Shemsi: While Hessen was returning to the palace, he fell from his horse and the horse fell on him, crushing him.

Abbas: What happened.

Shemshi: When I arrived, I heard him say ‘My poor son an orphan (*gerip*)’, then he collapsed in Shawazi's arms and died.

Abbas: My friend, my right hand, how terrible! He could not even see his dear orphan son. Let his son be named Gerip. When he grows up, he can continue his father's unfinished task...

Act One

A sunny Spring morning in a corner of the *medrese* of the King's Court.

There is a platform, and in front of it a table where Gerip and Senem studied when they were young. Ink and books on the desk. On a pillar to the right hand side hang a bow and a jewelled sword. In the distance is the palace dome. There is beautiful artwork in a collonade. By the wall of the palace are sheltering green trees, and surrounding the palace garden is a wooden fence. Mukam music is being played.

Song:

Love is like a burning fire
The lover is like a moth pouncing on the fire
If life lost its love
Life turns to darkness and loses its colour
Separation breaks up many lover
As autumn wind blows down the flower petals
The wheel of life may also turn backwards
Leaving its mark on fresh history
No matter how lovers prepare for and taste difficulty
The road of love is full of rough passages
Hope makes a garland of ideals
Sing praise to sincere and loyal love
The epic of Gerip and Senem
Is a beautiful and old legend
Passing from generation to generation
Following the peoples suffering life

[during the song, scenes of Gerip and Senem's youth are acted out]

Gerip and Senem are listening to their teacher. The teacher lays down his book and walks toward his residence. Gerips looks at his book, thinking. Senem picks a flower and throws it on Gerip's book, then runs away. Gerip looks around. Senem makes bird sounds from her hiding place. Gerip takes a flower garland and chases Senem. He

catches her and places the garland on her head. They laugh innocently together. Senem runs away again, and Gerip chases. The lights go down as the song finishes.

Gerip (as a young man) comes out of the trees, listening to the sound of birds. He picks a flower and sings:

Oh Friends, tell me

Why my darling is not here yet?

The fire of love burns in my heart

Why does my darling not yet come?

I am longing to see her blossom-like form

I long to make my western pilgrimage to unite with beauty

The time for our rendezvous is over due

Why has my darling not yet come?

How hard to bear, waiting for the time

I gaze longingly down the flowered path

My ruddy face is turning wan

Why has my darling not yet come?

While singing, Gerip walks into the garden. Shawazi, wearing official clothes, and Abdullah, holding prayer beads and wearing a jewelled sword, enter.

Shawazi: Abdullah – what is he doing here?

Abdullah: Father, this poor worm waits here all day long singing his serenades.

Shawazi: Oh! Don't underestimate his serenades. One day they may open the way to the King's throne.

Abdullah: Father, after we sent his father to the other world, and you became Vezir, I got this precious Court sword. I don't believe the crown of the Kingdom will be on his head.

Shawazi: (looking around carefully) Quite! Only you, Shemsi and I know of this . Don't ever let it out. If this comes out, heads will roll. Riches and power that are almost in our hands will be lost.

Abdullah: But his groom Dawud seems to know something.

Shawazi: What! Why didn't you say so earlier! He must be got rid of immediately!

Abdullah: Don't worry father, I have already arranged it. What should we do next?

Shawazi: We must use the Queen to dispose of the marriage agreement and get rid of Gerip.

Abdullah: Does the Queen agree.

Shawazi: She is already unhappy about the marriage agreement made by the King. But she cannot find an excuse to break it.

Abdullah: Oh? It's like that? Who knows what kind of son in law the Queen wants, to carry on the throne.

Shawazi: Of course, she wants an aristocratic one!

Abdullah: We have helped the King to become wealthy, and our contributions have been great. He should consider us.

Shawazi: That depends on you. The King can never have enough wealth. I intend to kill two birds with one stone – to satisfy the King's greed, and to get what I want...

(Shawazi and Abdullah go off talking secretly. Gerip enters.)

Gerip: I will give this beautiful flower to Senem. I hope she will understand my meaning.

Ilyas: Selam, my friend!

Gerip: Selam – I haven't seen you for the last couple of days.

Ilyas: The last two days I have been copying an epic poem for my father. Do you have any new works? Please let me read them. You must have dug many jewels from the mine of poetry.

Gerip: Lately, I could not even read a book, let alone write a poem

(Jelaleddin comes in and overhears the conversation between Ilyas and Gerip. He looks uneasy.)

Jelaleddin:

*The sea of knowledge extends far into the distance
Each drop of that sea is more valuable than kevser⁷²⁹
He who throws himself into the sea of knowledge
Will find innumerable treasures
The heart of an ignoramus, black as night
Is like a strong body with its bone-marrow drawn out
Be strenuous in searching for the mysteries of knowledge
Let the star of wisdom brighten your heart.*

Gerip: Selam, dear teacher!

Ilyas: Father, you have arrived.

Jelaleddin: Are you well, children?

(He continues his recitation)

*Knowledge is an inexhaustible treasure
Who can know its mystery
On the road of knowledge there are bumps and difficulties
Only the brave can reach their goal*

Jelaleddin: Fair children, always remember these words. Don't let unnecessary worries dissipate valuable energy. Right! Today's lesson begins after breakfast. Now do your swordsmanship training.

(Gerip and Ilyas practice swordsmanship.)

Messenger: By the King's order, the Teacher is to go immediately to the Court.

Jelaleddin (to Gerip and Ilyas): You continue your practice. I will go and return.

⁷²⁹ *kevser* – legendary water of Heaven

Gerip and Ilyas: Yes sir.

Ilyas: Your swordsmanship is rather distracted. It seems you have something on your mind.

Gerip: I have not seen Senem for the last three days. I wonder what happened?

Ilyas: That's right, Gerip. My father has been criticised by the King.

Gerip: Why?

Ilyas: Some people have accused my father of teaching unacceptable things that damage the reputation of the Court and *medrese*.

Gerip: What is unacceptable? Our teacher always studies ethics and morals. He offers the Court aristocrats wisdom and ethics on how to run the country. How could anyone say that he is spoiling the reputation of the *medrese*? It doesn't make sense.

Ilyas: I will go and see Mother Agcha to find out what happened.

Gerip sings:

*I hope that by morning, or by midday, I can see my loved one
When I see her, I will tell her what longing I feel in our separation
Morning passed, midday comes and still I could not see her smile
Why is it so difficult to meet my love?*

*Enduring through midday to the coming of evening, my heart is boiled and fried
To see her only once, I would be willing to die*

(Jelaleddin returns)

Jelaleddin: This world is cold and without feeling. The courtiers are corrupt, and pure and able men are insulted and suppressed.

Gerip: Teacher, why are you so upset?

Jelaleddin: The Court is full of rumours. There is no distinction between right and wrong, wise and stupid. Those court aristocrats abuse their power – they are dangerous and bad people.

Jelaleddin leaves and Gerip follows him. Aghcha comes in holding a plate, followed by Senem and some ladies in waiting. The mother walks into Jelaleddin's house, and the court ladies look towards the palace. Senem sings:

*Nightingale, you sing your love to the rose
 In the morning, by the time the rose can bloom, you are asleep with exhaustion⁷³⁰
 Since you built the palace of love
 Why do you let the road to it become covered in weeds*

*Everyone faces suffering for love
 There should not be the smallest complaint
 My soul moves like mercury in my body
 My love, I miss you every moment.*

*God, who made the universe limitless
 All day long I welcome and adore your wisdom
 Unending worry and longing turn sweetness to bitter fruit
 I am poorer than a beggar on the road of love*

Senem looks around, impatiently waiting. From a distance, Gerip's song can be heard.
 Senem hides by a flower bush.

Gerip sings:

*The way is blocked by the enemy
 My heart is stained with blood
 Heavy black clouds press about my head
 In separation from my lover, suffering fills my heart.*

*Like Layla and Mejnun⁷³¹
 I and Senem cry day and night
 Our tears, like a river flood
 In our eyes, rolling like the yellow sand.*

Senem: Selam, Geripjan.

⁷³⁰ This sense is not contained in the Chinese translation, but is present in the Uyghur original and is explained in a footnote to the Chinese.

Gerip: Selam, Senemjan. (He gives her a flower garland)

Senem: Thank you, Gerip.

Gerip: I am suffering from waiting for you.

Senem: I am afraid that we may not see each other. Suddenly, the world has become a forbidden prison. My father has stopped me attending the school. I made the excuse to say farewell to my teacher, so as to see you.

(Abdullah and Zamire see Gerip and Senem together, and hide to observe.)

Gerip: What will the future hold?

Senem: Don't worry, Gerip.

Gerip: There is a reason for your father to stop you attending school. It seems that some people want to separate us.

Senem: They must be dreaming!

Gerip: Dear Senem. (sings)

*Inside the garden, I want to be a gardener,
For you I want to plant beautiful roses
God made you so beautiful
I want to see your form every day*

Senem sings

*Your voice is so beautiful, like a nightingale
Poet of the mukam⁷³²
I want to be your loyal lover
I want to hear your beautiful tune.*

⁷³¹ Translators footnote: In Uyghur legend, a pair of very loyal lovers". The story of "Layla and Mejnun" is based on an early and famous Arabic epic love story.

⁷³² Chinese version does not mention Mukam – says "My heart is like thunder and timely rain"

Gerip:

Your steps are like tulips

Your glance takes my life⁷³³

Your mouth is like a golden cup

I would like to pour tea and drink from it

Gerip and Senem go behind the pavillion. Abdullah and Zamire and come out from the bush.

Abdullah: Huh! We shall see about your Gerip – your days are numbered.

Zamire: Don't! I won't let you hurt my Gerip!

Abdullah: Everyone talks about Gerip – all these women are crazy! I tell you, I will strike two birds with one stone!..

Zamire: You are ambitious.

Abdullah: You are not bad looking – after I marry Senem, I may take you as a second wife..

Zamire: You are dreaming..

Abdullah We will see.

Zamire: Don't indulge in wild fantasies.

Abdullah: It is a pity to seen a precious flower planted in manure. A princess in love with a pauper.

Zamire: You should consider morality a little more – are you not afraid of God's punishment?

Abdullah: I swear, I will not be a man if I don't split them up.

Zamire: You are a lost cause.

Abdullah: Don't talk nonsense. Now quickly inform the Queen of this indecent behaviour in the Court. It would be best also if the King hears of it.

Zamire: But you are not allowed to hurt Gerip!

Abdullah sings:

⁷³³ Chinese version Your glance keeps me restless day and night"

*My dear Senem, my heart beats for you
The fire of longing scorches my heart
How many times have I waited to see your eyes
Why are you as cold as icy frost toward me*

*Your father sits on the high golden throne
Who does not salivate in desire for the throne?
Your form is the throne within my heart
I happily salute and offer my life for it*

(Dawut enters Jeleleddin's house. Gerip and Senem come out from behind the pavillion.)

Gerip: We should prepare for our situation. If necessary, we should run away.

Senem: Let me beg my father. Maybe he will change his mind. You must look after yourself.

(Palace guards arrest Dawut.)

Dawut: Prince, Princess! Help!

Senem: What's happening?

Gerip: Stop! Bring him here!

Dawut: I have done nothing – I am innocent!

Senem: Why are you arbitrarily arresting him?

Guard: Princess – he is a spy sent by the Mountain People. I am following the order of Abdullah Beg to arrest him – this is not arbitrary.

Dawut: I am no traitor. My name is Dawut. From my youth I worked for Vezir Hessen. After he died, I had nowhere to go, so I travelled around. Today I came to see teacher Jeleleddin. I have important news!

Gerip: You knew my father?

Senem (to guards) You idiots – let go of him!

Gerip: From now on, don't oppress innocent people!

Guard: Yes sir.

Dawut: Thank you, Prince and Princess. I will never forget what you have done for me.

Gerip: Ilyas – this person has important business with our Teacher. See that he is taken there.

Ilyas: You are brother Dawut? My father is waiting for you. Quickly come with me.

(Abdullah enters with guards.)

Abdullah: I have orders to arrest an important criminal.

Senem: What has that got to do with me?

Abdullah: It may surprise you. Come, arrest this rebel who assisted Dawut to escape.

(Shemsi and Abdullah try to arrest Gerip.)

Senem: Stop!

Gerip: Abdullah, you are evil.

Abdullah: Be quiet! (to Senem) Your Highness, don't be angry. I am only following orders. (to guards) Tie him up!

Senem: Wait! Let me see the warrant!

Abdullah: This...

Senem: You are misusing your authority – what kind of crime is this!

Abdullah: Gerip has secret connections to traitors and thieves. He rebels against the Court. As chief of the palace guard, it is my duty to investigate him.

Senem: Don't make such deadly slander!⁷³⁴

(Sings)

Making slander out of nothing

You are not allowed to destroy Gerip

Abdullah, you are bold and absurd

You dare to create such disturbance in the palace.

The dagger and sword may flash, the cold breath may assault people

Suddenly black clouds roll over the palace

Abdullah, your murderous spirit is rampant

How could you be so bold!

⁷³⁴ lit. "spit blood on others"

(Senem takes off her jewellery and throws it to the guards.)

Senem: These are for you. Quickly, go away.

(The guards pick up the jewels, and Abdullah is angry.)

Abdullah: Get up, you greedy beggars!

(Abdullah exits with the guards. Jelaleddin, Aghcha, Ilyas and Dawut enter.)

Jelaleddin: Quickly, see Dawut out of the city, and be careful on the road.

Ilyas: I know!

(Ilyas and Dawut leave)

Jelaleddin (to Gerip and Senem): I know what happened. You did the right thing. I am proud of my students. Today we managed this, but they are not going to give up. You have to be careful – a big storm is coming.

Aghcha: Teacher, so are you saying that the wedding agreement is no longer valid?

Jelaleddin: In this world, people's fate is like this. How much can one useless document be worth? I don't think they will take that marriage agreement into account.

Guljemal: Father – there is bad news. The guards are looking for my brother, to arrest him!

Jelaleddin: Abdullah is going too far!

Guljemal: Quick, you must find a way to help my brother.

Gerip: Teacher, I will defy death against them.

Act Two

Scene 1: Daytime, in the Court

The King's jewelled throne is in centre stage. On the west side there is a round, shabby room. From the round window of the Court, one can see in the distance an old eastern-style spire, the domed roof of the royal *medrese*, and a tall minaret. King Abbas is sitting on his throne. On two sides stand senior officials including administrators, astrologers, mollas, scholars and guards. Court ladies happily sing and dance.

Song:

We are court ladies of the Abbasid Kingdom

Day and night we praise the King

The honourable King is the envoy of God

We are like butterflies dancing among the flowers.

Ah God! Our Lord! We are butterflies dancing among the flowers.

We wear cotton, silk and satin from Xinjiang's south

The crown jewels shimmer in golden light

The honourable King is God's messenger

We are like nightingales singing in praise

A God! A Lord!

We are like nightingales singing in praise.

The Court is a garden of many colours

We are flowers blooming in that garden

The honourable King is God's messenger

We are like moths circling a light

A God! A Lord!

We are like moths circling a light

A God! A Lord!

We are like moths circling a light

(The court ladies form a crescent shape and bow to the King)

Herald: Your Majesty, official Kasim has arrived.

Abbas: Let him come.

Kasim: Your Majesty!

Abbas: Did you have a good trip? Do you have any good news?

Kasim: The caravans of your kingdom already travel as far as Chang An. Every Dukedom is protected by Your Majesty's new law raising taxes to build new city walls for the capitals. This tax is going well. The country is safe, people are in peace, and everything is fine. Tule Beg sends presents and letters.

Abbas: Which Tule Beg?

Shawazi: Probably Kasim's Uncle, Tule Beg.

Kasim: Yes, it is he. He is waiting outside.

Abbas: Quickly, let him in.

Shawazi: I think it is not suitable for Kasim, as a high official, to go and welcome the representative of a small Dukedom. It is like a fox giving festival congratulations to the king of the lions. There is some problem here. I hope your Majesty will consider it carefully.

The Ambassador of the Dukedom of Tule is announced. Kasim goes to welcome him. They bring a letter and gifts to the King. The messenger gives the letter to the King. Many platters of gold, silver and jewels, emerald, agate, silk and satin are also presented. The King is happy, and invites his guest to be seated.

Abbas: Read the letter

Shawazi: Your Majesty Abbas Khan, I your subject should have come in person to see you but bad health prevented me, so I have asked the Senior Official Kasim's brother to take the letter and some presents to you, to demonstrate my respect. If I had a son, I would let him serve Your Majesty, just as the people of my domain are all at your service. May God bring your prosperity. Your subject, Tule Beg.

Zamire: Your Majesty – the honourable Queen sends a letter.

Abbas: The old saying says, first eat and then attend to business. Let our guest rest, and look after him.

Servant: Yes

Abbas: From all different countries messages arrive ceaselessly asking for the hand of our Princess. (to Shawazi) Read the letter from the Queen.

Shawazi reads: Your Majesty is supreme. I write with tears in my eyes. I hope you will understand. Our daughter Senem and Gerip have become like Layla and Mejnun in the garden. This is against our tradition. It brings dishonour to the dignity of the Court.

Gerip's mother is asking for the marriage document to be fulfilled. Everyone is gossiping. I angrily had Gerip and his mother thrown out of the Court. I hope the King will be strict, undo the agreement, and prevent things getting any worse. Queen Ayim.

Abbas: What nonsense!

Shawazi: I think the Queen may be right.

Kasim: Yes.

Abbas: For the sake of Vezir Hessen I have treated mother and son well. Now they have created this disaster?

Shawazi: This is the meaning of ingratitude. The old saying says: "If you give respect to the lower people, they will bring mud on their feet and sit on your embroidered mattress".

Kasim: Dragon should marry dragon, and phoenix should marry phoenix. The Kingdom has always followed this principle.

Shawazi: Who has ever seen a King's daughter marrying a pauper. This is not acceptable.

Jaleddin: Your Majesty – your subject wanted to say something, but I don't know whether I should say it or not.

Abbas: Say what is on your mind.

Jaleddin: Eighteen years ago, your marriage agreement was made known to everyone. You cannot take back the arrow you have shot. Actually, this is a good match. Why would you undo it?

Shawazi: Teacher, that agreement you speak of is no more than waste paper.

Jaleddin: Even if it is waste paper, an agreement is still an agreement. Also, the Prince and Princess love each other.

Shawazi: This is blasphemy! You, Teacher, probably created this, using sorcerer's language to poison pure and innocent youth!

Kasim: The Vezir is right.

Jelaleddin: You are wrong, Your Excellency Vezir. The marriage agreement was signed by the King himself. I am doing my duty to teach these two young people. As they were engaged and grew up together, they fell in love with each other. I ask you – what have I done wrong?

Shawazi: What love? Behaving promiscuously in the Palace?

Kasim: Your Reverence's will is law. Nobody should break it.

Jelaleddin: The marriage agreement was Your Majesty's own alliance. Are you both forgetting that you were witnesses to this marriage agreement?

Shawazi (angrily) : Your Majesty – this Molla, with his cunning words, could bring the dead back to life or make a camel dance! You should not believe him!

Jelaleddin: Your Majesty, do we see here the Evil and Jealous one playing the Sage? You must be careful!

(Abdullah enters)

Abdullah: Honourable Majesty – Gerip has shown disrespect for the law, collaborated with this Molla, aided the escape of a criminal, and says wild things that insult the Court.

Shawazi: To tolerate evil is to abet it. It leads to great disaster.

Abdullah: The Molla encouraged Gerip to seduce the princess, planning to take over the crown. He is scheming together with the criminal Dawut, and he is a spy in this Court!

Abbas : Spy?!

Jelaleddin: This is slander – no shame whatsoever.

Abdullah: Sergeant Shemshi has conclusive evidence.

Abbas: Call Shemshi.

Shemshi: The Molla himself gave Gerip a jewelled sword, scheming to stain the Court with blood. I saw this with my own eyes.

Abbas: Really?

Jelaleddin: This is evil-intentioned slander. These two, father and son, are evil-hearted schemers. Don't believe them, or you will face terrible consequences.

Abbas: Enough!

Jelaleddin: If you believe them, you will be deceived!

Shawazi: The Molla's crime is very serious. He should be heavily punished.

Jelaleddin: Your Excellency Vezir, people have often lost their lives for speaking the truth before you. But remember, even through the truth sometimes may be bent, it can never be broken!

Shawazi: Shut your dirty mouth!

Abdullah (handing a paper to the King): Your Majesty, this is the evidence of the Molla insulting Your Wisdom.

Abbas (reading):

God, though the Universe be limitless,

The era you have established is narrow and gloomy.

You placed a demon on the Emperor's throne

You permit a scheming clique to steal evidence and hold high office.

Abbas: Men, come!

Executioner: Sir?

Abbas: Execute the Molla immediately!

Kasim: Your Majesty, there is an old saying: 'In deep anger truth and falsehood are hard to distinguish.' I think the Molla's case is serious, and should be carefully examined before punishment.

Abbas: Very well. Put the Molla in prison, and investigate him together with his accomplices, then deal with them.

All officials: Your Majesty is wise!

Jelaleddin: Your Majesty, I am willing to be imprisoned and executed for these two innocent young people. (points to Shawazi) That father and son frame false charges to obscure their own crime, they have sinister aims!

Shawazi: Quickly, take him down.

Jelaleddin: I believe there will be a day that truth will radiate its dazzling light again.

Scene 2. Two days later, the market square outside the Palace.

The great gate of the Palace is in the distance. There is a pagoda-like building at the corner of the city wall. Opposite is the Royal Mosque, with a crescent moon over the top of the building. Seen closer, there is a prosperous avenue selling

carpets, copperware, and pottery. People are shouting their wares, including book readers and travelling story-tellers as well as beggars. As the curtain rises, a slave merchant leads a slave down the street. A cleric (*Ahun*) holding a whip denounces women who do not wear a veil: “Quickly, cover your face, you shameless infidel”. A beggar sings:

*The morality of this time is ruthless
Hurting the hearts of the myriad population
From ancient times, how many good people
Injustice strikes to heaven, funerals and graves.*

A travelling poet sings:

*This world’s morality is desolate
I am the King for the beggar
The county capital looks like a lady
Married to a poor groom.*

Bread (*nan*) vendor: *Nan! Nan!* Warm and delicious

Storyteller: Rustem Batur held high the flag in front of the battle as he led the army.

One could see a scene of dark masses, killing the demoralised enemy, men and horses thrown off their feet..

Listener: Good – well killed!

Storyteller: Brandishing a thousand-*jun*⁷³⁵ club, like thunder he smashed it down on the creature’s head...

Listener: Ha! – really powerful!

Storyteller: ...to skin the creature, draw out its tendons. With one blow he cut off its head and stuck it on a flag pole...

(The *Ahun* is cursing and whipping a blind woman)

Ahun: You left off your veil, you shameless infidel!

⁷³⁵ One Jun is thirty jin in weight.

Suddenly, there is the sound of a gong from the Palace. The imperial herald comes out of the gate to make an announcement.

Herald: Listen everyone! The King has made an order that Gerip, the son of former Vezir Hessen, has neglected his duty by conducting promiscuous activity in the Palace. He has turned against the court and the Law, so he is exiled. All his property is confiscated, and he is declared to be a traitor!

People talk, as the guards bring Gerip out of the city gate in chains, followed by his mother Mihrivan carrying a bundle.

Gerip sings:

*O cruel and heartless fate
Yesterday's happiness has disappeared without trace
All the birds are hushed, all the flowers are confused
The lush gardens are suddenly declined and withered*

*Remember the common childhood of our past
My heart is as if scorched in a strong fire
We swore never to separate
Today we shed tears, parting without union*

*My two hands are confined by chains
My heart is filled with worry and hatred
The nightingale has left its beloved rose
Only a cursing owl remains in the garden*

(Abdullah and two guards enter with the sound of hoofbeats.)

Abdullah: Faster – get moving

(Senem appears, sad and hopeless.)

Senem: Gerip, wait!

(The crowd is sympathetic to Senem.)

Gerip: Dear Senem!....

Senem sings:

*Gerip, you are going to far places
Leaving me totally alone, sorrowing alone
Senem from now on is trapped in a sea of fire
After this separation, when will you return home?*

Gerip sings:

*My heart breaks, seeing you as I am exiled
Dear Senem, don't be sad or shed tears for me
In life, bad weather is inevitable
Back on the mountain road we will meet one day*

Senem sings:

*I wait for you, my eyes longingly gaze
Even if I die, I will keep watch on the highroad
Oceans may dry, stones may rot, I will not change
Dear Gerip, after this separation, when will we meet?*

Gerip sings:

*If fate doesn't detain me forever in other places
If a god of death doesn't fall on me
If my head is not left in the Gobi desert
Don't cry dear Senem, I will be back.*

Abdullah: Get walking!

Senem: Dear Gerip!

(Senem faints and others make farewells to Gerip. The soldiers chase the people away, and take Gerip off.)

Mihrivan: God, why are orphans and widows so unfortunate? My son lost his father, and now is exiled into suffering.

Gerip: God give you happiness.

Crowd (weeping) Poor boy! God be with you both! Have a safe journey!

(Guljamel throws herself into Mihrivan's arms.)

Guljamel: Mother Mihrivan, let me go with you! My father and brother are both locked in the prison – I have nobody else. I would rather die together with you!

Person A: You should take this child.

Person B: What kind of a world is this?

Mihrivan: My child, don't be sad, we will look after each other.

(Mihrivan takes some soil and puts it in her handkerchief.)

Gerip: Goodbye, my countrymen.

Crowd: Peace be with you.. Come back soon!

Chorus sings:

Nightingales are sadly singing

I don't know where I can stay this night

Ah, all-powerful God,

I pray to leave Gerip in your care

I would like to go with him

I would like to comfort that broken heart

O Father Adam

I pray to leave Gerip in your care

Disaster falls on our heads

My heart is heavy as lead

Love God, Yusup!

I pray to leave Gerip in your care

Lokman, saint of doctors

Please cure the scars in his heart

Bless him, God

I pray to leave Gerip in your care

Senem puts a token into a bundle, and throws it to Gerip. Guljemal picks it up and gives it to Mihrivan. Gerip is taken away.

Senem: Gerip!

Act Three

Scene 1

Time: Three years of Gerip's exile have passed.

Place: The district of an Old Fortress in a remote area. The place where Gerip's family have settled in exile.

Scene: Simple mud-brick houses. A flower-bed surrounded by a fence. On the right, a mulberry tree casts shade. Under the mulberry tree is a platform where passers-by can sit and rest. One main road passes toward the old fortress in the distance. On both sides of the main road are poor old houses.

As the curtain rises, a fortuneteller sings:

*From both my eyes, flow tears of blood
The desert is covered with my footprints
I am singing and searching everywhere
Friend! Where are you now?*

*I passed through streets and gardens
I have scaled cliffs and mountain peaks
I call aloud to the wilderness
Friend! Where are you now?*

Gerip enters with a bow and arrow on his shoulder, carrying a pheasant, and picks a flower in front a doorway. Thoughtfully, he begins to sing.

*Morning wind take the fragrance of this flower
Blow it to my Senem,
Tell her the flower of love
Still blooms in Gerip's heart.*

*Please see the tulip in my heart
 Blood red petals in a split bloom
 Gerip uses the tears of suffering anxiety
 To water the beautiful scent of the flower.*

(Gerip sees the fortuneteller looking at him.)

Fortuneteller: Good day my son, I wish you well!

Gerip: Thank you. Where are you from?

Fortuneteller: Son, there is something on your mind. Let me tell your fortune.

Gerip: That is fine, but the best fortune-telling could not help relieve my worries.

Fortuneteller: The old saying says 'Don't believe fortune-telling, but don't be without fortune-telling'. Look! A loving girl is in difficulty. She is crying hopelessly.

Gerip: Say that again?

Fortuneteller: She is as beautiful as a fairy, but separated from you she is very lonely. She thinks about you day and night. Don't delay, otherwise you won't be able to meet each other in this world!

Gerip sings:

*I am a wanderer
 Please let me know my journey
 I am just like Mejnun, disappointed in love
 For Layla, I am desolate in the desert.*

*Since I separated from my beloved
 As my body burns in a fierce fire
 Like a lonely goose, divided from its flock
 Longing for its leader goose and the place of beauty*

*I am like a lost black slave
 Wandering alone in the desert
 Not hearing the sound of the camel's bell
 Not finding the caravan to return home.*

Fortuneteller: For your beloved, Baghdad can not be counted as too remote. People can only fulfill their desire if they are not afraid of difficulty and danger. You should try immediately to overcome her difficulties. Have a good journey. I hope you will fulfil your desire. Amen!

Gerip: Thank you for your advice. Your golden words have encouraged a fire of hope in my heart. The heavy gloom in my heart has suddenly brightened.

Fortuneteller: Turn your aspiration into power. Probably your teacher has given you this teaching.

Gerip: Teacher! I am thinking all the time of my teacher. Dear teacher, where are you? Are you still alive?

Fortuneteller: He is alive.

(Fortuneteller takes off his disguise and reveals he is Ilyas.)

Ilyas: Look, Ilyas stands before you.

Gerip: My good friend Ilyas!! (they embrace)

Ilyas: For the last three years we have had no news of you. Those who love you are all worried!

Gerip: Friend, tell me quickly. What wind has brought you over here?

Ilyas: Oh, it is too long to tell. After helping Dawut escape, I was caught and put in prison. I escaped to save my life.

Gerip: Where is Teacher? Where is my dear Senem?

Ilyas: My father is still suffering in prison. Senem

Gerip: What ??

Ilyas: After your exile, I heard that the Queen pressured her to marry Abdullah, but she prefers to die rather than marry him. Day and night thinking of you and calling your name, she became sick. Her life is in danger, and everyone is hoping that you will go back to save her from Hell. So I came in disguise to search for you.

Gerip: Ah, my dear Senem! I cannot wait any more. Come on, I'll go in to see my mother and sister.

(Mihrivan is sitting on the *kang*, mending clothes)

Mihrivan sings:

*Since your father died without seeing you
 For the last twenty years I have tasted the suffering of the world
 My son, you are the light in my heart
 Go, may God be with you and keep you safe on your journey*

*You are like an angel protecting the gates of heaven
 You are an angel maintaining my body and spirit
 Like a hawk that follows me on a desert hunt
 Go child, may God's spirit be with you and keep you safe on your journey*

(Mihriwan takes a jewelled sword from Guljemal's hand.)

Mihriwan: Child – take this with you. This is your father's sword, left for you. Use this to fight for justice and restore happiness. Amen. God be with you, and have a safe journey.

Guljemal: Brother, you must save my father from the prison. Give this *dopa*⁷³⁶ to Father. Just like this hat, I will be with him all the time.

Ilyas: Don't cry, my good sister. We will save Father for certain. We will see each other again soon.

Guljemal sings:

*How unfeeling is fate
 We have just met, and are separated again
 Today's tears are for seeing off a loved one
 Brother, when will we siblings see each other again?*

*The beast that swallowed our aged father
 Now wants to take my brother
 Today's tears of separation flow
 Brother, when are we going to meet again?*

⁷³⁶ embroidered Uyghur skullcap

Neighbour A: Don't be sad, good girl. We will look after you.

Neighbour B: Yes, we are your family.

Ilyas sings:

Soundless sobs come one by one at this time of separation

Setting out, the traveller cannot help but worry

To save loved ones and get rid of villains

The day of good news will certainly come

Gerip: Goodbye, Mother! Goodbye!

Ilyas: Goodbye, Sister!

Scene 2: In the Mountains

Time: Dusk, a few days later

Place: In a deep mountain valley

Scene: In the distance, a waterfall shrouded in mist. Closer, mountain gorges and luxuriant green forest. Pleasant clouds floating in the sky. As the curtain rises, Gerip and Ilyas appear.

Gerip sings:

I am trapped in love's bottomless abyss

Who can share my sorrow?

Tears like a peaking flood drown the seventh heaven.⁷³⁷

What possibility to meet my beloved in this life?

High mountains, do you hear my cry?

From inside me I pour out my sorrow

Hoping my song's sound flies to the far horizon

To warm the broken heart of my beloved.

*In the deep valley echoes the heart's call
 How could there be happy times without seeing my love
 I look up to the sky, rending my collar
 Like beloved saint Yusuf⁷³⁸ trapped in the dry well.*

(Gerip and Ilyas come to the edge of spring.)

Ilyas: Let's eat and rest here a while

Gerip: It would be good if we could roast a gazelle

Ilyas: Let's try our luck. You prepare the fire.

(Ilyas goes off to hunt. Gerip washes his hands in the spring and brings some water in a gourd, then sits down and begins to whittle a piece of wood.)

Gerip sings:

*The sorrow of separation, like a fire, burns me to ashes
 Omnipotent God, I state my heartfelt feeling
 Perhad divided a mountain for love
 Would I be able to see my Shirin, as he did.⁷³⁹*

*I look up to the lonely vast sky
 Sorrow and hatred of separation surge in my heart
 Where are you, bright and clear moon?
 I am like a nightingale, lamenting deep in the mountains*

*Melancholy presses like a mountain on my head
 Food is like poisoned wine, clothes are heavy as lead
 Spring water reflects my lonely shadow
 I am like Yusuf thrown into jail.*

⁷³⁷ Chinese translation says "Principal Heaven", whereas Uyghur uses the term "seventh level of Heaven".

⁷³⁸ This is the Joseph of the Old Testament, who was cast into a well by his jealous brothers.

⁷³⁹ Reference to the Uyghur epic love story of "Perhad and Shirin".

(Gerip falls asleep. In his dream, there is lightning and thunder, and a wise old whitebearded man suddenly appears.)

Hizir: Child, wake up?

Gerip: Salam.

Hizir: Don't be afraid, I have been waiting for you. I have a few questions to ask.

Gerip: Ask me please, I need your blessing.

Hizir: If you can not answer my questions, you will stay here forever.

Gerip: I am willing to be punished.

Hizir sings:

Why does a spirit have no root, but the body bestows life to the spirit?

What tree has no branches or tendrils, but still casts a shadow on the earth?

What bird has no wings, but still can fly?

If you are a person of determination, answer my questions

Gerip sings:

Man's spirit has no root, and flesh bestows life on it

Life's tree does not have branches and tendrils, but casts a green shadow on the earth

The bird of thought has no wings, but can travel the sky.

If you are a wise man, I have answered your question.

Hizir sings:

In the world, what is bent but cannot break?

In the world, what people are not afraid of suffering and hardship?

What kind of sword may split a mountain and remain sharp?

If you are determined, answer these hard questions.

Gerip sings:

In the world, truth may be bent and not broken.

In the world, a loyal lover fears not hardship and difficulty

*In the world, a sword of love may split a mountain and remain sharp
If you are a wise man, this is my answer.*

Hizir: Thank you, child, you have extraordinary wisdom and ability. Now listen further (sings):

*In the world have been countless loyal lovers
Their stories spread like epic ballads
Perhad, for love, split the mountain and brought water
Shirin was scorched in the strong fire of love
Mejnun for love roamed the desert
Layla made both eyes bleed through weeping
Ursula drifted many years on the river
Vamuk broke his heart with worry and sorrow
Yusuf and Zileyha were the ancestors of love
Their strong love is recorded in history
I hope you have learned from these stories of love.
Keep your loyalty and bravery every moment
I am pleased with your intelligence and wisdom
I grant that you and your lover may be united early
Amen!*

(The Hizir disappears in thunder and lightning. Gerip wakes up)

Gerip: This is not a dream! Where is the Hizir. (a wolf howls) A wolf! I'd better hide!
(Gerip, holding bow and arrow, goes to hide behind a mountain rock.)

Batur calls out: Who is that?

Gerip: Who are you? Are you human or animal?

Batur: Look at this arrow.

(Batur fires an arrow at the rock. Gerip responds by shooting, and Batur blocks the arrow with his shield. Mountain man A throws a lasso over Gerip, but he cuts it with his sword. Batur and Gerip begin to fight with their swords.)

Batur: Men, come quickly, surround him!

(More and more mountain people arrive, eventually surrounding and capturing Gerip.)

Mountain man B: Pick up the jewelled sword he dropped on the floor.

Batur: Who are you?

Mountain man A: Look at this jewelled sword – it seems to be from the Palace.

Batur: Search him!

Gerip: Search, I have nothing but sorrow.

Batur: Quiet – why are you here?

Gerip sings:

Ropes bind my arms

I may die without seeing my beloved

Thieves are determined to kill me

Why are my circumstances so miserable?

Today I fall into the hands of thieves

Who can save me from the tiger's mouth?

Is it possible I could be taken to the end of the world

Never to see the face for which I long?

Batur: Who are you, really. Did the King send you here? (to mountain people) If he does not answer, push him over the cliff.

(The mountain people march Gerip and Ilyas to the edge of the cliff. The two friends, fearing death, look at each other and sigh in despair.)

Escort: Brother Batur, we also caught a spy. It seems they are partners.

(Dawut, brother of the mountain peoples leader, appears at the top of the hill.)

Dawut: Wait, wait! (Dawut recognises Gerip) Isn't that dear Gerip?

Gerip: Dawut!

Ilyas: Brother Dawut!

Dawut: Untie them, brothers. He saved my life. This is Gerip, the son of Vezir Hessen.

Gerip: We didn't know each other. I thought you were thieves. I'm sorry.

Batur: It was a misunderstanding. We also were forced by the King to take refuge in the mountains. What can you do?

Dawut: You both faced difficulty. Where is your mother? Are they well?

Ilyas: She and my sister are living together, both well.

Dawut: We should bring them here. Here there is no King. We are the kings here!

Gerip: Thank you. We had better go.

Ilyas: Yes, my father is still suffering in the King's gaol. Princess Senem is waiting for Gerip to rescue her. We had better not stay here.

Mountain men: We came here to escape from the Palace. Why would they want to go to that sea of fire? How strange.

Mountain man: Big brothers, make a decision what we should do. We can not just stay here and do nothing.

Dawut: I heard that King Abbas is building a new garden for Princess Senem. He is looking everywhere to recruit gardeners and buy slaves.

Gerip: This is a good opportunity. You should sell me as a gardener to the Palace.

Batur: Very well, we will also pretend to be slaves and go with you to the Palace. There we can stir up trouble everywhere.

Act Four

Scene 1:

Time: A week later.

Place: the new Palace Garden.

Scenery: To stage right is an open pavillion, in front is garden, to the left a fountain, and in the background the gate to the inner palace. Dawut and Ilyas, disguised as gardeners, mix with slaves doing labour. Gerip, holding a watering can, is distracted by the birds singing in the woods.

Gerip recites:

Gerip, is it possible that all the worries of the world are placed on your shoulder?

Today you are a slave of the palace. Where is the Senem you long for?

Mother is suffering far away. Poor Gerip, why does sorrow always surround you?

Slave A: Young man, you are always sighing, as if something worries you.

Slave B: Your poem makes us feel like weeping.

Slave C: Let's rest a while and ask him to sing a song for us.

Gerip: Brothers, song can make one forget one's sadness and depression. Song is life! I will never abandon it!

Gerip sings:

*My head is pressed down by a mountain of sorrow,
Worry coils round my heart like thousands of silk threads,
If time and fortune cannot help, wind and cloud change to illusion,
My spirit is damaged and heart is broken, what can I do?*

*Black clouds are heavy, sometimes bright, sometimes dark
My heart endured a thousand hardships
Tears flow like a river pouring out
Feeling and longing so strong, what can I do?*

*I am a nightingale kept out of the garden,
I am a gardener, yet not tasted the fruit,
I call out for beauty, yet have not kissed its lips,
Feelings of youth can't change, what can I do?*

*People call me a palace gardener,
Nobody knows my real name.
I pray to God, to reach my desire
Please god, what can I do?*

Slave A: This young man doesn't look like a slave, he is more like the son of an educated family...

(Aghcha enters)

Aghcha: Son, your song was very moving. Can you sing it again?

Gerip sings:

*I sing my life for you,
Sadness of separation turns my spirits low,
All my life I have tasted bitterness,
My life was nearly lost in a desolate wilderness.*

*I am like a tethered arrow shot into the sky
 Spearing through the clouds and mist to the window of my beloved
 For love I shed abundant tears
 Limitless longing put me in the fire*

*I sell myself as a garden slave servant
 Hard work all day, without seeing the garden's owner
 I can't see the owner, I must depart
 I will leave my white bones in the desert.*

Aghcha: Thank you son. I hope from now on you will suffer no more. I must pick some flowers, poor Senem is waiting for me.

Gerip: Princess Senem? Mother, are you talking about Princess Senem?

Aghcha: Yes, it is a long story that I could not finish in a thousand and one nights. The King has an only daughter called Senem. She is prettier than the moon, but unluckily she loves Gerip..

Gerip: Mother , tell me more!

Aghcha: Gerip was sent into exile by the King. He is forbidden to return for ever. The Princess became ill, and all the doctors could not cure her. Her only comfort is when I pick some flowers for her.

Gerip: Mother Aghcha!

Gerip sings:

*Through the Gobi, back to my country
 With longing burning like fire in my heart
 Troubled with feelings of separation from Senem
 Today returning, confused in mind*

*Aghcha, dear nurse
 Listen, let me tell you my heart's sorrow
 My spirit cannot stand separation from Senem
 Like Mejnun, as stupid and as mad.*

Aghcha: You are Gerip! My old eyes did not immediately recognise you. Is your mother alive? Is she well?

Gerip: Mother is still alive. I feel seeing you is just like seeing my mother. Today, let me make the flower bouquet.

Aghcha: Very well I will personally give your bouquet to Senem. I am sure she will be very happy!

Gerip picks flowers.

Gerip sings

Flowers, I will turn you into a beautiful bouquet

Please take my greetings to Princess Senem.

I will tell you all the secrets in my heart

With your tears, pour out these feelings to her.

I don't know if that rose is already withered,

This singing nightingale is still as happy as a drunkard,

If the nightingale is separated from its rose, it sings sadly

Tell her the nightingale in the garden cries forever.

Tell her, there is a gardener, sad and alone

His face pale as wheat straw, by evening seeming entranced

If she asks the gardener's name,

Say it is a Mejnun called Gerip.

Gerip puts a note in the bouquet and gives it to Aghcha.

Scene 2

Time: Afternoon of the same day

Place: In centre stage is a carved royal bed with light-green gauze canopy hanging from the ceiling and surrounding the bed. A Persian-design carpet is on the floor. To the right of the bed is a chair. In the corner hangs a round mirror. Either side of the door are beautiful flower planters. Senem lies sick in the bed, ladies in waiting moving about.

Senem: (dreamily) Ah! Gerip, where are you? I would love to hear your song.

Lady in waiting: Princess, wake up!

Senem: Ah! Is this a dream? Gerip, did you come?

Court ladies try to entertain Senem, singing and dancing:

Sentimental dear Princess Senem

Her lament is like a sword piercing our hearts

Your tears are so many, your young heart so melancholy

May your fortune change and your wish be granted from now on

Senemjan, Ah! Senemjan

Be happy, laugh, beautiful Senemjan.

(The court ladies form an arc and bow to Senem.)

Senem: You may go. Let me be quiet for a while.

(Lady in waiting Zamire enters.)

Zamire: Your Highness, the King has arrived.

Senem: That is really good – bring him to see me!

(The King enters in a dignified way, fully dressed with a crown on his head, escorted by senior officials.)

Abbas: Daughter, has your health improved?

Senem: Thank you for coming to see me in person.

Abbas: Child, I have built a new garden for you. Don't you want to see it? Walking in the garden will help your health. Don't be stubborn, let Father be happy.

Senem: Father, I don't understand. You are head of the nation, how could you turn back from an agreement you signed in person!

Abbas: This is Fate, not man's will. Who let your Fate be like this? Child, it is a virtue to obey your Father.

Senem: Father, let me be straight with you. As you said, your daughter's condition is probably due to Fate.

Abbas: Don't speak nonsense! God will punish you! Ah!, all is that teacher's doing.
What condition did his teaching bring you to!

Senem: Father! Don't falsely accuse my teacher. He is like a sage, wise and blameless.

Abbas: I am thinking of your good.

Lady in waiting: Princess, here is a present given to you by the Chief of the Palace Guard.

Senem: Take it away!

(She away pushes a platter full of gold, silver and jewelry, and it falls on the floor)

Abbas: You cannot change fate. If your Father is pleased, God will be pleased. You are confused.

Senem: Fate? What is Fate? In this world, everything is done by man.

Abbas: Very well, don't argue. Abdullah is responsible for the security of this Palace. He is a reliable and important person. You should not treat him so coldly.

Senem: You can give him the throne. I only want my happiness and love. I do not want to be used to please others.

Abbas: Enough! I've had enough! (Abbas leaves)

Senem sings:

*If I am not sorrowing for love
How could my tears have soaked my dress
My love, you drift far away
I am trapped in deep sadness.*

*I call out for Gerip day and night
In this life I will love nobody but him
I would rather suffer for my lover
I don't want that golden crown.*

Court lady: God, in this world who can achieve their desire?

Court lady B: Sister, we women are pitiful. Who can understand our heart?

Zamire: Princess, Mother Aghcha has brought you flowers.

Senem: Bring her in.

Aghcha: Princess, look how beautiful these are – I am sure you will like them.

Senem sings:

Among the flowers, one is special

Tell me, dear mother, who made this bouquet?

Why have I not seen this flower before?

Tell me, what is the hidden meaning of this bouquet?

Aghcha sings:

I have picked many many flowers

I won't know which one you ask about

For your, I bring different flowers every day

I only hope this flower can make you happy.

Senem sings:

This kind of flower you have never picked before.

Good mother, don't leave me wondering

I swear, I will grant you your wish,⁷⁴⁰

Dear mother, tell me the truth, who made the bouquet!

Aghcha sings:

Early morning roses are beautiful when they blossom

Among the flowers, a nightingale twitters and weeps

I have a lonely son

He is a sad and melancholy youth.

Senem sings:

I beg you, bring your son for me to see

I would like to talk to him of sadness in the heart

⁷⁴⁰ Chinese translation has “burn incense and wish you long life”, but Uyghur says “grant your wish”.

Dear mother, my confidant
Seeing this bouquet stirs me.

(Zamire looks at Senem, as Senem finds the note in the bouquet.)

Senem: (reading the note) 'Sending a message with this flower, meet me in the garden'.

Geripjan! (Senem faints).

Aghcha: Bring water (She sprinkles water on Senem's face. Senem revives)

Senem: Bring a pen, I will write to my Father. (writing) I heard my Father built and renovated a new garden, and that the garden is beautiful, with singing birds and fragrant flowers. Your daughter would like to walk there, to relieve my sadness. I hope my Father may give permission.

(Zamire takes the note.)

Senem sings (to Aghcha):

Dear Mother, I pray for you.
You brought me Gerip, your kindness is great
My Father Abbashan left him slandered and humiliated
Please look after my poor man.

Gerip has been exiled for three full years
For him, I endured all kinds of suffering
I don't know where my nightingale sings
Why don't you use roses to lead him to my window

Zamire (entering): I bring a letter from the King.

Senem: Read it to me.

Zamire: My elegant and proud dear daughter Senemjan. I have built this garden for you. It is all at your disposal. Father Abbashan.

Senem: Sisters, prepare quickly.

The court ladies happily prepare themselves in the mirror. They sing:

A hundred kinds of flowers in the garden
The Princess is showing her smile

Today we will stroll around in the flower garden

Court ladies, happy and cheerful.

Aghcha: Girls, today's sunshine and breeze are so beautiful, perhaps the Princess may meet Gerip in the garden. This world's affairs are difficult to predict.

Court lady: That would be good.

Aghcha: If Gerip comes, maybe you will go to the king to report, and get a reward!

Court ladies: We will not do that.

Aghcha: But if someone goes...

Court ladies: Whoever did that should be struck by lightning.

Aghcha: Can you swear?

Court ladies: Yes!

Aghcha: Good, every one of you swear together with me. Whoever reports on Gerip will be punished in this world and the next. Amen.

Court ladies: Amen! God is great!

(Senem comes out dressed. The court ladies dance and sing.)

Beautiful ladies, swans of the court, go to the garden

Dancing among the hundreds of flowers

Disperse the clouds and mist

Happy songs, cheerful chatter, chase the clouds from the sky.

Scene 5

Time: early morning.

Place: The New Garden in the palace.

Scenery: Same as fourth scene.

Curtain open: A few gardeners, slaves in the garden. Herald arrives.

Herald: Attention: The king has ordered a public holiday (for all including slaves and prisoners) to celebrate the princess' recovery from illness.

Gerip: I'm so excited because I'm seeing Senem today. I can't wait.

(A few court ladies arrive.)

Gerip sings:

*In the imperial garden, the beautiful women look like clouds
As if beauty flows out from the middle of their foreheads
This is a happy day, (Gerip and Senem will) meet in the garden
Senemjan, come forward and enjoy the Spring.*

*Court ladies turning and dancing
Like birds flying in the sky among the clouds
Beautiful, gentle women are among the flowers
Beside the lake, the sounds of laughter and chatter*

*One lady, slender like a silky willow
Another, beautiful like a flower bud
The court ladies are graceful and elegant
Yet not as beautiful as Senemjan*

*Waiting for the princess to arrive
I will state my sentiment
Open up her veil
Let the spring wind take away the icy frost*

(Jelaleddin arrives)

Jelaleddin: Selam Geripjan!

Gerip: Teacher, you've been suffering in prison! (eyes watering)

Jelaleddin: Don't be sad, child, I know your situation. Now the most important thing is that you talk to your beloved Senemjan.

(Gerip and Jelaleddin exit, Senem enters.)

Senem: Girls, go find Gerip.

She sings:

*The Hawk extends its wings and flies away
Who knows where it rests!*

*I look to the sky and sigh
Difficult to overcome the sadness in my heart*

*Bird of happiness flies far and high
I hope day and night for him to return
That bird makes no sound, and brings no news
I can only suffer quietly in solitude.*

*I hope he will be back soon
To comfort my heart
I fear that this happy scene will not last long
This bright day, ephemeral as foam and shadows.*

(Agcha arrives)

Agcha: Child, have you seen the hawk you were longing day and night to see?

Senem: Mother!

She sings:

*Mother, if you truly love me
Please quickly bring my Geripjan
Ah, his shining eyes, his gentle love
As the bright moon showers down golden light*

*We planned our life together when we were young
Under the moon we shed sweet, happy tears
He leaves a shadow of his tall image in the garden
Ah, today I will meet him among the flowers in the court.*

*Senem leaves black misfortune
Maybe the moment of my death comes closer
Quickly, leave the crown upon the throne
Only He can cure me from my illness.*

Agcha: I will bring that poor person to you.

(Agcha and Senem exit, Gerip catches a glimpse of Senem leaving)

Gerip: Ah, my Senemjan, is that you?

(Zamire sees Gerip and is happy)

Zamire: Are you well Geripjan?

Gerip: How are you, Zamire?

Zamire sings:

Geripjan, I have loved you for a long time

Please listen, I'll tell you what I conceal in my heart

I look haggard, my heart is burning

Your black eyes make me fall in love

Geripjan, look in my eyes

I'm longing for your love.

Gerip sings:

Senemjan already took my heart and spirit

For her I have endured the bitterness of the world

Except her, I can love no other

Zamire, please forgive my infatuation

My heart is pure and clean like crystal

I don't want my heart to become impure.

(Gerip and Zamire exit, Senem, Agcha and court ladies enter.)

Senem sings:

My worries surround my heart like entangled silk

Mother, look at me, how unfortunate I am

My eyes searching everywhere for my love

Just like a beggar expecting God's compassion

I am strolling in the garden, hoping to see my loved one

I cannot help the increasing anxiety for my love in my heart

*I have heard that he is already in the garden
So why is the garden so quiet, nobody there?*

*I am longing for my beloved every moment
My vulnerable heart can not endure any longer
Mother quickly find him, bring Gerip
Look at me, I am crazed, scorched by anxiety*

(Gerip arrives)

Gerip: *Selam, Senemjan.*

Senem: *Ah, Geripjan! (She faints, Agcha and court ladies catch and revive her.)*

Gerip: *Senemjan, I've returned!*

Gerip sings:

*All these years I've endured many hardships for you
I did not expect to shed tears of happiness with you in the garden
Dear Senem, I shout out your name
I hope that this union is not a dream.*

(Agcha and the court ladies are moved and weep.)

Senem sings:

*I hear one word, and I can't stop the tears from flowing
Meeting in the garden of a hundred flowers, our love is deep
This long awaited, joyous time has arrived today
From now on, let us never separate again.*

Gerip sings:

*Your eyebrows are as dark as night
Your eyes are my life spring
Come dear Senem, you are my angel⁷⁴¹
Let us together drink the wine of happiness.*

Senem sings:

*Nightingale sings on the branch
Rose longing for nightingales, lingering affection
Come Geripjan, my nightingale
Let us become immersed in a wave of love.*

(Agcha and Gerip exit)

*Gerip and Senem endured all hardships
Everyday, tears of longing were shed by both sides
Today is a happy day, when lovers meet in the garden
Pouring out emotions, the separation of love will turn to happiness.
(Court ladies weep.)*

*Come Geripjan, let us turn our love to happiness
Let the nightingale appreciate the beauty of the rose
Gerip, I am willing to give up my life for you
Let all the lovers in the world admire.*

Gerip arrives, and sings:

*Heaven and spirits created by God
He gave the world good food and treasures
All these years I drifted here and there
Let Leyla praise the loyalty of Mejnun's love.*

Senem sings:

*Who in this world is not trapped and destroyed by the madness of love
Body trapped in a sea of fire, who doesn't frown?
Perhad split the mountain for love
Let Shirin admire Perhad's bravery.*

⁷⁴¹ Chinese translation (footnote 18) uses the term "idol" in place of angel. "Idol" would be offensive in

Court ladies dance. Gerip sings:

*God, let everyone be mad with love
World's worries and entanglements rise in clamour
Ursula floated for twenty years on a bitter sea
Let Vamuk admire Ursula's determination.*

Chorus sings:

*Suffering lovers, break the glass and unite
Tears stream down the happy faces.*

Gerip and Senem sing:

*Gerip and Senem happily smiling
Friends, come and attend our wedding!*

Gerip: Look, someone is coming!

Senem: Geripjan, quickly hide!

(Gerip and the mountain people hide in the bushes. Abdullah with Shemshi and guards arrive.)

Senem: (pulls down her veil) Stop!

Abdullah: (smiles lecherously) Princess Senem, I wish you good health.

Senem: What do you want, barging into the garden like this?

Abdullah: I've come to protect you from outsiders spying on your radiant beauty. His Majesty is also concerned about your safety.

Senem: You are an outsider. How can the King send you to protect his daughter?

Abdullah: Honourable Princess, your beauty makes the sun lose its brightness. That today I could meet with you in the garden is my good fortune.

Senem: Stay away from me!

Abdullah: Senemjan, I've come to protect you, this is the King's order.

Senem: Stop it.

Abdullah: I heard that some outsiders came in here, and they were acting inappropriately!

Senem: There are no outsiders here, only Geripjan!

Abdullah: What did you say? Geripjan who rebelled against the court? If he thinks that he can get out alive he is dreaming.

Senem: Don't you dare!

Abdullah: Princess Senem, I don't understand how you cannot give up that rogue. He can not make you happy, only bring you suffering. Only I can give you the crown of the Kingdom, wealth, honour and happiness.

Senem: You...

Abdullah: Princess, if you disregard my advice, you will lose everything you own. I am afraid even your father's position cannot be defended.

Senem: What a lowly, scheming person you are. How could you deserve my love?

Abdullah: Senemjan! (He angrily approaches her, as Gerip arrives)

Gerip: Stop!

Abdullah: It is you? Good, this will be your end! (draws his sword)

Gerip: If I was afraid, I wouldn't have come.

(Abdullah and Gerip fight. Davut and Batur aid Gerip against Abdullah, Shemshi and the palace guards.)

Senem: (prays) Geripjan, I hope God gives you strength.

(Abdullah attempts to flee, Gerip leaps and kicks Abdullah, who falls to the ground. Davut stabs Abdullah with his sword and Abdullah cries out.)

Shemshi: Heroes, spare my life. I will tell you everything to repay my sins.

(Jelaleddin, with walking stick, arrives with the mountain people.)

Jelaleddin: Children, well done.

Senem: Teacher, we caused you trouble.

Jelaleddin: The swift who experiences the harsh winter, understands the beauty of Spring and sunlight. Lovers who experienced difficulty appreciate the value of loyalty. At last I can rest in peace, seeing you two united. Give me that marriage agreement!

Gerip: Teacher, why do you want it?

Jelaleddin: Now we can put it to use. (Gerip gives him the agreement.)

Senem: I going to leave the court forever to be with Gerip!

Jelaleddin: You are right, break this sinful cage. Fly freely in the sky, just like a bird.

Gerip and Senem: Teacher, come with us!

Jelaleddin: No, I will stay and get even with them!

Davut: This is a den of man-eating monsters, they will not easily leave you alone.

(A mountain man rushes up.)

Mountain man: Oh no, the King has arrived!

Jelaleddin: Go quickly, don't worry about me! I wish you eternal love and to grow old together. Safe journey! Amen.

Gerip and Senem: Teacher, look after yourself. Goodbye!

(The sound of horse hooves go off into the distance. King and Official Kasim arrive.)

Abbas: Hey! Official Kasim, how did these criminals get into the garden? How could this happen?

Kasim: Majesty, didn't you order for all criminals to be pardoned for a day?

Abbas: Where is the princess?

Jelaleddin: The princess and Gerip ran away together!

Abbas: Who let them go?

Jelaleddin: When birds grow wings, nobody can stop them.

Abbas: Abdullah! Go arrest Gerip and bring him back. What is this lawlessness?

Jelaleddin: Your Abdullah is dead! If you kill Gerip, I am afraid there won't be peace.

Abbas: Bold convict! You are daring. Come, men!

Jelaleddin: Truth sooner or later will overcome evil. In all of the world from ancient times, there is no example of God's love being defeated by a despot.

(Davut brings Shemshi.)

Shemshi: (prostrated before the King) Please Majesty, forgive me, I am guilty and deserve to die. I will tell everything, please be lenient.

Abbas: Tell quickly, I will spare your life.

Shemshi: Abdullah asked me to forge false evidence against Jeleleddin, and to get rid of Gerip. Abdullah wanted to marry the princess, and by doing so take over the throne. He promised me a high office after he succeeded. I am guilty, Your Majesty, show me your mercy.

Abbas: Come men, take away this degenerate. Execute him!

(Executioner takes Shemshi. Shemshi calls out, 'Forgive me!' as he is dragged away.)

Jeleleddin: There is more! Twenty-one years ago Vezir Hesen was assassinated by Shawazi. Hesen's horseman Davut, was a witness. Because of this, Abdullah has been after him, to destroy the evidence. Shawazi was the culprit of this evil scheme. Now everything is out in the open, your Majesty must wake up!

Abbas: No! I don't regret what I did.

Jeleleddin: (takes out the marriage agreement) This document is signed by you. So you must not regret this!

Abbas: (angrily tears the document to pieces) Pass on my order! Immediately arrest this Molla, take away Shawazi's official rank and imprison him. Then investigate the situation and deal with him! Ah! Kind God! Why must fate mock me? (He faints)

(The stage darkens. From the back of the stage, day breaks on mountain valley forest and wildflowers. Mountain people escort Gerip and Senem, happily singing and dancing.)

Song:

Tears of sorrow disappear from the lovers' faces

The mountain of sadness broken by the sharp sword of love

*Come friends! Let us be happy all the way
See Gerip and Senem meet in the Springtime!*

Mihrivan, both her eyes blinded from years of weeping, aided by Guljema and Ilyas, mixes with the happy crowd.

Gerip and Senem, dressed for a wedding, look very happy. The joyful crowd showers them with flowers.

End.

November 1980, Turpan.

Appendix 4

Gerip and Senem: Comparison of Uyghur and Chinese script versions, and differences from Opera.

Gerip-Senem – Film script - Urumqi 1981 Script Writers: Ali Aziz and Zunun Kadir.		Gerip – Senem Opera script – Turpan November 1980 (full script in Appendix 3)
1. Translated from Uyghur version of released film	2. Translated from Chinese published version	3. Opera script differences from film script
<p>Cast (main characters):</p> <p>King Abbas Senem – his daughter Queen Shemshibanu – Senem’s mother Vezir Hessen Gerip – Hessen’s son Mihrivan – mother of Gerip Guljamel – sister of Gerip</p> <p>Perman – Military Adviser</p> <p>Shawazi – Official, later to become Vezir Abdullah – son of Shawazi, later Chief of Palace Guard Hatice – Wife of Shawazi Suchuk – a Court lady and student Dilalem – female leader of a dukedom.</p>	<p>Cast:</p> <p>King Abbas Senem – his daughter Queen Shemshibanu – Senem’s mother Vezir Hessen Gerip – his son Mihrivan – mother of Gerip Guljema – sister of Gerip</p> <p>Perman – Military Adviser</p> <p>Shawazi – Official, later to become Vezir Abdullah – son of Shawazi (security official)</p> <p>Hatice – Wife of Shawazi Suchuk – a student Dilalem – female leader of a dukedom. Kamer – Dilalem’s servant Nur – Dilalem’s maid</p>	<p>Cast:</p> <p>Abbas – 63, King of the Abassi Empire Senem – 18 years old, daughter of King</p> <p>Hessen – 50, Vezir of the Abassi Empire Gerip – 18 years old son of Vezir Hessen Mihrivan – 45, mother of Gerip Guljema - 14, daughter of Jelaleddin, adopted by Gerip’s family Shemshi – 45, Abdullah’s confidant, military officer Shawazi – 65, Inspector-General, later Vezir Abdullah – 35, Chief of the Palace Guard, son of Shawazi</p> <p>Zamire – 20, Lady in waiting to Senem Hizir – a holy man</p>

1. Translated from Uyghur version of released film	2. Translated from Chinese published version	3. Opera script differences from film script
<p>Jelaleddin – ulema, teacher of Gerip and Senem</p> <p>Sidik – court inspector of prisons</p> <p>Aybuve – wife of Sidik</p> <p>Zapar – son of Sidik</p> <p>Mother Aghcha – Senem’s wetnurse</p> <p>Gulbanu – Senem’s lady in waiting</p> <p>Kasim – minister of the internal affairs</p> <p>Alim - son of Kasim and Gerip’s fellow-student</p>	<p>Dilalem’s housekeeper and confidant</p> <p>Eye-patched man – Dilalem’s gaoler</p> <p>Jelaleddin – ulema, teacher of Gerip and Senem</p> <p>Sidik – court inspector of prisons</p> <p>Aybuve – wife of Sidik</p> <p>Zapar – son of Sidik</p> <p>Mother Aghcha – Senem’s wetnurse</p> <p>Gulbanu – Senem’s lady in waiting</p> <p>Kasim – minister of the internal affairs</p> <p>Alim - Gerip’s friend, son of Kasim</p>	<p>Batur – 35, brother of Dawut, leader of mountain people.</p> <p>Jelaleddin – 68 Court Scholar, teacher of Gerip and Senem</p> <p>Dawut – 40, Vezir Hessen’s groom</p> <p>Aghcha – 55, Senem’s wetnurse, a widow</p> <p>Kasim – 60, high official of the Empire</p> <p>Ilyas – 20 yrs old, son of Jelaleddin and classmate of Gerip</p> <p>[Names in the opera do not as often convey a metaphoric meaning relating to the character’s symbolic role in the narrative.]</p>
<p>Titles: A scene of towering pointed minarets; a splendid palace; green interiors; colorfully clothed courtiers; various shots of architectural features; as the actors names appear in titles.</p>	<p>Titles: A scene of towering pointed minarets; a splendid palace; green interiors; colorfully clothed courtiers; various shots of architectural features; as the actors names appear in titles.</p>	<p>In the film, description of the Court as prosperous and Islamic.</p> <p>In the Opera more traditional Turkic images, the wolf skin on the throne, more attention to the folk theme of the childless king. Reference to the “third eye” in the forehead. More connections to Middle East and Central Asian references. Recitation from the epic poem “Leyla and Mejnun”.</p>

1. Translated from Uyghur version of released film	2. Translated from Chinese published version	3. Opera script differences from film script
<p>Scene 1: Inside the palace courtyard</p> <p>It is a Spring night. Inside the palace there are shining lights and colorful pillars, music is playing, and well dressed courtiers, and foreign ambassadors and foreign guests are congratulating King Abbas on the birth of his daughter.</p> <p>Officials in unison: “Congratulations, your majesty”. Individual: “Congratulations”.</p> <p>The King is very happy, and receives the congratulations in a dignified way.</p>	<p>Scene 1: Inside the palace courtyard</p> <p>It is a Spring night. Inside the palace there are shining lights and colorful pillars, music is playing, and well dressed courtiers, and foreign ambassadors and foreign guests are congratulating King Abbas on the birth of his daughter. The King is very happy, and receives the congratulations in a dignified way.</p>	
<p>Scene 2. The palace inner courtyard</p> <p>There is much activity and many lanterns. Beautiful court ladies are in a celebratory mood.</p>	<p>Scene 2. The palace inner courtyard</p> <p>There is much activity and many lanterns. Cooks are bustling about in the kitchen and providing all kinds of delicious food. Beautiful court ladies are in a celebratory mood.</p>	
<p>Scene 3. The public square outside the palace.</p> <p>There is drumming and a crowd is gathering, some on camels. A group of young children run to the centre of the square. Girls on camels throw down small gifts and the children scrabble for them on the ground. A group of 40 ladies in waiting (kenizek) are dancing and singing.</p>	<p>Scene 3. The public square outside the palace.</p> <p>There is drumming and a crowd is gathering, some on camels. A group of young children run to the centre of the square. A group of 40 ladies in waiting (<i>kenizek</i>) are dancing and singing.</p>	

1. Translated from Uyghur version of released film	2. Translated from Chinese published version	3. Opera script differences from film script
<p><u>Why is the light so bright in the sky, why is there so much joy on the earth</u></p> <p><u>Why is the peacock opening its beautiful tail, why are all the flowers blooming so well</u></p> <p><u>The clear moon rises in the sky, a beautiful princess is born</u></p>	<p><i>Why is the light so bright in the sky, why is there so much joy on the earth</i></p> <p>The beautiful girls continually change their lines as they dance, moving their shoulders, in a beautiful and spectacular dance style. The song continues:</p> <p><i>Why is the peacock opening its beautiful tail, why are all the flowers blooming so well</i></p>	
<p>Scene 4. The Queen's chamber.</p> <p>Queen Shemshibanu, is sitting in bed. The nurse Aghcha tests the bath water, takes a towel, then goes over the Queen and takes the baby from her. She admires it then walks toward the bath.</p> <p>The scene cuts to Vezir Hessen's house, where a servant carries a baby across the room and gives it to Mihrivan, who takes the baby.</p>	<p>Scene 4. The Queen's chamber.</p> <p>The beautiful queen, Shamshir Banu, is sitting. The nurse Aghcha brings the baby to the Queen, and the Queen and her ladies in waiting admire it. In the background, singing continues:</p> <p><i>The clear moon rises in the sky, a beautiful princess is born.</i></p>	
<p>Scene 5. The Public Square</p> <p>The song continues:</p> <p><i>Why is the nightingale happily singing in</i></p>	<p>Scene 5. The Public Square</p> <p>The song continues:</p> <p><i>Why is the nightingale happily singing in the</i></p>	

1. Translated from Uyghur version of released film	2. Translated from Chinese published version	3. Opera script differences from film script
<p><i>the garden, why is the mountain eagle flying in the blue sky</i> <i>Why is the fine horse galloping across the grassland, why does the brave lion spring into the mountain mist.</i> <i>The bright stars rise in the sky, a handsome youth descends from the sky.</i></p>	<p><i>garden, why is the mountain eagle flying in the blue sky</i> <i>Why is the fine horse galloping across the grassland, why does the brave lion spring into the mountain mist.</i></p>	
<p>Scene 6. [intercut with scene 5]</p>	<p>Scene 6. Vezir Hessen's Chamber The palace nobility are congratulating Vezir Hessen. Vezir Hessen, with a look of joy, returns their good wishes. The singing continues in the public square <i>The bright stars rise in the sky, a handsome youth descends from the sky.</i> A servant carries the baby across the room to Mihrivan, the Vezir's wife. Mihrivan takes the baby, and Hessen stands by her side looking happily at the baby.</p>	
<p>Scene 7. The main hall of the palace</p> <p>A beautiful hall, splendid with light and colour. A large chandelier hangs from the centre. King Abbas sits on a splendid divan-style elevated platform, officials standing on both sides. In the centre of the hall, the Mollah Jeleddin, is holding two babies, one in each arm, and reciting the prayers in a solemn proceeding to name the children.</p>	<p>Scene 7. The main hall of the palace</p> <p>A beautiful hall, splendid with light and colour. Many coloured lanterns are arrayed. King Abbas sits on a splendid throne, officials standing on both sides. In one group, the scholar, Mollah Jeleddin, is reciting the prayers in a solemn proceeding to name the child.</p>	

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<p>A civil official quietly approaches Perman, the military advisor to Abbas, and Perman quickly leaves the room with him. The two of them go to a dark staircase. They come into a room where Shawazi, the Vezir, is waiting.</p> <p>Perman: “Greetings honourable Shawazi” Shawazi: “Greetings” Perman: “His Majesty the King, today at the naming ceremony, made an agreement of betrothal with Vezir Hessen”. Shawazi: “Perman, what do the other senior court officials think about this betrothal?” Perman: “I haven’t heard anything” Shawazi: “Have you heard anything recently concerning me?” Perman: “Honourable Shawazi, you should be very careful with Sidik, the gaol-keeper. He is not reliable”. Shawazi: “What?!!” Perman: “Last autumn I was out hunting with Vezir Hessen...”</p>	<p>A civil official quietly approaches Perman, the military advisor to Abbas, and Perman quickly leaves the room with him. The two of them go to a dark staircase and it can be seen that a few of the nobles go into another room. Dawut comes secretly to the room and tells Shawazi and reports “He has arrived”.</p> <p>Perman: “Greetings honourable Shawazi” Shawazi: “Greetings”, Perman: “His Majesty the King, today at the naming ceremony, made an agreement of betrothal with Vezir Hessen”. Shawazi: “Perman, what do the other senior court officials think about this betrothal?” Perman: “I haven’t heard anything” Shawazi: “Have you heard anything recently concerning me?” Perman: “Honourable Shawazi, you should be very careful with Sidik, the gaol-keeper. He is not reliable”. Shawazi: “What?!!” Perman: “Last autumn I was out hunting with <u>the King and</u> Vezir Hessen, and that day....”</p>	
<p>Scene 8. A Pine forest, an autumn day.</p> <p>Vezir Hessen is hunting together with Sidik the gaoler and Perman the military adviser, with four</p>	<p>Scene 8. A Pine forest, an autumn day..</p> <p>Vezir Hessen is hunting together with Sidik the gaoler and Perman the military adviser, with four</p>	

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<p>others, hunting on horseback. They notice a pregnant gazelle on a crag. Perman: “Bring me the bow and arrows” Hessen: “Perman, can’t you see that this is a pregnant gazelle?” Perman: “This is good – God has given you an extra prize”. Hessen: “Nobody should hurt that gazelle. Let it be” Perman: “Yes sir”. Hessen calls to Sidik. Hessen: “Sidik, When I saw this pregnant gazelle, for some reason it made me think of my pregnant wife Mhrivan” Sidik: “Your excellency, this is a sign of your compassion”. They laugh Sidik: “Your excellency, I have something to say to you, but I’m not sure whether it is appropriate or not.” Hessen: “What? What is it?” Perman listens in to the conversation from behind. Sidik: <u>“In the past we had people killing other for their own interest. But now you have run the country well and the people now have peace and happiness. But I am a bit worried about what would happen if bad people got into power.”</u> Hessen looks at Perman and cuts Sidik off. Hessen: “Sidik, don’t worry. Listen to this old saying:</p>	<p>others, hunting on horseback. Sidik approaches Hessen quietly. Sidik: “Your excellency, I have something to say to you, but I’m not sure whether it is appropriate or not.” Hessen: “What? What is it?” Perman listens in to the conversation from behind. Sidik: “You have run the country well and the people now have peace and happiness, and the people are very happy. But I am a bit worried that bad people may wish to take over your position. ...” Hessen looks at Perman and cuts him off. Hessen: “There are bad people in the world, but fate in this world is fixed. But sometimes people’s action can make a difference. You should not worry about it too much.” Perman pretends he did not hear. Perman: “Vezir Hessen, there is a gazelle!...” Hessen and the other hunters look in the direction and see a gazelle drinking water near the mountain. One of the hunters speaks. Hunter: “It is a gazelle – lets chase it..” When they come close to the gazelle, Perman calls out “Shoot!” Hessen: “Stop!” The others are surprised. Hessen: “Perman, can’t you see that this is a pregnant gazelle?” Hunter: “You have very good eyes – yes it is pregnant and has a swollen belly” Perman: “This is good – God has given you an extra</p>	
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<p><i>Kishi ichin hile bir nerse kilsang</i> <i>Ayak siritin komushtek kurur</i> <i>Alemdeki ishler teghdirge teelluk</i> <i>Ve lekin onung mu tedbiri bardur</i> <u>If you behave deceitfully to others,</u> <u>Like bamboo, you will dry up from the feet</u> <u>Events in this world are according to fate</u> <u>But even so, there can be ways to prevent it</u></p> <p>You should not worry about it too much.”</p> <p>Perman pretends he did not hear.</p>	<p>prize”.</p> <p>Hessen: “ Don’t speak nonsense – nobody is allowed to hurt that gazelle”</p> <p>Perman is disgruntled, but accepts the instruction. Hessen calls to Sidik.</p> <p>Hessen: “When I saw this pregnant gazelle, for some reason it made me think of my pregnant wife”</p> <p>Sidik: “Your excellency is so kind – even a pregnant gazelle could get your compassion”.</p>	
<p>Scene 9: The main hall of the Palace.</p> <p>King Abbas and Vezir Hessen are both signing the betrothal document.</p> <p>Abbas: “How interesting that before the Princess was born, I went hunting with Vezir Hessen and saw a pregnant gazelle. Because it reminded me of my pregnant Queen, I didn’t shoot it.”</p> <p>Sidik: “Vezir Hessen also came across a pregnant gazelle that day, and didn’t shoot it.”</p> <p>Abbas: “Yes, Hessen has much in common with me. Hessen and I have always shared the same vision. Because of this sign, I decided that if both of our wives gave birth to boys, they would be brothers, and if to girls, they would be sisters.”</p> <p>Courtier: “But now there is one girl and one boy!”</p>	<p>Scene 9: The main hall of the Palace.</p> <p>King Abbas and Vezir Hessen are both signing the betrothal document.</p> <p>King: “How interesting that before the Princess was born, I went hunting with Vezir Hessen and saw a pregnant gazelle. Because it reminded me of my pregnant Queen, I didn’t shoot it.”</p> <p>Sidik: “Vezir Hessen also came across a pregnant gazelle that day, and didn’t shoot it.”</p> <p>Abbas: “Yes, Hessen has much in common with me. Because of this coincidence, we decided at that time that if our wives gave birth to the same sex, they would become siblings, and if they are different sexes they would marry.”</p>	

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<p>Abbas: “As in the marriage agreement, they will be husband and wife when they grow up”.</p> <p>Hessen: “Thank you for your kindness”.</p> <p>The court attendants congratulate the King and Vezir Hessen on the betrothal.</p>	<p>The court attendants congratulate the King and Vezir Hessen on the betrothal.</p>	
<p>Scene 10: Shawazi’s residence – a spring night.</p> <p>Hatice: – “What is this – say something!”</p> <p>Shawazi: “What do you want me to say? They have already signed the betrothal. It is a disaster for us.”</p> <p>Hatice: “Disaster? Have the birds eaten your brains? How can Hessen be an in-law to the King? <u>He is an outsider!</u> But we and the King...”</p> <p>Shawazi: “What are you saying!”</p> <p>Hatice begins to cry: “What is there for me to say..!”</p> <p>Seven year-old Abdullah comes in.</p> <p>Abdullah: “ Mum, mum!”</p> <p>Hatice: “Abdullah my son, you must remember when you grow up that you must marry Princess Senem – do you understand? If you marry Senem, you will become the future ruler.”</p> <p>Shawazi: “Huh! At this age what could he understand??”</p> <p>Abdullah looks at his parents: “Mother, mother...”</p> <p>Servant: “My lord Shawazi, they have arrived, let’s go.”</p>	<p>Scene 10: Shawazi’s residence – a spring night.</p> <p>Shawazi’s wife Hatice is complaining –</p> <p>Hatice: “What can we do?”</p> <p>Shawazi: “They have already signed the betrothal. That is our misfortune”.</p> <p>Shawazi paces up and down. Hatice says : “What! Misfortune? Is your intelligence eaten by the birds? How can Hessen be related to the King? <u>He is a peasant!</u> But we...”</p> <p>Hatice begins to cry.</p> <p>Seven year-old Abdullah comes in.</p> <p>Abdullah: “ Mum, mum!”</p> <p>Hatice: “Abdullah my heart, you must remember when you grow up that you must marry Princess Senem – do you understand? If you marry Senem, the Abbas Kingdom will be ours.”</p> <p>Shawazi: “Huh! At this age what could be understand??”</p> <p>Abdullah (fearfully): “Mother I’m afraid”.</p>	<p>In the Opera, Shawazi does not have an active wife – Hatice is not mentioned.</p>

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<p>Scene 11: Shawazi’s guest room, expensively furnished. A few of the courtiers are discussing something, while Shawazi looks on.</p> <p>Courtier One: “The only way is to get rid of Vezir Hessen.”</p> <p>Courtier Two: “I don’t agree”</p> <p>Courtier Three:” Why?</p> <p>Courtier Two: “Even if we get rid of Hessen now, unless we get rid of the marriage agreement, still the King’s place will eventually be taken by an <u>outsider.</u>”</p> <p>Courtier Three: “Mmmm – that makes sense”.</p> <p>Courtier One: “Your Excellency Shawazi, don’t hesitate. We will not rest until we get rid of Vezir Hessen.”</p> <p>Shawazi: “We should not act hastily. We should both plan, and wait for the right opportunity.”</p>	<p>Scene 11: Shawazi’s guest room, expensively furnished. A few of the courtiers are discussing something, while Shawazi looks on.</p> <p>Courtier One: “The only way is to get rid of Vezir Hessen.”</p> <p>Courtier Two: “I don’t agree”</p> <p>Courtier Three:” Why?</p> <p>Courtier Two: “Even if we get rid of Hessen now, unless we get rid of the marriage agreement, still the Abbas Empire will eventually be taken over <u>someone from another place.</u>” (<i>wai xiang ren</i>)</p> <p>Courtier Three: “Mmmm – that makes sense”.</p> <p>Courtier One to Shawazi: “In old sayings, it is said that if you miss an opportunity, the hammer will strike the stone” (i.e. miss the objective) “You can’t be hesitate. Without getting rid of Hessen, we will have no peace.”</p> <p>Shawazi: “We should not act hastily. We should both plan, and wait for the right opportunity.”</p>	
<p>Scene 12: A flowery meadow. Blue sky and white clouds.</p> <p>Six year old Gerip and Senem are playing with a butterfly. They are seen to run behind a tree, and when they come out they are teenagers. Gerip is chasing her. Senem gives him a coy look: “Gerip, its time for our class.”</p>	<p>Scene 12: A grassy lawn. Blue sky and white clouds.</p> <p>Six year old Gerip and Senem and playing with a butterfly. Among these flowers and plants, the six year olds transform into young adults. Gerip runs toward Senem, but is stopped by Senem’s attendants. Gerip gets very embarassed, but Senem</p>	

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Gerip: “Yes, let’s go”	gives him a soft look and says “Gerip, its time for our class”. Gerip watches Senem walking off toward the medresi.	
<p>Scene 13: A corner of the city</p> <p>A herald and attendants ride through the bazaar on horseback</p> <p>Herald: “Abdullah Shapoor was given authority to punish opposition to Shah Abbas! Abdullah Shapoor rounded them all up in one night. Zapar is being paraded. <u>All of you, take a lesson from this.</u> You must accept the Shah’s command as supreme.”</p>	<p>Scene 13: A corner of the city Abdullah has grown up into a bully. A herald announces.</p> <p>Herald: “Let everyone know, and everyone remember, that the great King, in order to have rebels drowned in a sea of terrible anger, has authorised Abdullah. Abdullah has in one night eliminated the traitors. Zapar will be paraded on the streets so that all may remember.”</p> <p>The common people are horrified and ask for God’s protection. <u>Person: “God, protect your people.”</u> <u>Young hotblood: “Huh! What kind of hero is Abdullah – he is a poisonous snake!”</u> <i>A group of courtiers: “God protect and extend the King’s powers.”</i> Abdullah, dressed in breastplate and sword on horseback, parades proudly through the city. A few short-haired soldiers clear the way in front of him, with Zapar led behind the horse and a few bad soldiers humiliating him a they go towards the royal palace.</p>	

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<p>Scene 14: Library of the Medrese</p> <p>Mollah Jelaleddin is teaching a group of boys and girls. Zamire comes in.</p> <p>Zamire: “Teacher, Zapar has been arrested! He helped his father Sidik escape from the gaol, but he himself was caught. His father has escaped.” Teacher sighs.</p> <p>Senem: “Teacher, Zapar is innocent. His father Sidik is also innocent.”</p> <p>Zamire: “How can you say that, Senem, when Zapar’s father Sidik was opposing your father, the King?”</p> <p>Alim: “Shoosh! Hold your tongue!” (he realises he has been too abrupt and sits down).</p> <p>Jelaleddin: “Children, return to your lessons! (thoughtfully) The lion has come out of its cage – <u>let it go where it wants to go.</u>”⁷⁴²</p>	<p>Scene 14: Library of the Medrese</p> <p>Mollah Jelaleddin is teaching a group of boys and girls. A student comes in.</p> <p>Sujuk: Teacher, Zapar has been arrested! He saved his father from the gaol, he himself was arrested, but his father has escaped.”</p> <p>Senem: “Zapar is innocent. His father Sidik is also innocent.”</p> <p>Sujuk: “How can you say that, Senem ,when Zapar was opposing your father, the King?”</p> <p>Alim: “Shut up, Sujuk”.</p> <p>Jelaleddin: “Children, be quiet! The lion has forced open its cage – <u>let it run to the place it ought to go.</u>”⁷⁴³ (<i>yinggai qiu de difang</i>))</p>	<p>In film and film script, Jelaleddin has no children. In the Opera, Jelaleddin is the father of Ilyas (parallell to Alim in the film) and also father of Guljema,, who is adopted by Mihrivan when Jelaleddin is arrested.</p>
<p>Scene 15: The Medrese Garden</p> <p>Senem sits near the pond, reading. Her inverted reflection is seen in the pond. Gerip, hiding, throws a stone into the pond, and the ripples break up the reflection of Senem. Senem raises her head</p>	<p>Scene 15: The Medrese Garden</p> <p>Senem sits near the pond, reading. Her inverted reflection appears in the pond. A stone is thrown into the pond, by Gerip, and the ripples break up the reflection of Senem. Senem raises her head and</p>	

⁷⁴² Film Script of Gerip and Senen, Ali Aziz and Zunun Kadir, tr Zhang Yerong, Xinjiang Youth Publishing House, 1981, p.14

⁷⁴³ Film Script of Gerip and Senen, Ali Aziz and Zunun Kadir, tr Zhang Yerong, Xinjiang Youth Publishing House, 1981, p.14

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<p>and looks around, but sees nobody. Gerip hides behind the flowers, peeping out at her and hiding again. Senem closes the book, shuts her eyes and daydreams...</p> <p>Visual effects merge into the next scene</p>	<p>looks around, but sees nobody. Gerip hides behind the flowers, peeping out at her and hiding again. Senem closes the book, shuts her eyes and says to herself: Senem: “Perhad – he is so much like Perhad...” Visual effects merge into the next scene..</p>	
<p>Scene 16: Dream sequence</p> <p>In a dream sequence, Gerip (as the legendary Perhad) and Senem (as Shirin) dance among the clouds. Senem’s voice says “Perhad!” Perhad is wearing blue trousers, high boots, a gold tunic and a spiked helmet⁷⁴⁴. Perhad (Gerip) reaches out to take Shirin’s hand, but falls back. Perhad begins to call “Shirin! Shirin!” The clouds disappear and reveal a beautiful queen, gloriously dressed. Perhad: “Greetings, beautiful Queen” Queen: “Greetings Perhad – what is your wish?” Perhad: “Your Majesty, my wish is to unite with Shirin” Queen: “If you are able to bring a water channel from the other side of this high mountain to this side, then you can have Shirin.”⁷⁴⁵</p>	<p>Scene 16: Dream sequence</p> <p>In a dream sequence, Gerip becomes the legendary Perhad and Senem becomes Shirin, and they dance among the clouds. Perhad reaches out to take Shirin’s hand, but suddenly black clouds cover the sky. Perhad begins to call “Shirin! Shirin!” The clouds disappear, the sun comes out, and reveals a beautiful queen, gloriously dressed. Perhad salutes the Queen and tells his story, begging to marry Shirin.</p> <p>Queen: “Is your love true? If it is true love, you should fetch some water from the other side of the water, make a channel through the mountain to this side, and turn the desert into a garden. Then you can have Shirin.”</p>	<p>In the opera, the Perhad – Shirin reference is only a spoken reference. In the film and the film script, it is acted out in a dream sequence</p>

⁷⁴⁴ The spiked helmet is worn by Persian soldiers of 16th century – as seen in historical murals of the Chehel Soton palace in Isfahan.

⁷⁴⁵ The historic capital of Shah Abbas 1 at Isfahan, like most of the oasis cities of East Turkistan, relied on river water originating in nearby snowy mountain ranges. The Safavid kings tried repeatedly to bring additional water to Isfahan from the far side of the mountains, but did not succeed.

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<p>Scene 17: The dream continues</p> <p>Perhad is seen working very diligently to divide the mountain and bring the water to the desert. Mountain divides, the water flows.</p>	<p>Scene 17: The dream continues</p> <p>Perhad is seen working very diligently to divide the mountain and bring the water to the desert. Mountain divides, the water flows.</p>	
<p>Scene 18 Perhad and Shirin, run towards each other beside the stream of water, and embrace when they meet.</p>	<p>Scene 18 Shirin, beside the stream of water, runs up the stream calling out “Perhad”. Perhad calls “Shirin!”</p>	
<p>Scene 19. The Medrese garden</p> <p>Senem is still daydreaming. Gerip calls Senem gently, coming close to her holding a bouquet. Gerip is wearing a white jewelled turban, blue doublet and pale blue long coat over it, blue trousers and red boots.</p> <p>Senem wakes from her dream, blushing.</p> <p>Gerip: “What were you thinking about Senem my dear?”</p> <p>Senem: “ Nothing”</p> <p>Gerip gives her the bouquet. Senem puts down her book and takes the bouquet, and takes it to the pavilion. Gerip picks up the book that Senem left on the seat, and sees that it was “Perhad and Shirin”. Gerip begins to sing and Senem joins in – Gerip saying how beautiful and charming Senem is, while she replies how handsome and talented he is, and how she would like to be an expert in music to</p>	<p>Scene 19. The Medrese garden</p> <p>Gerip: “Senem my dear!” Gerip calls gently, coming close to her holding a bouquet.</p> <p>Senem wakes from her dream, blushing.</p> <p>Gerip: “What were you thinking about Senem my dear?”</p> <p>Senem: “ Nothing”</p> <p>Gerip gives her the bouquet. Senem puts down her book and takes the bouquet, and takes it to the pavilion. Gerip picks up the book that Senem left on the seat, and sees that it was “Perhad and Shirin”. Gerip begins to sing –</p> <p><i>I would like to be a gardener in a garden Every day picking beautiful flowers for you God made you so beautiful</i></p>	

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<p>appreciate his voice.</p> <p>Gerip: “Dear Senem, the poem at the bridge..” Senem: “Don’t say it..” Gerip: “Yes, I will!” Senem: “Then answer my question! (she recites) <i>Rose petals layer on layer Are they the pages of a book of love, or a mirror of love</i></p> <p>Gerip: (recites) <i>“If I am Perhad, you are beautiful Shirin”</i></p> <p>Senem: “This pair of roses is proof of our hearts. No kind of frost or cold could wither them.”</p>	<p><i>How could I not be drunk with love for you</i> Senem sings: <i>The sound of your song is like beautiful birdsong My heart feels lightning, frost and happiness bursting I wish I was a song of deepest love And could hear every day the moving sound of your song</i></p> <p>Gerip: “Senem, can it be that you...”</p> <p>Senem: “Don’t say it...” Gerip: “I will say it..” Senem: “Then answer my question! (she recites) <i>Rose petals layer on layer Are they the pages of a book of love, or a mirror of love</i></p> <p>Gerip: (recites) <i>“If I am Perhad, you are beautiful Shirin”</i></p> <p>Senem: “Let us bury this rose as symbol of our love.” Gerip: “No matter what storms or rain we face, it will not wither”.</p>	
<p>Scene 20: Behind the garden pavillion.</p> <p>Abdullah is secretly watching Gerip and Senem together in the garden.</p> <p>Abdullah: “God, you have seen it all!”</p>	<p>Scene 20: Behind the garden rockery.</p> <p>Abdullah is secretly watching Gerip and Senem together in the garden. He angrily breaks off a branch and bites it, burning with jealousy.</p> <p>Abdullah: “God, you have seen it all!”</p>	

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<p>Zamire comes from behind, Abdullah turns and sees her. She laughs Abdullah: “What are you doing here?” Zamire: “I want to know the meaning of jealousy”. Abdullah: “You” He notices Zamire’s mischievous look, and just walks away.</p>	<p>Sujuk comes from behind, Abdallah turns and sees him. Sujuk: “I’ve come to ask you the meaning of jealousy”. Abdullah: “You” He notices Sujuk’s mischievous look, and just walks away. Sujuk sees his hostile look, and laughs at him..</p>	
<p>Scene 21 Shawazi’s residence – a summer day</p> <p>Abdullah: (to himself) “He is going to deprive me of the throne. My heart is bleeding.” Hatice: “What has happened, son?” Abdullah: “I am the son of the Vezir and head of the palace guard. Am I not as good as an orphan boy? ” Hatice: “Abdullah...!” Shawazi enters. Hatice: “I’m, glad you arrived. Our son...” Shawazi: “I know everything. Gerip! He...”</p>	<p>Scene 21 Shawazi’s residence – a summer day Abdullah is talking to himself Abdullah: “I am burning with jealousy. It hurts so much, it is going to take my life..” Hatice: “What is going on, Abudllah my son?” Abdullah: “I am the son of the Vezir, and the head of the palace guard. Am I not as good as an orphan peasant boy?” Hatice: “My son, what are you saying..” Abdullah: “Mother, I’m going to...I’m going to...” Hatice: “Son, if you want a star, I will fetch it from the sky for you. I you want a pearl, I will dive under the sea to get it for you.” Abdullah: “Mother – I will kill Gerip”. Hatice: “Abdullah!” Shawazi enters. Hatice: “You have come back – our son...” Shawazi: “I know. I didn’t imagine that Gerip...” Hatice: “What happened!” Abdullah: “Gerip and Senem were hugging each other in the garden like lovers!” (he leaves) Hatice: “Oh my God – what behaviour! Such impropriety in the Court!”</p>	

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<p>Scene 22: The chamber of the Princess</p> <p>Senem takes a bouquet of flowers from it vase and dances with it.</p> <p>Senem: “Aghcha!” Aghcha: “This Kurban festival you are happier than ever” Senem: “Yes, because Kurban falls at the time when roses are blooming and nightingales singing, who could not be happy at such a time?” Aghcha: “Your happiness is probably not just for that!” Senem: “<u>Aghcha, freedom and happiness of the heart is a person’s true happiness.</u> Mother Aghcha, shall I tell you who made this bouquet?” Aghcha: “Do you want me to say it?”</p>	<p>Scene 22: The chamber of the Princess</p> <p>Senem’s loyal maid, Mother Aghcha, brings a bouquet. Senem receives it happily</p> <p>Senem: “Aghcah, what do you think of my dress – is it beautiful?” Aghcah: “As beautiful as a red flower with green leaves.” Aghcha: “Senemjan, my Princess, this festival you are ten times happier than ever.” Senem: “This year’s Kurban festibavl came just when the flowers were blooming. How could one not be happy?” Aghcha: “I think that is not the only reason for your happiness.” Senem: “D you know who made this bouquet?” Aghcha: “Gerip made it” Senem reacts coyly.</p>	
<p>Scene 23: Gerip’s home</p> <p>Guljema: “Brother, your clothes suit you – you look like a prince.” Gerip: “Stop it!” Guljema: “Brother, what did sister Senem say?” Gerip: “I will not tell” Guljema: “I won’t let you pass!” Gerip: “Don’t be naughty” Guljema: “Mum! Look what he is doing!” Mihriwan: “<u>Honey has bees, roses have thorns,</u></p>	<p>Scene 23: Gerip’s home</p> <p>Guljema: “Brother, you are dressed as handwomely as a prince.” Gerip: “Good sister, don’t say that.” Guljema: “Brother, what more did sister Senem say?” Gerip: “Little sister, you..” Guljema: “If you don’t tell me, I won’t let you go.” Gerip: “Don’t be naughty.” Guljema: “Mother, look what he is doing..”</p>	

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<p><u>happiness also brings its worries. If you are in the garden of good fortune, don't forget that spring also has its autumn.</u></p> <p>Guljema! "Mother, sister Senem said to my brother 'You are Mejnun and I am Layla, you are Perhad and I am Shirin.' Who is Perhad?"</p> <p>Gerip: "Guljema!"</p> <p>Guljema! "Is it not true?.."</p> <p>Gerip: "If you don't hurry up, I will leave."</p> <p>Guljema! "Just wait a little, and I will be ready."</p> <p>Mihriwan remembers her husband's deathbed.</p>	<p><i>Mihriwan: "Don't delay him. You brother won't be able to get to the morning prayer on time."</i></p> <p>Guljema! "Mother, do you know that Senem said that brother is Perhad and she is Shirin."</p> <p>Gerip: "Sister!"</p> <p>Mihriwan: "<u>I'm afraid that the flower that is very beautiful is most likely to be picked. The sweetest fruit most easily drops from the tree. The most beautiful dream can be most easily awakened, and a good deed is most easily worn away.</u>"</p> <p>Looking at her handsome children, Mihriwan thinks sadly about her late husband, Hessen.</p>	
<p>Scene 24 (Flashback) – Hessen's residence Hessen has been shot in the back with a poisoned arrow. Young Gerip and Mihriwan are by his bed.</p> <p>Hessen (voice over Mihriwan's face, remembering): "<u>There is an old saying – 'When the oil runs out, the light is extinguished'</u>. The King agreed to marry his daughter to our son, but I worry whether, after I die, he will stick to the agreement? Aah!"</p> <p>Gerip: "Jaleddin has come to visit you".</p> <p>Jaleddin: "Greetings, Vezir Hessen"</p> <p>Hessen: "Greetings, my soul-mate. Mihriwan, show that arrow to Jaleddin."</p> <p>Mihriwan: Yes</p> <p>Gerip: "Father, will you drink some tea?"</p> <p>Hessen: "This poisoned arrow struck me from behind. Please give this to the King. To protect the country and the people, it is important that this</p>	<p>Scene 24 (Flashback) – Hessen's residence Hessen has been shot in the back with a poisoned arrow, and is on his deathbed. He strokes the head of young Gerip.</p> <p>Hessen: "Our ancestors had a saying – "Don't expect rain from a passing cloud". Even though the King made a betrothal between Senem and our son, after I leave this world, will he keep this agreement? That is very difficult to say.."</p> <p>Mihriwan: "Teacher Jaleddin has come to see you Prime Minister."</p> <p>Jaleddin: "Greetings, Vezir Hessen"</p> <p>Hessen: "Greetings, my old friend. Mihriwan, go and fetch that arrow."</p> <p>Gerip: "Father, do you want a drink?"</p> <p>Hessen: "No thank you"</p> <p>Jaleddin looks at the arrow. Hessen raises his head slightly.</p>	

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<p>should be investigated as soon as possible.” [Hessen dies]</p>	<p>Hessen: “This is the poisoned arrow that shot me from behind. Please give this to the King. Hopefully, as soon as possible good and bad will be made clear, to prevent a bad result” [Hessen dies.]</p>	
<p>Scene 25 Flashback continues. Vezir Hessen’s funeral</p> <p>King Abbas: “When Vezir Hessen was alive, he was my support in ruling the country. He was my sword <u>in defeating monsters</u>. He faced misfortune and passed away, causing me great worry. I will investigate, and punish severely the killer and other culprits.”</p>	<p>Scene 25 Flashback continues. Vezir Hessen’s funeral.</p> <p>Abbas: “Madame, my sympathies. Look after yourself. While Vezir Hessen was alive, he was my sharp sword <u>against outside enemies</u>, and he was my arm for internal affairs. Now that he is gone, I am very sad. Madame, believe me, I will find out the truth and punish the killer.”</p>	
<p>Scene 26 – Gerip’s home</p> <p>Mihrivan is weeping over her memories, but also smiling Guljema: “Mother, you are weeping..” Mihrivan: “I’m happy to be looking at you.” Guljema hugs her mother.</p>	<p>Scene 26 – the present, Gerip’s home</p> <p>Mihrivan is weeping, but also smiling Mihrivan: “I’m happy for you” Guljema hugs her mother.</p>	
<p>Scene 27: Inner court of the palace, summer day</p> <p>The King is looking at Queen Shemsibanu, who is crying.</p> <p>Abbas: “I can’t believe what you are saying, Shemshibanu! Such an embarrassment in the</p>	<p>Scene 27: Inner court of the palace, summer day</p> <p>The King is looking at Queen Shemsibanu, who is crying.</p> <p>Abbas: “I can’t believe what you are saying!” Hatice: “Abdullah himself saw it, your Majesty”</p>	<p>In the film, the embrace of Senem and Gerep in the garden is the major scandal that causes gossip. In the opera, the main scandal is about Jeleddin “teaching unsuitable knowledge to the youth”. Jeleddin has openly criticised the corruption of the Court</p>

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<p>Court.” Haticce: “Our concern is not just that.” Abbas: “What else?” Shemsibanu: “We have only one daughter, so whoever she marries will inherit the whole country. Abbas: “I know this” Haticce: “Gerip’s ancestors do not belong to our clan great King, so the throne is a serious matter.” Abbas: “Enough of this talk!” Shemsibanu: “Your majesty, you must not be soft on this matter!” Abbas: “Shemsibanu....” Shemsibanu: “Your majesty, my concern is that if they continue like this....?” Abbas: “Very well, from tomorrow, Senem may no longer attend the Medrese (school).</p>	<p>Shemsibanu: “In the palace, and before they are married! This is inolerable” Haticce: “Your Majesty, this is not the most important thing.” Abbas: “What else?” Shemsibanu: “We have only one daughter, so whoever she marries will inherit the position of the King. Abbas: “I know, I know..” Haticce: “Gerip’s family are not aristocrats of our kingdom (<i>khan guo</i>), so the country’s future will be affected.” Abbas: “Enough of this talk!” Shemsibanu: “Your majesty, you must be decisive!” Abbas: “Very well, from tomorrow, the Princess may no longer attend the medrese (school)</p>	<p>and encouraged his students to resist oppression.</p>
<p>Scene 28: Garden of the medrese It is a misty morning. Gerip waits in a domed, islamic-style round pavilion. Gerip sings a love song expressing his longing for Senem, and his suffering. Alim : Greetings, Gerip” Gerip: “Greetings” Alim: “I will go to the palace to find out what happened” Gerip: “Greetings mother Aghcha” Aghcha: “Son, dear Senem is waiting in the garden for you” Gerip: “I’ll go there”</p>	<p>Scene 28: Garden of the medrese Gerip sings a love song expressing his longing for Senem, and his suffering. Alim: “Greetings, friend” Gerip: “Greetings” Alim: “Don’t worry, there won’t be any trouble.” Gerip: “It is already three days that I haven’t seen her.” Alim: “I will go to the court to find out what happened.” Aghcha arrives with Gulbanu. Gerip meets them. Gerip: “Mother Aghcha.”</p>	

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<p>Aghcah: “Go, Gerip. I will wait for you at the Medrese.” Gerip: “Good” Alim: “Mother Aghcha, what has happened?” Aghcah: “Nothing, son. Let’s go and pay a visit to the Teacher.”</p>	<p>Aghcha: “Son, Princess Senem is waiting for you in the orchard.” Gerip: “Right – I’ll go!” Aghcha: “I will wait for you at the teacher’s library. Alim notices Aghcha’s ad expression Alim: “What happened, is there anything wrong?” Aghcha: “Nothing. Come with me to see Teacher”.</p>	
<p>Scene 29: The orchard Gerip: “Greetings, Senem my dear” Senem: “Greetings, dear Gerip.” Gerip: “What is going on? Tell me quickly” Senem: “Gerip, from now it will be very difficult for us to meet. My father has issued a decree to stop me coming to school. Today I came to see you, making the excuse that I had come to say farewell to our Teacher.” Senem gives Gerip a handkerchief embroidered with two roses Gerip: “What is this?” Senem: “<u>Take this, the double rose, so that we will never separate</u>” Gerip: “Don’t cry, Senemjan” Zapar runs out of a passageway, chased by soldiers.</p> <p>Gerip: “Zapar – what has happened?” Zapar: “Enemies are coming – quickly”</p> <p>Zapar runs away, climbs a wall and escapes.</p>	<p>Scene 29: The orchard Gerip: “Greetings, Senem my dear” Senem: “Greetings, dear Gerip.” Gerip: “What is going on? Tell me quickly” Senem: “Gerip, from now it will be very difficult for us to meet. My father has issued a decree to stop me coming to school. Today I came to see you, making the excuse that I had come to say farewell to our Teacher. This may be the last time we can meet.” Gerip: “Why?” Senem: “Geripjan, <u>I fear that in the garden of our love, an evil goshawk [cangying] has come.</u>” Gerip: “<u>Cruelty can tear apart the two joined roses, but our hearts forever cannot be separated.</u>” Suddenly, Zapar runs out of a passageway, chased by soldiers. Gerip: “Zapar!” Zapar: (panting): Enemies are coming – quickly..” Gerip points the way to Zapar, who athletically scales the wall and tree and gets away. Gerip: “Senemjan, let’s go. Aghcha is waiting for us at the Teacher’s house.</p>	

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<p>Scene 30: Abdullah comes in with guards (wearing pointed helmets)</p> <p>Abdullah: “I’m sorry, Senem – this is the King’s orders.” Senem: “What to the King’s orders have to do with me?” Abdullah: “Yes, I must disturb you, to secure this cursed one” Senem: “Don’t you dare. What are you doing?” Abdullah: “Senemjan, you should know that the King’s orders <u>apply to everybody.</u>” Senem: “Do you have a warrant?” Abdullah: “Well...” Senem: “All of you go away. I will talk to my Father.” Abdullah: “Very well, Princess”</p> <p>Abdullah and guards go away</p> <p>Gerip: “Senemjan, Aghcha is waiting at the Medrese”. Senem: “Gerip – it seems that some evil has grown in our garden of love” Gerip: “Yes...”</p>	<p>Scene 30. Medrese garden pavillion – a summer day.</p> <p>Abdullah comes to arrest Gerip with a group of guards. Gerip: “What are you going to do?” Abdullah: “You still don’t know your limits?” Soldiers surround Gerip. Abdullah: “Excuse me, this is the King’s orders. Senem: “What has the King’s order to do with me?” Abdullah: “Yes, I must trouble you.. Guards! Take this arrogant outlaw away.” Senem: “Don’t you dare!” Abdullah: “Princess, you should know that the King’s order is <u>like a mountain.</u>” (immovable) Senem: “Where is your warrant of arrest?” Abdullah cannot produce a warrant Gerip: “You are shameless” Senem: “You can all go – I shall talk to my father myself” Abdullah, unwillingly: “Your servant will obey you.”</p>	
<p>Scene 31 A hall in the palace court. Girls dance, the King plays chess. Abdullah enters.</p> <p>Abdullah “Your Majesty, I have brought bad news”</p>	<p>Scene 31 the inner palace court, inside a pavillion. In the King’s court, King Abbas and Vezir Xiawazi are seated. Abdullah “Your Majesty, I have brought unexpected</p>	

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<p>Abbas: “What is it?” Abdullah: “The criminal Zapar has run away from prison.” Abbas: “Really?” Abdullah: “A traitor helped him escape”. Abbas: “Who is the traitor?” Abdullah: “I am reluctant to tell you. Abbas: “Say it” Abdullah: “Gerip is the one who helped him escape”.</p> <p>King jumps up and scatters the chess pieces in anger.</p> <p>Senem: “Your majesty the King, my father, don’t listen to this gossip. It was I who helped him, because Zapar is my class-mate” [Zamire] “Senem, you are talking nonsense. Abdullah: “The King’s Palace Guards are witness that is is Gerip who helped Zapar.” Senem: “Your Majesty my Father, Gerip is not guilty”. Abbas: “Aghcha!” Aghcha: “Yes, your majesty”. Abbas: “From now on, Senem is not allowed to leave the palace without my permission”. Aghcha: “Yes your Majesty” Abbas: “Abdullah Shapoor!” Abdullah: “Your majesty!” Abbas: “Arrest Gerip immediately”</p>	<p>news.” Abbas: “What is it?” Abdullah: “The criminal Zapar has run away from prison.” Abbas: “Really?” Abdullah: “A traitor helped him escape”. Abbas: “Who is the traitor?” Abdullah: “I am reluctant to tell you. <u>Shawazi</u>: “Say quickly!” Abdullah: “It is Gerip”.</p> <p>Senem: “Your majesty the King, my father, don’t listen to this gossip. Gerip is innocent.” Abdullah: “Honourable Princess, it that is the case, then how did Zapar escape?” Senem: “I let him go.” Abbas: “Senem, what nonsense are you talking?” Senem: “Your Majesty my father, Zapar is my classmate. That is why I let him go. Please forgive my crime.” Abdullah: “Your majesty, the Guards will witness that Zapar was helped by Gerip.” Senem: “Father King...” Abbas: “Quiet! Aghcha – take the princess back. From now on she is not allowed to set foot outside the palace without my permission.” Aghcha: “Yes your Majesty”</p>	
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Abdullah: “Yes sir”.	Abbas: “Abdullah Shapoor!” Abdullah: “Your majesty!” Abbas: “Arrest Gerip immediately”	
<p>Scene 32 Outside Gerip’s family front gate. Gerip is being arrested, while GuljemaI tries to hang on to him.</p> <p>GuljemaI “Brother! Brother!”</p> <p>GuljemaI is knocked aside and falls down.</p> <p>Gerip: “GuljemaI!” Mihriwan: “Daughter GuljemaI, open your eyes, get up!” GuljemaI: “Mother, where is my brother” Mihriwan: “Let’s go to see Molla JelaIeddin”</p>	<p>Scene 32 Outside Gerip’s family front gate Security officers are trying to arrest Gerip. The Gerip’s household are weeping. His sister GuljemaI begs for his release, clinging to the officers, but Abdullah cruelly kicks her. As Gerip is being taken away, his voice can be heard calling “Mother”, fading into the distance. His mother suggests going with her daughter to see Ulema JelaIeddin to ask for advice.</p>	
<p>Scene 33 At the library of the Medrese</p> <p>JelaIeddin recites:</p> <p><i><u>The sea of knowledge extends far into the distance</u></i> <i><u>Each drop of that sea is more valuable than kevser⁷⁴⁶</u></i> <i><u>He who throws himself into the sea of knowledge</u></i> <i><u>Will find innumerable treasures</u></i></p>	<p>Scene 33 At the library of the medrese A background chorus is singing about bad fate. GuljemaI arrives with her mother at JelaIeddin’s house. JelaIeddin recites:</p> <p><i>In the cosmos, life is a nightmare</i> <i>You promote cunning’s words and good looks</i> <i>Good people face humiliation and hardship</i> <i>Corruption and oppression of the powerful is tolerated</i> <i>The cries and sighs of the ordinary people are ignored</i></p>	

⁷⁴⁶ kevser – legendary water of Heaven

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<p><i><u>The heart of an ignoramus is blind</u></i> <i><u>Is like a bone with its marrow drawn out</u></i> <i><u>Gain knowledge, have convictions</u></i> <i><u>Let the star of wisdom brighten your heart.</u></i></p> <p>Guljemal arrives with her mother at Jelalleddin’s house.</p> <p>Jelalleddin: “Madame Mihrivan”. Mihrivan: “Greetings” Guljemal: “Master, Abdullah Shapoor has arrested my brother” Jelalleddin: “Why?” Guljemal: “They say Gerip helped Zapar to escape” [student]: “Why did they arrest Gerip, if he is innocent?” Jelalleddin: “Because he released a criminal.” Mihrivan: “Please think of some way to help him” Jelalleddin: “There is no other way than to take the marriage agreement made between the King and Vezir Hessen during his lifetime.” Mihrivan: “Take the marriage agreement?” Jelalleddin: “Yes, don’t hesitate”</p>	<p><i>The low are wearing the crown of roses.</i> <i>Scheming cliques try to get everything</i> <i>Is there no distinction between black and white?</i></p> <p>Jelalleddin: “Madame Mihrivan”. Mihrivan: “Greetings” Guljemal: “Master, Abdullah Shapoor has arrested my brother, please save him.” Jelalleddin: “Why?” Mihrivan: “Because Gerip allowed Zapar to escape.” Student: “Gerip is right, why should they arrest him?” Jelalleddin: “Because he released a criminal.” Mihrivan: “Teacher Jelalleddin, please think of a way.” Jelalleddin: “There is no other way than to take the marriage agreement made between the King and Vezir Hessen during his lifetime.” Mihrivan: “Take the marriage agreement?” Jelalleddin: “Yes, this is the only way.”</p>	
<p>Scene 34 In the King’s court</p> <p>Abbas: “Gerip, do you know your crime?” Gerip, raises head and says in a tone of suffering: “Your Majesty, Father King – I don’t know what</p>	<p>Scene 34 In the King’s court</p> <p>Abbas: “Gerip, do you know your crime?” Gerip, raises head and says in a tone of suffering: “The child doesn’t know what crime he has</p>	

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<p>crime I have committed”.</p> <p>Abbas: “If that is the case, how did that criminal Zapar escape?”</p> <p>Gerip: “I let him go, Father King. <u>Zapar released his own father from prison. His father Sidik was also innocent.</u>”</p> <p>Abbas: “What? Turning against the King, and questioning his rulings, is not a crime?? You rebellious cursed one, disturbing the Court, releasing the criminal Zapar!... Executioner!”</p> <p>Executioner: Yes, your Majesty”.</p> <p>Abbas: “Take the head of this rebel”.</p> <p>Jelaleddin comes in with Mihrivan.</p> <p>Jelaleddin: “Be patient, compassionate King”.</p> <p>Abbas: “Jelaleddin – you ??”</p> <p>Jelaleddin: “Your Majesty, Gerip should not be killed.”</p> <p>Mihrivan shows the King the marriage contract.</p> <p>Mihrivan: “Your Majesty, for the sake of this marriage contract and the misfortune of Vezir Hessen, please forgive Gerip.”</p> <p><u>A courtier passes the marriage contract to Kasim,</u> who gives it to the King.</p> <p>Shawazi: “For security, it would be good to get rid of this agreement as early as possible.”</p> <p>The King takes the contract and tears it up.</p> <p><u>Mihrivan:</u> “It is easy to tear up a paper, but it is not easy to disguise the truth.”</p>	<p>committed”.</p> <p>Abbas: “You are very bold! How did that criminal Zapar escape?”</p> <p>Gerip: “I was the one who let him go.”</p> <p>Abbas: “Men, take this traitor and kill him!”</p> <p>Jelaleddin: “Stop!”</p> <p>Jelaleddin comes in with Mihrivan.</p> <p>Jelaleddin: “Your Majesty, Gerip is innocent.”</p> <p>Abbas: “What ! He created disorder in the palace, he went against tradition, he looked down on the King’s law, and he let a criminal go – do you think this is not a crime?”</p> <p>Jelaleddin: “Where is the proof of all this? You say he has created disorder in the Court – where is the proof? You say he let the criminal go – who is the real criminal? Is it Zapar? Is it his father Sidik? No, the real criminals are not those two.”</p> <p>The King is taken aback. Mihrivan shows the King the marriage contract.</p> <p>Mihrivan: “Your Majesty, for the sake of this marriage contract and the misfortune of Vezir Hessen, please forgive Gerip.”</p> <p>Shawazi takes the marriage contract and gives it to the King.</p> <p>Shawazi: “To avoid even greater disasters in future, this contract should have been destroyed a long time ago.”</p> <p>The King takes the contract and tears it up.</p> <p><u>Jelaleddin:</u> “A contract can be torn up, but the truth cannot be changed”.</p>	
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<p>Abbas: “<u>Oh my God – all of them are rebels.</u> Take them away!”</p> <p>Kasim: “Wait, Your Majesty, it is difficult to distinguish black and white when one is angry! At a time like this, everyone is in a happy mood. If blood is spilt, it is not right before God. People might also feel uneasy.”</p> <p><i>Shawazi: “Kasim Vezir, this punishment will be a good example for the population.”</i></p> <p>Jelaleddin: “Your Majesty, Gerip and his mother are the dependents of the late Vezir Hessen, who as long as he lived was very loyal to you. Today, the marriage agreement has been torn up. If on top of that they are executed, it could start some trouble among the population.”</p> <p>Abbas: “HmMMM”</p> <p>Perman: “Your Majesty, I suggest that instead of execution, you could exile Gerip and his family. That might avoid such trouble, and ensure peace for the King.”</p> <p>Abbas: “Shawazi, Vezir – what do you think?”</p> <p>Shawazi: “I think that what Perman says is reasonable, your Majesty. I suggest we take his advice.”</p> <p>Abbas: “Perman!”</p> <p>Perman: “Your Majesty”</p> <p>Abbas: “Let this be as you say. I authorise you to carry this out.”</p>	<p>Abbas: “Take them away!”</p> <p>Kasim: “Your Majesty, please don’t execute him!”</p> <p>Abbas is surprised at Kasim’s intervention.</p> <p>Abbas: “Why?”</p> <p>Kasim: “Because it is a festival season and everyone is celebrating. When one is angry, it is difficult to see right and wrong. If you execute someone unjustly during this festive time, the people will be discontented.”</p> <p>Jelaleddin: “Gerip is the son of former Vezir Hessen, who while he was alive was very loyal to you. Today you have torn up the marriage arrangement – and if on top of that you kill his only son, if you do this how are their friends and relatives going to think? How will you hold the hearts of the people?”</p> <p>Shawazi scowls.</p> <p>Perman: “Your majesty, instead of killing them, I suggest that the whole family should be exiled. This way would be most effective.”</p> <p>Abbas: “What do you think, Shawazi?”</p> <p>Shawazi: “Since Kasim and Perman have spoken, probably it is the right thing to do.”</p> <p>Abbas (to other officials): “What do you think?”</p> <p>Officials: “Yes, your majesty.”</p> <p>Abbas: “Kasim, why did you not say anything?”</p> <p>Kasim: “Your Majesty, when events have come to this point, your official has nothing to add.”</p> <p>Abbas: “Oh God, your compassionate eye should see the difficulty I am placed in!”</p>	
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	<p>Abbas: “Perman, since I have taken your advice on this, you take responsibility for the action.” Perman: “Yes Your Majesty, I will do it” <u>Abbas: “Come back.”</u> <u>Perman: “Yes sir?”</u> <u>Abbas: “Take them just outside of the borders, but don’t do them any harm”.</u></p>	
<p>Scene 35 The interior of the inner palace. Senem is lying face down on her bed.</p> <p>Aghcha: “Senemjan, don’t upset yourself like this” Senem: “Mother Aghcha, I don’t want to live!” Aghcha: “ Dear Senem, be patient. Every Spring has its rainy days” Senem: “I would do anything for Gerip. Without him, life is meaningless for me.” Aghcha: “Don’t say that, my dear. There will be a Spring, and there will be good days ahead.”</p> <p>Herald announces : “By order of the Great King, Gerip and his family, for rebelling against the King, are exiled.”</p> <p>Senem runs through the palace and garden and climbs the stairs to the top of the palace wall. Outside, Gerip and family are on their way to exile.</p> <p>Senem: “Geripjan!” Gerip: “Senemjan!”</p>	<p>Scene 35 The interior of the forbidden palace</p> <p>Herald announces : “All listen - By order of the King, Gerip, his mother, and his sister, are exiled because of their rebellion.”</p> <p>Senem: “Mother, I really don’t want to live.” Aghcha: “My dear Senem, the old saying says “The storm that blows strongly passes quickly. The heaviest Winter passes to a Spring. You must keep your mind open.” Senem: “My Spring , Gerip. If he is not there, this Court is like a prison to me.” Gulbanu: “Princess Senem, don’t cry too much – you will harm your health.” Senem: “Geripjan!...”</p>	

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<p>Scene 36 On a small road outside the city – summer day.</p> <p>Gerip’s family are on the road to exile, accompanied by Perman and his guard. Bystanders are farewelling them. Gerip, in a prison cart, sings that so long as he lives, he intends to return. Senem is heard singing that she will wait for Gerip until she dies.</p>	<p>Scene 36 On a small road outside the city – summer day.</p> <p>Gerip’s family are on the road to exile, accompanied by Perman and his guard. Bystanders are farewelling them. Gerip, in a prison cart, sings that so long as he lives, he intends to return. Senem is heard singing that she will wait for Gerip until she dies.</p>	
<p>Scene 37 Kasim’s House sitting room</p> <p>Kasim is reading. His son Alim enters hurriedly:</p> <p>Alim: Father! It seems that when Perman takes Gerip and family as far as the Eagle’s Mouth, he is going to get rid of them!”</p> <p>Kasim: “Where did you hear this?”</p> <p>Alim: “One of the guards accompanying Gerip told someone.”</p> <p>Kasim: “<u>He must have some backing, otherwise he would not be able to be so bold (big headed).</u>”</p> <p>Alim: “Father, we must do something about this”</p> <p>Kasim: “Son, can you manage it?”</p> <p>Alim: “Yes”</p> <p>Kasim: Do you know the short cut to the Eagle’s Mouth?”</p> <p>Alim: “Yes”</p> <p>Kasim: “Bring my great coat.”</p>	<p>Scene 37 Kasim’s House sitting room</p> <p>Kasim is reading. His son Alim enters hurriedly:</p> <p>Alim: Father! When Perman takes Gerip and family as far as the Eagle’s Mouth, he is going to kill them all!”</p> <p>One of soldiers accompanying Gerip has reported this to Alim.</p> <p>Kasim: “<u>What a savage and poisonous heart!</u>”</p> <p>Alim: “Father, we should think how to save them”.</p> <p>Kasim: “Can you manage my spirited horse? Do you know the way? Then take some trusted men and get to the Eagle’s Mouth before dawn.”</p>	

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<p>Alim: “Yes” Kasim: “Let’s go. Take some of my guards. You must reach the Eagle’s mouth before dawn. Sidik: “Quick!” Alim: “Yes”.</p>		
	<p>Scene 38: The Eagles Mouth Alim arrives at the Eagles mouth on horseback, dressed in white robes and turban with a feather, like a warrior horseman.</p>	
	<p>Scene 39: A mountain valley Alim collects the group of horsemen, galloping across the grassland.</p>	
<p>Scene 40: On the mountain-side</p> <p>Alim and some other riders are masked in white cloaks and hoods. They intercept the party led by Perman who are taking Gerip (in a cage) and his mother and sister (on camels) into exile.</p> <p>Perman: “Who are you?” Alim: “What are you planning to do with these people?” Perman: “Great hero, I am Perman, a commander of the army of King Abbas. I am not willingly hurting these people. This is the order of Vezir Shawazi. I have no choice but to do what I was instructed.” Alim: “Listen! <i>‘Whoever unnecessarily bullies people, will</i></p>	<p>Scene 40: On the mountain-side</p> <p>Alim and a group or horsemen, their faces covered, surround the cart that is taking Gerip and the camels on which Guljema and Mihrivan are riding. Perman: “What do you want?” Alim uses his dagger to cut the sword from Perman’s belt, and it falls. Before Perman realises what is happening, two of the masked warriors sandwich him between their horses. Alim points at Gerip’s family. Alim: “What are you planning to do with these people?” Perman kneels, begging, saying he is just following the orders of Shawazi. Alim tells Perman to go back and tell the King’s Ministers that “Those who hurt others hurt themselves, and those who harm others harm</p>	

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<p><i>in the end suffer worry and regret'</i></p> <p>Tell your King and your Vezir this.” Perman: “Yes excellency, I will tell them”. Alim: “Release them” Perman: “Yes sir” Gerip: “My saviour, I wish I could know your name. I will never forget your compassion.” Alim: “Good hearted people are not safe from disaster. Have a good trip, and be careful along the way.” Mihrivan: “Thankyou, my children. May you live long, amen.” Alim (to Perman): “What are you waiting for – get moving” Perman: “Yes, yes, excellency...”</p>	<p>themselves.” Alim forces Perman to open the cage door and let Gerip come out. Gerip thanks Alim, and Alim replies “Those who do good face many calamities. Go quickly, we may see you later”. Mihrivan: “Saviour, accept my prayers. May God protect you and give you happiness. Amen.” Gerip: “Good bye.” Alim to Perman: “What are you waiting for, get going. Alim, as camels depart, to himself: “Look after yourselves.”</p>	
<p>Scene 41: Room of the inner palace.</p> <p>Senem: “Geripjan...” Gulbanu: “There is good news. At the Eagle’s Mouth some people came and saved Gerip. This talk has spread through the Court” Senem: “I wonder if it is true?” Gulbanu: “I think it is true. All the guards who went with Perman are saying that.” Senem: “Dear Gerip and Mihrivan, where are you..”</p>	<p>Scene 41: Inner room of the forbidden palace.</p> <p>Gulbanu: “Things have changed in the palace! People say that at the Eagle’s Mouth some mysterious people came and saved Gerip. The soldiers who returned with Perman are all talking about it” Aghcha: “Dear Senem, so long as he is alive, he will return to you..” Senem: “Dear Senem and Mihrivan, where are you?..”</p>	

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<p>Scene 42: Gerip and his party are seen trekking across sandy deserts and mountains.</p>	<p>Scene 42: The Gobi Desert Gerip and his family continue their travel by camel. There is sand and wind. Guljema and Mihrivan are holding each other closely.</p>	
<p>Scene 43: A pine forest – a winter’s day Gerip is walking into the forest with a staff and carrying a jewelled sword. Searching for food, Gerip thinks he sees a rabbit. He chases it and faints on the ground.</p>	<p>Scene 43: A pine forest – a winter’s day Gerip is walking into the forest with a staff and carrying a jewelled sword. Searching for food, Gerip thinks he sees a rabbit and tries to hit it with his stick, but finds it is just a patch of withered grass. In his imagination, the rabbit reappears. He chases it again, and faints on the dead grass. Hallucinating, he hugs the tussock Gerip: “Mother, here is some food.”</p>	
<p>Scene 44: The entrance to a cave Mihrivan and Guljema have made a fire in the cave, and are waiting for Gerip. Guljema: “Mother where is my brother?” Mihrivan: “In such a winter season, it is not easy to find food..”</p>	<p>Scene 44: The entrance to a cave Mihrivan and Guljema have made a fire in the cave, and are waiting for Gerip. Mihrivan: “In such a winter season, it is not easy to find food..”</p>	
<p>Scene 45: In the forest - winter An impressive, warrior-like woman chases a fox, and shoots it with a bow. The fox falls on the snow. The woman’s two attendant horsemen ride off and collect the fox. They find Gerip, who gets up and tries to fight them.</p>	<p>Scene 45: In the forest - winter An impressive, warrior-like woman chases a fox, and shoots it with a bow. The fox falls on the snow. The woman’s two attendant horsemen ride off and collect the fox.</p>	<p>Dilalem does not exist in the Opera. In place of her role (representing external support aiding the cause of good) the opera has Shemshi, who is a member of Abdullah and Shawazi’s faction at the Court.</p>

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<p>Soldier: “Your excellency Commander, it seems there is a stranger in our territory”</p> <p>The woman leader approaches on her horse. Dilalem watches Gerip fighting well and trying to escape from the soldiers, but he is surrounded. The soldier in command, <u>Batur</u>, wears an eye patch.</p> <p>Dilalem: (laughing) “Can you three or four not manage one person? Don’t let him escape!” Dilalem: “<u>Batur</u>, treat him as a guest”.</p>	<p>“You got it, Your Majesty” Gerip, lying in the forest, is woken by the sounds. Before he realises what is happening, he is surrounded by several men with swords. He is captured. The woman leader approaches on her horse. Dilalem “Who is this”. Soldiers: “We have just now captured him” Dilalem watches Gerip trying to escape from the soldiers, but he is surrounded. Dilalem “Can you three or four not manage one person! Don’t let him escape!” Dilalem: “Treat him as a guest”.</p>	
<p>Scene 46: A village in the wilderness – winter</p> <p>Mihrivan and Guljemal are hiding by the wall of a ruin. Two soldiers come.</p> <p>Soldier: “Mother, where do you come from? Don’t be afraid, we are Sidik’s people from the mountain. Guljemal: “Father Sidik?!” Soldier: “Yes, we are Sidik’s people of the mountains. Mihrivan: “Did you notice a young man out hunting?” Soldier: “Who?” Mihrivan: “My son Gerip” Soldier: “Geripjan? Then you are the wife of Vezir Hessen? Thank God we have found you. Come with us.”</p>	<p>Scene 46: A village in the wilderness – winter</p> <p>Mihrivan and Guljemal are hiding by a dilapidated wall. Two soldiers come.</p> <p>Soldier: “Don’t be afraid, we are Sidik’s people from the mountain.” Guljemal: “Sidik!” Mihrivan: “Did you notice anyone out hunting?” Soldier: “Who” Mihrivan: “Gerip” Soldier: “Are you the wife of Vezir Hessen?” Mihrivan: “Yes” Soldiers: “Thank God we have found you. Come with us”</p>	

1. Translated from Uyghur version of released film	2. Translated from Chinese published version	3. Opera script differences from film script
<p>Scene 47 In front of the mountain cave where Sidik lives</p> <p>Ironworker: “We want Sidik to come and look at the new sabres we have made”.</p> <p>Aybuve: “He went up there”</p> <p>Worker: “I’ll go and look for him”</p> <p>[someone]: “Zapar, who is coming?”</p> <p>Zapar: “Guljermal”</p> <p>Aybuve: Dear daughter, and sister Mihrivan, are you well?”</p> <p>Guljermal: “Brother Zapar!” (Guljermal hugs Zapar)</p> <p>Sidik: “Ask the honoured guests into the house. Greetings, mother Mihrivan”</p> <p>Mihrivan: “I did not imagine I would see you”.</p> <p>Sidik: “I did not imagine King Abbas would not stick to his word, <u>and make people suffer like this</u>”.</p> <p>Mihrivan: “All of this is the deception of Shawazi and Hatice”.</p> <p>Sidik: “It is good that you escaped from them. Honourable Mother Mihrivan, our past has been destroyed by disreputable monsters, but God willing we will find the killer of Vezir Hessen and take revenge.”</p> <p>Mihrivan: “I hope God grants you such wisdom and power.”</p>	<p>Scene 47 In front of the mountain cave where Sidik lives</p> <p>Fires are burning all over the hillside, as the mountain people are beating iron into armaments. A few young people are practising martial arts. One of the young ironworkers approaches the cave and calls Sidik.</p> <p>Ironworker: “We want Sidik to come and look at the new sabres we have made”.</p> <p>He goes up the hill looking for Sidik. On the hillside, someone tells Zapar that someone is coming. Zapar recognises that it is Guljermal, and runs down to meet her. Everyone happily greets Mihrivan and Guljermal. Aybuve (wife of Sidik) and Mihrivan hug each other with tears of joy.</p> <p>Sidik appears and asks them to come inside quickly. Guljermal and Zapar enjoy each other’s company, and the parents observe happily.</p> <p>Sidik: “We never thought that Abbas would become one who forgets his promises”.</p> <p>Mihrivan: “It is all the fault of Shawazi and Hatice”.</p> <p>Sidik: “Honourable madam, as sure as God is in the sky, I swear that I will bring back the sword of justice to those who have destroyed good order that Hessen had brought to the people.”</p> <p>Mihrivan: “I trust that God gives you the power and intelligence to do it.”</p> <p>Guljermal: “Uncle Sidik – the most important thing is to save my brother”</p> <p>Sidik: “Don’t worry my child – we will find him</p>	<p>Sidik does not exist in the Opera. The role of leader of the Mountain people is taken by Dawut, who is the former groom of Vezir Hessen.</p>

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<p>Guljamel: “Father Sidik, we must find my brother Gerip.” Sidik: “Daughter, we will find your brother. Wherever he is, we will find him.”</p>	<p>wherever he is”.</p>	
<p>Scene 48 The leader’s underground chamber.</p> <p>Gerip is lying semi-conscious on the warm kang. It seems he has been washed and cared for. A servant, Kamer, comforts him with a wet towel. Dilalem comes down the staircase, finely dressed.</p> <p>Dilalem: “How is he?” Kamer: “He is asleep Gerip: (half asleep) “Mother...mother...where are you” Kamer: “He’s been saying that all night.” Dilalem: “When people are in difficulty or in happiness, they always call out for their mother”. Kamer: “Sometimes he calls for Senem.” Dilalem: “Senemjan...?” Kamer to Gerip: “The princess has come to see you” Dilalem: “Kamer, quickly call a doctor.” Kamer: “Yes”</p>	<p>Scene 48 The leader’s underground chamber.</p> <p>Gerip is lying semi-conscious on the warm kang. It seems he has been washed and cared for. In a dream, Gerip calls out the name of Senem. A servant, Kamer, comforts him with a wet towel. Dilalem appears on the staircase, holding her dress in all her glory. Dilalem: “How is he?” Gerip: “Mother...mother...” Dilalem: “When people are happy or in pain, they call out for their mother”. Kamer: “Sometimes he calls for Senem.” Dilalem reacts thoughtfully, and asks Kamer to call for a doctor.</p>	

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Scene 49: Outside Dilalem’s fortress. <u>A wolf is heard howling</u> , and a figure moves toward the fortress walls in the dim light.	Scene 49: On the walls of the old fortress. Someone is prowling around in the dark outside the wall in the moonlight.	
Scene 50: A hooded figure climb the walls and clubs a drunken guard. He lifts his hood to reveal it is Zapar. He takes keys and a sword from the unconscious guard.	Scene 50: The old fortress, a ground level corner. A man with an eyepatch comes out of a room, humming. A shadow appears and hits the one-eyed person with a stick, knocking them out. The shadow reveals himself as Zapar and takes some keys from the man knocked down, as well as Gerip’s jewelled sword.	
<p>Scene 51: Dilalem’s dungeon</p> <p>Zapar: “Is there anyone here called Gerip?” Prisoner: “ There is no such person here.” Zapar “Is there any other dungeon here?” Prisoner: “This is the only one we know of”. Zapar: “Run away, quickly!”</p> <p>Zapar opens the dungeon doors and releases all the prisoners, then sets fire to the straw.</p>	<p>Scene 51: The dungeon</p> <p>Zapar: “Is there anyone here called Gerip?” Prisoner: “ There is no such person here.” Zapar “Is there any other dungeon here?” Guard: “This is the only one we know of”. Zapar: “Run away, quickly!”</p> <p>Zapar opens the dungeon doors and releases all the prisoners, then sets fire to the straw.</p>	
<p>Scene 52: The leader’s apartment, upstairs.</p> <p>Dilalem sitting in front of her dressing table. She talks to herself. Dilalem: “Senem must be very pretty...God! What is happening to me!”</p>	<p>Scene 52: The leaders apartment, upstairs.</p> <p>Dilalem sitting in front of her dressing table. She says to herself. Dilalem: “Senem must be very pretty...God! What is happening to me!”</p>	

1. Translated from Uyghur version of released film	2. Translated from Chinese published version	3. Opera script differences from film script
<p>Kamer: “Princess, Princess! Bad News! Dilalem: “What happened?” Kamer: “Someone has set fire to the prison.” Dilalem: “Who did it?” Kamer: “According a prisoner who was caught, it is one of the mountain brigands, who came looking for Gerip.” Dilalem: “A Mountain thief who came to find Gerip?? What about Gerip himself?” Kamer: “He asked me to tell you that he is grateful that you saved his life.” Dilalem: “What is he doing?” Kamer: “He is sleeping”.</p>	<p>Kamer, her servant, runs in to report that someone looking for Gerip has set fire to the prison, but Gerip is safe in her house.</p> <p>Dilalem: “What is he doing?” Kamer: “He is still sleeping”.</p>	
<p>Scene 53: Inside Sidik’s cave.</p> <p>Sidik is looking at the jewelled sword that Zapar brought back with him. Sidik: “He must be in the Old Fortress”. Zapar: “What” Sidick: “This is the sword that I made for Vezir Hessen when I was young. Zapar: “If that’s the case, then Gerip must be...”. Sidik: “Don’t tell Mihrivan about this yet.” Zapar: “Yes sir” Sidik: “May God protect Gerip. Take this grain to Mihrivan now. It is almost Spring. Look after them. Zapar: “Yes sir”</p>	<p>Scene 53: Inside Sidik’s cave.</p> <p>Sidik is looking at the jewelled sword that Zapar brought back with him. Sidik: “He must be in the Old Fortress”. Zapar: “What” Sidick: “This is the sword that I made for Hessen when I was young. So he must be...”. Zapar: “If that’s the case, then Gerip must be...”. Sidik: “Don’t tell Mihrivan about this yet.” Zapar: “Yes sir” Sidik: “May God protect Gerip. Take this grain to Mihrivan now. It is almost Spring. Look after them. Zapar: “Yes sir”</p>	

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<p>Scene 54: The Mountain Valley – Mihrivan’s house.</p> <p>Guljemal is feeding chickens. Guljemal: “Zapar brother, did you find my brother?” Zapar: “Greetings, mother Mihrivan” Mihrivan: “Welcome, son. We are being a burden for you.” Zapar: “No, my Father sent me to visit you” Mihrivan: “Thank you very much for your compassion.” Zapar: “You are welcome.” Guljemal: “Zapar brother, do you think my brother has gone to the city of King Abbas?” Zapar looks up to the sky at a flock of migrating birds flying, but doesn’t answer.</p>	<p>Scene 54: The Mountain Valley – Mihrivan’s house.</p> <p>Guljemal holds a container and Zapar comes with a bag of grain. Guljemal: “Did you find my brother?” Zapar: “No” Guljemal: “Do you think my brother has gone to the city of King Abbas?” Zapar looks up to the sky, but doesn’t answer.</p>	
	<p>Scene 55 The thaw Ice is melting and birds are beginning to come from the south.</p>	
<p>Scene 56: An upstairs room. Spring night</p> <p>Dilalem stands by the window, looking at the moon, and listening to a report from the maid.</p> <p>Maid: “According to my investigation, Gerip is the son of Vezir Hessen. His mother and sister are now living as refugees in Sidik’s mountain community.</p>	<p>Scene 56: An upstairs room. Spring night</p> <p>Dilalem stands by the window, looking at the moon, and listening to a report from the housekeeper.</p> <p>Housekeeper: “According to my investigation, Gerip is the son of Vezir Hessen. His mother and sister are now living as refugees in Sidik’s mountain community.”</p>	

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<p>Dilalem: “They were exiled for the crime of rebellion?” Maid: “Yes”. Dilalem: “You can go.” Maid: Yes”</p> <p>The sounds of music come from the window, and Dilalem looks out.</p> <p>Dilalem (to herself): “Geripjan.”</p>	<p>Dilalem: “They were exiled for the crime of rebellion” Housekeeper: “Yes”. The sounds of music come from the window, and Dilalem looks out.</p>	
<p>Scene 57: Dilalem’s back garden.</p> <p>Court girls are dancing, music playing, everyone happy.</p>	<p>Scene 57: Dilalem’s back garden.</p> <p>Court girls are dancing, music playing, everyone happy. Gerip sits quietly to one side, looking on.</p> <p>Dilalem looks at him.. Dilalem: “Poor dear Gerip...”</p>	
	<p>Scene 58 The same</p> <p>Dilalem appears at the door, the dancing court ladies stop and bow to her. She tells them to take a rest, and they leave. Gerip greets her. Dilalem: “Sit down. <u>Your father used to come here often to share the joy of Spring with us</u>”. Gerip is surprised, and gets a faraway look. Dilalem: “What is the problem? <u>You don’t want to share Spring’s joy with me?</u>” Gerip looks at her with a painful smile..</p>	

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<p>Scene 59 The same</p> <p>Gerip is playing a musical instrument, sitting by himself on a bench in the garden. Dilalem approaches.</p> <p>Dilalem: “Geripjan. <u>Gerip: “Oh, its you. Come, your Majesty”</u> <u>Dilalem: “Don’t call me that. I’m an ordinary girl.”</u> <u>Gerip: “An ordinary girl??”</u> <u>Dilalem: “You think I don’t seem like one?”</u> <u>Gerip [unconsciously] “Senem!...”</u> <u>Gerip: “Come, sit down Princess.</u> Dilalem: “Do you think there is only one Senem in the world? No, she caused you exile and many sufferings. I can give you love and power, and make you happy”. Gerip: “Your Majesty Princess...” Dilalem: “Gerip, do you think I was born only to command? Do you think I could not warm your heart, like the Spring?” Gerip: “Your excellency, you are a flower of the world of beauty. Probably you are warmer than the Spring. <u>“Don’t you think that someone like you who had grown beautifully in your own land can find a suitable person?”</u> Dilalem does not answer. Gerip: <u>“He is in the land where you grew up”</u> Dilalem: <u>“Are you talking about my own tribe?”</u></p>	<p>Scene 59: Same garden Gerip sits by the lake, thinking, looking at his inverted reflection in the water, and calling out “Senemjan”. Dilalem finds Gerip in the garden.</p> <p>Dilalem (painfully): “Dear Gerip..” Gerip: “Oh, it’s you” Dilalem is pale, and says quietly: “Don’t think that Senem is the only one under the sky. There is also me, Dilalem. Senem only gave you pain, but I can give you love and power, and make you happy”. Gerip: “Your Majesty, love is painful” Dilalem: “Gerip, do you think I only deserve to be a leader? Do you think I could not warm your heart, like the Spring?” Gerip: “Your excellency, you are like the Spring, only more beautiful. <u>But you lived in your own land for twenty years. Why do you think that you didn’t find love?”</u> Dilalem does not answer. Gerip: “Your majesty – <u>leave your wealth and power, and go to pursue your love, where your dynasty and the sunset come together”</u> Dilalem: <u>“Are you talking about my people?”</u> Gerip: “Your majesty, would you like me to tell you about Senem? Even though she is a beautiful princess with wealth and power, she loved me as a poor orphan. Because of me, probably she will be</p>	
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1. Translated from Uyghur version of released film	2. Translated from Chinese published version	3. Opera script differences from film script
<p>Gerip: “Your majesty, would you like me to tell you about Senem? She gave me, an orphan, her love, by giving up her own throne and crown. Because of this, probably she will live in confinement.”</p> <p>Dilalem: “Gerip, what do you want to do from here on..”</p> <p>Gerip: “To tell you the truth, I am going to escape..”</p> <p>Dilalem: “What for??”</p> <p>Gerip doesn’t understand.</p> <p>Dilalem: “I will open the city gate and farewell you..”</p>	<p>confined in her palace all her life.”</p> <p>The two stand quietly for a while. The light shines on the lake.</p> <p>Dilalem: “Gerip, what do you want to do from here on..”</p> <p>Gerip: “I’m not going to hide it from you – I am going to escape..”</p> <p>Dilalem: “What for??”</p> <p>Gerip doesn’t understand.</p> <p>Dilalem: “I will open the city gate and farewell you..”</p>	
<p>Scenes 60-63: Gerip leaves the old fortress and is seen travelling through the landscape on horseback. He comes to the cave where he had left his mother and sister and finds it deserted. He calls out loudly for his mother, but there is no reply.</p>	<p>Scene 60: The old fortress – a summer day The old fortress looks like a green ship on the desert. The gate is open. Gerip comes out of the city on horseback.</p>	
	<p>Scene 61: A river bank. Gerip gallops along beside the river</p>	
	<p>Scene 62: A mountain pass, a range of mountains, and grassland. Gerip gallops on at high speed. The sun shines beautifully.</p>	
	<p>Scene 63: Entrance to a cave Gerip dismounts from his horse and enters the cave. The cave is empty. Gerip calls for his mother. The valley is empty, and he hears only his voice echoing back.</p>	

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<p>Scene 64: A desolate village market.</p> <p>Fortuneteller: “God is one! Don’t go without having your fortune told! Don’t believe in fortunetelling! <u>I will tell the fortune of Hoja Daniel!</u>⁷⁴⁷ Don’t be sorry that you missed out on having your fortune told!”</p> <p>Perman arrives on horseback, looks around, and then leaves.</p> <p>Gerip to fortuneteller: “Greetings” Fortuneteller: “Greetings. This is a dangerous place”</p>	<p>Scene 64: A desolate village market. A few people are wandering around. A fortuneteller calls for business.</p> <p>Fortuneteller: “Fortune told, fortune told! In the sky and on the earth! Dark and light! Good and bad! Accurately told!”</p> <p>Perman, dressed as a trader, together with two soldiers, passes by on horseback. Perman looks around and then leaves.</p> <p>Gerip comes in leading his horse. The fortune teller says to his assistant Fortune teller: This is Gerip, the one we were supposed to find” Assistant: “How dangerous!” The fortune teller gets up and goes into a gap in the old wall. He takes off his disguise and calls out “Gerip!”. Gerip: “Zapar!”</p>	
<p>Scene 65:</p> <p>The fortune teller gets up and goes into a gap in the old wall. He takes off his disguise.</p> <p>Zapar: “Geripjan!” Gerip: “Zapar!” Zapar: “Gerip! I saw Perman here. We should leave</p>	<p>Scene 65: Behind the wall</p> <p>Zapar and Gerip meet and hug each other.</p> <p>Zapar: “You should leave quickly, I saw Perman here!” He leads Gerip away.</p>	

⁷⁴⁷ Hoca Daniel was a member of one of the ruling clans of South Xinjiang who rule the six southern cities of East Turkistan independently from the Ching Empire and the Jungars, around 1720 AD.

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quickly.”		
Scene 66 – cut into 67	<p>Scene 66: Shawazi’s residence Shawazi: “Where have they gone, are they dead?” Abdullah: “I sent people, but they came back without finding them.” Shawazi: “That’s strange” He walks around restlessly. Hatice: “I’m afraid that they must have been eaten by wolves on the road.” Shawazi: “<u>Yes, I hope they have been eaten by wolves. Otherwise, they may become wolves themselves, and come back to eat us up</u>”</p> <p>Outside the window can be heard Senem’s song <i>If I were not suffering from my separation</i> <i>How would my clothes be wet with tears</i> <i>Darling, where are you drifting</i> <i>I am sunk in pain</i> Abdullah angrily shuts the window.</p>	

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<p>Scene 67: The Palace.</p> <p>Gulbahar: “Mother Aghcha, all the guards who went to find Gerip with Perman have come back.” Aghcha: “Did they find Gerip?” Gulbahar: “No. <u>According to Hatice, Gerip and his whole family became food for the wolves along the way.</u>”</p> <p>Outside the window can be heard Senem’s song</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>If I were not suffering from my separation How would my clothes be wet with tears Darling, where are you drifting I am sunk in pain</i></p>	<p>Scene 67:</p> <p>The courtyard of the inner palace. Senem looks very weak, and weeps as she sings that she will not love anyone else. Aghcha cries in sympathy.</p>	
<p>Scene 68: A room in the inner palace. Senem’s song:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>I would rather suffer from love I do not want a golden crown.</i></p> <p>Gulbahar: “The Queen is coming to visit the Princess” Senem: “Mother Mihriwan” Queen Shemshibanu and Hatice enter.</p> <p>Queen: “<u>Senemjan, we are offering you the crown</u></p>	<p>Scene 68: A room in the inner palace. Gulbahar sits on a bed embroidering. From the window, she sees Senem singing: <i>I would rather suffer from love I do not want a golden crown.</i> Gulbahar also cries in sympathy. Queen Shemshibanu and Hatice enter. Queen: “Don’t be difficult. <u>The King your father has left you so much wealth for your happiness. He has build a new Imperial Garden for your enjoyment</u>” Senem: “Mother, I will not marry anyone but Gerip”</p>	<p>In the Opera, the King justifies his actions as determined by Fate. In the film, he recognises that actions cannot be undone even when they may be regretted (the arrow has left the bow)</p>

1. Translated from Uyghur version of released film	2. Translated from Chinese published version	3. Opera script differences from film script
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<p>of a nation. <u>Don't trouble us. Your father the King has built a Remedy Garden [charibagh⁷⁴⁸] for your enjoyment.</u>"</p> <p>Senem: "Mother, don't bother about me. I have only one thing to say. I will not give up love."</p> <p>Hatice: "Dear Senem, how can you not listen to the Queen – she is your mother?"</p> <p>Senem: "Mother? MotherAghcha!"</p> <p>Senem runs to Aghcha and cries on her bosom.</p> <p>Aghcha: "My dear Princess. Please Queen, your majesty, for God's sake show compassion to her. How can one stand to force a sick child?"</p> <p>Hatice: "What is she saying? It is the King's order that she should marry my son, and it is God's will! One cannot change the destiny of Fate!"</p> <p>King enters and tells them to stop arguing.</p> <p>Shemshibanu: "Your Majesty..."</p> <p>Abbas: "Enough! Out, all of you!"</p> <p>Shemshibanu, Senem and Hatice leave. Aghcha remains.</p> <p>Agcha: "<u>Compassionate King, if there is no distinction between black and white and things go on like this, will not the world be upside down?</u>"</p> <p>Would it be possible to issue a decree to bring back Gerip? If this happens, Senemjan as well as all the people will be in peace."</p> <p><u>King remembers the words of Shawazi and hears his voice :</u></p>	<p>She walks away to her room. The queen walks angrily to the window. Hatice follows Senem to her room.</p> <p>Hatice: "Dear Senem, how can you not listen to the Queen – she is your mother?"</p> <p>Senem: "Huh!"</p> <p>Senem runs to Aghcha and cries on her bosom.</p> <p>Aghcha: "Please, your majesty, she is so sick – what will happen to her?"</p> <p>Hatice: "What do you mean! It is the King's order that she should marry my son, and it is God's will! One cannot change the destiny of Fate!"</p> <p>King Abbas enters and order them all to be quiet. Hatice is frightened.</p> <p>Abbas: "Out, all of you!"</p> <p>He sits down looking at his daughter, feeling sad.</p> <p>Agcha, crying: "Please your majesty, find Gerip and bring him back for Senem, so that the Princess will get better, and all the citizens will be glad for the Princess".</p>	
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⁷⁴⁸ "chari" in Uyghur means "remedy" or "cure" – bagh is garden.

1. Translated from Uyghur version of released film	2. Translated from Chinese published version	3. Opera script differences from film script
<p><i>(Shawazi): “To be safe from disaster, the marriage agreement should be dealt with.”</i></p> <p>Abbas: “My loyal servant Agcha, you should know that once the arrow has left the bow, it can not be recalled”.</p> <p>Gulbahar enters: “Your majesty, the doctor you requested for Princess Senem has arrived.”</p> <p>Abbas: “That doctor guaranteed to find a cure for Senem’s sickness?”</p>	<p>Abbas: “My loyal servant Agcha, you should know that once the arrow has left the bow, it can not be recalled”.</p> <p>Gulbahar enters: “Your majesty, the doctor you requested for Senem has arrived”</p> <p>Abbas: “A woman doctor has come from afar – bring her in quickly.</p>	
<p>Scene 69: Inside a room of the inner palace</p> <p>Dilalem (disguised): “Greetings, your Majesty.”</p> <p>Abbas: “Welcome, doctor. Find a cure for Senemjan.”</p> <p>Dilalem: “Yes”</p> <p>Aghcha: “Sit down”</p> <p>Aghcha (to Senem): “Get up, dear. The King has called a famous doctor for you.”</p>	<p>Scene 69: Inside a room of the inner palace</p> <p>A woman doctor in a simple dress and veil comes in.</p> <p>Abbas: “If you cure my daughter, <u>I will reward you richly.</u>”</p> <p>Doctor: “I will try to serve Your Majesty”</p> <p>Abbas nods and leaves.</p>	
<p>Scene 70: the same</p> <p>Dilalem (opening her veil): “My beautiful Princess, your face is pale. Your breath and pulse show that you have sorrow in your heart. For this, I have a remedy, and if you apply it, you will find a cure. You should agree to marry Abdullah.”</p> <p>Senem “What!!”</p> <p>Dilalem: “Make a condition that beforehand there should be a wedding celebration of forty days. Only agree to marry after that.”</p> <p>Senem: “A forty days and nights wedding party? I</p>	<p>Scene 70: the same</p> <p>Agcha and the doctor enter Senem’s bedchamber. The doctor lifts her veil – it is the beautiful Dilalem.</p> <p>Dilalem: “My beautiful Princess Senem, I believe you have a problem? I have medicine, and if you take it, you will get better.”</p> <p>Senem smiles coldly.</p> <p>Dilalem: “I think you should marry Abdullah”</p> <p>Senem “What!!”</p> <p>Dilalem: “Make a condition that there should be a wedding celebration of forty days.”</p> <p>Senem: “Forty days! No, I won’t accept that.! I</p>	

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<p>would agree to let my heart break into pieces, my tears to dry up completely, let my body become food for birds and insects, but I will not agree to marry Abdullah! Are you the witch Yasmin who used a poisoned rose to intoxicate Perhad and handed him over to his enemy!”</p> <p>Dilalem (laughs): “ No, beautiful Princess. Within those forty days, you will meet your loved one Gerip, and achieve your goal.”</p> <p>Senem: “Who are you”</p> <p>Dilalem: “<u>I saw a couple on the altar of loyalty. This brought me here. I only want to help you.</u>”</p> <p>Senem: “Tell me more, please!”</p> <p>Dilalem: “I want to tell you something. To achieve one’s goal, apart from loyalty and love, you need wisdom”</p> <p>Senem: “Am I not dreaming?”</p> <p>Dilalem: “It is not a dream, Senemjan. I hope you two will be together as soon as possible. Good bye.”</p> <p>Senem: “Goodbye. An angel..”</p>	<p>would rather have my heart broken, my tears dried up, my body eaten by birds and insects, rather than marry Abdullah! You must be a poisonous flower, the witchdoctor Yasmin who made Perhad unconscious and handed him over to his enemy!”</p> <p>Dilalem, with no anger: “ Don’t worry. Within forty days, your loved one Gerip will come to rescue you”</p> <p>Senem: “Who are you”</p> <p>Dilalem: <u>I am just like you – a poor woman who wants to help two lovers in difficulty.</u></p> <p>Senem: “Tell me, please!”</p> <p>Dilalem: “I want to tell you something. Apart from loyalty and love, you need wisdom.”</p> <p>Senem: “God, am I not dreaming?”</p> <p>Dilalem: “It is not a dream. I hope you will be together as soon as possible. Good bye.”</p> <p>Dilalem leaves</p> <p>Senem: “Doctor...”</p>	
<p>Scene 71: Mihrivan’s residence in a mountain valley.</p>	<p>Scene 71: Mihrivan’s residence in a mountain valley.</p> <p>Gerip is saying goodbye to his mother.</p> <p>Gerip: “Don’t worry about me, Mother. <u>The old saying says ‘a fire can brighten the night, and a righteous deed can gain support of the people’.</u> <u>Everyone has advised me to go back.</u>”</p> <p>Mihrivan: “Tell Senem that I miss her, and she</p>	

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<p>Guljemal: “Brother, father Sidik has come to see you off.” Sidik: “Greetings” Gerip: Greetings, father Sidik. Sidik: “Are you well, daughter” Guljemal :”Welcome” Zapar: “Father, the sword...” Sidick: “Zapar brought it from the Old Fortress. Mihrivani: “How are you – are you well?” Sidick: “At that time, Dilalem thought of us as brigands.” Gerip: “Yes, yes” Sidick: “Son, you must remember, your father used to read me this poem: <u><i>A person with deception and arrogance</i></u> <u><i>Will wither like a bamboo from the root</i></u> <i>Events in the world depend on Fate</i> <i>But there are also ways to prevent them</i> Gerip: “Father, I will remember”</p>	<p>should look after herself” She says good bye. Guljemal: “Uncle Sidick is coming to see you off” Gerip meets Sidick. Sidick takes the sword from Zapar’s hand, and gives it to Gerip. Gerip happily takes it: Gerip: “This is the jewelled sword.” Sidick: “Zapar brought it from the Old Fortress. At that time, Dilalem thought of us as brigands.” Gerip: “Thank you.” Sidick: “You must remember, your father used to read me this poem: <i>Even though there is Fate</i> <i>Sometimes things depend upon what people do”</i> Gerip: “I will remember”</p>	
<p>Scene 72: Gateway to the Inner Courtyard Alim: “Greetings, Abdullah” Abdullah: “Alimjan, you are dressed very well today!” Alim: “I came to congratulate you on your wedding, my friend. Abdullah: “Are these words sincere?” Alim: “Yes, and I arranged this bouquet to please your loved one.”</p>	<p>Scene 72: Gateway to the Inner Courtyard Gardeners are working in the garden. A guard is patrolling. Alim arrives and greets Abdullah. Alim: “I came to congratulate you on your forty-day wedding. Since we are old friends.... Abdullah: “Are these words sincere?” Alim: “I swear ... I hope that you will have happiness forever, and I brought you this beautiful</p>	

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<p>Abdullah: “Let me have a look. All right, you can go in. (thinking) He is up to something.”</p>	<p>flower to give Senem as a present.” Abdullah: “Since we are old friends, you can go and give it to her yourself.” Alim enters with a smile. Abdullah: “Huh! This person must have something going on...” He quickly goes to talk to the guards, then walks off..</p>	
<p>Scene 73: Courtyard of the Inner Palace Aghcha: “Alim jan, did you pick this bouquet yourself?” Alim: “Yes, I went all around the mountains and everywhere to find a master flower-arranger, and I learned it all from him.” Aghcha: “Alim – tell me quickly, has he returned?” Alim nods: “Yes” Aghcha: “Where is he now.” Alim: “Mother Aghcha, find a way for Princess Senem to visit the Garden of Remedies tomorrow evening – there they can meet.”</p>	<p>Scene 73: Courtyard of the Inner Palace Aghcha receives the bouquet from Alim and sees the double rose. Aghcha: “Did you pick this bouquet yourself?” Alim: “Yes, I found a florist from the mountains, and learned from him.” Aghcha: “Alim – tell me quickly, has he returned?” Alim nods: “Mother Aghcha, find a way for Princess Senem to visit the New Garden tomorrow evening – there they can meet.” Aghcha: “Certainly” She walks inside the palace, but there is a guard listening behind a bush.</p>	
<p>Scene 74: In the inner court Aghcha (to Senem): “Do you know who arranged these flowers?” Senem sits up in surprise, and sees the twin rose. Aghcha was going to place the flowers in a vase, but Senem takes the flowers and notices the twin rose, and starts to remember... [flashback] Gerip is giving Senem the double rose. In the</p>	<p>Scene 74: In the inner court Aghcha comes excitedly to Senem and shows her the bouquet Aghcha: “Do you know who picked these flowers?” Senem sits up in surprise, and sees the twin rose. Aghcha was going to place the flowers in a vase, but Senem takes the flowers and notices the twin rose, and starts to remember... [flashback]</p>	

1. Translated from Uyghur version of released film	2. Translated from Chinese published version	3. Opera script differences from film script
<p>festival, they are holding the flower in front of Aghcha, and dancing and smiling. [the present] Senem: “Tell me quickly, Mother Aghcha, has he returned?? Aghcha – he is back? Where is he? Let me know, where is he?” Senem goes quickly to the window and sees Queen Shemshibanu and a maid approaching. Aghcha: “He is in Alim’s house. Senem: “Gulbanu, Gulbanu! Mother, bring my new clothes” Aghcha: “Yes Senemjan. You should find a way to get permission from His Majesty for you to go to the Remedy Garden tomorrow night. Gerip will be waiting for you there.” Gulbanu: “I am here, Princess.” Senem: “Bring me a pen..”</p>	<p>Gerip is giving Senem the double rose. In the festival, they are holding the flower in front of Aghcha, and dancing and smiling. [the present] Senem goes quickly to the window and sees Queen Shemshibanu and a maid approaching. Senem: “Tell me quickly, Mother Aghcha, has he returned?? Aghcha – he is back? Where is he? Let me know, where is he?” Aghcha: “He is in Alim’s house. We have to find a way to get permission from His Majesty for you to go to the New Garden. You can see him there.” Gulbanu enters Senem: “Gulbanu, bring me a pen..”</p>	
<p>Scene 75: Inside the palace King Abbas is looking at the note from Senem. He hears the note in her voice: Voice of Senem: “Compassionate father King, I want to sightsee in the new Remedy Garden, that you built for me to improve my broken heart. I am looking forward to your permission. Your daughter Senem.” Abbas: “Guards! Guards: “Yes your Majesty” Abbas: “From today on, nobody is allowed to go to the Remedy Garden without my permission. If</p>	<p>Scene 75: Inside the palace King Abbas is looking at the note from Senem. Senem seeks permission to take a walk in the new garden together with her ladies in waiting. Abbas: “Men! From today on, the New Garden is forbidden to for anyone to take even one step in it, on pain of death.”</p>	<p>In the Opera, the King recruits slaves from everywhere to help build the Garden, and this provides the opportunity for Gerip and the Mountain People to infiltrate the garden as slaves.</p>

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<p>anybody disobeys this order, they shall be executed.” Guards: “Yes sir.”</p>		
<p>Scene 76: The Remedy Garden Senem and her maids come into the garden, and walk toward the pavilion.</p>	<p>Scene 76: “The New garden Senem and her maids come into the garden, and walk toward the pavilion.</p>	
<p>Scene 77: Gerip waits in the pavilion Senem: “Geripjan!” Gerip: “Senem!”</p>	<p>Scene 77: In the pavilion Gerip: “Senem!”</p>	
<p>Scene 78-80: On a bridge in the garden The lovers run to each other. Aghcha and other maids look on happily.</p>	<p>Scene 78: In the pavilion The lovers run to each other. The maids look at the two lovers meeting, and shed tears of happiness.</p>	
	<p>Scene 79: On a small bridge. Early morning, Autumn The lovers on the bridge are looking at their reflections in the water. The maids sing and dance. <i>“After all pain and difficulty, the lovers today are united”</i></p>	
	<p>Scene 80: In front of the pavillion Singing and dancing continues, celebrating the lovers. They compare the love to historical epics. Gerip and Senem come and mix with the maids.</p>	
<p>Scene 81: In front of the pavillion Abdullah runs in with guards. He confronts Gerip and laughs triumphantly.</p>	<p>Scene 81: In front of the pavillion Senem stands in front of Gerip. Senem: “What do you want!?”</p>	<p>In the Opera, Gerip and Senem run away together during the final fight between Mountain People and the bad court faction.</p>

1. Translated from Uyghur version of released film	2. Translated from Chinese published version	3. Opera script differences from film script
<p>Abdullah: (to guards) “Quickly. (to Gerip) Now I have you in my hands!” Aghcha brings the maids in between Gerip and Abdullah. Aghcha: “What are you going to do? Abdullah, don’t you know our King’s decree? Your action is contrary to the King’s decree, and the punishment is execution!” Abdullah: “What King’s decree – it is my turn to issue decrees now!” Guard: <u>Abdullah Shapoor begim</u> – there is a group of mountain people” Abdullah: “Watch them” Guard: “Yes”</p>	<p>Abdullah draws his sword and laughs. Abdullah: “Gerip, you will not escape this time...” Aghcha comes with a group of the maids to protect Gerip and Senem. Aghcha: “Abdullah, don’t you know the King’s order? Nobody may break it and anyone who defies it will be punished by death.” Abdullah: “Huh! What decree! Now it is my turn to make decrees!” Abdullah(to soldiers) : “What are you standing there for?” Soldier: “I must report to your excellency, the mountain brigands are becoming active just outside the city” Abdullah: “Keep an eye on them.”</p>	<p>There is no reconciliation with the King.</p>
<p>Scene 82: In the forest</p> <p>Zapar and some followers ride on horseback out of the forest.</p>	<p>Scene 82: In the forest</p> <p>Zapar and some followers ride on horseback out of the forest.</p>	
<p>Scene 83: On top of the City Wall Royal guards hold their swords nervously, come out of the City Gates prepared to fight.</p>	<p>Scene 83: On top of the City Wall Royal guards hold their swords nervously, come out of the City Gates prepared to fight.</p>	
<p>Scene 84: The Remedy Garden, nighttime Zapar holds a sword, leading a group of fighters. Inside the forbidden garden, there is torchlight everywhere. The maids are screaming, crying and running around.</p>	<p>Scene 84: The New Garden, nighttime Zapar holds a sword, leading a group of fighters. Inside the forbidden garden, there is torchlight everywhere. The maids are screaming, crying and running around.</p>	

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<p>Scene 85: The Inner Palace courtyard.</p> <p>Zapar: “Abdullah!” Abdullah: “This time you won’t escape from me!”</p>	<p>Scene 85: The Inner Palace courtyard.</p> <p>Abdullah tries to capture Zapar, and they fight. Other of Zapar’s fighters run past the small bridge.</p>	
<p>Scene 86: The prison</p> <p>The prison gate lock is broken, and Alim enters the prison with the mountain folk. The prisoners start escaping.</p> <p>Alim: “Teacher, teacher!” Jelaleddin: “Alim” Alim: “Teacher, let’s go” Jelaleddin: My dear son..”</p>	<p>Scene 86: The prison</p> <p>The prison gate lock is broken, and Alim enters the prison with the mountain folk. The prisoners start escaping. Jelaleddin, looks confused, and Gerip calls him “Jelaleddin” they hug.</p>	
<p>Scene 87: The main hall of the palace.</p> <p>The king is reviewing the case, and Perman is begging to be forgiven.</p> <p>Perman: “I am guilty – with your compassion, please spare my life” Abbas: “Cursed one, speak clearly” Perman: “I will tell you everything.” Shawazi gives him a threatening look Abbas: “Executioners!” Four men with swords come. Perman: “I deserve to be dead, your majesty, but all the crime was planned by Shawazi”. Shawazi: “Your Majesty, all that he says is slander” Abbas: “Continue” Perman takes out a document Perman: “Here is the order he gave me twelve years</p>	<p>Scene 87: The main hall of the palace.</p> <p>The king is reviewing the case, and Perman is begging to be forgiven.</p> <p>Perman: “Forgive me”</p> <p>Abbas: “You beast – come on..” Perman: “I will tell you, I will tell you..” Shawazi gives him a threatening look Abbas: “Men..” Four men with swords come. Perman: “I am guilty, your majesty, but all the crime was planned by Shawazi.” Shawazi: “Your Majesty, he is talking nonsense” Abbas: “Continue” Perman takes out a document Perman: “This is the order he gave be twelve years</p>	<p>In the film, Abbas repents and asks forgiveness for his mistakes, and there is reconciliation.</p> <p>In the Opera, Abbas does not admit error, does not forgive Gerip (who has run away with Senem), imprisons Jelaleddin, and the empire is left in turmoil.</p>

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<p>ago, ordering me to kill Vezir Hessen with a poisoned arrow.” Abbas takes the document from Kasim’s hand and <u>reads it.</u> Perman: “After twelve years, he again issued the order to kill Gerip and his family at the Eagles Mouth.” Shawazi rises and tries to stop the proceedings <u>Shawazi: “Guards!”</u></p> <p>A soldier hurries in from outside. Soldier: “Your Majesty – Gerip is leading the mountain people, storming the palace” Gerip, Alim, Jelaleddin and the mountain people come into the main hall. Shawazi: “I repent! Grant me my life” Gerip: “Your Majesty – unless you get rid of the evil ones, this country can never have peace.” Shawazi (on his knees): “Please forgive me – spare my life!” Abbas: “Executioner, behead this <u>old cursed one.</u>” Shawazi is dragged out. Abbas: “God, forgive me for my foolishness” He stands up and walks to Gerip. Abbas: “Son” Gerip: “Father King” Abbas: “Thank you for saving me and saving the country from disaster.</p>	<p>ago, ordering me to kill Vezir Hessen with a poisoned arrow.” Abbas takes the document from Kasim’s hand and <u>shows pain.</u> Perman: “After twelve years, he asked me again to kill Gerip and his family at the Eagle’s Mouth.” Shawazi sees that the situation is untenable and all will be revealed. He quickly pulls out his sword.. <u>Shawazi: “Left, Right, come out...”</u> <u>Men: “Present!”</u> Suddenly a soldier hurries in from outside. Soldier: “Your Majesty – Gerip is leading the mountain people, storming the palace” <u>Abbas is shaken.</u> Gerip, Alim, Jelaleddin and the mountain people rush into the main hall. Gerip points his sword at Shawazi. Gerip: “Your Majesty – unless you get rid of the evil ones, this country can never prosper.” Shawazi, on his knees: “Please forgive me – spare my life!” Abbas: “Take him away and execute him!” Shawazi is dragged out still begging for his life. Abbas sits on his throne, sorry for his errors and sighing. Abbas: “God, forgive me for my past” He stands up and walks to Gerip. Abbas: “Thank you for saving me and saving the <u>Abbass Kingdom</u>”</p>	

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<p>Scene 88: A palace corridor Abdullah is retreating, chased by Zapar. Gerip comes to Zapar’s assistance. Abdullah attacks Zapar as he turns to look at Gerip. Gerip warns Zapar and attacks Abdullah. Gerip and Abdullah continue to fight in the corridor.</p>	<p>Scene 88: A palace corridor Abdullah is retreating, chased by Zapar. Gerip comes to Zapar’s assistance. Abdullah attacks Zapar as he turns to look at Gerip. Gerip warns Zapar and attacks Abdullah. Gerip and Abdullah continue to fight in the corridor.</p>	
<p>Scene 89: A high gallery inside the palace Gerip and Abdullah continue fighting. More mountain people arrive to help. Abdullah tries to escape, but Alim comes in from the other side with more mountain people. Abdullah is trapped, gives a loud cry and jumps to his death in the courtyard.</p>	<p>Scene 89: The top of a tower Gerip and Abdullah continue fighting. More mountain people arrive to help. Abdullah tries to escape, but Alim comes in from the other side with more mountain people. Abdullah is trapped, gives a loud cry and jumps off the tower.</p>	
<p>Scene 90: The Palace Square</p> <p>The whole population are celebrating, with 40 court ladies singing and dancing. happily. Gerip and Senem come out in fine costume with Aghcha, Gulbanu and the court ladies from the official door. Song: <i>Tears have disappeared from the lovers’ faces A mountain of misery is broken by love’s sharp sword</i></p> <p>Mihrivan, Jeleleddin, Alim and Zapar are watching the dance performance. Aghcah and Gulbanu look</p>	<p>Scene 90: The Palace Square <i>Sun and a breeze, The sky beautiful as if washed, Contented people with increased enthusiasm</i> The whole population are celebrating, with 40 court ladies singing and dancing. Happily. Gerip and Senem come out in fine costume with Aghcha, Gulbanu and the court ladies from the official door. Song: <i>Tears have disappeared from the lovers’ faces A mountain of misery is broken by love’s sharp sword</i></p> <p>Mihrivan, Jeleleddin, Alim and Zapar are watching the dance performance from a balcony . Aghcah and</p>	<p>In final scene of the film, the Kingdom is saved and parties reunited. Mihrivan, Jeleleddin, Zapar and Alim included in the celebrations. The servant class (Aghcah and Gulbanu) watch and smile from the sidelines. Gerip and Senem give a final bow to Mihrivan</p> <p>In the Opera, right and wrong are not fully resolved. Jelalleddin is returned to jail without promise of release. Shawazi is also jailed but “to be investigated”. King Abbass faints with stress.</p>

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<p>on smiling. Gerip and Senem pass through the happy crowd.</p> <p>Song: <i>Come friends let us be happy</i> <i>Let us watch the spring union of Gerip and Senem</i> Sidik and Dilalem smile happily. Gerip and Senem come through the crowd showered with flowers.</p>	<p>Gulbanu look on smiling. Gerip and Senem pass through the happy crowd. <u>They come in front of Mihrivan and bow to her.</u></p> <p>Song: <i>Come friends let us be happy</i> <i>Let us watch the spring union of Gerip and Senem</i> Sidik and Dilalem smile happily. Gerip and Senem come through the crowd showered with flowers.</p>	<p>The stage darkens and a new light promises a new regime in the mountain valley, with Gerip and Senem dancing, but Mihrivan blinded with suffering, supported by Ilyas (intellectual youth) and Guljemal (pure-hearted individual) who are both offspring of Jelaleddin the intellectual.</p>
October 1981	1981, May Urumqi.	

Appendix 5

“Hessen”⁷⁴⁹

Our home, being in the city, was close to the county prison.⁷⁵⁰ One day I saw a number of people hurrying in that direction. Wondering what was happening, I followed them. The forecourt of the prison was full of people. The east side of the courtyard by the prison was crowded with people craning their necks to see what was happening.

“That cripple is the one who cuts peoples tendons”.

“Really! He’s holding a hook in one hand and something like an iron razor in the other!”

“Is it a *nester* or what?”

“Hessen the thief is tearing up some white cotton cloth.⁷⁵¹ What is he going to do with it?”

“He will probably use it to bind his legs.”

This was the conversation passing among the crowd. At that time a man with staring eyes said, “Yes, brother, he will use it to bind his legs. Do you know why? If they don’t bind his legs very tightly from his ankle to his knee, even if the tendons cut below the ankle heal, he will still not be able to keep his head up. You know, Hessen is very skillful at this, he knows how to do it. He’s wrapping it very strongly now. Even if they cut his tendons, his head will not drop.”

I went closer to see how they cut people’s tendons, crawling between peoples’ feet to get closer to the gaol door. The door of the outer court of the prison was open. In the middle of the courtyard was a straw mat on the ground. On this mat was a man around

⁷⁴⁹ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri* op cit p.168

⁷⁵⁰ *Sengen yamul*

⁷⁵¹ *mata*

thirty years old, of middle height, with olive skin, and a turned up moustache. With a gleaming eye, he lay with his left side pressing on the mat and his right leg drawn up. By his head two or three prisoners were setting out kernels on a board to play either *pag* or *katar* (games). After a while, they began to play the game with Hessen as he lay on the mat.

While they played, the crippled man brought to carry out the punishment cut Hessen's ankle open, pulled out the tendons and severed them. While this was occurring, Hessen appeared unconcerned, made no noise, but, keeping a smile on his face, placed his counters down firmly on the game-board with his right hand. Throughout the watching crowd people were remarking,

“Oh what a brave lad!”

“You are a hero, young man!”

“He didn't even move his mouth!”

At first I watched Hessen's bravery with fascination, but later as the blood ran down his ankle I began to cry with horror. Later those who had carried out the operation placed the ash of burnt rags on the wounds.

In the 1920s, Hessen was a thief who struck fear into the rich. He never took anything from the ordinary people, only robbing the storehouses of the rich, and dividing the spoils among the poor, homeless and desititute. He gave clothes to those with none and fed the hungry. For this reason the poor liked him and protected him, but the rich did not like him at all. They feared him, and complained about him to the *Sengen* (County Magistrate). The magistrate tried to catch him for several years, and finally offered a reward of three hundred *ser tenge* to anyone who revealed his whereabouts, or a reward of one thousand *ser tenge* for his capture. The reward posters were everywhere, but even so they could not catch Hessen.

One day Hessen was drinking tea at a teahouse in Chong Körük. An informer, seeking the reward, told the *Sengen*, who immediately sent two officers⁷⁵² and ten soldiers to the teahouse to arrest him. While he was wondering how to escape, one of the teahouse staff suggested he get out through a window of the cool room at the back. Hessen was able to escape the ten soldiers. The two officers and ten soldiers may have failed to catch him, but they arrested the workers, beat them up, smashed up the teahouse, breaking every breakable item and destroying the samovar.

Another time Hessen was in a restaurant buying food for a group of the poor and homeless, when the *Sengen* heard of this and sent twenty soldiers to arrest him. Hessen was again warned that they were coming, and escaped through the streets. The soldiers followed him as far as the city wall, where he somehow managed to disappear. Once more he had evaded the *Sengen*. This sort of event occurred several times, giving rise to rumours amongst the ordinary folk that Hessen was someone special, with supernatural support.

In reality, Hessen was not a saint and had no dealings with ghosts, but there were two things about him that people liked. First, he protected the poor and punished those rich who exploited the poor. Thus ordinary people looked on him as a saviour and protected him. Second, he was very brave.

Hessen was very accomplished in martial arts. He wore black velvet trousers tailored to fit him well but not to restrict his movements. He wore shiny, low-heeled boots made of good leather. At the sides of his boots he carried two daggers. If surrounded by a number of enemies, he would draw these two daggers, flourish them to break the circle, and make his escape. He could climb to high places by using these two daggers, sticking them one after the other into crevices and using them as foot-holds or hand-holds, or by leaping acrobatically. This explains how, as we mentioned, he evaded a posse of twenty soldiers who had pursued him to the city wall, using his daggers.

How was Hessen caught?

⁷⁵² *lozung*

One summer day he was travelling on horseback to Ili from the direction of the Ili River, passing along a ridge in the west of the Aydung district. He came to a large creek behind the house of Kerim Beg. He saw some good grass waving in the breeze, and thought to rest and feed his horse. Seeing nobody around, he unbridled his horse to let it feed, and lay down to rest. Some children playing on a distant rooftop saw him, and told Kerim Beg. Kerim Beg was a big, fat man with a lust for money and favour from the government, so he planned to capture Hessen.

The plan was that two of Kerim's men, disguised as ordinary farmers and carrying hoes,⁷⁵³ would come to a place on the creek close to Hessen, and pretend to have a fight over water. When Hessen intervened to separate them, whichever had an opportunity would hit him with a hoe.

Hessen had been riding all night and was tired, so he went to sleep easily. Taking advantage of this, Kerim Beg and the two men disguised as farmers came to within thirty paces of Hessen, and began to fight and shout at each other. Hessen woke and came to separate them. He used many reasonable words to calm them down, but they fought and argued all the harder, threatening to hit each other with their hoes. At this point, Hessen picked one of them up to carry him away from the other. The other then struck Hessen on the spine with his hoe, felling him. Realising that these were enemies, Hessen tried to draw his daggers from his boots, but the one he had been carrying struck his right arm, and when he went to use his left arm, Kerim Beg came and struck him in the knee with his hoe. Hessen fell. So it was that the brave Hessen was taken by traitors, with tricks and deceit.

Normally a criminal would receive a single punishment. But Hessen had his tendons cut, and finally was hanged to death in a cage. The *Sengen* hastily arranged to have his tendons cut, but being afraid that he might recover and continue his activities, the cowardly *Sengen* informed the *Jangjung* in Urumqi. The *Jangjung* ordered the further punishment that Hessen should be tortured to death by hanging in a cage. This proclamation was posted on the outside wall of the prison. It was a day in late autumn.

⁷⁵³ *ketmen*

On that day, many people were walking towards the prison, and to find out what was happening I followed them to the prison, where the proclamation was posted. A group of people were reading the proclamation of the hanging of Hessen.

“My God, what is going on!”

“It’s been said that the King’s punishment should fall only once for a crime!”

“Oh yes, but there’s a saying that the King’s mouth is a monkey. Here we see it!”

“Some envious cowards among us also want this to happen.”

“Destroying people like Hessen will benefit the greedy, the cowardly, and the cruel!”

Such were the remarks in the crowd.

Some tenderhearted people were shedding tears or having difficulty in swallowing. Others were holding their collars and praying for God’s mercy.⁷⁵⁴

Inside the main gate of the prison, and before the second gate, on each side there was a cage, narrow at the top and wider at the bottom. They were made of wooden beams as thick as a person’s thigh. People were hanged with their head protruding from the top of this cage, and their feet an arms length⁷⁵⁵ from the ground. I had played hide and seek around these cages without knowing their purpose. On this day, workmen were preparing the cages, loosening the part where the neck would go.

Next day at sunrise I went into the street. The crowds were bigger than the previous, going in groups toward the prison, and I followed them. The first and second courtyards were full of people. At the back of the third courtyard was a small dais where the *Sengen* would emerge from the inner court to stand in a place known as the *Da Tang* [outer court]. On each side of this outer court stood a statue of a lion with its

⁷⁵⁴ *tova*
⁷⁵⁵ *gulach*

mouth open, showing its teeth and staring furiously at the people. At the back of the *Da Tang* were a pair of double doors painted with a pair of dragons, also open-mouthed and sticking out their poisonous red tongues.⁷⁵⁶ The court was decorated with designs of snakes and scorpions, terrifying to the people.

In front stood a small table covered with a red cloth, on which stood four dishes of food and a bowl⁷⁵⁷ of alcoholic liquor. Assistants, guards and messengers stood in two rows on either side of the court. They called out something in strange and frightening tones. The upper door of the *Da Tang* opened, and the *Sengen* walked unsteadily to the seat prepared for him by the small table.

Then we heard a shout for the condemned to be brought out, and the soldiers of the execution squad on both sides shouted back ‘Yes’ in unison. A prisoner was brought out with a yoke⁷⁵⁸ chained to his neck. His hands and feet were shackled with chains. He was brought in front of the small table and made to kneel. It was Hessen. The *Sengen* read the order sent from the *Jangjung*, and the herald⁷⁵⁹ translated this into Uyghur. Then two executioners hung a sign on Hessen’s back indicating that he was sentenced to death.

The *Sengen* stood up and said, “This is the last day of your life. You may have some wishes in your heart. For that reason, to please you, we have prepared this banquet. Now taste the wine and food.” He gestured to the food and wine on the table. A soldier used chopsticks to pick up some food and offer it to his mouth, while another brought the alcohol to him. But Hessen used his head to knock the wine-cup away, and it fell to the floor and broke into pieces.

The *Sengen* said angrily, “Kill him!”⁷⁶⁰, and kicked over the table. Then the soldiers came and took him to the cage.

⁷⁵⁶ The chinese version of this text did not translate “poisonous”

⁷⁵⁷ *hejir*

⁷⁵⁸ *takak*

⁷⁵⁹ *tongchi*

⁷⁶⁰ *Sa!*

Kerim Bey was standing to the right hand side of the *Sengen*. Hessen shouted at him, “Hey, you two-faced hypocrite! Kerim the running-dog! This time I didn’t manage to escape, you were lucky! My only wish was to crush you to pieces! I did not achieve this wish.” Everyone looked at Kerim with hatred.

A four-wheeled cart pulled by three horses was brought in, and the cage that Hessen was in was placed on it. Four soldiers stood on the cart, one on each side of the cage. Eight soldiers took places in front of the cart, and eight behind it.

The cart travelled through the market district of the city, with a crowd following. When it came to the Tashlepke cross-road the crowd was bigger than could fit in the street. I climbed onto a strong, tall crate to look at Hessen. He was wearing the black trousers, and the shiny boots were on his feet. Although his hands were shackled, he wore a black fedora hat at an angle on his head. Someone probably helped him with this. With his head straight, he said, “I hope you will bless me.⁷⁶¹ Forgive me if I ever hurt your feelings.” This was his farewell to the crowd.

Again he straightened his head and said, “I will not ask for the forgiveness of those traitors who helped to catch me and put me to death. That’s it brothers - Goodbye and Amen!”

Throughout the crowd you could hear voices joining him with an “Amen”. The cart passed across the big bridge and went on towards *Kara Döng*.⁷⁶² With some difficulty it made its way up to an open space and stopped. The *Sengen*, protected by soldiers, was brought in a sedan chair to the open space. He got out of the sedan chair and went to sit in a place that had been prepared for him. The cage with Hessen in it was brought to the same place.

The *Sengen* gave the sign to hang him, and the soldiers pulled apart the two boards at the top of the cage. They pushed Hessen’s neck into a semicircle cut out of one of the boards, then pushed the other board against his neck to choke him. He was left hanging

⁷⁶¹ *razi bolmak*

⁷⁶² Black Ridge

with his head and neck sticking out of this hole, and his feet an arm's length above the ground.

Thousands of people climbed like ants up to the place to see.

“Oh God, oh God, are you witnessing this?”

“My God, what kind of punishment is this?”

“Such a pity!”

The horrified remarks came from all directions in the crowd. I don't know why I followed the crowd to this high open place. I was afraid, and in this dusty place I could not swallow my own spit.

The executioner rolled up his sleeves and, with a cruel eye, hit the plank with a hammer to tighten the semicircle around Hessen's neck. The tok! tok! sound of the executioner's hammer shook people as if their own hearts were being hit. In the end, Hessen's neck had become as thin as a wrist, foam was coming from his mouth, his eyes bulged, and he turned blue. This was how a brave man said farewell to an unfaithful world.

Appendix 6.

On the Journey

[*Seperde*]⁷⁶³

My uncle Abdulla Yavas used to have a leather business, tanning the skins and selling them. I learned from him how to tan skins, how to work on astrakhan⁷⁶⁴, and fox skins. This is how it worked.

With the astrakhan, we would buy shrunken or hardened skins cheaply, then spray them with water, stretch them to make them better, curl the wool into little flower patterns, cut out the bad parts and repair them. For fox and leopard-cat we would also moisten the skin and stuff it with grass, then dry it. After this we sprinkled bran on it and beat it with a stick until it shone. I also learned to scrape the fat from the skins of marmot, badger, skunk, and yellow-weasel.

One day my uncle said to me, “Good, this work is well done. Now you should learn to do business. You are seventeen years old, and if you don’t start to learn a trade, how can you set up a family? Tomorrow come to my house, and I’ll give you fifty *som* as capital. Go around the inns to find people from the villages and mountains, get information from them and buy their skins, then sell these skins to the leather-dealer⁷⁶⁵ for a profit.”

After this I began buying from farmers and herdsmen who came from the mountains, at a bit under the market price, sheepskins, goat, lamb, cat, rabbit, and yellow weasel, then onselling them for a small profit. When the competition was strong, I would go out from the city and stop people on their way by horse and cart from the mountains and villages, to buy skins from them. Where in the world is a job easy?

Many others also learned to get out of the town, just like me, and to stop people on the road to do business. My business also became difficult so, jealous of others taking my

⁷⁶³ *Hatireler* op cit p.190

⁷⁶⁴ *eltire mare*

⁷⁶⁵ *jallap*

business, I would get up before dawn and leave the city on foot, going five, ten, even fifteen kilometres in search of skins. Those I met would not sell their skins cheaply - some fools would ask me many times more than the market price, believing that if a buyer came out so far to get their product, the price must be very high. So they did not want to sell for my first offer price. Some times I would run around without finding any simple person who would sell their skins under the market price.

One cold midwinter day I walked fifteen leagues⁷⁶⁶ and was only able to buy one wild rabbit-skin. I put it in my cummerbund. I was shivering with cold, and when I came home, it was dark.

In those days, conducting trade used to be considered a profession, because one had to get to know the ways of the market, and how to buy and to sell. As the old saying says, “If there was no nose between them, one eye would eat the other”. There were quite a lot of cases where one person would cheat the other. Because I did not know how to cheat, I could not do this business very well. When I began to worry about how to survive, my uncle said, “You have not discovered the way to do business. Watch me, and let me show you the way.”

He asked me to join three traders from his district going to Manas and some other places. I made an agreement with the three traders. I had three hundred *tenge* and my own horse, while they each had many hundreds of thousands in capital. When we came to an inn, I would take their horses and mind them for the night. In the morning I would rise early to prepare the horses for the road. Wherever we stopped, I would cook *polo*⁷⁶⁷ for all of us. And I would keep a note of their commercial dealing. They fed and accomodated me and my horse. They helped me to find cheap goods to buy with my limited capital, and they trained me to be a trader.

On these terms, we started out on our journey from Gulja to Manas. On the way to Jing we had quite a few problems. After riding all day, when we stopped at an inn, instead of resting I took an hour to cool down the four horses and tether them in stables. Then I

⁷⁶⁶ *chakirim*, shili = ten li (Chinese distance measure)

⁷⁶⁷ pilaf

would go to the market to buy meat, oil, carrots, onions and rice for a *polo*. I had learned to make *polo* on religious holidays⁷⁶⁸ and wedding days, assisting professional cooks. In addition, I learned from my brother who had learned it very well when he was studying in *Medrese*, because he used to make the *polo* for all the students. Because my brother had taught me how to cook *polo*, my *polo* pleased the three traders. In a month of travel, they ate *polo* every night. So they left pots, bowls, plates, spatula and rice at every place where they stayed or intended to stay.

When I had cleaned up after dinner, I would then cut hay to feed the horses, prepare it to feed them, and clean out the stables. By the time I went to bed, my companions had been sleeping for quite some time. After the roosters had crowed around five o'clock, I would get up and feed hay to the horses. Sometimes I would not sleep at all, feeding the horses two or three times, and after dawn watering and feeding them and harnessing and saddling the four horses for travel. Then I would prepare breakfast.

It was very boring sitting on the horses from morn till night in the desert. When I saw my travelling companions dozing off with boredom, and their heads nodding, I would tell them jokes and stories that I had heard from Grandma Perizhan. The merchants greatly appreciated this and were pleased with me. As time went on they would show their appreciation by feeding me with rock sugar.⁷⁶⁹ I too recognised that there were benefits to amusing them. They would be more likely to help me to make profitable trade. So I served them well at the rest stops, and told them amusing stories to revive them. I would embellish the stories that I knew and add to them from the new experiences I had had or heard on my travels, telling them creatively.

One day there was a discussion as to what kind of person was really happy. Each of them gave their own views. One of them was a womaniser.⁷⁷⁰ He said, rolling his eyes,

“A young, slim, beautiful wife, with eyebrows as if drawn on her, shining eyes like big black grapes, fair skin blushing like a pomegranate, pearly teeth, ruby lips, a waist thin

⁷⁶⁸ *Nezir*

⁷⁶⁹ *navat*

⁷⁷⁰ *hotun peres*

enough to hold with one hand, and two braids of hair coming down to her thighs. That's what will make you happy!"

Another was money-minded.

"You can't be happy just with a wife. You've got to have money, and if you don't your wife will leave you and break your heart. As the saying says, 'If money is your big brother, your garden will bloom with roses'.⁷⁷¹ If you have plenty of money, your arm will be long enough to reach whatever you want. Beautiful, coy girls will come and bow to you. So you must get happiness by acquiring lots of money. That's why the first thing to fill is this", he said, patting the purse on his waist.

The other favoured prestige.

"You can't be happy only with what you two have suggested. To be happy you need to become a great and powerful person. If you become King", he said, pointing at the womaniser, "You can have forty such women as you described. If you like money, that will be available - his treasury will be full of gold and silver, and whatever he wants, he can have."

Each of them gave examples to prove their point, but none of them agreed with the other's point of view. In the end one of them, looking at me, said,

"Although you are young, tell us what you think about this question?"

"Yes, tell us!", the others agreed.

I remembered that I had been orphaned at a young age, losing both my parents, and living homeless, poor and without security. I said, "Happiness is security", and I told them a story.

⁷⁷¹ *Akasi pul, chimende gul*

Once upon a time, outside a big city, there was a deep gorge. Beside this gorge there was a poplar tree, and next to the tree there was a hut where lived a cobbler. As this place was next to a busy road, passers-by came to the cobbler to repair their boots and shoes. Among these, the coalman gave him some coal, and the woodcutter gave him some wood, market gardeners gave him rockmelons and watermelons or other fruits and vegetables, while farmers gave him grain. Below this place a mill turned, and a stream flowed. The cobbler could lower a basket to catch a few fish and cook a fish soup. Thus he had no worry over food or shelter.

Near the water there were green trees and grass, and fresh air giving spiritual uplift. But his friends and acquaintances often said to him, “You are an old friend of the King of this place. Why don’t you go and ask favour of him? Why live in this lowly hut in such a pathetic situation? Your friend is living in luxury and wealth, with every happiness”.

These things were said to him so often that at last he decided that he would try to get a powerful position, gather some wealth, live in a distinguished residence, eat expensive food and marry a beautiful wife. So he decided to go and see the old friend with whom he had played and studied when they were young, and who now was King. But because he was old and tattered, the guards would not let him in. The cobbler insisted, “Go and tell the King that his old friend and classmate Sadik is at the gate to see him. If he agrees, I will see him. If not, I will go away.”

The soldiers went in and informed the King, and the King told them to bring Sadik the Cobbler in immediately. The King treated his friend hospitably, offering all kinds of good foods. Then he brought in musicians to entertain his old friend, and asked why he had come, and whether he wanted anything. The cobbler bowed respectfully to the King, and said, “Your majesty the King, respected friend, when we were young we grew up together and played together. But now, you are a King, wearing a golden crown and sitting on a throne, enjoying unequalled happiness, while I am a cobbler living under a tree and eating only porridge. Our lives are as different as the sky and the earth. Even though this does not make me jealous, my friends have been nagging me to see you, saying you might help me.”

The King said, “Very well, that’s what others have said, but what do you want yourself?”

The cobbler said, “Would it be possible for you to make me a County Magistrate?”

The King replied, “Brother, do you see that? Since I became King, I have been sitting under that millstone that hangs by a very thin hair. That millstone weighs many *patman*. I live every moment with the anxiety that the thread might break, and I may be crushed to death under the heavy millstone. If you are willing, my good friend, instead of wanting to take up such a minor position as a Magistrate, why don’t you be King? I will happily give you my position. I will happily exchange my position with you and go to live in the security of your hut. What do you say to this?”

The cobbler understood the meaning of the clever King’s words, and said, “Brother, you do your job, and I will stick to mine!” And he left.

So if you do not have security, it doesn’t matter if you have a beautiful wife, gold and silver, as much money as you could carry on your back, or even if you sit on a royal throne. Even if you sleep on a velvet mat, you will feel as if you are sleeping on thorns.”

My companions seemed all to agree with my opinion, nodding their heads together. There was still some time to go before we would reach the inn, so my companions asked me to tell an even longer story. I did not disappoint them, and began to tell them the amazing tale of “The Farmer who Found Treasure”. When I came to the climax of the tale, my companions wanted to free me from the tasks of guiding my horse by its bridle and of applying the whip. So one of them took my bridle, and another, when my horse started to lag behind, whipped it with his crop. Thus, with my hands free, I could make the story even more vivid by using my hands to illustrate the situations in the story. In this atmosphere, the four of us were drawn together in the joy of a shared interest, not noticing the hardship of the journey. And so we arrived at the inn.

They said to me, “From now on, you get some sleep. We will take turns in looking after your horse, in addition to our own. And in the mornings we will saddle your horse and help you to mount. If only you will tell us these stories on the journey. So, by turns, they treated me like a guest. Thanks to the comforting power of folk tales, I was being freed from minding the horses of these three traders.

When we came to *ShiHo* (Manas) district, they bought most of the skins, having more capital. But they left for me the cheaper pieces of astrakhan. After spending a couple of months in this area, we paid to despatch our goods off by donkey-train, and ourselves set off back to Gulja. We kept the astrakhan, as it was lighter and of higher value. We stowed this into saddle-bags⁷⁷² and, putting these over our horses, continued our journey.

When we came to Jing, we agreed to take a by-road down to Gulja, because the main road would take us five or six days, whereas the by-road through the mountains would enable us, by crossing the mountains, to reach Gulja over night. The next day we set off at sunrise over the small track. We followed this road for some time, until we got to a place called *Kalla Asti* (Hanging Heads). Over time the snow-melt had carved this place into a dangerous defile, where in former times robbers had waylaid caravans and hung up the traders’ heads - this was how the place had got its name. When we had passed *Kalli Asti* by a narrow path, a storm began, and we were obliged to stay overnight in the mountains with some Kazaks.

Earlier, four donkey-drivers with fifty to sixty donkeys loaded with salt had arrived at the place. They were doubtful that they could find the way across the mountains in this storm, and they had been waiting there for three days. We four did not accept the advice of our host, who said, “Even though it is already April, the snow on this route is very heavy. The road is not open, and you came here not knowing this. It would be better for you to go back to Jing and take the main road”.

But with the sunrise, we continued our journey, wanting to get through to Togrusu and thence go down to Gulja. So we went straight towards Kayja. When we came to the

⁷⁷² *horjun*

west of Kayja, we came to a place called Sarhiratma. From Sarhiratma to the west of Kayja, the storm had blown the snow to bury everything up to a depth of two or three metres. We climbed to the west of Kayja with a thousand difficulties. Until lunchtime, we walked in snow up to our knees. That afternoon the storm became even more fierce. We could not find the path, and did not know what to do, being able neither to advance nor to retreat. So we headed towards the mountain, looking for the route.

In places the snow reached the horses bellies. In this situation, the horses used their bellies to open the way to walk. In certain places the horses hooves could not touch the ground, and they were suspended by their bellies. These conditions tested our horses severely.

One at a time, one horse would make the path, and the other three of us would follow the path it made. Finally the three traders' *yorga* horses had no more strength to beat the path. The traders were becoming anxious, and the howling of the storm assailed our frozen ears. Our eyes were covered with snow and ice. We could not move in any direction, and were left in a very difficult situation. My own ugly, mangy horse began to open a pathway with its chest, and in places sliding on its stomach to open the way. Previously, the traders' horses had moved along skittishly, while my ugly horse plodded along slowly with its head down.

The traders used to ask me where I bought such a pitiful, stubborn mount. I answered, it can pull a cart, go to market, and is generally useful - not petted and pampered like yours. And here we were today, with my ugly horse, accustomed to hardship, showing its mettle when the four of us were in danger of our lives. It continued for quite a distance opening the road, but in the end its feet could not touch the ground, as it hung by its stomach in the snow. It laid its head on the snow and rested. We watched as the horse's body-heat melted the snow and the horse sank until we could hardly see its saddle. In this situation we were walking, leading the horses. Then we had an idea.

I had a white Khotan woven mat tied on the goods on my horse. Now we unloaded the horses, as the horses were tired from carrying the saddlebags. Laying the mat over the snow, we led the horses one by one, about four or five armspans. One of us pulled the

horse's bridle, one pulled its tail forward, and the third pulled it by the ears, in this way getting the horses to move some distance, then returning to do the same with the next horse. Once all the horses were moved forward, we would go back to collect our saddlebags and saddles.

In search of a path where the snow was shallow, we headed for the top of a tree which was visible near the mountain. The snow came up to our knees, and sometimes up to our chests. Ibrahim, one of the traders, lost his galosh⁷⁷³ while trying to pull his foot out of the snow. He tried to reach for it with his hand, but could not retrieve it, as beneath the snow was water running like a stream.

Later that afternoon the storm became even heavier, and we searched constantly for the pass where we could cross the mountain. On the horizon we could see that lonely tree. If we could reach that tree, we would be safe. But the increasing snow finally buried the tree completely, and it was impossible to reach that spot. We began to discuss among ourselves that if we worried about our possessions, we could lose our lives. There were only one or two hours left till sunset, and if we spent the night out in the snowstorm, we would die. Our possessions were not more important than our lives, so we should link hands and make our way back.

But the trader Ibrahim did not agree with us. "If you want to go, you can go. I am going to put my saddlebag over my head and sleep here. If I live, I will have my pack. If I die, I will die next to my goods." He began to cry, and we realised that in his saddlebag he had thousands of *som*, precious furs,⁷⁷⁴ astrakhan, and silver coins. The possessions meant more to him than his life.

The three of us did not care for his possessions, but as it is said that a good companion does not desert his fellow traveller on the road, so we decided to take our horses, abandon the direction we had chosen, and return back by a different route. We were wondering what to do, looking in all directions. We saw from a distance that the salt train donkey-drivers, with whom we had spent the night in the hut under the hill, had

⁷⁷³ *kalas*

⁷⁷⁴ *kama*

followed our footsteps with their donkeys. In fear for their lives, we called from a distance to them, as loudly as we could, “Hey donkey-drivers! Don’t come this way! It’s dangerous - you will die!”

The storm became even worse. The horizon was obscured, and we could not see whether they had heard us or not. The snow crust could not bear the weight of horses, but could have carried us walking, so it became even more difficult to keep our horses. I was so tired that I could hardly lift my feet out of the snow. So I went down on my knees holding the bridle, and led the horse moving forward on my knees. My companions pulled my horse’s tail to move it forward, and the horse, using all its strength, pushed forward to open a way through the snow. My companions said “Hey Powerful One,⁷⁷⁵ you are not beautiful, but you are *Dul-Dul*.”⁷⁷⁶ This was a great compliment to my horse.

After a short rest, I patted my horse’s head and forced it forward again. The day was darkening, and we were looking for Sarhiratma, saying “Oh God, let us reach there!” By its strength that day, my pitiful, enduring, mangy horse made me swear that I would value it more than my life until I should die, and look after it for ever.

In every situation, if man has hope and strength, no matter how bad the situation it can be overcome. That day, shuttling back and forth with the horses, and bringing our saddles and saddlebags, we made our way back to Sarhiratma. Since we could not pass to the west of Kayja, we changed direction to arrive at Gursay Pass. At sunset⁷⁷⁷ we entered Gursay. This road passes between two high mountains, with only two armspans of sky visible above. Among the stones on either side of this road we saw many dead sheep. Four or five flocks had been travelling to Karasu Kokemlik near Nilka, but had met with a terrible storm and died. The herdsmen had lost fifty percent of their animals. We arrived as it was getting dark, and our lives were saved. Along the path we stepped over countless dead sheep, being buried under the snow. Some sheep were still in their death throes.⁷⁷⁸ I saw one black lamb, no bigger than a cat, suckling at its dead mother.

⁷⁷⁵ *janivar*

⁷⁷⁶ a legendary horse

⁷⁷⁷ *namaz sham*

⁷⁷⁸ *can talasmak*

As the milk did not flow, the lamb sucked more and butted the sheep's teat with its head. Witnessing this tragedy I felt even more grateful that our own lives had been saved from such danger. But pitying the lamb, I took it with us to the cave where we decided to spend the night.

We rested in a cave overhung with large rocks. We tied the horses together, and they also lay down on the road with their legs stretched out. Between us we found matches and food. One of us had matches, another had sugar in his saddlebag, the third had a piece of rock sugar, but there was nothing with which to fill our stomachs. In my saddlebag I still had five or six small rounds of bread⁷⁷⁹ left from those given to me as a present by my sister in Siho. I placed those on the saddlebag in front of my companions, who were devoid of strength from tiredness and hunger. They all said, gratefully patting my shoulders, "You are a very special young man!"

Together we ate the bread and sugar, but there was no water or snow to moisten our dry throats. So, in the dark, I went out from Gursay to bring in, using my fur hat, some of the snow which had tortured us since the morning. Now we chewed the snow and ate it, taking our revenge. We did not talk, just lay down and went straight to sleep. Oh yes, and I also put some sugar, softened in my mouth, in the mouth of the lamb, and it also went to sleep snuffling⁷⁸⁰ on my chest. Though the cruel, horrible hand of nature had cast down this poor little lamb's mother, the lamb, unaware of the disaster that had overcome it, still tried to suckle its mother.

Thinking of this pitiful situation, I was filled with gloom. Sorrowfully, I remembered the death of my own mother. I was five years old. I was next to her when she died, with her hand holding the twisted hem of my jacket. My aunt pulled my hem out of my mother's hand, put me on her back, and walked around the yard, crying loudly.

The next day when we came out of the cave, breathing in the fresh air, the weather was beautiful. The sun had risen a spear's-length above the horizon. We stretched

⁷⁷⁹ *tokak*

⁷⁸⁰ *pusuldap*

ourselves, ready to get moving. The horses also had recovered from their tiredness and were standing up. We got ready immediately and continued our journey.

After a short walk we came upon an extraordinary scene on the other side of Gursay. At the foot of the mountain on the righthand side, a cliff wound like a snake above a wide stream bordered by trees with very green leaves moving in the wind. Through the trees and branches we could see the river like a rope, and clearly see the stones under the water of that clear, fast-flowing stream. On the opposite slope, plum trees blossomed like an embroidered Uyghur cap.⁷⁸¹ In the surroundings, bees flew among the flowers. On velvety green grass by the water stood a Kyrgyz tent, with a few people cooking meat in a large pot. Round about many sheep and lambs were grazing. Seeing this scene, I could not restrain my delight, calling out, "Look at that - between hell and heaven is only one arm's length!" My companions joined me, and looking towards the people sitting by the water below us, they also yelled, "Hey! Hey!"

All my life, I will never forget the excitement that I felt at that moment, and the words in which I expressed it. Words are inadequate to explain the joy felt by a person who has, in a terrible situation, given up all hope of life, and then suddenly returns into rich and beautiful scenery. But one's heart can retain that joy for ever.

The people below got up and invited us with waves of their hands. We followed their directions on how to get down, and exchanged greetings with them. After some pleasantries, we discovered that they had come to this place under the mountain the day before, to move their sheep, and it was they who had been the poor ones preceding us through the storm, and losing one thousand of their two thousand sheep. By the time we were fighting for our lives in the terrible storm, they had already reached this heaven. They had hung up some *halal* meat. A pot full of meat was cooking. In this beautiful place we rested until midday, letting our horses enjoy the grass, and ourselves enjoying the meat. Then we wished the herdsmen well, and continued our journey.

⁷⁸¹ *bokke*

We followed the water down between the mountains, enjoying the bewitching beauty of the scenery. We passed the place called Burbusun and at sunset arrived at the mountainside village called Tar. Here we stayed overnight in a courtyard belonging to a middle wealthy farmer. Travellers passing here used it as an inn. The owners were welcoming and generous. The owner's wife waited on us unceasingly. We washed our hands and faces while she prepared tea. She placed on the low table's cloth a stack of five *nan* two armslengths around, and on top of this four loaves made with a milk and fat dough, the fat glazing the surface. As well there was a large enamel pot of cream tea, and a further two bowls, one of scalded cream and another of fresh cream. Villages in the Ili area have plenty of milk and cream in the spring-time.

Each of us drank two or three bowls of cream tea and enjoyed ourselves for two hours. Then we went out to cut fodder⁷⁸² to feed our animals. We were ready to go to sleep, when the host came out to ask us to share some restorative soup.⁷⁸³ Ignoring our protests, he brought noodle soup⁷⁸⁴ fragrant with coriander. We took one or two bowls of this soup, rested a little, and went to bed. That night I had no trouble sleeping, but my three companions could not get to sleep, moaning until sunrise. In the morning I saw that their eyes were as red as berries, and holding their eyes with both hands, they were moaning and banging their heads against the wall, saying, "My eyes feel as if they've been pierced with needles - what can I do!"

The host, an experienced man, said, "Your eyes have been snow-burned. The cure is to cover your heads and let the steam of snow evaporate onto your eyes - this is the only way".

People who had been attracted by the moaning of these three merchants were surprised that I had been floundering in the snow together with these three for a whole day, but my eyes had not been harmed at all. They wondered how, as one of those who had travelled the mountains covered in snow, and faced equally the horrible difficulties, my eyes were not harmed as theirs were. I was also wondering about this, and eventually

⁷⁸² *bide*

⁷⁸³ *hadik esi*

⁷⁸⁴ *ugre as*

we discovered the reason. I had a Kyrgyz hat lined with black velvet. When the storm struck my head, I felt the freezing cold on my neck and forehead, and pulled down the folded-up flaps. The black velvet came down to my eyes, and for this reason the snow did not damage my eyes.

As a matter of fact, if you came in June to that place where we had faced such calamity, you would find a green grassland, shining like velvet, and full of flowers. The area would be surrounded by a level plateau and hillsides covered with countless animals, moving about easily, grazing and fattening on the grass. There would be abundant milk, cream, yoghurt, cottage cheese,⁷⁸⁵ horse-milk liquor,⁷⁸⁶ and ripe strawberries covered in dew - a paradise. But we had been tested by a cruel time. The tortures we faced arose from the consequence of our own actions.

The hospitable farmer, our host, continued to ply us with milk, cream and yoghurt until mealtime. To cure my three companions suffering from the terrible pain in their eyes, he led us on horseback down below Tar to the valley of Bolukey. With some trouble, he sought out some snow among the gulleys and found a patch of frozen snow in the grass. He made a fire of some straw and heated three pieces of stone. He covered my three snow-bitten companions' heads with a coat, and put snow, little by little, on the heated stones. With the steam, the pain left their eyes and they found comfort.

Then our affectionate host saw us off towards the city. While farewelling us, he joked with me, "Young man, you are younger than these three, but your wisdom is greater. From now, don't abandon that Kyrgyz hat of yours, for it serves many purposes. Wear it when you come again, and I will get you a Kyrgyz girl with cheeks as red as pomegranates!" Saying this, he waved us off with a cheerful laugh.

Going through the valley of Bolukey we came to the Gulja road. Two people on horseback caught up with us. These two had waited until the storm stopped and left the gorge (the Kazaks' place) a day after us, and come this way on horseback. We had not listened to those Kazaks with their herds, who had told us to take our horses after the

⁷⁸⁵ *suzme*
⁷⁸⁶ *kimiz*

storm finished, or face danger. Going in ignorance, we had suffered horribly. We told this to the two men, and asked after the donkey-drivers who had followed our footsteps. They told us that, seeing us leaving, the four donkey-drivers with their salt train had followed us. They said that at the place we had lost our way, the donkey-drivers following our footsteps had met the horrible situation we had faced. Realizing that we were signalling them to go back, two of them said, “Let’s go back”, but the other two, stubbornly, said “If four horsemen could go ahead of us, we also could safely pass the ice mountains”, and continued their journey. The two who did not agree turned back at the last prayer time in the evening.⁷⁸⁷ They left their salt and their thirty donkeys, but with a thousand and one difficulties got back alive to the wooden hut in the gorge. The other two drivers had come to that place where our horses hooves had been unable to reach solid ground, and with their more than twenty donkeys had been buried under the snow, and died. Today, some more fortunate friends had gone looking for them on horseback, and had found their bodies.

Hearing this bad news, I felt sorrow, pitying these poor donkey-drivers. In the quest for a living, people can encounter all kinds of events. Some learn from those horrible adventures of life, and become wise from the experience. Some, to the point of death, can learn nothing from their experience, facing bad outcomes fatalistically.⁷⁸⁸ Some, having been through difficult times themselves, upon attaining some comfort and prosperity forget all they have experienced and become arrogant.

For example, these donkey-drivers, fifty to sixty years old, with forty years experience of walking this route, had experienced all the possible perils of the journey. As the old saying says, “The suffering of the road is the suffering of the grave”.⁷⁸⁹ But they did not pay attention to the experienced advice of the young Kazak at the bottom of the gorge, “In April, especially on cloudy days like today, one should never go towards this grassland.” So they faced such terrible consequences. But Oh! How we also suffered such hardship, to the point of almost perishing. And see how those two donkey-drivers

⁷⁸⁷ *hopten*

⁷⁸⁸ p. 238 The Chinese translation of this point is inaccurate.

⁷⁸⁹ *Yol Azabi, Gor Azabi*

and their over twenty donkeys also perished! Experience is our teacher, this is the greatest knowledge. One who does not understand this remains ignorant.

The wise farmer, the host with whom we had spent the night, left a deep impression on me. For example, as we were exhausted almost to the point of death, he welcomed us with a smiling face. Minding the old saying “Don’t talk to the tired and hungry”,⁷⁹⁰ he did not try to engage us in empty conversation, but generously served us with an excellent meal, ensuring the we and our horses could rest, day and night. His own experience helped my three travelling companions with their terrible eye pain as he, like a saint, cured them in one hour with snow. What a great, generous and moral person! If there were more like him in the world, there would be harmony among peoples: “Even if there were not a nose between them, one eye would not eat the other”,⁷⁹¹ and “People will not only put a fire in their own oven.”⁷⁹² But this kind of fair, experienced person, working for the people, is all too rare....

We arrived in Gulja city that day at late afternoon prayer time.⁷⁹³ The summer in Gulja is beautiful, green everywhere, bursting with flowers and with plentiful orchards on all sides. But in spring, the streets are disgustingly muddy. No doubt we came to the notice of the local merchants as we crossed the city market, our horses treading in mud up to their knees.

That evening, four or five leather merchants came one after the other to my house to ask what I had brought. Discovering that I had brought *eltire* and *mariye* they wanted me to sell to them, and not tell others what I had brought. They complimented me with the words “You have crossed the waters and slept on grass mats.”⁷⁹⁴ As the saying goes, you have now entered trade. Now you are a useful citizen, and with God’s grace you will be a great man.” They suggested that they would help me with this work, by giving me more profit. Some of them said that they would give me a good price, using any valuer⁷⁹⁵ I preferred.

⁷⁹⁰ *Bir harganga gep kilma, Bir ackanga*

⁷⁹¹ This is a reversal of the saying as quoted in “Hessen”

⁷⁹² *komchek*

⁷⁹³ *namazdiger*

⁷⁹⁴ *Manggan derya, yatkan borya*, meaning “you have gained wisdom through experience”.

⁷⁹⁵ *preyumcik*

I agreed, but said I wanted to rest, and after the goods had arrived I would then talk about selling to them. So saying, I sent them away. But next morning, before I had got out of bed, two of those merchants came to wake me in my house, asking me to show them at least the goods in my saddlebags. One of these was a rich exporter, and other a relative named Kurban, who was a valuer. I was reluctant to show them my goods, but Kurban insisted, saying that we were relatives, and he would protect my interest, swearing, “By God⁷⁹⁶ I will protect the interest of an orphan like you.” I then decided to trust him, and took out my goods from my saddlebag to show them, including the astrakhan and yellow weasel⁷⁹⁷ skins. They liked my goods, and wanted to buy them on the spot, not even giving me a chance to dress and wash my face, and began to divide and classify my goods and put prices on them.

I did some haggling, and said I wanted to wait until my Uncle came before I sold, but Kurban said, “I am your uncle, I am your brother, flesh and blood! I won’t cheat you!” They talked and talked, and in the end fixed a price, put fifty *som* into my hand, and bought my goods. Later when my astrakhan arrived late at night, they came again to buy with that special price they had offered, and went off.

In return for the difficulties I had endured on my journey, my 300 *som* had become 600 *som*. I had doubled my capital. But later I found out that the one who had bought my goods made a further profit of 350 *som*. The rich leather merchant gave Kurban 50 *som* as a commission,⁷⁹⁸ and then himself made the 300 *som* in three hours that I had earned in three months of arduous travel, with the pain of travel and the hazard of death. So I still lacked experience in business. Not benefiting from real experience of life, I believed insincere words.

None the less, with the money I had earned I could give a wedding for my brother. In this way, I saved my family from extinction. Our overturned cookingpot once again began to steam.⁷⁹⁹

⁷⁹⁶ *Ezbira Yihuda*

⁷⁹⁷ *agmihan*

⁷⁹⁸ *dellal*

⁷⁹⁹ *dum bolup kalgan kazanimisdin yene hor jikscka baslidi*

Appendix 7

“The Road in Quest of Knowledge”

[*Ilim Izdesh Yolida*]⁸⁰⁰

In going to a religious school I learned to read books, but it was up to me to discover literature and knowledge for myself. In the old days, people studied in these religious schools in order to become a Mollah, who managed religious life. To become a Kharim one needed to memorise thirty chapters⁸⁰¹ of the Koran, which took many decades of study.

After the changes of April 1933 in Xinjiang, modern educational arrangements were put in place and modern schools were opened. This created the opportunities to learn, in a few years in these schools, knowledge suited to contemporary life and to various kinds of work. I greatly desired to study in such a school to gain this knowledge. I heard that various kinds of schools had been opened in Urumqi, and that people entering these secondary schools would be given clothing and living allowance. I began to save money for a trip to Urumqi.

Following these April changes, my brother Turdi Kadir went to Urumqi looking for work. Because he was quite knowledgable and had good handwriting, he found work stencilling articles for the “Xinjiang Gazette”.⁸⁰² In those days, newspapers in Xinjiang were printed by mimeograph process .

Because my brother was quite active in this newspaper work, he was selected among a hundred students to be sent to study in Tashkent. He was among the first to attend the “SAGU” (Central Asian University). He spent most of his living allowance on all kinds of books, which he sent back to me. I read books on the literature of Uyghur, Uzbek, Tatar and Kazak cultures, and became very interested in literature.

⁸⁰⁰ *Hatireler op cit p 264*

⁸⁰¹ *pare*

⁸⁰² *Sinjiang Geziti*

I had kept some of these books on literature. To Lutpulla Mutellip I gave the “Selected Poetry of Pushkin” (in Uzbek translation); the “Five Kinds Literary Anthology”, the Selected Poems of Hadi Tahta, and Gorky’s novel “Mother”. Books on mathematics and the sciences I sold to raise money for my trip to Urumqi.

The money I raised amounted to one hundred *som*. If I were to take motor transport with the merchants who travelled that route, it would cost me fifty to sixty *som*. In that way, more than half of my money would be consumed by transport, and I would not have enough to cover other expenses on the journey, or my food and lodging until I began school. So I looked for free transport. From March until April I searched in vain. But my determination to study was so high that I decided to walk a month to get to Urumqi on foot if necessary.

Just at that point, I met a carter who was taking a load of sugar lumps and fabrics to Urumqi. This man had four carts, and his plan was to take them harnessed in train, one behind the other. (At that time in Ili it was rare for these carts with two wooden wheels to be linked together, and few drivers formed such a caravan). I made a deal with the carter: He would drive the first two carts, and I would drive the second two. Each would look after the horses that they were driving, the harnessing and so on. Inn and stabling charges would be met by the carter. I would pay nothing for lodging or transport, but would look after my own food. Though working day and night for no pay, I was still happy that I would not need to take that long and lonely journey on foot, or pay for my lodgings.

Three days journey out of Gulja, close to Kengsay, the fourth cart dropped into a rut⁸⁰³ and broke its axle. The carter smote his forehead and came at me, saying, “You accursed one! By not watching out you’ve broken the cart’s axle, and you’re going to pay for it”. He hit me and, waving his whip, demanded several *som* for the broken axle.

⁸⁰³ *katang*

I defended myself: “The carts follow wherever you drive. Are you trying to charge me for the dead body of your rundown old cart!” Still waving his whip, he came towards me again, and I picked up a stone the size of my fist to threaten him. Other carters on the road intervened to stop us fighting, criticised my boss and made peace between us. The carter could not find an axle in that place, and went back to LusiGong. I stayed to mind the horses and the carts. We spent three troublesome days in this place until an axle could be found and we could continue our journey.

When these carts came to a steep hill, the horses could tire and stop. It was my responsibility to quickly place stones behind the wheels of the last cart. For this purpose I carried in each hand a stone as big as two fists, and became dripping with sweat when going up such hills, and left with no strength. We crossed the mountains, passing Santai, Sitai and Wutai, and between them stretches of desolate Gobi Desert which we passed with suffering and hardship, arriving after three days and nights at Dahiyenzi.

The carters wanted to rest the horses, so the next day we did not set off again on the journey. I went into the inn to ask whether I should harness the carts. Seven or eight drivers had set up a gambling arena and were gambling. My boss carter, without answering my question or even glancing at me, picked up the knucklebones from the smooth damp-clay floor. For lunch I ate handmade noodles with vegetables and meat at the food-stall, and for dinner I filled myself with *manta*.⁸⁰⁴ The horses also had hay and barley. After all that, when I returned to the room I saw through the crack of the door that the drivers were still gambling. In the light of the flaming lamp, those drivers had forgotten their horses, their carts, and the goods consigned by others to them, even forgetting their own hunger, with their whole bodies given over to the gambling.

That night I got up several times to feed the horses and check the goods on the carts. From time to time I listened to the gamblers through the door. They were in the same

⁸⁰⁴ meat, onion and pumpkin in a steamed bun

state, with their cries of “*Dettikam*”.⁸⁰⁵ I wanted to continue the journey, but it was not within my power. Nor could I stop the delinquency of the drivers, wasting time with their gambling. If I said anything to my boss, he would fight with me, or even split my head open with a cudgel.⁸⁰⁶ In this alien environment, I realised that I could not compete with him. I sat quietly on a stone beside the gate of the inn.

I talked to myself in boredom and frustration, inwardly cursing those gambling carters. Why didn't the innkeeper stop them, knowing that they were misbehaving? Why didn't he complain to the authorities and have them thrown out? Surely this must be a conspiracy? Should I go to the police and inform them of it? No - I had never in my life done such a thing, and moreover if I were to go and report them, the innkeeper would kick me out, the carters would refuse to take me, and I would still come to disaster. These thoughts made me so angry that, to distract myself, I went to look after the horses again, check the goods once more, and walk around the local market.

On the third day of angrily going around the market, I came upon a distiller's shop. I met a young fairhaired man sitting on the bench next to the long black counter, drinking alcohol.⁸⁰⁷ He was a primary school teacher, teaching the Kazak children around Jing county. This young Tatar named Raup had a welcoming and devilish look, and could play the accordion. He was on the way from Gulja to Jing, and had left his horse at the inn and come to this shop for a drink. After we had exchanged greetings, he got four-ser of alcohol in a black terracotta bowl and offered it to me. I refused, saying I had never drunk alcohol. Raup sang, in Tatar, in Kazak and in Uyghur languages, and told stories and jokes of Aldar Kusa and Nasrettin Eppendi, lightening my heavy heart. But I was afraid to drink alcohol, and said to him, “Believe me, I really am afraid to drink”.

“Mate, what are you worried about!”, he said. “You look upset. If you drink this, you will feel better, like being in paradise!” So saying, he put the bowl up to my lips.

⁸⁰⁵ The cry given, with a slap of the chest, when casting knucklebones

⁸⁰⁶ *tokmak*

⁸⁰⁷ *harak*

I took the bowl from his hand and put it on the counter. “The Faith of one who drinks alcohol will be separated from his body for forty days. If he should die within that period, he will die faithless”, I said, arguing with him.

“That talk is just farts!”, he said with a gesture of his hand. “Your’re so silly! As if alcohol could take your faith! Its just like Nasrettin Eppendi’s breaking of his cleansing rituals.”

“What is that?”

“Like this - one day Nasrettin Eppendi was sitting by a stream cleansing himself. He slipped and lost his shoe in the flowing water. Eppendi raised the foot that had lost the shoe, let out a fart, and touching the water said, “You can take back your *teret*,⁸⁰⁸ but give me back my shoe!” With jokes like this he made me laugh and in the end, ignoring my objections, got me to drink that four ser of alcohol.

As some say, drinking alcohol is bitter, but afterwards it is sweet. I swallowed the four ser with great difficulty, feeling as though someone had set fire from my throat to my chest, and bitter smoke was coming from my mouth. After a short time my bitterness and worry went (to where, I don’t know), and I felt overtaken with good, sweet enjoyment.

My new friend filled his litre waterbottle with liquor, slung this over his left shoulder, and took his accordion from his right shoulder. “You see, now you are giggling! This is good alcohol - prime gin. Let’s go and have some fun.”

He began playing his accordion immediately while in the town, leading me to a good stream outside the bazaar. Beside the stream were plenty of willows and good grass. Raup hung the accordion on the branch of a tree, took out five or six eggs from his pocket and placed them on the green grass. Among the eggs was one raw one. He took

⁸⁰⁸ The cleansing ritual before prayer

a little knife that hung on a chain from the belt of his trousers, and used it to make a small hole in the egg and suck the egg out and drink it. Later he made the hole bigger, so the shell could serve as a wine cup. He filled this shell with alcohol from the water bottle and drank it, eating the eggs which he had peeled and prepared in advance as a snack. He offered me a cup of alcohol, but I steadfastly begged to refuse.

“Hey, you’re being a real *sart*.⁸⁰⁹ If you insist, then eat this egg, or, in my language, this *jumurka*.”

When he spoke he mixed the Kazak, Tatar and Uyghur dialects all together. One after the other, he drank three or four cups of the alcohol, played the accordion and sang Tatar songs. I ate the eggs and sat there listening to his songs. His voice was strong and pleasant. His voice blended with the sound of the clear water flowing in the stream, and joined with the cool wind bending and playing with the new shoots of the green willow trees, flying far away. The tone of his voice brought forth one’s emotion. The deep lyrics of the Tatar song ran like this:⁸¹⁰

When my mother gave me birth
Wrapped me up in a white bundle
She wished me a long life
She did not wish me good fortune

Sandughach’s chicks
Why are there not eight?
This world’s comforts
Why are they not equal?

⁸⁰⁹ *Sart* is the name for urban or settled Uyghurs used especially by non-Uyghur Turkic peoples.

⁸¹⁰ *Enkey meni tughan chaghda*

Ak bölevge bölegen

Umruk bolsun dep tilegen

Behting bolsun dimegen

Sandughachning balalari

Nige segiz bolmaghan

Shul dunyaning rahatleri

Nige tigiz bolmaghan.

His every word attracted me like a shining pearl, meaningfully using the analogy and contrast of fortune, love and hope. I thought of this fun-loving young man, faced with a depressing life, not able to take it any more and giving himself to alcohol to comfort his heart.

I also was tied here without strings or barriers, and drifting around. I was depressed and not knowing what to do, and came upon this happy-natured young man with a talent for singing. He lifted my spirits, and I felt a bond with him. We stayed together until evening, then I took him to a restaurant and bought him a meal. I wrote down his address, promising that I would look him up at Külöteng. I said good bye to him when the sun set, and went back to the inn.

When I came to the front of the inn, the head carter was squatting on a stone with his head hanging between his knees. Noticing that I had come, he raised his head and looked at me with a sad and hopeless expression. His green eyes were sunken, the hair of his beard was dishevelled, and his round face was grimy. From his look, it was clear that he was suffering worry and sorrow. Seeing him, I knew that he had lost. I went in to the inn to see whether this was the case. In fact he had lost not just bits and pieces, but everything - all his money, everything in his packs and even the four horses and carts - and he was destitute.

This worthless man, without considering that I had driven his cart for several days, looked after his horses and merchandise, and not caring where I would go or what I would do, even asked money from me.

“Lend me five or ten *som* so I can eat”, he said. I told him my own situation, and did not give him any money. He further begged me, “Just one *som*, for a drink to ease my pain?”

With a smile, because I had just returned from having a happy time, I said, “For the last few days you have left me stranded. I was so bored that I became confused and drank alcohol for the first time in my life. I’m not going to pay now for your mistakes.” With that, I went into the bedroom.

The next day, since the carts I was supposed to drive had gone, and the carter didn't have any money to pay for my lodging, I paid for my own three or four days lodgings. I wasted a day looking for a motor vehicle or a cart to take me further. In the end, I bought four *girde*⁸¹¹ of bread, placed these in the saddlebag with my clothes, put the saddlebag on my shoulder and began walking towards Urumqi. I walked sixty kilometres in two days, and arrived at Jing county.

The next day I was so tired and footsore that I could not walk, so I went to the road to try to catch a ride. Some drivers refused, saying that their loads were heavy and they could not take on anyone. Others asked for a high price. I sat by the road until lunchtime. I was starting to get hungry, but did not want to go to the market, firstly to conserve my money, and secondly fearing that if I went away I might miss a convenient ride. So I stayed put and sat and ate one of my dry *girde* from my saddlebag.

Just at that time I saw a black motor truck coming from the direction of Jing market, and quickly put my *girde* back into my saddlebag, went into the middle of the road saying "Please God, let this driver be reasonable!" and raised my two hands. It was a lucky moment for me, as the driver stopped his truck in front of me. It was loaded with cloth, and two people were sitting on top of the load. I recognised them: one of them was Abliz, the brother of the trading⁸¹² merchant Ekram, and the other was his accountant. Abliz opened his eyes wide under his bushy eyebrows and stared at my dusty face.

"Hey, aren't you Zunun? What are you doing here? Stay out of the way of the truck!", he said waving me to the side of the road with his right hand. I went up to the truck and said, "Brother Abliz, I'm going to Urumqi to study. I've lost my ride and am travelling on foot. Can you let me ride on your truck?"

⁸¹¹ A medium round of Uyghur bread

⁸¹² *dogverchi*

He could just hear my feeble, hoarse voice coming from my dry throat. Seeing my pitiful situation, I don't know whether he pitied me, but without saying anything more he said, "Climb up!" I don't know what he was feeling, but I thought he was showing compassion and affection, so I felt quite happy.

I threw my saddlebag onto the truck and climbed up to sit at the empty back of the truck. The truck proceeded, and we stayed overnight at Tallik. Next day we started at sunrise, and without stopping at Shiho we arrived by mealtime at Köytun river. It was in flood, with muddy waters flowing strongly. The Russian driver, a man in his fifties with a woolly beard covering his face, drove too hastily into the water, the flow rose over the front of the motor, and it got wet and stalled.

The driver went into the water up to his waist and tried all means to fix it, but could not get the motor going. The more he tried to repair it, the stronger grew the flood, covering the vehicle and threatening the cargo of material. In this situation the merchant and his assistants got into the water to carry the fabrics to the side of the river. Because they had helped me and given me a ride, of course I could not look idly on such a calamity. Without a thought I stripped down to my undershorts and went into the water. By sunset, the four of us led by the merchant carried the cloth across the river. I worked with all my heart, thinking of their kindness towards me. With the strength of the current, I tripped two or three times on submerged stones and fell into the water. Another time, a rolling stone struck my ankle and injured it. Though still bleeding, I bandaged it and continued to work, limping.

That night the merchant and the accountant slept on top of the load in a dry area, while I and the driver slept in a damp place. We covered ourselves with a tarpaulin, but could not sleep for the cold. We shivered sleeplessly until sunrise. With the discomfort of pebbles digging into me, I remembered the words of the Uyghur epic "Tahir Zohre":⁸¹³

⁸¹³ *Beziler kırıghuche hichnime bilmez*
Beziler chinikhıdu yeshida
Yıghıt yatsa bir kün etles körpide
Bir kün yatıdu saynung teshida.

Some people learn nothing with age,
Some people show their age,
A good young man lies one day on silk
And another day lies on a stony strand.

Next day, when the sun had risen to the height of a spear, the merchant and the accountant rose and looked for something to eat for breakfast. The driver went to the riverside to look at the truck, half under water and covered in sand from the night before, and he squatted sadly on the ground.

Because I had been cold all night, I rose as soon as there was light enough to see, and began to collect wood that had been thrown up by the river and dried among the rocks. I made a pile next to our load. When I had been quite a distance for the third time collecting an armload of twigs, Abliz and the accountant had woken up. I asked the driver for some matches and lit a fire. The other three gathered around the fire, talking about how they had not eaten since the previous midday. Thinking they would buy prepared food at each truck stop, they had not brought any bread or other foods with them. Now they were blaming each other about the situation. The accountant looked at Abliz and said, "What are we going to do about breakfast?"

Abliz just said, "We'll have to go back to Shiho." The accountant got up and, looking back the way we had come, said, "Going to Shiho would be fifteen kilometres walk - thirty kilometres return, on foot! That will not be easy on an empty stomach!"

I looked at Abliz and said, "I have three or four girde. We could use that to make a start on breakfast, and maybe later find something more". All three men stood up joyfully.

"Good for you!"⁸¹⁴ said the merchant.

The accountant said, "Well done, brother. Bring out your bread - where is it?" The

⁸¹⁴ *Hebelle*

Russian, understanding what we said in Uyghur, said in his own language “*Vet harasho!*”, patting me on the shoulder. I had eaten half of one of the four *girde* that I bought at Jing. I kept the other half and gave the three, one to each of them. They began to eat the bread dry.

I said, “Wait - let’s use the bucket from the truck, put it on some stones and boil water for tea.” The accountant and driver agreed, but Abliz said, “How are we going to drink muddy water?” I replied that this muddiness was sandy, and it would sink quickly to the bottom, and the water would be clear.

I brought half a bucket of water, placed it on three big stones and set a fire under it. In a short time the water had boiled and as I said, when we waited a little, the water I had boiled became clear. I put some boiled water in the enamel mug I was carrying for my travels, and offered it to my companions. Drinking my boiled water, they were able to swallow the dry bread that had been sticking in their throats. They complimented me on my practical experience of life.

They then wanted to discuss how to pull the truck out and get it going again, and how to find food until we could leave the place. The decision was that the driver would go to a place where people were working on paving the road, to try to borrow a tractor to pull out the truck. I would go to Shiho market to buy bread and other provisions to bring back.

Following this decision, I took some money from the boss, took a large sack⁸¹⁵ and two small cloth bags.⁸¹⁶ I limped to the Shiho Market, and bought ten *nan*, the cooked heads, shanks and tripes of two sheep, a kilo of sugar lumps, tea, salt and one bottle of spirits. I put these in the *taghar*, lifted it on my back and by evening came back to the place by the river.

⁸¹⁵ *taghar*

⁸¹⁶ *halta*

Those who had stayed by the river had begged every passing vehicle to help pull the truck out of the river, but they could not get it out. The poor old driver, covered in mud, had been through something he had never experienced. Trying to save the truck, which was almost submerged in the water, they were tired and hungry. The boss Abliz, frustrated and looking for something to charge at, said angrily, when he saw me, “What took you so long? We are almost dead from hunger!”

I didn't just take this. “Don't you remember the accountant saying it was thirty kilometres there and back? It's not easy to walk that far carrying a heavy sack. I nearly collapsed. Fine. I shall not go again. If you need anything more, you can go yourself.” I dropped the sack on top of the load.

The poor driver had probably become very hungry through working so hard. He said, “*Nichivo! Ribiyata! Daiti hilep*”. He shook the mud of his dirty hands and picked up the sack, glad to see the sheep's heads and shanks in the sack.

“*Ahay! Kak harasho*”.

I showed him the bottle of spirits which I had wrapped securely and packed in the sack. The poor frustrated driver held the bottle up high saying, “*Kak harasho? Ochin harasho tiumi*”. As he spoke he was jumping with joy. He pulled the cork with his teeth and spat it out, raised the bottle to his mouth and swallowed about four ser of spirits in one gulp. As everyone began to eat, ignoring my tiredness I went to get water to make tea in the bucket. Later, at the insistence of the driver, I for the second time experienced in this place the pleasure of alcohol, as I had learned the first time from the young Tatar. I began to eat the sheep's heads and shanks.

We tried every means to pull our vehicle out of the water, without success. Eventually, we found a tractor and paid fifty *som* for it to pull the truck out of the sand. Our poor driver began to take his old vehicle to pieces, clean each part one by one, and put it back together. He worked regardless of rain or sun, using a cloth to clean the small parts. I lit a fire next to him from the wood I had collected, and the driver, going without sleep, lay on his back under the truck getting it back into order by the light of the fire. I slept

next to the fire, curled up like a hedgehog. From time to time I got up to stoke the fire. The bosses arranged the bolts of cloth with a tarpaulin over the top as a kind of tent, and snored away in that.

As soon as the sun rose, I would get up to go to the city to buy whatever was needed. Some days I cooked soup with meat in the bucket. In this way we passed four days and nights. When the vehicle was repaired, we renewed our journey towards Urumqi. When the truck approached Sanchi,⁸¹⁷ we stopped at a farm about five or six kilometres before the market to spend the night. The next day, the boss said to me, “Brother Zunun Ahun, the truck will not be going into Urumqi, because Sheng Duban⁸¹⁸ is stopping vehicles coming from all directions, and forcing them all down to the south. So we will leave our load here and send the empty truck back to Gulja. So you must find your own way from here into Urumqi.”

I was grateful that I had got near to Sanchi. “Thanks for bringing me even this far. I will look for a vehicle to take me to Urumqi.” So saying I put my saddlebags on my shoulder and prepared to walk away.

“Set aside empty thanks, little brother”, said Abliz. “Pay some transport fare before you go.” I swallowed, saying, “Pay a fare?” I was surprised to hear this from the mouth of the boss. I thought they had let me get on the truck free because they knew me as an orphan from their home town. I was very grateful all that time. Secondly, when they had the disaster near the river, ignoring my injured foot I had helped them considerably, and so I assumed they would not charge me for the transport. It was a big disillusionment, and on top of that, to give away the money that I had saved with such difficulty was like a blow to the head with a bat. With difficulty, I asked “How much should I pay?”

The boss said, “People pay from Gulja to Urumqi seventy *som*. You came from Jing to Sanchi, so you can pay sixty *som*. Not looking at Abliz, I turned my eyes to the accountant, blinking and saying sadly, “Sixty *som*?”

⁸¹⁷ 30km. from Urumqi

The meaning of my wretched look to the accountant was “the Boss is showing me no compassion and putting me in great difficulty. You are more compassionate to those in trouble. Help me not to have to pay this fare, or at least help me pay less!”

I was asking for sympathy, but my hopes were dashed. The accountant said, “Younger brother, it would be nice if we didn’t have to charge you at all, but as you have seen yourself, we faced some disaster along the road, and Abliz has had many expenses. That’s why it would not be fair if you did not pay something.” With the negotiation of the kind accountant, this person from who I had sought help, I paid forty *som*.

That day I walked five or six kilometres to Sanchi, and from there found a cart loaded with wood. I paid five *som* and set off for Urumqi in the late afternoon. But because there was too much wood loaded on the cart, the horses could not pull the cart in steep or muddy places, and we had difficulty all night - most of the time walking on foot. Close to sunrise, we entered Urumqi, and arrived at an inn by Big Bridge.⁸¹⁹

I had no idea what to do in this big city. I had only thirty *som* left. I was worried about how I would live if my small amount of money finished before I could enter the school. During this period I met Eli Hemrayov and Memeteli Jilanov - two acquaintances from Gulja who had come to Urumqi to take examinations to go to study in Tashkent. They were staying in the North Garden.⁸²⁰ On their advice, I joined them, saying that I was also a student intending to go to Tashkent. There were some places vacant because students had not arrived from other places, or had failed their medical examinations, and I filled of these places to take the exam. I was provided with food and lodging as one of the students due to go to Tashkent.

Nearly a hundred students had come from all over Xinjiang. They could not go as planned in 1937, so they stayed on at the North Garden. This was because a number of

⁸¹⁸ Governor Sheng Shicai.

⁸¹⁹ *Chong Kövriük*

⁸²⁰ *Gherbi Baghcha*

people in the Education Department under Sheng Shicai had one after the other been labelled as “traitors” and imprisoned. The official sponsoring us to go to Tashkent had disappeared.

All summer there was nothing to do and no money to spend. When I was in Gulja looking forward to study, I had thought “Science and Knowledge is the only road that can lead the people out of their misery”. With this in mind, I wrote the rough draft of a drama called “The Hardship of Ignorance”⁸²¹. In that time I had also written a five part⁸²² poem describing the experiences of Chimen, the daughter of an old farmer destroyed by high taxation. When I came to Urumqi I brought manuscripts of these two works with me.

I revised and completed the play that I had drafted. Eli Hamrayov, Jilanov, Abdukadir and I discussed among ourselves putting this play on in Urumqi. Hamrayov was delegated to discuss mounting the play with the relevant organisations and obtain approvals. I took on the job of directing, and played the part of the old man who is conservative, and who doesn’t want his children to go to a modern school. Jilanov was to play the part of Mehsut, the old man’s son. Mehsut ran away from his father to study medicine, and came back as a doctor to save his father from illness and his sister from begging, and gave them a good life. The role of the girl was to be played by a young Tatar called Mejit, who had himself grown up as an orphan. Mejit played this role with great emotion. The role of a younger brother who died under the poison of ignorance was played by a young Uzbek called Emin. Ahmetyar, who was always playing the *dap* took the role of a shaman.⁸²³

After fifteen days’ rehearsal, we put on the play in a theatre in an inn at Nan Guan. For lighting, we borrowed one measure⁸²⁴ of kerosene from a merchant. Costumes and props we borrowed from a local Uyghur club. Each day the tickets sold out very quickly. Playing for three days, we collected seven or eight hundred *som*. Everyone agreed that we would elect a committee to decide who would receive how much money. The

⁸²¹ “*Jahaletning japasi*”

⁸²² *boghum*

⁸²³ *bahkshi*

⁸²⁴ *put*

committee decided that I should receive half of the total takings, some 350 *som*, for writing and directing the play and taking five different roles. Eli Ekber did not have any heavy clothing and it was late autumn, so it was decided to give him one hundred *som*. The *dap* player Ahmetyar was given one hundred *som* because his clothing was tattered and old. The rest of the money was divided according to the actors' roles, twenty or thirty *som* apiece. The young Tatar who had played the role of the girl was given fifty *som*. Those who had received more bought winter clothing and gave a banquet in the evening to entertain all those who had helped with the show.

In other words, "The Hardship of Ignorance", written in 1936, was the first drama that I wrote since I developed my love of literature. After we had mounted this play ourselves, I went to the newspaper to see if they would publish my poem "Chimen", which I had written sitting under a pumpkin trellis. The editors said that they would publish it if I received the clearance of the editor in chief. But the editor in chief was busy, moving from place to place. I chased him for two weeks and could not meet him. While I was pursuing this business of mine, going between the newspaper and the Department of Education, I heard that Sheng Shicai had arrested poets and writers Ayub Kari, writer of the story "Barat the Stooge",⁸²⁵ Turdahun Kari, Merup Eppendi, Helil Sattari, Kasimjan Kamberi, and other well-known people. In the end I could not find the person I needed to clear my poem, because he too had disappeared. There was no place I could publish, and I lost my manuscript of "Chimen" because, afraid that I too could come to this disaster, I burned it. When I had shown it to Lutpullah Mutellip he had commented on how beautiful the name was. Later on, he himself wrote a drama using this name.

The spring of of Art and Literature had just begun to bloom. The autumn which would kill those leaves had brought a frost. I was also in the first Spring of my first steps towards literature, my own first *Chimen* [grass shoots] were burned to ashes in these frosty days.

⁸²⁵ *Barat jelligör*

Here we were, with the snowflakes flying. Winter had arrived. About a hundred of us youth on the path to knowledge, like a caravan on the road, lit fires in parks and sat around them to pass the days.

One afternoon by the fire Eli Hemrayov was playing *dutar*, Abdireshit was playing *tambur*, Ahmetyar was playing *dap* and singing. Suddenly a number of vehicles entered the park. Among these, four trucks carried a hundred soldiers armed with machine guns, automatic rifles, and slung with grenades at their waists. Between these trucks was a car, in which was sitting Sheng Shicai. When they arrived at the main stream about fifty paces away from us, Sheng Shicai got out of the car, went to the shade of a tree next to the stream, and squatted down there. This man, with his strong eyebrows and his flat face, took off his white gloves, dipped his fat hands in the rippling water, and played around with the pebbles in the stream. These were not the hands of a poet moved by the scenery, rather they were the hands of an executioner, coloured with the blood of our precious people. We stopped the music and froze. I even froze in the act of breaking a piece of wood across my knee.

Ali Ekber whispered: "Boys, boys! Look, our leader Governor Sheng is looking at us!" "Shut up, Crazy", said Eli Hemrayov, nervously. (Crazy⁸²⁶ was Eli Ekber's nickname).

Sarang went quiet and said no more. In a public situation, whenever Executioner Sheng's name was mentioned, everyone would be instructed by his lackeys to rise. Here, when Crazy Ekber mentioned the sacred name, we all remained seated as if frozen. We were afraid to end in a graveyard, because a machine gun was aimed at us from the front seat of the trucks.

After his sightseeing in the park, the terrorist Sheng Shicai went away. Probably he had asked who we were, because two days later someone came from the Education

⁸²⁶ *Sarang*

Department to inform us that this year there would be no students going to Tashkent to study. Instead, we would go to secondary school or teachers college in Urumqi.

I was one of those who went to secondary school, starting in Fourth Year. Some others were admitted to Teachers' College. Even though we could not go to Tashkent to study, we had the opportunity to study with teachers who themselves had studied in "SAGO" (Central Asian University in Tashkent). At that time the main teachers in the Teachers College were Abliit Seypullayuf, and Hajiyuf, and in the secondary school they were Abdurahman Muhdi, Kadir Hessen, and Arpov.

Here I must mention the young Tatar man who had played the role of the orphan homeless beggar girl in my first drama "The Hardship of Ignorance", and played it so intensely that he brought the audience to tears. This young man, considering the advantages of clothing and other fringe benefits, chose to join a training course for security personnel. His fate was even worse than ours. At that time, security officers under the hypocrite Li Yingqi were arresting many hundreds of intellectuals and well known people, and were imprisoning them as "traitors", then killing them secretly.

That young Tatar man who had entered security training for the sake of the fringe benefits was forced to step in the blood of innocent people who were being killed by a bloodthirsty executioner. Our poor actor, who had shown great talent in our drama, under the hand of the disgusting executioner had to play the role of a carter, transporting and concealing dead bodies who had been sacrificed in a horrible death. After he had done this task for a certain time, the bloodthirsty hypocrite Sheng Shicai, to conceal the evidence of his own murders, took him along with all those who had been involved in this purge and killed them all in a single night.

Our secondary school was at the Beimeng Rise. During the administration of Yang Jangjung⁸²⁷ it was called the "Old School".⁸²⁸ There were cells on two sides of the courtyard, with only an armslength separating them. The chimney pipes coming out

⁸²⁷ Governor Yang Zengxing

⁸²⁸ *Gudong Shutang*

from the windows of the cells used to fill the walkway with smoke. We would run in a crouch to our classes. About a hundred *jin* of coal was distributed to each cell for a week's heating, but it was only enough for four days. On the other days we could not sleep from the cold, so we were forced to break the lock of the store-room to steal extra coal, or to take out the windows from other classrooms so that we could steal the coal that was to be used in the stove for that room. For this, those students who had broken the store-room lock were punished and interrogated by the school discipline manager. We fought with our fists between classes over coal. In that severe cold when we could not sleep, there were incidents such as breaking up room tables and chairs to burn.

In 1937 there was a shortage of food. We had rice gruel⁸²⁹ twice a day, and were so hungry we could not study. When they gave us steamed bread⁸³⁰ only once or twice a week, we fought over the bread, and broke up the utensils and tables in the canteen in protest. Because of the poor conditions in the school, a saying grew up spontaneously among the students: "We will die from hunger or from smoke". If someone fell ill, we would ask "Is it from the hunger or from the smoke?" Because of the crowded conditions, many students became ill through catching a cold, bedbugs, lice and dirt, and had to leave. By the time the spring arrived, over twenty students had died of illness from the Uyghur class alone.

Because of the political atmosphere, some students had been accused of being "bad elements" and "traitors", and had been arrested. In such difficult conditions I studied for a year in the secondary school, and in 1938 I returned to Gulja. For one year I taught in the orphanage school, while I recovered my health and restored my dilapidated clothing. In 1939 I returned to Urumqi to sit an exam at the Saybang Rural Management Technical Institute. I was admitted to the animal husbandry department. At the end of a year's study, before the summer holiday, the students of our class decided to write to Sheng Duban requesting that Uyghur students as well as Chinese students should be admitted to a new course in Agricultural Science⁸³¹ which was to

⁸²⁹ "shipen", = Chinese *xifan*

⁸³⁰ *moma*

⁸³¹ *Agrinum*

commence in the following year. In that class they would teach maintenance and repair of all kinds of agricultural machinery and tractors. People in that course would learn about technical knowledge and commerce. Secondly, people studying in that class would become officials in the offices of rural management. Those who studied animal husbandry, water management, and veterinary science would be working under those officials. For these reasons, our desire to study in this course became stronger, and we wrote a second letter. Without receiving any response, we went home for the summer holidays.

In 1940 I was not able to return to school immediately and stayed a further month in Gulja. Then I caught a truck of the Urumqi Pharmaceutical company, paid fifty *som* fare, and began my journey back. The truck arrived at Süydung (close to Gulja) and we went to get a meal. At the meal I met a young Tatar called Jüji who worked for the pharmaceutical company. After we had chatted a while, he signalled me to come outside. I went out immediately, and Jüji came next to me and said quietly, “I left Urumqi yesterday. There’s something I couldn’t tell you in there in front of other people, so I called you out here. The situation in Urumqi is very difficult.”

“What is the problem?”, I asked seriously.

“Most of the students in your class were arrested about ten days ago.”

“Why?”

“You wrote a letter to Sheng Duban - that’s probably the reason.”

“Where did you hear that we had written a request?”

“From your Discipline Manager Ablihay”.

In those days we knew that personnel were sent from the security bureau⁸³² to be eyes and ears in the secondary schools and to inform. We used to hear these stories. For that reason our school’s discipline department would definitely have known about our letter of request to Sheng Duban. Because our letter was a petition, most of the students had signed it. In addition, there was also an informer amongst the students.

⁸³² *jinsajü*

From Jüji's bad news, I realised that this was not a matter of few students disappearing in the middle of the night, but the ghastly situation of the entire class being arrested. I decided to abandon the idea of going to Urumqi to study. Now I needed to recover my fare and my belongings. To encourage the driver and boss to be agreeable, I bought two bottles of spirits and put them on the table where they were eating, and ordered a plate of *sey*.⁸³³ Nurzat, the official from the pharmaceutical company, and the driver, were pleased with my generosity and eagerly drank the spirits. When they were a little tipsy, I said that I had changed my mind about going to Urumqi and requested my money and belongings back. They were surprised, and told me not to be silly. Not taking their advice, I went to the truck and threw down my baggage. Then I went to them to ask them more strongly to give back my money. It was as well that I had oiled the driver's throat with alcohol, as he happily took my side to convince Nurzat. The boss then had no choice but to refund me. He gave me thirty-five *som* that he had in his pocket. I gave up fifteen *som* and my saddlebag, which they had loaded with soap. The next day I returned to Gulja.

After that I couldn't return to the school [where I had taught]. First I joined the Ili District Uyghur Cultural Organisation's Arts Section as an actor and writer. Later, I worked as head of the Cultural Education Branch.

⁸³³ stir fry

Appendix 8

“The *Bahkshi* Woman”

[*Chokan Bahkshi*]⁸³⁴

The *bahkshi* woman was a very beautiful woman. She had beautiful big eyes, strong eyebrows, long eyelashes, milky white skin, was of middle height, and around thirty years old. Many young men were unable to tear themselves away, and hung around the building where she was conducting the *pire oyun* spirit dance. But the shaman woman paid no attention to those admirers who hung around her like moths around a flame. For this reason, she did not permit any lascivious or ill-behaved young men to come close to the house where she was conducting the *pire oyun*. She would only allow people of good moral character, non-drinkers who prayed five times day, faithful men, women and children like myself.

She chose two blind men, Hesên Khari and Yunus Khari, to play the *dap*⁸³⁵ and sing the lyric poems.⁸³⁶ She would ask us children to lead them by the hand to the place where she was conducting the *pire oyun*. In order to be able to get into the house of the *pire oyun*, most of the time I arranged to be the one who held Hesên Khari's hand and carried his carry-bag⁸³⁷ containing the daggers for the *pire oyun*. The *bahkshi* was very skillful, and conducted her ritual with authority and discipline.

At the beginning of the spirit dance, the *pire mukam* began. When the singing finished, the *avush* rhythmic dance music began. She spread out her long hair, and her white silk dress hung down to the ankles. She began to dance around the centre pole.⁸³⁸ As she spun around, her silk dress floated up and the hem reached out to touch the people sitting around the room. Her *bahkshi* skill bewitched everyone. Her long black hair floating over her white floating silk dress and her high breasts, long fluttering eyelashes, bewitching eyes piercing through her eyelashes. As she spun, her beautiful figure and fair face showing through her tossing and flying black hair made one think of a legendary princess. Her dance was exuberant and exquisite.

⁸³⁴ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri* op cit p.565ff.

⁸³⁵ flat drum

⁸³⁶ *gazel*

⁸³⁷ *horjun*

⁸³⁸ *tugh*

Sometimes the *bahkshi*'s beautiful dancing would bring erotic images into the minds of some watchers. For example, she would make gestures with her dance such as spreading her two arms wide open and bring them together again, symbolizing the gathering of something and giving back again. This represented gathering up the disease afflicting the sick person, and giving it back to the spirits.

The *bahkshi*'s ritual comes from the traditional past of the Uyghur people. There was a time when we believed in Shamanism. Her dance, apart from providing appreciation and enjoyment for people, also induced a magical, fearful environment for the conduct of rituals. Through this, she presented more than an ordinary dancer - she represented someone who knew the unknown, an authoritative, magical person.

One of her mysterious rituals, "Lighting the Torch",⁸³⁹ was performed wherever the sick person was. All lights in the house would be extinguished. A large *nokcha*⁸⁴⁰ would be lit. The *bahkshi* would bring this before the sick person and ask them to look into the flame. The sick person would gaze into the flame with full concentration. The *bahkshi* would draw attention to a miraculous sight:

"Look, did you see the piebald dog⁸⁴¹ climbing over the wall, coming towards you? With tangled fur, a big brindle dog with its tail erect and its teeth showing, looking viciously at you. Do you see it?"

The patient, without moving his gaze from the flame, would say "Yes, I see it."

"Now do you see in that corner back by the wall, a yellow-haired woman with hair awry, fire sparking from her red eyes, looking at you smilingly?"

"Yes, I see it" the patient would say.

"These are the devils and jinns that gave you the disease."

⁸³⁹ *Chirak Yekish*

⁸⁴⁰ torch made of a stick wrapped in oil-soaked cotton or rags

⁸⁴¹ *ala isht*

Then the *bahkshi* would hold the daggers and shout “Go away! Get out of this house! If you don't I will stab you”. The *bahkshi* would stare around with eyes flashing and mouth foaming with anger.

At this point, what kind of magic is the *bahkshi* performing? Through detailed visualisation and description, she is hypnotizing the sick person. By inviting the demons and jinns, who are known to her, into the darkened room, then questioning them, she creates an authority for herself which persuades the patient to see what the *bahkshi* is describing. The whole room is filled with solemnity and a sense of fear, and the *bahkshi's* appearance adds even more solemnity to it. The audience in the room truly begin to believe that the *bahkshi* is in contact with jinns and demons.

Next the *bahkshi* used a rope tied to a central pillar and had the patient hold one end of the rope and circle around the centre until tired. Then the patient would be allowed to support himself holding on to the rope attached to the pillar. Then the *bahkshi* started the dagger dance to exorcise the disease passed by the jinns and demons. For this, she uses a silver dagger with two or three small bells⁸⁴² hanging from it. Synchronized with the rhythm of the *dap*, she would gently touch the patient with the point of the dagger, place by place, starting from the head and working towards the toes, and then from the shoulders to the tips of the fingers. With each touch she would shout “Hey! Get out! Be gone! Get back to the ruined walls, get back to the ruined mills!”

She would hold the dagger in one hand and a whip in the other. She shook her whip, coming close to the children sitting in the front of the crowd, and pointing with her dagger and her whip would shout to us “Call on Allah!” She lashed the air above us, and we would call out “Allah!” in fear. If we did not shout strongly enough, she might touch us lightly with her whip. After that we would shout as mightily as we could.

Once I was staring at the *bahkshi's* flashing eyes and shining dagger, feeling she could poke me with it at any moment, while she was shaking her whip over us. My cheek was

⁸⁴² *kongrak*

touched by the red tassel on the end of her whip. Startled, I yelled out “Allah!” louder than any of the other children. When the *pire oyun* was finished, the *bahkshi* came to me. “Were you afraid, you timid thing?”, she said touching my cheek affectionately. She was severe with jinns and coarse people, but she was gentle and loving towards good people and children.

As I had lost my mother at the age of five, I was deprived of mother love, so I was always very happy to meet any woman who showed me affection. So when the affectionate hand of the beautiful *bahkshi* woman touched my cheek, I felt caressed all over by a glow of warm mother's love. I looked on her as my mother, or more accurately, because she was quite young, as my elder sister. I used to help her to carry her *dap*, daggers,⁸⁴³ the chicken which she would pin to the wall with a dagger (but which miraculously did not die), the rope used for the pillar, and porcelain bowls, spoons and cloth given by the household to the *bahkshi* woman together with money in payment for her services.

Because of this (my assistance) she would let me go with her into the *pire oyun*, and feed me with cream, and stroked my hair. The *bahkshi* would never allow in young fellows like Haydar the Spatchcock,⁸⁴⁴ who was two or three years older than me. On various occasions he deliberately bumped against her and hung around. Many young fellows were intrigued by her beauty, but would never dare to flirt with her or even cross her path. But some bad characters, with jealousy like those who say “the peach beyond one’s reach is bitter”,⁸⁴⁵ would spread rumours about the *bahkshi* woman. The *bahkshi* ignored such gossip and went on her way. The slanderers had to bite their own tongues in frustration.

⁸⁴³ *henjer*

⁸⁴⁴ *juje horoz*

⁸⁴⁵ “*kol yetmigen shaptul, achchik*”

Appendix 9

Folktales “Hizir Peygamber” and “Buhem” from the story “Grandma Perizhan”,⁸⁴⁶ and “Leelshah”.

9.(a) Hizir Peygamber.

...And Grandma told us another story:

“One day Hizir Peygamber saw people cutting wood in a forest, and walked on. After some time he walked past again. The forest had disappeared, and in its place there was a sea. A fisherman was sitting next to the sea. Hizir Peygamber went up to him and asked ‘What happened to the forest that was here?’ The fisherman replied, ‘There never was a forest here.. From ancient time we have always been fishing here!’ The Hizir Peygamber went away and travelled to other places, then returned again to the same place. This time, in stead of a sea, there was grassland, and a shepherd there looking after animals. He asked this shepherd, ‘Where is the sea that was here?’ The shepherd replied, ‘This has always been grassland! There is no sea here!’ A while later the Hizir Peygamber again passed by, and this time instead of grassland there was a large city, and he asked a shopkeeper, ‘Where is the grassland that used to be here?’ The shopkeeper replied, ‘There never was grassland here, we have lived in this town from ancient times!’ On the next occasion that Hizir Peygamber passed that way, the city had become desert. Hizir asked some caravan drivers next to their camels, ‘Where is the city that was here?’ They replied, ‘How could there be a city here, this is desert and has been desert for all time. There is nothing here except camel droppings!’ Hizir Peygamber wondered at this and went on his way.

“So look - ordinary people's lives are short, but according to the visionary Hizir's experience, the whole situation can be known only by such an immortal as Hizir. But everyone, in their short lives, can have some experience in their own terms.”

⁸⁴⁶ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri* op cit p.142

9(b) Buhem

...I asked her, "Please, Grandma, can you tell us a story of change."⁸⁴⁷

Grandma said:

"In the olden days there was a man called Buhem. One spring day, when the snow had thawed and the fields were ready, he wanted to cultivate a piece of ground. He asked his son of thirteen or fourteen years to push the plough, while he himself pulled it. With the exertion he sweated, and his tongue was hanging out. A passing merchant saw him and said, 'Hey, brother! You put yourself in the position of a bullock! Why is that?' Buhem looked at the merchant and said, '*Hem eyin guzeret*'⁸⁴⁸ and continued with his work. The merchant walked on.

A few years later that merchant happened to go to a high-class, prosperous shop to buy some silk brocade.⁸⁴⁹ He looked carefully at the owner - he was the very same man who had worked so hard in the field. The merchant asked, 'Aren't you that man who worked like a bullock in the field?' The distinguished shopkeeper said, 'Yes.'

'How did you get so rich?' asked the merchant.

The man replied, '*Hem eyin guzeret*.' The traveller went on his way, wondering. After many years the travelling merchant went to another city, where he was falsely accused by another, and went before a judge. The judge was very fair, and acquitted the merchant. Looking carefully at the judge, the merchant realised that he was that shopowner who had sold him the silk brocade. He asked, 'Oh, Your Excellency, you were previously a shopowner, and now you have become a judge!' The judge replied, '*Hem eyin guzeret*'. And the merchant went on his way.

Some time later the merchant walked into a city and went into an inn where he saw a man, covered in dirt, sitting by a fire scorching the wool from a sheep's head and legs. He noticed that this person was none other than that judge who had been so fair. The

⁸⁴⁷ *serguzesti*, meaning personal experience of change

⁸⁴⁸ *Hem eyin guzeret*, used as a phrase in Uyghur, is originally from Persian.

⁸⁴⁹ *kimhab*

traveller said, 'You were that distinguished judge - why are you now cleaning the sheep's head and legs?' The man, without any embarrassment, said, "*Hem eyin guzeret*".

The merchant said, 'I have seen you in all different situations, and whenever I question you, you always give the same answer. What does it mean? You are very strange!'

The man answered, '*Hem eyin guzeret* - by this I mean that this, too will also pass. The change of my situation is the meaning of my words. It is not that I am strange, but times and conditions are strange. My name is Buhem, meaning "This will also pass".'

9(c) Leelshah

The tale of "Leelshah" begins with a King who had everything except children, and was worried that he had no heir. A loyal slave asked the King what favour he could be granted if the King's wish were granted. The King said he would grant the slave his freedom. Thereafter the King prayed for offspring, and the slave prayed for his freedom.

One day the slave was sitting beside a lake, weeping. A tear dropped into the lake and turned into a strange little worm. The slave was surprised, and took the worm in a bucket to the King to tell him of the magical event. The little worm was giving off a white aura.⁸⁵⁰ Just from looking at it, the King felt joy. He ordered it to be cared for in a golden fishtank.

One day the King dreamed that an white-bearded old man holding a set of prayer beads⁸⁵¹ advised him to change the worm's water each week and care for it. After seven times forty-days, the worm would then change into a beautiful baby. The King awoke and did as he had been advised. After seven times forty days the worm changed into a

⁸⁵⁰ *nur*
⁸⁵¹ *tesbih*

beautiful baby boy, with a special dimple in his forehead that gave off a bright aura. The King called this baby Leelshah⁸⁵² from the name of the worm.

Everyone who heard the story came to congratulate the King with presents, because he was a just and fair king. Good teachers were employed for Leelshah, and he studied hard until he was seventeen years old. He was such a fine young man his reputation spread far and wide.

The proud King looked for a bride for his son. They heard of the reputation of a beautiful girl called Ipargul, born in a country called Gulistan. This girl also had a complicated history.

The King of Gulistan had been married for twenty years but had not produced an heir, so he decided to marry a new wife, in addition to his beloved Queen Gulbanu. Gulbanu became ill with sorrow. This Queen had a loyal servant who was a gardener, and each day this gardener, to cheer her up, brought her a special bouquet she had made with her own hands. But nothing improved the Queen's health.

One morning the gardener saw a pink rose with extraordinarily fragrant perfume and a shining aura. The gardener arranged this rose in the centre of her bouquet for that day. When the queen noticed the rose and asked what kind it was, the old gardener answered "*Ipar gul*".⁸⁵³ The Queen said she had never seen a rose like it.

"This rose rejuvenates my heart, and makes me feel better. What should I do with it, dear mother."

The gardener advised, "Press the rose against your breast, and I hope it will ease your sorrow!"

With this, Queen Gulbanu went to sleep, and dreamed of a wise, whitebearded old man who said to her, "My child... don't be sad. The flower is a symbol of new life. Put it

⁸⁵² *Leel* (worm) + *shah* (ruler)

⁸⁵³ "fragrant rose"

into a vase, water it every week, and change its water. After seven times forty-days you will turn into a beautiful baby girl, as beautiful as that special rose, and you will attain your desire.”

Queen Gulbanu awoke and did what the old man had told her in her dream. After seven times forty days, she did indeed turn into a baby girl called Ipargul. So Ipargul started life on the same day as Leelshah.

Ipar's parents built a beautiful school in a heavenly palace garden. They hired virtuous teachers to educate her from the age of seven. She grew up into a virtuous, intelligent, angelic young lady. Her reputation spread around the world.⁸⁵⁴

Leelshah's father heard about Ipargul and sent his Vezir⁸⁵⁵ to seek Ipargul's hand in marriage for his son. Ipargul's parents knew of the reputation of Leelshah, so they agreed to the marriage. However, the Vezir, seeing how beautiful and accomplished was Ipargul, began to form an evil plan. He sought a way to have Ipargul marry his own son, who like himself was bad hearted, greedy, a womanizer, ugly, cold and hypocritical. He decided to arrange for his own son, disguised as Leelshah, to meet Ipargul. Together with his wife, he schemed to get hold of this beautiful Ipargul, who spread fragrance and good aura everywhere, to benefit themselves.

So the bad Vezir plotted to kill the King and Leelshah, and get control of the royal seal. The Vezir sent a message to the King, saying he had contacted Ipargul's family and had good news, but was now sick at home and desired to see the King as soon as possible. The King immediately wanted to visit the Vezir and receive the good news. When the King arrived, the Vezir and his wife poisoned the King with food and drink. The Vezir then declared himself King, and issued orders for the arrest and execution of Leelshah.

⁸⁵⁴ In these passages, Zunun draws upon the folkloric framework of Uighur culture, in which the universe is transformative and changeable, and where powers mysteriously operate and move around. Power can operate through plants (Ipargul), animals (the leel worm), females (the Queen and the Gardener) or males (the King, Leelshah, and the wise old man)

⁸⁵⁵ *og kol vezir*.

Leelshah had two mothers: the first his real mother the Queen, and the second a clever wetnurse who had brought him up and was also the closest friend to the Queen. They were suspicious of the Vezir, and sent spies to see what he was up to. Finding that the King had been poisoned, they determined to protect Leelshah and flee into exile to escape the bad Vezir. The three of them (two mothers and the son), set off with three horses, and after forty days stopped by the garden city of Gulistan. There were beautiful buildings, trees and flowers, and the people lived in prosperity and peace. Leelshah went ahead to investigate the city.

On the east side of the city he found a large and beautiful garden, surrounded by a brick wall five times as high as a man. There was a large iron gate, guarded by sentries. The songs of birds and fragrance of flowers floated out of this garden, and Leelshah wanted to see inside. He climbed a plane tree⁸⁵⁶ and looked into an extremely beautiful garden surrounding a green, seven-storey building. A large group of girls came out of the building, laughing and talking. Among them was one extraordinary girl. Her flashing eyes touched Leelshah's trembling heart. He felt as if his whole body was flowing with mercury.

On his return, the Queen warned her son to be careful and not to cause offence in their difficult situation. But Leelshah was determined that he could not live without this love. Leelshah enquired about the situation of the King, his daughter, and the forty companion girls,⁸⁵⁷ the beautiful school she attended inside the palace, and her wise teachers. Naturally, outsiders were forbidden to enter the palace, so Leelshah and his mothers made a plan. Leelshah would climb up and look out from the plane tree. His two mothers would ask to see the princess's teacher.

Leelshah's mothers explained everything to the teacher, and he was understanding and willing to help them. He said: "Leave your son here with me. Let him study with Ipargul for the time being. We shall expose the activities of the evil Vezir."

⁸⁵⁶ *chinar*
⁸⁵⁷ *kenizek*

Let us return to the bad Vezir who had grabbed power in Leelshah's homeland. Holding the state seal, he announced that he was in charge, and dismissed all the people who were loyal to the previous King. He appointed his own cronies, and made justice into a doormat. He punished and imprisoned anyone who demanded justice. Ignorance and oppression became normal, and people of good conscience were destroyed. This new kingdom opened the door to corruption, waste, and murder. Villain and flatterers held the positions of power, and good people were left to suffer.

This bad king, who made oppression his task and cruelty his profession, dressed his own bad son as Leelshah, and bringing a retinue of two thousand soldiers, he came to ask Ipargul to marry the false Leelshah, his son. After forty days journey they arrived at Gulistan. The bad King asked the Gulistan King if his son could marry Ipargul. The King of Gulistan agreed to this proposal, but he made a condition that before Friday prayers, Leelshah and Ipargul should meet, because he was suspicious that this might not be the real Leelshah.

The King of Gulistan planned that there would be a competition before the wedding. The competition would include martial arts, culture, tradition, etiquette, philosophy and logic. The King also planned that if it came to force, the lovers could escape to another country.

Friday came, and Ipargul arrived in a palanquin to see Leelshah. She had been told that the true Leelshah had a dimple on his forehead which spread light and aura. The false Leelshah was exposed. The bad King realised that his deception was not working, so he threatened violence. He said, "If you don't give us Ipargul and conduct the wedding with my son, I will bring army after army to destroy your entire city and enslave the people." The Gulistan King, without asking his daughter's opinion, agreed because he was afraid of what the cruel King might do. So the wedding began.

This news reached the lovers, and with the help of their kind teachers, they escaped to another country. Leelshah received his parents blessing to leave. Together with

Ipargul, they travelled for forty days and came to a beautiful big green city. As a precaution, Leelshah asked Ipargul to wait outside the city, while he would go first to check the situation. He went to look around, and decided to buy some meat to make kebabs for Ipargul. He went to a butcher shop, but it happened that the butcher was an evil sorcerer, who immediately turned Leelshah into a ram. (This magician was a slave trader who turned young strangers into rams to sell them at a profit.)

Returning to Ipargul: Ipargul waited for Leelshah until evening, but did not see him return. She spent all night worrying and fearful. The next morning Ipargul went into the city, dressed as a man. In this city there were many thieves and villains. A thief followed this new “young man” and, when she went into a food store, stole her horse. Without her horse, she walked all around the city, looking for Leelshah. She found no sign of him. When she was tired, she sat down at a street corner. As she was wondering where she would sleep and what she would do, her eye was caught by a small shop with a lamp burning. Ipargul went and knocked on the door, and an old lady came out, full of kindness, and asked who she was. Ipargul said, “I am lost, I am a stranger in this place. Can I spend a night here, dear mother?”

“What is your name?”

“Leelshah.”

“You have a holy name, my child. I don't care who you are - you are a stranger, so come in.”

The old lady fed “Leelshah” with good food. Ipargul told the old lady that she had lost her brother, and was looking for him. She said she came from far away, and had no possessions. The old lady said that she kept herself by making halva in this little shop, and that she had no family. She suggested, “Since I am alone, and you are alone, until you find your brother, be my son and let's work together.”

Ipargul agreed, and the old lady taught her how to make halva. Eventually, she took over the trade. The old lady had someone to look after her, and Ipargul had a place to live and work.

With customers noting Ipargul's appearance and manner, in a short time business improved manifold and they began to prosper. Their reputation spread, and the local King eventually heard of them. This King had a daughter Remzigul who was beautiful and humorous. She heard of this new "young man" so much that she was attracted to him. She asked her wet nurse to help. The wet nurse said, "You cannot see him openly, so we need to dig an underground passage from here to the halva shop. This way you can meet him. Remzigul sold her jewellery to pay workers to dig the tunnel. Under her orders and with her financial support the tunnel was dug, connecting the princess's residence with "Leelshah's" halva shop. "Leelshah" at first was hesitant to meet the princess because he was stranger in this country. But with the assurance of the princess's wet nurse, he decided to meet the princess. "Leelshah" and the princess established a good relationship and planned to continue meeting.

In the good-hearted Remzigul's land there was a wise Vezir who implemented the King's justice by going out at night dressed as a commoner and mixing with the people. He gave aid to the disadvantaged and punished the bullies and the corrupt. This wise Vezir met "Leelshah" and found out about the relationship between "Leelshah" and Remzigul. As the King's Vezir, it was his duty to report the situation to the King, but the wise Vezir was afraid of the King's reaction, so he made a special arrangement with the King: the King would leave his royal seal with the Vezir during his visit to the halva shop, and the Vezir would return the seal to him after the visit. That way, the King would not have his royal authority while he was at the halva shop. The Vezir said to the King: "For this period, I will be the King, and you will be the Vezir". So the King, dressed as a commoner, went out to see that strange situation. Visiting the halva shop, he was surprised to see ladies emerging from the tunnel leading "Leelshah" to the princess. He recognised that these were his daughter's servants. Although he was very angry, he did not have the authority to punish them then and there.

When he went back to the palace to claim his seal, the wise Vezir came before him and said, "I know you are angry. Many Kings do not recognise real kindness. With ignorance, conservatism, with egotistic pride, they do not judge things clearly. Your

daughter Remizgul loves a poor halva shopkeeper's son. This young man brightens our nights with light and an aura emanating from his forehead.⁸⁵⁸ He is popular among the citizens. I recommend that you let them marry and make them happy. If you should kill him, you will break your daughter's heart, and if you separate them you will become a cruel despot.”

So the Vezir ended his talk.

The King understood and gave permission for the Princess to marry “Leelshah”. After the wedding, the situation was not what Remizgul expected. The distressed Remizgul demanded an explanation from “Leelshah”. “Leelshah” said that he would tell the truth on one condition: that he would be King for seven days, and after seven days he would return the power to the King. Because the King loved his daughter more than life, he agreed to let “Leelshah” use the King's authority for seven days.

“Leelshah” had a stage built in the centre of the city, and had all the people and animals paraded before him. He and his Vezirs inspected each one thoroughly as they passed in front of them. During this procedure, there was much discussion: “Why was the son of the King sitting up there, not mixing with the common people?”

“Leelshah” could not identify the real Leelshah. But meanwhile, people were talking about a butcher who had turned Leelshah into a ram, and who kept this ram secretly in a cellar. When children playing nearby heard the sheep bleating, the butcher would punish the children in case they exposed his secret. The children spread this story, and it came to the ears of the King. The King ordered the butcher and his ram to be brought before him. When they brought the ram, it began to cry human tears before “Leelshah”. The King was moved by this. He looked into the butcher's evil eyes, realising that he must be a sorcerer who had turned Leelshah into a ram.

“Leelshah” said, “Butcher, turn this ram back into its original shape!”

⁸⁵⁸ Although this is not the real “Leelshah”, it seems that Ipargul (disguised as Leelshah) also exhibits the supernatural qualities of Leelshah, perhaps because she is also the product of a miraculous birth.

The butcher said, "This is my own sheep, your majesty."

The King said, "You are lying, this ram is a young man. You put a spell on him."

"No, this is my own ram, my own sheep gave birth to it."

"If you bring it back to its original form, I will forgive you. If you don't, you will die in a most painful way".

"I swear it, this is my own ram, it was born of my own ewe."

The King said angrily, "This is a devil disguised in the form of a butcher. He is to be beheaded by guillotine."

When the executioner placed the butcher's head in the guillotine, the butcher confessed, "All right! All right! I'll tell the truth."

The executioner let him stand up to make his confession, but the butcher took the opportunity to plead, "What kind of justice is this? I am innocent, please save me from this torture."

The crowd felt pity for the butcher and began to voice their dissent, but "Leelshah" knew the truth. He said, "He is lying. Let me kill him and expose him."

Just before he cut off the butcher's head, the butcher again begged for a chance to tell the truth. Leelshah responded, "First, turn the ram back into its original form!"

Under fear of death, the butcher said the magic word, and the ram turned back into the original Leelshah. Leelshah did not know what had happened to him. He felt as if he had awoken from a long, dreaming sleep. He ran towards Ipargul. The sorcerer confessed all his evil deeds in front of the crowd. The lovers were reunited. Ipargul took off her man's clothes and put on woman's clothes. The people congratulated them and demanded the execution of the sorcerer.

Ipargul explained her situation and expressed her wishes.

“Look, the real Leelshah is more handsome and virtuous than I am. If Remzigul wants him, I will be happy to see Remzigul and Leelshah to be married and live happily forever. I will guard their happiness with my life.”

The people were pleased that Ipargul was loyal, brave and fair. The King announced that Ipargul would be First Queen, and Remzigul would be Second Queen, and Leelshah would be King. Ipargul and Remzigul became the King's Vezirs. After forty days of wedding celebrations, the King had beautiful wives and lifetime companions.

Leelshah remembered that his country had been taken over by the cunning Vezir who was oppressing the people, and in particular the parents and teachers who had been punished unjustly.

He gathered a large army and marched towards his homeland that was under the control of the bad Vezir. They went around the country, talking to the knowledgeable among the citizens. According to these people, the city was facing many disasters. The most beautiful girl of the city had run away with Leelshah, who had a strange mark on his forehead that emanated light. As a result, Princess Ipargul's father and Leelshah's two mothers and their teacher had been hanged.

Leelshah was distressed by this news, and determined to take revenge for their parents, teachers, and the citizens who had been oppressed. Leelshah planned with his wisest advisers how to defeat the bad King and save everyone from his oppression. He defeated him and put him to death. He made his wise Vezir King of that place, and the new King brought happiness to the citizens.

Leelshah went back to his own country, united with his two wives, and brought the old halva-seller to the court, treating her as his own mother. He ruled the country with justice, and shared his happiness with his citizens.

Appendix 10.

Uyghur Poetic forms related to Zunun Kadir's poetry.

General Comments

The general form of classical poetic style in Uyghur is called *aruz vezin*, from the Arabic word *aruz* meaning width or breadth, but in Uyghur meaning form or mould. *Vezin* means metre, and the *aruz vezin* in Uyghur is quite complex and elaborated, according to the rules governing the arrangement of short and long syllables within the line. The poetic system is based on rhythm and phonetic harmony (rather than strict rhyme). This system makes the poetry easy to recite and with its own inherent musicality. Poems written in the *aruz vezin* are easily sung to music. The most important Uyghur people's classical music, the Twelve *Mukam*, mostly are used with words written in *aruz vezin*.

The rhythm and harmony of an *aruz* composition is determined by the positioning of pauses in the lines, and the same harmony will be consistent throughout all the lines of a particular poem. Long and short sounds are synchronised with Uyghur grammar and inflection of word forms reflected in syllables. Syllables ending in vowels are grammatically classed as "open"[*ochuk*], and in *aruz vezin* they are called "short"[*khiskha*] syllables.⁸⁵⁹ The short syllables are read quickly, and the long syllables are given a longer reading⁸⁶⁰. Within the *aruz* form, syllables and pauses may be adjusted to suit the metre, which remains fixed. More than 30 variations of *aruz* metre are used. In Uyghur classical poetry emphasis is given to form and structure elements such as syllable rhythm and sound harmony.

⁸⁵⁹ Ablet Omer (ed) *The Theoretical Basis of Literature*, vol. 2, Xinjiang University, Urumqi, 1997, pp.562-3: Examples of short syllables given by Ablet Omer are *yasha, ana, yoli, heli, tehimu*. Syllables that end in consonants are grammatically classed as "closed" (*yipihk*), and in *aruz* are called "long" (*uzun*). Ablet Omer's examples are *ay, say, kun, yultuz, millet, jurnal*.

⁸⁶⁰ Sometimes a syllable may be extended as if it were two syllables, for example, a two-syllable word may extend of three syllables of metre. An example from Navayi:

Bolmighay erdi jamaling munche ziba ka-sh-ki (A/15)

Bolsa hem khilghay iding kozlerdi-n_ikhpa kashki (A/15)

"If only your graceful were not so beautiful,

It being so, if only you showed some visible flaw"

These examples show two different conditions. In the first, the two-syllable word *kash-ki* is extended, for metrical reasons, to three syllables, as in *ka-shi-ki*. In the second, the final consonant of the word *kozlerdin* 'n' is transferred to become an initial consonant of the next word, as "*n_ikhpa*", which allows the long syllable "*-din*" to become a short syllable "*-di-*".

Classical Influence on Zunun's poetic style

In Zunun's youth, the educated literary style was still influenced by the Chagatai tradition of Turkic literature and language. The period was characterised by increased use of Persian and Arabic lexicon.⁸⁶¹ In the later period it was also known as *Hakaniye* [Court] literature. By the late 19th Century, the proportion of Arabic and Persian words in use had decreased.⁸⁶²

The Chagatai writer Navayi (1441-1501), the poet most admired by Zunun, is considered to represent the high point of this Chagatai literature. Although he used many Arabic and Persian words, Navayi is still considered to be the founder of the literary use of the Turkic language. Before Navayi's time very few literary writers used the Turkic language in high literature. Though he lived in the southern part of the Chagatai geographic spread, holding government posts at different times in what is now Iran and Afghanistan (Herat), he is considered by modern Uyghurs to represent the continuity of Uyghur culture from its Turkic origins to its present form.⁸⁶³

A typical theme of Chagatai literature is the praising of the Court, and the victories of kings in their wars. Navayi wrote in the 15th Century, a period that was politically conservative and with religion playing a big role in state affairs.⁸⁶⁴ Navayi was one of the writers of this period who introduced and developed humanistic themes and sentiments, often using the imagery of the "just king". The values associated with the "just king" included the respect for the people and the implementation of justice by the ruling class. Love was another typical theme of Navayi's, with characteristic imagery that included the nightingale and the rose. Navayi also drew on oral literature for his inspiration and narratives, such the traditional epic "Perhad and Shirin" that he wrote out in epic form.⁸⁶⁵

⁸⁶¹ Abdurup Polat, in XUAR Language and Orthographical Work Committee (eds) *Turki Tillar Tahkikati*, vol 3, Xinjiang Peoples Publishing House, Urumqi, p.208.

⁸⁶² Ibid, p.217-8.

⁸⁶³ Ibid, p.208-10.

⁸⁶⁴ Sherpudin Omer, *Ottura Esir Uyghur Klassik Edebiyati*, Xinjiang Peoples Publishing House, Urumqi, 1996, Vol.1, p.38. Omer in particular notes that the Sufi *Nakhshibandi* sect had a position of great privilege under the Timurid state.

⁸⁶⁵ Ibid: According to Sherpudin Omer, the Perhad in Navayi's epic is the son of a king of Hotan (in East Turkistan) and his beloved Shirin is a princess of Armenia.

In Zunun Kadir's work, an example of this style of Chagatai-influenced poem can be found in poems included in the opera "Gerip and Senem":

Rhyme pattern/Syllable count		
<i>Yirak meni hazir <u>eylidi</u> berbat,</i>	A/11	The distance between us ruins me
<i>Bir hudagha yighlap <u>eyledim</u> peryat,</i>	A/11	I cry and scream to God
<i>Kiser haman buyuk taghlarni Perhad</i>	B/11	Perhad, cut through the great mountain
<i>Perhad kebi Shirinjanni korermen mu?⁸⁶⁶</i>	C/12	Like Perhad, will I be able to see Shirin?

Zunun's reference to Perhad and Shirin here is a very deliberate link to the Central Asian Chagatai literary traditions shared by the Uyghur culture. The auxiliary verb *eylemek*, "do", used in compound verbs and underlined in two forms in the above example, is an influence from Persian, absorbed by Uyghur culture during the Chagatai era.⁸⁶⁷

Another example of this kind from "Gerip and Senem" uses *Pelek*, a Chagatai image meaning the sky, heaven, and fate. Also in this example, *Bulbul* and *Gul* (Nightingale and Rose) is a very standard pairing of images associated in Chagatai literature with lovers:

Rhyme pattern/Syllable count		
<i>Kabah <u>pelekning</u> derdidin</i>	A/8	Through worrying about cruel fate
<i>Yurekimde, daghlar khaldi</i>	B/8	My heart is bruised
<i><u>Bulbulni</u> ayirdi <u>gul</u>din</i>	A/8	Nightingale is separated from rose
<i>Ne, nekashlik baghlar khaldi⁸⁶⁸</i>	B/8	What, oh what beauties remain in the garden?

⁸⁶⁶ The Uyghur original version is taken from the lyric sheet accompanying a sound recording: *Wei Wuer zu Gejiu* [Songs of the Uyghur Nationality], DB-20103, side 2, track 7, Zhongguo Changpian, Chengdu Changpian Chang, Beijing, 1981.

⁸⁶⁷ Sherpidin Omer, op.cit., p 143.

⁸⁶⁸ "Ailipu yu Sainamu" in *Wei Wuer zu Gejiu* op.cit., Side 2, track 4.

A second layer of meaning in the above passage is associated with aspiration for a higher goal, as love is commonly a metaphor for any desired goal.

Zunun's use of popular poetic forms

Traditional Uyghur popular poetry is known both by the Turkic-Uyghur name *koshak* and by the Arabic name *shiir*.⁸⁶⁹ It has a number of recognised genres and specific forms. A description of these is provided in Osman Ismail's contemporary text "General explanation of Uyghur Oral Literature". Ismail says "*koshak* is the collective name of poems belonging to the ordinary people, who have passed it down orally from generation to generation. *Koshak* can be classified in three sub-groups, according to form, content, and whether they are accompanied by music or not.

Koshak

The first category he classes as plain *koshak*. This class is in couplets [*koplit*] and of more than two lines, expressing completed ideas, without a fixed relationship to a particular tune, and expressing the creativity of common people.⁸⁷⁰

Osman Ismail says the general form of *koshak* is four lines, in which the first two are descriptions of natural events, and the third and fourth convey a logical message which is connected, or rhymes with, the first and second lines⁸⁷¹.

Osman says this form is very common, but there are some cases of six-line verses, such as from the Lop Nur region. *Koshak* can be sung to popular tunes, though the tunes are not fixed. People choose any *koshak* and tune that they like and put them together, creating their own singing style. This genre is therefore very different to the formal singing styles (such as the *muqam*) in which the songs are under the control of the music. The phrasing and rhythm of *koshak* is not influenced by any particular tune. Typically, *koshak* relate an emotional state to a physical situation, and are rich in symbolism.

Zunun's work contains many examples of the *koshak* form. Mostly he uses *parmak vezin* ("finger" form). Contrasting to the *aruz*, contemporary Uyghur poetry is more

⁸⁶⁹ Sherpidin Omer, *Uyghur Classical Literature*, op.cit., p.27.

⁸⁷⁰ Osman Ismail, op.cit., p.385.

⁸⁷¹ Ibid, p.386.

likely to employ the *parmak vezin*. This is the form most commonly used by Zunun Kadir although his poetry sometimes uses metaphoric imagery from Chagatai literature. Parmak Vezin is subdivided into two kinds – the first based on a fixed syllable count per line, and the second has varied syllable counts per line. The first kind usually is based on lines of between four and sixteen syllables, whereas in the second kind each line may have a different syllable count. Where the *aruz* uses pausation to maintain or enhance rhythm, in *parmak* pausation is used purely to enhance or emphasize meaning.⁸⁷²

The following is from Zunun’s stage play *Toy* (The Wedding or Celebration):

Rhyme pattern/Syllable count		
<i>Hashim ahun sapra kheri</i>	A/8	Hashim ahun, an angry old man
<i>Heydelmigen oy-dong yeri</i>	A/8	His home fields are not ploughed
<i>Ishiniptu pahtigha</i>	B/7	He believed the (fluffed-up) ⁸⁷³ cotton
<i>Igiliptu sahtigha</i>	B/7	He bent to the deceivers
<i>Kamlashmidi onung ishi</i>	C/8	His labour did not work out
<i>Khetip kaldi Kapakbeshi</i>	C/8	His stupid head is worried
<i>Bezirip kaptu Eytizi</i>	D/7	His farmlands do not progress
<i>Yeghilap kaptu kyuvizi</i>	D/7	They say his cotton crop is crying

The poem follows traditional *koshak* syllable and rhyme patterns. The first quatrain relates to Hashimahun’s psychological condition (feeling cheated and angry) while the second quatrain relates the results of the situation relating to his cotton crop. The two sets of ideas, though closely related, each make up an independent idea. Zunun’s example is in rhyming couplets, though this is not the only common rhyme form.

Nahsha

The second category in Osman’s analysis is *nahsha* [songs]. A *nahsha* is composed of a set of *koshaks* connected to each other and attached to a particular tune. Each

⁸⁷² Ibid.

⁸⁷³ *pahta atmak*, literally “fluffed cotton”, is a popular metaphor for boasting.

nahsha has its own tune, and can only be sung to that tune. The character of the *nahsha* is determined by its tune, consisting of meter, melody and rhythm pattern. The metre and rhythm pattern are synchronised to the tune, with the phrasing, rhythm and distribution of long and short notes fixed. This limits the range of tunes that may be adapted to the words of a particular *nahsha*.⁸⁷⁴

Zunun uses the *nahsha* form in a number of his works, as in this example from “Gunchem”:

Rhyme pattern/ Syllable count		Rhythm Pattern	
<i>Almilar pishey deptu</i>	A/7	3,4	The apples are almost ripe
<i>Shah-shihida mey bolup</i>	B/7	4,3	All the branches become nectar
<i>Yar bizdin yamanlaptu</i>	A/7	3,4	My beloved is sulking with me
<i>Bulut toskhan aybolup</i> ⁸⁷⁵	B/7	4,3	Like a moon covered by cloud

This *nahsha* has a 4-line *koshak*. Each couplet of the *nahsha* is self-contained, but each couplet relates to the next. Each couplet reflects an independent idea, but the meaning of all of the couplets is related through the major theme of the *nahsha*.

Another example of this linked couplet form is found in “Gulnissa”.

Rhyme pattern/Syllable count		
<i>Beglerim beglikte yatsa</i>	A/7	The Beg is asleep in his domain
<i>Doghsi alvan bilen</i>	B7	His <i>dogha</i> ⁸⁷⁷ is free of charge
<i>Ahunum petva khiladur</i>	C8	Ahun issues commands
<i>Rasti yok yalghan bilen</i> ⁸⁷⁶	B7	Without truth, with lies

This *nahsha* is sung to a *mukam* melody at the beginning of “Gulnissa”. The first couplet criticises the privileged life of a privileged man (*Beg*) in feudal conditions, and

⁸⁷⁴ Ibid, p.390.

⁸⁷⁵ “Gunchem”, in *Zunun Kadir Eserleri* op.cit., p.250.

⁸⁷⁶ “Gulnissa”, *Zunun Kadir Eserleri* op.cit., p.336-7.

⁸⁷⁷ *dogha* is part of the hardware of a cart, made of wood or metal.

the second criticises a religious person. The connection between the two is that they are both part of the “feudal” social structure, though one is civil authority and one is religious.

Since the *nahsha* must fit to a defined tune, it is common for a *nahsha* to contain refrains that are repeated to indicate the breaks in the tune. This example from “Ghunchem”:

Rhyme pattern/Syllable count		
<i>Hey hey olen, hey olen gulkayda bar</i>	A/11	Hey hey sing, hey sing where is the
<i>Yar, yar</i>	B/2	rose, darling, darling,
<i>Bir yahshigha, bir yam, herjaydabar</i>	A/11	For one good, everywhere there is one
<i>Yar, yar</i> ⁸⁷⁸ .	B/2	bad, darling darling

Beyit

The third class is called *beyit*, which Osman Ismail says is from the Arabic word for a couplet. However, in Uyghur the term has come to refer to a particular form of *koshak* which is not limited to couplets. The *beyit* is not usually sung to musical accompaniment or a particular melody. Its metric form is brought out in recitation, with the ideas developed through an extended form without limitation on the number of lines. The Uyghur *beyit* is relatively free in its verse structure and number of lines, which may be in groups of four, six, eight or more lines, as well as the couplets used in Arabic *beyit*. The lines are also not restricted to maintain the same number of syllables.

The *beyit* is normally associated with humorous meaning. It is often recited by antiphonally by two sides, with each making challenges and the other side answering back. It can often be a form of verbal competition, which encourages the use of strong, humorous lines.⁸⁷⁹

As seen in these examples, the most common content of the *beyit* concerns love and emotion. Young men and women create their own *beyit* to declare their love and

⁸⁷⁸ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri* op.cit., p.311.

⁸⁷⁹ *Ibid*, p.396.

emotion, though sometimes using sarcasm and exaggeration.⁸⁸⁰ The *beyit* is a literary form that well demonstrates the Uyghur people's close connection with oral literature, and is a feature of wisdom and artistic ability in popular culture, created by ordinary people.

In "Gulnissa", her lover Polat recites a *beyit* to Gulnissa:

Rhyme pattern/Syllable count		
<i>Ustun bekip ayni kordum</i>	A/8	I look up and see the moon
<i>Cherhki pelekte.</i>	B/5	The wheel of the God
<i>Toven bekip sizni kordum</i>	A/8	I look down and see you
<i>Gulluk chushekte</i>	B/5	On a bed of flowers
<i>Egip egip kitelmeymen</i>	C/8	Around and around, I cannot leave
<i>Kharap koymaysiz</i>	D/5	You don't look at me
<i>Koye-koye kul bolarmen</i>	C/8	Burning and burning, I turn to ash
<i>Rehim khilmaysiz</i>	D/5	You show no compassion

Gulnissa replies:

	Rhyme pattern/ Syllable count
<i>Men bu yerge kelmes erdim, yari kelturdi meni</i>	A/15
<i>Otkha salsa koymes erdim, yari koydurdi meni</i>	A/15
<i>Koye-koye kul bolarman, yaghlighingha tug meni</i>	A/15
<i>Her zaman yadinggha yetsem, echip-echip kormeni</i>	A/15
I would not have come to this place, except for my darling	
If someone put me in a fire I would not burn, but my darling burned me	
Burning and burning, I turn to ash, wrap me in your handkerchief	
Every time I come to your mind, open it at look at me	

⁸⁸⁰ Ibid, p.397.

“Gulnissa” also provides an example of the humorous, antiphonal dialogue style of *beyit*:

	Rhyme pattern/ Syllable count
<i>Sutegidin tepivaldim bir jup kara tash</i>	A/13
<i>Kiche-kunduz koydurgen jenim karakash</i>	A/12
<i>Kara kara kashlaringha khelem yugrutey</i>	B/13
<i>Sining tashlap ketkiningni kachan unutay?</i>	B/13
I find a pair of black stones under the water Day and night burning me, darling black eyebrows I will draw your black black eyebrows When can I forget that you abandoned me?	
<i>Altun tahta kovruktin bulbul otelmes</i>	A/12
<i>Ala-yishil yupurmakhtin yamgur otelmes</i>	A/13
<i>Ak kushkachkha navat bersem temini bilmes</i>	A/12
<i>Nadan khizgha oyun khilsam khedirni bilmes</i>	A/13
The nightingale could not cross the golden wood bridge Rain could not pass the leaves of many greens I give <i>navat</i> to a white sparrow, it does not appreciate the taste I played the game, with a foolish girl who did not know its value	

Appendix 11

Two of Zunun’s Fables [*Mese*]

This Appendix presents translations of two of Zunun Kadir’s most important moral/political fables, noting the rhyme and syllable counts typical of this form of popular poetry suitable for recitation.

11(a)

Chuje bilen Seghizhan (The Chick and the Magpie).

Rhyme pattern/Syllable count		
<i>Tehi chuje chikmighan chagh</i>	A/8	A chick had not yet hatched
<i>Körüp seghizhan yep almakchi uni</i>		A magpie was dreaming of eating it
<i>chüshide</i>	B/14	
<i>Ötmishtin tartip melum o shu</i>		Because his beak was famous from
<i>tumshukning desti</i>	C/14	olden times.
<i>Söz achkhinim ötmushtin chöchek</i>		The reason for telling this story is
<i>eytishingning khesti</i>	C/15	to speak about the past,
<i>Khara bulultlar tarilip uchuvatidu</i>	D/13	Scattered black clouds flying,
<i>Kün yuzughu külümsirep chikivatidu</i>	D/13	The sun's face coming out smiling,
<i>Khoyuk laykhi sular akhti</i>	C/8	Thick muddy waters ran,
<i>Bu taza etiyaz vakti</i>	C/8	Truly it was springtime.
<i>Chuje aptapka karidi zokhibilen</i>	E/12	The chick looked around keenly,
<i>Mangdi o temtilep asta khir bilen</i>	E/11	Staggered unsteadily along the side.
<i>Keldi seghizhan yorghulap</i>	F/8	Magpie came running,
<i>Tohtatti chujini chokulap</i>	F/9	Stopped the chick, pecking it,
<i>Valaklap echildi shur tumshukhi</i>	G/10	Opened its beak to nag,
<i>Nege barisen hay pesning oghli</i>	G/10	“Where are you going, son of
		lowly,
<i>Kengdalaga hayasiz dessepsen!</i>	H/10	Walking outside, shamelessly?
<i>Ya mangha tezim khilip ötmepsen</i>	H/10	When you passed, you didn't bow
		to me!
<i>Tumshikum uzum sendin</i>	I/7	My beak is longer than yours,
<i>Kuyrukhummu andin</i>	I/7	So is my tail.
<i>Hich söz chikmaydighu sen yamandin</i>	I/10	Have you nothing to say,
		scoundrel?”
<i>Oynidi kapkara közi shumsheydi chuje</i>	J/13	Black eyes rolling, the chick
		became sad,
<i>Yumshak avazda keldi tili sözge</i>	J/11	Began to speak with a soft voice,
<i>Hich, hich yamanlik khilmidim janab</i>		“No, No, Excellency, I did no
<i>sizge</i>	J/12	wrong,
<i>Chokup azar bermisle bizge</i>	J/9	Don't peck and reprimand me.”
<i>Achik khilip seghizhan yerge birni</i>		Magpie angrily stamped on the
<i>tepti</i>	C/13	ground,
<i>Kuyrukhi onung lepenglep ketti</i>	C/10	It's tail starting to shake
<i>Hich yamanlik yok sende</i>	J/7	“You've done no wrong?”
<i>Shundak tehsir elvette</i>	J/7	“Yes, Excellency, of course.”
<i>Khanaet yok..katektin chikting</i>	K/9	“You, not satisfied, came out of
		your coop!
<i>Mushtek turup meni hakaret khilding</i>	K/11	You, so small, insulting me!
<i>Keng dalagha chikip dan izdiding</i>	K/10	You went outside to look for grain,
<i>Yamanlik emesmu shuy sening</i>	K/9	Is that not your wrongdoing?
<i>Chunki bu dalalarda men yashaymen</i>	L/11	Because the outside is my place,
<i>Khakhakhlap kulup men sekreymen</i>	L/9	I jump and laugh aloud.”
<i>Hapa bolmisla hormetlik, danmu</i>		“Respected one, don't be angry, I
<i>tapmedim</i>	M/13	found no grain,

Rhyme pattern/Syllable count		
<i>Tehi keng dalada bir kapammu almidim</i>	M/13	In the vast outdoors I haven't got one bite."
<i>Bolmisa keypimni buzmakchimiding Yaki davangha chikip khichkarmak chimiding</i>	N/11 N/13	"Then did you want to spoil my joy Or crow from a mountain top".
<i>Yengidin köz achtighu dunyagha</i>	O/10	"I have just opened my eyes on the world,
<i>Hazirla chikattimmy davangha</i>	O/10	How could I climb to a mountain top,
<i>Yaki chushettimmu yagha</i>	O/8	Wouldn't I fall into a chasm?"
<i>Boldi ehmekh, asmanga khariding</i>	N/10	"Yes, you fool, you looked at the sky,
<i>Jahan issisun dep tiliding</i>	N/9	You wished the world to be warmer,
<i>Shumlikingdin issimakhchi, jahan</i>	P/10	Because of your evil intent, the world is warming up,
<i>Chugulup ketmekchi bizning eski makan</i>	P/12	Our old domain will be scattered,
<i>Külbolup ketimen aptapta</i>	Q/9	I will turn to ash in the sunshine.
<i>Közüngni chokuymen shutapta</i>	Q/9	Right now, I will peck your eyes",
<i>Dedi Seghizhan chokulap chujini</i>	R/11	Said the Magpie, pecking the chick,
<i>Kangha bulap etti bash-köziniy</i>	R/11	Leaving it covered in blood.

11(b)

Sunggülügüch bilen Bulbul (The Drain and the Nightingale)

Rhyme pattern/Syllable count		
<i>Hava güldürlüse sunggüligüch</i>	A/10	When there is thunder, the drain,
<i>Yorghılap ketıdu O, ghıldırlıguch,</i>	A/10	That shaker, runs around,
<i>Puti havada ongda yatıdu</i>	B/10	Lies with its legs in the air
<i>Asmannı O, kötüriüvatıdu!?</i>	B/10	Thinking it is holding up the sky!?
<i>Hkıyalıda asman yıkhıldı,</i>	C/9	It imagines the sky is falling
<i>Pehkırlendi O megrur bir küni:</i>	D/10	It is proud, and one day, arrogantly:
<i>“Dunyada mendek danıshman</i>		“Where is an adviser as good as me?
<i>kheni?</i>	D/10	
<i>Nazuk sumbatım bulbuldın artukh,</i>	E/10	My form is more beautiful than the
		nightingale,
<i>Müşküil ishni orundaymen shakh-</i>		I deal quickly with difficult matters.
<i>shakh,</i>	E/10	
<i>Nahaytı nahsha eytalmıghangha,</i>	F/10	Just because I can't sing,
<i>Nohksan khoymakh shunche chong</i>		They want to find fault in my great
<i>ishimgha;</i>	F/10	affairs.
<i>Bir saatte ögünimen oni,</i>	D/10	I will learn it in one hour!
<i>Kheni bulbul demisinchu meni,</i>	D/10	We'll see if they don't call me a
		nightingale.”
<i>Yorghılap keldı bulbul kheshigha,</i>	F/10	The drain came running up to the
		nightingale,
<i>Mahtandi sunggüligüch öz</i>		He boasted of what he had done:
<i>khılmishigha:</i>	F/12	
<i>Yahshılıkning khedirni bilmeydu,</i>	G/10	“It doesn't know the value of
		goodness.
<i>Tashlısam asmannı kim yashaydu?</i>	G/10	If I did not hold up the sky, who
		would have lived?
<i>Mensiz halaketke kheni chare,</i>	H/10	Without me, where is the solution to
		disaster?
<i>Yurt üçhün avare - men avare,</i>	H/10	I am troubled for the country,

⁸⁸¹ *periz* is a religious precept or binding duty.

Rhyme pattern/Syllable count		
		troubled!
<i>Hemme nahshıgha amrak, nadan.</i>	I/9	The fool likes all kinds of songs,
<i>Shuning üchün deydu sini ubdan,</i>	I/10	That is why they say you are good.
<i>Sen bilen bolup bakhay sohbette,</i>	J/10	I will try to converse with you.
<i>Nahsha eytip körey bu pursette.</i>	J/10	Let's take this opportunity to try to sing
<i>Likin artukh varkhirima yurtdash,</i>	K/9	But don't shout too much, fellow countryman!
<i>Yügürüşhüp kelidu hemme bengvash,</i>	K/11	The mischief makers will come running.
<i>Halmaymen nadanlar tilini,</i>	L/10	I do not like the language of naifs,
<i>Eytisang emdi supturghay köyi.</i>	L/10	You should sing the song of the thrush."
<i>"Bu bolmughur tekellıpkhu 'hörmelik'</i>	M/11	"With respect, the proposal is unacceptable,
<i>Her khush öz tilida sayrash eplik"</i>	M/11	It is appropriate for each bird to sing in his own tongue"
<i>"Nahshini shundakh yaman körimen,</i>	N/10	"I don't like the song so much,
<i>Emdi bir eytip körey digenmen."</i>	N/10	But I'm saying I will try to sing it."
<i>Bulbul estihza bilen küldi,</i>	C/9	The nightingale laughed with mockery,
<i>Anga javaben mundakh sözlidi:</i>	C/10	and answered in these words:
<i>Borichi halvıchi bolghan ken,</i>	O/9	"It is said, if a grass-mat maker tries to be a halva-maker
<i>Chapakh besiptu oning közini,</i>	L/10	His eyes will become rheumy.
<i>Turalmusa bir hünerde kishi,</i>	L/10	If one could not persevere in one skill
<i>Vujudkha chikarmu oning ishi,</i>	L/10	Will the job come to fruition?"
<i>Elem yandi sunggülgüch közide,</i>	P/10	The world burned in the eyes of the Drain,
<i>Dedi omu tekebbir sözde:</i>	P/10	He spoke with arrogant words:

Rhyme pattern/Syllable count		
<i>“Senmu nadan, khedirimni bilmiding!</i>	Q/11	“You naively did not appreciate me!
<i>Sözge atnrakh chüshinelmiding..</i>	Q/11	You failed to understand my meaning,
<i>Abroy üçhün her nersini ögen Ukhmidingmu “jan bakhmak periz”^{ss1} digen?</i>	O/10 O/11	Learn everything to gain status! Don’t you know that “livelihood is one’s first duty”?
<i>Hosh eyte nahshangni men tutup alay.”</i>	R/11	Sing your song – let me memorise it!”
<i>“Renjime meylı ögitip khoyay”</i>	R/9	“All right, don’t be angry, I will teach you”.
<i>O sayrap ketti bulbul hosh avaz!</i>	S/10	Oh! The nightingale sang with a pleasing voice,
<i>Terennum eylidi yapyeshil yaz</i>	S/10	The green summer began to reverberate,
<i>Sunggülügüch lepenglep chaldi saz.</i>	S/10	The drain began to make the music unsteadily,
<i>Kheni chikkhini onungdin avaz?</i>	S/10	Where is the voice coming from it?
<i>Bostan ara onunggha mehabet,</i>	T/10	The garden turned on him in horror,
<i>Ushkhitip khlyynaldi nechche saet,</i>	T/10	For many hours he contorted and strained to perform.
<i>Eslide sunggülügüch avazi khandakh?</i>	U/12	In reality, what was the drain’s voice?
<i>Nahsha eytip körgenmidi shundakh</i>	U/10	Had he ever sung that kind of song?
<i>Chikhti shamal görüldep hava, Hudukhup sunggülügüch khildi tova,</i>	V/9 V/10	A storm began in the air, The drain was taken aback and surprised,
<i>Ne ongda yatalmidi bir shakhta,</i>	W/10	In the branches, he could not lie on his back,
<i>Sekrep ketti putakhtin-putakkha</i>	W/10	He jumped from branch to branch.
<i>Sayravatidu bulbul dilaver</i>	X/10	The Nightingale sang on bravely,
<i>Avalkhidek jaranglıkh, baraver</i>	X/10	As powerfully resonant as before.

Rhyme pattern/Syllable count		
<i>Havada dolkhunlinar sayrishi,</i>	L/10	The birdsong sent waves through the air,
<i>Dilde ba zokh muhebbet khanimi</i>	L/10	Spreading love and aspiration to hearts.
<i>Bulbulning taymas shundakh yoli</i>	Y/10	The Nightingale has a road that is firm,
<i>bar</i>		
<i>Gülshande echilghan khızılgüli</i>	Y/11	It has blooming roses in the rosegarden.
<i>bar.</i>		

Appendix 12

Development of the Uyghur *Mukam*

According to the Uyghur historical view, the *mukam* developed from an original form developed in Kucha in the Kushan period (around 80 AD). The well-known Central Asian Islamic philosopher Abu Nasir al Farabi (870-950) is said to have contributed some elements to its development. The *mukam* is linked to the pre-Chagatai culture of 12th Century, and then identified as having been completed in the 16th Century by King Kadirhan and his Queen Amanissahan. The story of this event was made into a popular film in the 1980s. The explicit references to the *mukam* developing with inputs from Central Asia contrasts with the absence of any reference to influence from China on this important cultural symbol.

The Chinese musicologist Wan Tungshu says the name *mukam* may originate from the Kushan language of around 80 AD in which *muka-y(a)kne* means “big tune”, as does *Chong Naghme* in modern Uyghur. Wan holds that the “big tune” is in fact the *mukam*.⁸⁸² Emin Tursun says that China’s early knowledge of the *mukam* is recorded in the *Records of the Sui Dynasty [Sui Shu]*. Its commentary on music says:

Zheng Yi, Duke of Pei said: “In researching the bronze and stone musical keys [*lu*], these names were found – *gong*; *shang*; *jiao*; *zhi*; *yu*; changed *gong*; changed *zhi*. Among the seven tones [*yin*], three tones [could not be matched] [did not correspond] although carefully studied. In the time of Emperor Wu of Zhou (560-578 AD), a man of Qiuci (Kucha) called Suzhipo entered the capital as a dependant of the Tuque (Turk) queen. He was an expert on the Hu *pipa*. Listening to what he played, there were seven tones in each modal scale [*jun*]. He was asked about this and replied, ‘My father was famed as a musical expert in the Western Regions. It has been passed on from generation to generation that there are seven kinds of mode.’ His seven modes were compared to the seven tones and they corresponded.⁸⁸³

⁸⁸² Kheyum Turdi and others, *On the Uyghur Twelve Mukam*, Xinjiang Peoples Publishing House, Urumqi, 1992, p.117.

⁸⁸³ *Sui Shu*, Zhong Hua Shu Ju [China Publishing House], Beijing, 1973, ch.14, p.345.

[In matching these seven sounds [*sheng*] to the known Chinese sounds, the Sui scholars were not able to match three of them. Suzhipo was able to explain this problem⁸⁸⁴]

The name of the music is *Mughenni Bilik* (knowledge of music).⁸⁸⁵

A recent paper by Nathan Light quotes a *tambur* teacher in the Urumqi Art College saying that in the sixth century a Uyghur musician named Suzup had invented the chromatic scale of seven whole tones and five half tones and taken it to China.⁸⁸⁶ The Central Asian scholar Abu Nasir al Farabi wrote an extensive study on music and took this musical system to the Arabs, from where it spread to Europe and became the basis of modern European musical theory. “Sujiva” [Suzup, Sujipo] gave these notes the names *sheddel*, *namche*, *zejje*, *shehul*, *karma*, *penjama*, *salek*, and *erikem*⁸⁸⁷. In 12th Century, the *mukam* names were recorded as *nava*; *ushak*; *irak*; *rehavi*; *huseyni*; *rast*; and *hijaz*, *abucheshme*; *bozrek*; *ispihan*; *zengule*; and *selkhe*.

In the 16th Century, the Uyghur King Kadirhan and his Queen Amannisahan made an effort to collect *mukams* and organise them according to consistent musical rules. The names given to the *mukams* under this system are:

1 <i>Rak</i>	7 <i>Ejem</i>
2 <i>Chepbayat</i>	8 <i>Ushshak</i>
3 <i>Mushavirek</i>	9 <i>Nava</i>
4 <i>Chargah</i>	10 <i>Bayat</i>
5 <i>Penjigah</i>	11 <i>Sigah</i>
6 <i>Ozhal</i>	12 <i>Irak</i>

⁸⁸⁴ Ibid, p.347.

⁸⁸⁵ Turdi, op.cit., p.38.

⁸⁸⁶ Light, op.cit., p.7.

⁸⁸⁷ Tursun, op.cit., p.43.

Some of these *mukam* are attributed to particular authors. Ferabi is said to have invented *Ushshak*, and *Irak* is said to have been composed by Mevlan when he was travelling on the Haj and passing through the desert of Irak. A Chinese scholar, Zhu Jinyao, attributes all these origin stories to Uyghur historical materials.⁸⁸⁸

A contemporary Uyghur music teacher describes the *mukam* form as “building on the base of the *chong naghme* (big tune), which is the core of the *mukam*. Following the performance of the *chong naghme* come performances of *destan* and of *meshrep*, progressing through an orderly sequence of closely linked tunes and rhythms, with a *marghul* (happy interlude) between each song.⁸⁸⁹ The *mukam* may not be performed without order. One cannot put *mukkadime* between *destan* or *meshrep*. If a *mukam* is performed out of order, it loses its lifeblood and its form.⁸⁹⁰ *Mukkadime* is an opening which is slow and free without fixed rhythm, and without the accompaniment of the *dap*.⁸⁹¹ If necessary, one can preface each major section of the *mukam* with *mukkadime*. The knowledge of the order, including the ability to improvise creatively, has continued the strength of the *mukam* from era to era, from ancient times to today, without disturbing the overall form.⁸⁹²

All *mukam* forms begin with the free melody known as *mukkadime*, then move to an even, level metre (*udar*) in $\frac{3}{4}$ time known as *teze*. This is in turn followed by a passage in dance metre, and another called *nusghe* in a more complex combination of $\frac{4}{4}$ and $\frac{5}{4}$ metres, which is supposed to represent a floating or flying feeling. After this comes a slower metre, *kickek selkhe* (small selkhe), followed by the lively and happy *merghul*. The melody moves from slow to exuberant, then back to the original slow tempo. After this there are a series of three lively motives with no *merghul* interlude: *jula*, *senem*, and *chong selkhe* (big selkhe). These three forms are very simple and plain, with much common material, but have subtle differences: *jula* being somewhat serious, *senem* being bold, and *chong selkhe* is quick, in a $\frac{5}{8}$ metre.

⁸⁸⁸ Zhu Jinyao “A concise account of the history of origins and development of the Twelve Mukam of Chinese Uyghurs”, in Turdi et al, op.cit., p.111.

⁸⁸⁹ Shir Mamet quoted by Nathan Light, op.cit.

⁸⁹⁰ Muhammet Zunun in Turdi et al, op.cit., p.237.

⁸⁹¹ Flat round hide drum, hand held, like a large tambourine without cymbals attached.

⁸⁹² Muhammet Zunun, op.cit., p.238.

The sequence finishes with *peshru* (in free 2/4 metre), *peshru merghuli*, *tekit* (a quick, free 3/8) and *tekit merghuli* which is slower, soft and melodic. This completes the *Chong Naghme*.

The next major section of the *mukam* is the *destan*. The rhythmic forms of the *destan* are not always the same. Of the twelve *mukams*, *Sigah* and *Irak* do not have *destan* parts. The *destan* is the Uyghur epic form, through which storytellers sing the great folk tales such as “Jengname” – the legends of war – in a musical form. *Destan* music is distinct from dancing music, and shaped for song. There are numerous *destan* tunes, each belonging to a particular epic story with its distinctive events and moods to convey.⁸⁹³

Meshrep has a special style of metre and rhythm, adapted to the *dap* (drum). Each line of the melody is quite distinct, and there is no *merghul* interlude. This part of the *mukam* is called *meshrep* because it has its origins in the peoples tradition of the *meshrep*, as described in Zunun’s story “Remembrance” (*Eslesh*). The music is from traditional group singing and dancing, and has a character that is exuberant and bold, rather than soft and sweet.⁸⁹⁴

⁸⁹³ Shao Guangxin, “Importance of Order in the forms of metre and motives of the Uyghur Twelve Mukam” ,in Tursun et al, op.cit., p.321.

⁸⁹⁴ Ibid, p.322.

Appendix 13

Arabic and Persian influences on the Uyghur language at different historical periods: examples from Abdurup Polat.⁸⁹⁵

1. Nesirdin Rabhoz, son of Burhanidin: (“Khissasul Enbiya”)

(suleyman)bir kun hodayitealage munajat kilip: hodaya hadawanda wujudumdin bir nimerse berseng

.didiler.andan hatuni bilkisning boyuda hamile boldiwakti saeti yatip bir nimerse tugdi.anda ne bax we ne ayak we ne kulak hiq nimerse me'lum emes ersi, goyaki bir senaqke ohxaydur, erkek we kiz ikenliki hem me'lum emes.

This example is written earlier in the Chagatai era before Navayi. In this paragraph, of 49 words 37 are Uyghur words and only 12 are of Arabic/Persian origins.

2. Navayi; (from “Uyghur classic literature examples”)

*Boldi meni olmekime sewda bais,
Sewdaga hewayi jami sehba bais,
Sehbaga dagi jami museffa bais,
Bu bariga ol dilberi tersa bais.*

In these four lines there are 21 words, of which Abdurup Polat says only six are Uyghur words.

3. Navayi: (from “Muhakimetul Lugheteyin”)

We bu sozning tenewwui teekuldin neri we tesewwurdin taxkaridur. Eger mubaligesiz ijmal yuzidin kelem surulse we ihtsar janibidin rekem urulsa,yetmix ikki new'I bile taparida hud hiq soz yoturki,yetimix ikki firke kelamga delalet kilgay.amma, ewwelqe tefsilidur oldurkim,rub'imeskuning yette iklimidin her iklimda neqqekexwer bar.we her kexwarde neqqe xeher we kesebe we kent, we her dextde neqqe heyl sehranexin olus we her tagda neqqe tewayif bar her jemaet elfazi

⁸⁹⁵ XUAR Language and Orthographical Work Committee (eds), *Turki Tillar Tahkikati*, vol.3, Xinjiang Peoples Publishing House, Urumqi, p.308.

ozgelerdin we her guruh ibareti yanalardin muteqeyyir we bir neqqe hususiyet bile mutemeyyizdurki ozgelerde yoktur...

In these 88 words, 21 are Uyghur words. Abdurup's point on these examples is that at the period of Navayi's writings, the great majority of lexical elements in the literary language, whether verse or prose, were Arabic and Persian words.

4. (Late 19th Century)

Sultan (Abdurrexidhan) mezkur rewixleriqe bir herabe oyge konuqi suretide bolup, ekrem nam bir mehremi bilen kirdi. ol oy mehmun atlik bir otanqining oyi erdi, bu melike(amannisa hemim) xul mehmunning ajizesi erdi. sultan karaydurki, bu oyning burjekide bir tenbur bar erdi. sultan mehmuddinsoridiki, tenburni qelip bergey. ol aydiki, men tenbur qelixni bilmesmen, uxbu kizimiz menga tenbur alip berng dep hefa qilip aldurdi kizim qalidu dep erdi, sultan kizingiz qelip bersun didi. Mehmun kizige emri kildi. kiz tenburni kelturup penjigah mukamige andaq qaldikim, sultan heyran kaldi.⁸⁹⁶

In this example of 86 words from the second half of the 19th Century, there are 74 Uyghur words compared to 12 Arabic or Persian words (author's count).

⁸⁹⁶ Mujizi; "Muzikantlar tarihi" manuscript, p.53, quoted in *Turki Tillar*, op.cit., p.218

Appendix 14.

Texts referenced in keyword analysis:

14 (a) Writers and Artists should join masses of the Workers, Peasants and Soldiers for the long term

[*Yazghuchilar ve senetchiler chokum uzun muddet, ishchi, dikkhan, eskerler ammisining ichige berish kerek*]⁸⁹⁷

Chairman Mao, in his speech eighteen years ago to the meeting in Yenan, showed us the line on literature and the arts serving the workers, peasants and soldiers. Since then our country's literature and arts have been developing in the correct direction. In the light of socialism, today we have rapid development in our arts, land development, and food production. We have followed the line of serving workers, peasants and soldiers, and of serving socialism. We succeeded in "Letting all flowers bloom, letting all voices sing competitively", and "Replace the old with the new" - these new kinds of attitudes. The literature and art of our Xinjiang Autonomous Region is an inseparable part of our multi-national, socialist literature. Under the leadership of the Party and with the help of our Hanzu brothers, there has been great success in literature and the arts.

Before Liberation, the majority of almost all nationalities were illiterate. There were no literary journals. At the beginning of the anti-Japanese war, a new literature movement began to develop under the leadership of the communist intellectuals Tian Jiyu, Mao Zemin, and Ling Jiliu. Patriotic poets like Li (Lutfullah) Mutellip appeared. But this new literature movement soon faced strangulation and destruction under the counter-revolutionary authorities. After Liberation, the literature and arts affairs of all nationalities developed as never seen before. Now we have Uyghur, Hanzu, Kazak, Mongol, Huizu, Kirgiz, Uzbek, Tajik, Shibo, Tatar, Daur: more than ten nationalities and 3,000 people working in our organisation. Among these are over 400 Party members. According to the road directed by Comrade Mao Zedong, the writers and artists have immersed themselves in the hot struggle of the workers, peasants and soldiers, got to know them closely, studied and developed to create quite

⁸⁹⁷ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri* op cit p.663.

a number of good works. They created heroic characters from every nationality of workers, who reflect the growth of communist ethics and virtues in this heroic period through social revolution and social organisation, to increase the enthusiasm of the masses.

Literature and art reflect the rich meaning of life. Day by day more works are created to present the image of the socialist system, all nationalities hand in hand, especially the Hanzu with other brother nationalities, on the road to friendship and peace. As the heirs to literary classics, and on the principle of advancing them, the form of literature and art is continually developing, renewing and inventing itself. Works will be popular with the people when they combine mass style with nationality style. Previously in Xinjiang, nationalities' literature was limited to a few genres.⁸⁹⁸ Prose is now continuously developing, and film scripts are being created. Previously illiterate people now have their own writers and artists. Popular literature and art is innovating and spreading its wings, creating "village poems"⁸⁹⁹; "work unit poems"⁹⁰⁰; and "branch poems".⁹⁰¹ Writers and poets have developed among the workers and peasants. Apart from this we achieved a lot by collecting, interpreting and organising every nationality's oral literature, classic epics, new and old ballads, stories and articles.

One thing is clear - the demand for action on socialist organisation in our country is flying ahead. Compared with our brother countries and other autonomous regions' literary and art affairs, our achievement has been very little. In this great time, the demands for action place new and honourable responsibilities before us as writers and artists. Of course we try to struggle hard to achieve them. We will work hard to reflect the socialist system, the people's communist ethic and virtue, their internal spirit struggles, and their revolutionary zeal. To accomplish this honourable task, we must resolutely uphold and follow the road of only serving to provide correct literature and art along the way of Marx, Lenin and the works of Mao Zedong, and deeply study the proletarian world view. If we don't observe the lives of workers,

⁸⁹⁸ *janra*

⁸⁹⁹ *shiir yiza*

⁹⁰⁰ *shiir dui*

⁹⁰¹ *shiir shehleri*

peasants and soldiers, we can not provide works that meet the needs of the time. That is why all of us should join voices with our Party's directive and correct call, by joining in labour to bring each to his best.

Immerse in the masses. Many writers and artists have obtained great success through living with the masses. So we writers and artists should go to the countryside, to the factories and mines, to live and work extensively with the workers and peasants. In doing this we will find the truth, and we will develop worker-peasant ideology and feelings. By living with them for a long time we can find out what they like, what will interest them, so we can create works that they will appreciate. In doing this we can accomplish the tasks given to us in this new era. We can follow the line of turning writers and artists into workers, peasants and soldiers. If we only claim to be workers, soldiers and peasants, but do not participate in their production, struggle and hopes, then what we say will be empty words. Here I will give my own experience to you.

The first time I wrote a drama, "The Hardship of Ignorance" in 1937, my point was to show the condition of the poor townspeople under counter-revolutionary authorities. My main character was a hemp-smoking, poor and ignorant man, who did not send his son to a modern school. With all his family he led an itinerant life.⁹⁰² Later his son went to university to save his family from poverty. At that time I had not studied Marxism, Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought, so I did not express the life of struggle and desire for liberation of the urban proletariat, because I did not know of it. Later, in 1946, I wrote "Gunchem", intending to show the struggle between peasants and landowners. But I did not know the farmers well, and I did not observe things from the perspective of class struggle, so "Gunchem" was very superficial. The farmers' characters were weak. My biggest mistake was showing landowners with a conscience. After liberation, when I had studied Chairman Mao's "Talks to the Yen-an Meeting on Literature and Art", I realized my mistakes. I realised that I had distorted my own experience and history, and the history of the working people. I made some oppressing landowners look good. (Later I made significant changes to this drama).

⁹⁰² *sergerdanlarche*

From my own experience, if a writer or an artist wants to work for the workers, peasants and soldiers, they definitely must join the life of the workers, peasants and soldiers for a long period - there is no other way. From the above example, every one of us writers and artists should study hard Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought. If they do this, they can serve the workers, peasants, soldiers and socialism.

Our literature and art absolutely must serve the socialist task. We will follow Chairman Mao's road by immersing ourselves among the workers, peasants and soldiers, reflecting every nationality's lives and their outlook in Xinjiang. We will try hard to create even better works.

14 (b) Let's go to the Front Line of Rural Development!⁹⁰³

[*Yiza igilikinung brinchi sipigha barayli*]

Development of the rural areas is the basis for Peoples' ownership, and the basis of food policy. When we strengthen and uphold this policy, we can change our country's two images as 1) "white"⁹⁰⁴ and 2) poor, using contemporary art and contemporary science, to build a strong, socialist, civilized country. This is the long-term, honourable and difficult task before us.

Literature and art are for superstructure.⁹⁰⁵ It is essential for some people to serve in this way. Without that, the development of some people could not be economically supported by the superstructure. Superstructure, as well as literature and art, could not keep up with the times and flourish. Literature and art could not gain inspiration from the masses. Over the last few years, our artists and writers, working in the countryside and the factories, have created works reflecting new characters and new events, opening up our horizons. Even though success is difficult, it is worth trying even harder. Otherwise we will not match the needs of the times. Especially now, when we turn literature and art to be the Party's strong political and ideological

⁹⁰³ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri* op cit p. 657

⁹⁰⁴ *ak*

⁹⁰⁵ *ustikhurulma*

weapon. We should turn it into a strong educational weapon to inspire millions of people for development of farms and increasing the production of food.

The great responsibility laid before us artists and writers is more than ever to immerse ourselves in the people and the struggle for production, to put down roots into the development of our land. On the one hand, we must dedicate ourselves to production, and on the other hand practise correct observation of life, study events, and create even more good quality works. If one doesn't immerse deeply in life, it is difficult to discuss what life is really about.

Now there are all kinds of ideas on how to fight against nature where thousands and thousands of people are working hard in the front line to increase production. In this movement great heroes are being produced and these heroes are creating miracles which greatly excite the people. How could this not create a great tidal wave of inspiration in which we writers and artists should joyfully swim? Is there any greater honour than to be creating a new realism, which reflects these new characters and events and makes them concrete, and thereby uplifting the enthusiasm of the broad masses for the building of socialism.

Some comrades say that if we are all writing about land reconstruction and production, our work will all be the same. I don't agree with this. As Chairman Mao says, "The countryside is big, one can do all sorts of things." If we can not be truly of one heart and mind with the peasants, we can not develop selfless political standards. If we could practice self-criticism as well as developing our skills in writing, we could produce many kinds of good works. We could understand the life of the proletariat, their feelings, only by working together, living closely together, eating together and discussing all kinds of issues together. Someone who has never tasted sugar will not know it is sweet. If someone has never tasted chili, he will not know it is hot. To know what kind of people the farmers are, we should get to know their life first hand. Life is complex and events are varied. Peoples lives, including the farmers we write about, all have individuality and differ from each other. We should not be those who observe a rose garden from horseback. For us intellectuals and young writers, it is even more important to go enthusiastically into that seething environment of labour.

Of course, going into the countryside and joining in labour does not solve every problem. Together with this we must observe life. One should learn about every event and situation in life and continuously study it. Chairman Mao said, “Those who do not study have no right to express opinions.” If one does not mingle with the life of the peasants, does not observe and study, how could one produce works that will be welcomed by the proletariat? The most important link⁹⁰⁶ in expressing a correct and enthusiastic life is to uphold the proletariat world view and personal outlooks. Even those who go to the countryside to work in labour production can not produce good works unless they avoid some serious errors. This depends on continuous reading and study of the works of the problem-solver Chairman Mao. We don’t immerse ourselves in peasant life just for the sake of it. The motive for immersion in life is to understand life deeply, to join the struggle to reform that life and to reflect it correctly. That is why we should possess a dialectical materialist world view, join the era of the freedom of the proletariat, and take Mao Zedong Thought as the guidepoint⁹⁰⁷ of our movement.

Together with this we should learn diligently to selflessly raise our professional standards. The art of writing has its own features: through characters it expresses great realism and events. If we cannot invent good characters it will effect our works. A writer is not a person who writes of events as they see them, but perhaps one who looks at situations and events, identifies the patterns,⁹⁰⁸ and uplifts them to a higher level, using characters to reflect the meaning. This is where the art of literature differs from other sciences. That is why we oppose presenting superficially, as well as the portrayal of ordinary life plain and without character, or just relying on certain formulae. To avoid these faults we should deeply study the life of the ordinary people and observe how they are continually occupied in innovative labour. Our people possess a rich heritage. We should learn from this heritage. We should explore people’s characters, and the light and shade of their meaningful language. Particularly if we learn the similes and allegories of legends, epics and ballads, we will benefit greatly.

⁹⁰⁶ *halkha*

⁹⁰⁷ *kible*

⁹⁰⁸ *tipiclet turup*

If we follow the Party line on literature and arts, we will progress in this area, especially the program of land reconstruction and food production which is spreading its wings, with seething enthusiasm. We should actively participate in this work, using our strength, intelligence and judgement. We can create a garden of the arts where all kinds of flowers bloom together.

Now, all over our autonomous region, the movement of land reconstruction and food production is being carried out by the Party and the people. The task has generated a great wave of support from the people to strengthen the front line of land reconstruction and food production. In this wave, the self-sacrificing millions of working people demand that their own revolutionary writers and poets bring about effective and high quality educational works, through clear characterisation that makes them real, lively, and representative of this seething, enthusiastic life. This is an honourable duty that we cannot delay.

Comrades, to meet the needs of the times, let us go to the countryside with all enthusiasm for labour and the hot struggle. We must turn ourselves into true workers, to present the most and the best works to our people!

14(c) A Family Finds Security⁹⁰⁹

[*Hatirjem bolghan Aile*]

After seeing cute little Tursunay singing in the kindergarten, I wanted to know who bore and raised this cute and intelligent girl, and so one day I went to see her mother at a time when she was home from her work. Behtihan greeted me warmly and invited me in. I sat on the chair next to the window-ledge, where a row of potplants was standing. I could see from Behtihan's expression that she was wondering why I was here.

“You may be thinking ‘Why is this man here?’”...

⁹⁰⁹ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri* op cit p.220

As I spoke, she said, “Hmm, no.” But her soft smiling expression indicated to me, “You guessed what I was thinking”.

I mentioned that I was a writer, that I had seen her intelligent daughter Tursunay in kindergarten, and I liked the little girl very much, so I wanted to know what background she came from. Behtihan’s eyes, shone brightly, just like Tursunay’s. Behtihan, about fifty years of age, hearing my praise of her beloved daughter, spoke excitedly:

“Now I don’t believe in the Evil Eye⁹¹⁰ and Evil Tongue⁹¹¹. Until Tursunay was three I made a protective amulet⁹¹² to put under her clothes so nobody could see it. Now, I laugh at myself for doing this.”

“Why don’t you believe in the amulet any more?” I said.

“You know it all yourself, so why are you asking!” Behtihan mockingly laughed and shook her head. I felt she may have thought that I was a village reporter who knew the answers but was testing her. I explained, “We who don’t work in the countryside together with you don’t know how your thinking has changed”.

She began to talk seriously. “In the past”, she said, “spiritualists,⁹¹³ Sufi priests,⁹¹⁴ and shamans⁹¹⁵ used to fool us. They liked to cheat the poor like us, and they helped the landowners and the rich to keep us in chains. That’s why they would show us miracles”.

“From childhood we learned to ask what is the hardest thing in life. We used to say that poverty is the hardest thing in life, but it was destiny, and whatever difficulty or disaster came to us we would blame destiny. In the last ten years, with our Party’s leadership, our eyes have been opened. Now we realise it is not true that disaster and bad luck are our destiny. We were told that rich people were fated to be rich,, and

⁹¹⁰ *köz tegidu*

⁹¹¹ *til tegidu*

⁹¹² *til tumar*

⁹¹³ *mazayi - mashayihlar*

⁹¹⁴ *Ishan*

⁹¹⁵ *dahan, bahkshi*

poor people were fated to be poor. But now we realise that we workers were the ones who created the better fortune for the rich. Now that we are collected into communes, whatever we work for will be ours. Already we are experiencing the benefits of the communes.”

She stopped, blinking. I realised she was remembering something, but whether it was happy or sad I could not tell. Behtihan went on, “You complimented my daughter. Yes, she is intelligent, and I love her. You ask why I named her Tursunay? I bore seven children, of whom three died at birth. I had a bad reputation that my children did not survive. The fourth child was a boy, and I hoped he would survive, so I called him Turdi, hoping that he would stay.⁹¹⁶ I visited tombs to light candles, and I attached evil-eye protections to his clothes. I hung a tongue amulet around his neck. I spent quite a lot of money. I gave all the eggs that I collected one summer to a Mollah. But after all that, the child died. The fifth time, I again gave birth to a son. We took him to ‘*Ulugh Mazarghujam*’ to name him Niyaz. Even though he was a boy, I left a little tuft of hair to grow on the side of his head. But Mazarghujam could not help us - my son died. It broke my heart. I prayed in the early mornings. I could not understand what was my crime, that my children were dying.

“Four years after liberation I had this daughter. Still with the old understanding, I called her Tursunay. Until she was three, I hung the tongue amulet on her. Then from our meetings and discussions I began to get new understanding. It is not we who are at fault. It is those masters who sucked our blood and sweat, and left us with no strength. My children died because of the bad conditions. Let’s change the subject. To remember is heart-breaking.” Behtihan’s face creased, as if she had swallowed something bitter. As she talked, it was clear that she remembered the bitter pain of the old life which hurt her heart. For this reason she might only talk about her past life in a general way, but I continued to ask her whether she had owned any land in the past.

⁹¹⁶ *turdi* = stayed

“We had no land”, she said. Behtihan then spontaneously began again to relate her life story. “If my hat dropped from my head it would fall on someone else’s land. Let alone farming land, we didn’t even have enough land for a hat to drop on. My husband worked on the landlord’s land and they let us live in a cottage. I washed and baked bread. When I say a ‘cottage’, don’t think of it like this place I am living in now, it was really more like a stable, dark and damp. But if we improved it, the master would kick us out and put us in an even worse place. ‘If you don’t have a house, you don’t have a life’.⁹¹⁷ We slept on the damp floor on an old mat. We cooked and ate there, bore children and brought them up there. There was a wok, and around it the cradle, tin basin, and food.

“It was because of this bad environment that my previous three children died from long infections before they were one year old. I did not know the real reason. I thought ghosts and devils did it, and we would seek for exorcists to drive them away, giving them whatever we had. Behtihan swallowed and paused. I noticed her dark eyes, shining with new life, become tearful. I saw wrinkles around her trembling lips, the lines evidence of past hardships. I was embarrassed to have reminded her of the bad memories of her past. I said, “Those days are past”.

“The old saying says ‘Don’t forget the past’⁹¹⁸”, said Behtihan cheerfully. It seemed her heart was lightened. Her expression was soft, as the more she remembered the old days, the more she appreciated the free, secure new life of the *Gongshe*.⁹¹⁹

She said, “The time for weeping is past, but I became emotional just through telling, as I remembered one of the darkest days of the past”. She continued softly,

“My fourth son was two years old, in Autumn. Before my husband came home I wanted to make tea, so I lit the fire. I put all the cow chips⁹²⁰ on the fire, then taking advantage of my baby being asleep I went out to collect more. I could not find any

⁹¹⁷ “*Öyi yoknung, jeni yok*”

⁹¹⁸ “*Körgen künungni unutma, shire chorukhongni kurutma*”

⁹¹⁹ Commune

⁹²⁰ *tezek*

nearby by so went further away. When I came back, my God, what did I see? My child had fallen into the wok of boiling water and died! My poor child had probably pushed off the lid with his two hands, and his head went in. When I saw this scene I fainted. Later his father came back and moved me and the child. You see? For one wok of boiling water I sacrificed my golden child. I was so miserable with the situation, and on top of that the father beat me till I was bleeding. I kept quiet because I felt guilty, as if I had done it on purpose. How could I believe my own flesh and blood could end like this?"

"Of course", I said sympathetically. "Mother's love is strong love, and confronted with death a mother will try to save her child rather than saving herself."

"Very true. My mother hoped I would be lucky, but I was unlucky in the past. I also hope for a long life for my child, so I named him Turdi and did everything to raise him, but I could not save him. As Behtihan told this story I imagined the scene: Behtihan's poor son's head accidentally boiling in wok in that damp, dark room smelling of the smoke of burning cow manure. In the wild, the child's loving mother, shivering with cold in the late Autumn wind, collecting twigs and cow chips. The cold Autumn wind turning the green leaves to yellow, with each light breeze dropping one after the other, saying goodbye to their few months of life. Flowers around the trellis of withered pumpkin vine also sadly saying a melancholy goodbye to the summer. These sad scenes of nature, in a melancholy season, remind people of the darkness and misery of their past life.

"Yes, as you said, all that has passed", said Behtihan, recovering her cheerfulness.

"My mother hoped I would be lucky, so she named me Behtihan. This was not in vain, because under our Party I find good fortune in the Commune. As you see, my daughter, born after liberation, is living happy in the kindergarten of the Commune. And my one year old son is in the nursery of the commune. Now I have no worries except working hard. Listen to this little rhyme- you will better understand our past life..

I used to be hard working

My children had no luck

Now and then I found flour
 If I had a sieve I didn't have a bowl⁹²¹

“It was like that - if I found salt there was no tea, if I found meat there was no oil. Walking around with one hand held out for pepper and vinegar, another hand holding a turnip,⁹²² a bundle of firewood under my arm. Now I have joined the Commune, I am freed from work of this kind.”

Everyone in hardship desires good fortune, happiness, enough to eat, and security - but they don't know how to reach this goal. Now one of the reforms has freed millions of hard-working women like Behtihan, saving them from being imprisoned like dependent rats inside their homes. As a member of a secure family, Behtihan enjoys equal rights, her son will not die by falling into a cooking basin when he is thirsty. Just like sister Tursunay, he can drink delicious milk in the kindergarten. Her daughter plays happily in front of her educators, and her son next year will also transfer to join Tursunay's kindergarten.

The husbands who used to be the sole breadwinner, in the Communes do not boast as before “I provide for my wife”, or shout at and beat their wife. The feudal system of patriarchy has been overthrown. Now all family members are equal and secure.

1960

⁹²¹ *Men uzum namrat idim*
Ballrumning Eghli yok
Anda-sanda un tepip
Eghlekni tapsam teghne yok
⁹²² *chamgur*

Appendix 15

Sentence Analysis of representative texts from Zunun Kadir.

Sentence Structure Analysis

In these sentences, we will see how Zunun's content reflects both the influence of the relevant period, and the expression of his basic literary dilemma through the use of underlying messages.

EXAMPLE A

In Example A, from the story "Strength is Gone" (*Maghdur Ketkende*), all the auxiliary phrases describe the underdog, Baki. This passage was written in a time when Zunun seems to have retained some socialist ideals and belief in a socialist solution to the suffering of the people.

Swallowing the boss's nastily-said bitter words, Baki licked his cracked lips, gave a long inward sigh and a short outward sigh, then like a person in mourning, with his head held low, Baki walked off one step at a time towards his home district.⁹²³

Phrases:

1. The boss's nastily-said bitter words
2. Baki swallowed inside him
3. licked his cracked lips
4. sighed long and short, and then
5. like a mourning person
6. in the condition of putting his head down
7. one step two step walked off toward the district [*main action phrase*]

Zunun's complex compound sentences can be divided into a main action phrase and secondary or auxiliary phrases that together contribute to a complete meaning. There may be one or many auxiliary phrases. Example A is a descriptive sentence which shows Zunun's realist writing style, written in the 1940s. All the auxiliary phrases

describe Baki's physical as well as psychological condition. Zunun's physical descriptions are all related to psychological conditions, or the effect of psychological conditions. The relationship is set out in the following diagram.

<p>Stimulus (Disapproval, insult) ↓</p>	<p>The boss's nastily-<u>said</u> bitter words Baki <u>swallowed</u> inside him</p>
<p>Psychological response (Sadness, disempowerment) ↓</p>	<p>like a mourning person</p>
<p>Physical response (Withdrawal)</p>	<p><u>licked</u> his cracked lips in the condition of <u>putting</u> his head <u>down</u> <u>sighed</u> long and short, and then one step two step <u>walked off</u> toward the district</p>

Word by word:

(1)

Hojayin ning zerde bilen khilghan achik soz ler ini

The boss 's nasti- ly said bitter word s

(2)

ichige yut u vet ken Baki

into him swallowed Baki

(3)

gez baghlap ketken kalpuk lar iniyalap

skin crust -ed lip -s licking

(4)

ullugh kichik tindi de ,

⁹²³ . Zunun Kadir Eserleri op cit. p.83

big small sighed and then

(5)

matem dar kishi ler dek

mourn -er person-s like

(6)

besh ini toven salghan halda

head lower putting condition

(7)

mehelle teripige bir besip iki besip yurup ketti

district towards one step two step walked off

Glossary to Suffixes

Hojayin <i>ning</i>	-ning = possessive
Kil <i>ghan</i>	-ghan = adjective participle
Yutuvet <i>ken</i>	-ken = adjective participle
Gez baghla <i>p</i>	-p = conjunctive
Tindi <i>de</i>	-de = conjunctive (and then...)
Matem <i>dar</i>	-dar = personal pronoun
Kishi <i>dek</i>	-dek = likeness

Text: When Strength is Gone

(*Maghdur Ketkende*)⁹²⁴

When we were young, we could not manage by ourselves the few *ho* of land that our father had left us. In our district there was landowner with plenty of his own land, who also share-farmed⁹²⁵ with some farmers who could not farm on their own. One year, we also share-farmed with that landowner. In the Spring, his seasonal workers⁹²⁶ came and ploughed the four *ho* of land in one day, sowed the grain, and departed. All summer we watered the wheat and tended it.

In the Autumn, when we were ready to collect the crop, the landowner⁹²⁷ would send a man to help the threshing of the grain. We would drive the threshing roller⁹²⁸, and the landowner's man would use the fork.⁹²⁹ This man kept his head down, scratching at the hard ground with his fork. I was driving the roller. From the sun at spear-height to sunset, I drove that roller around, and its din⁹³⁰ bored me. To tell the truth, my bones seemed ready to crack and by body ached with tiredness. When I beat the horse with a mulberry switch as hard as I could the horse went faster but, after five or six circuits, as if pulling a heavy load it would start to slow down again. I also obtained a little respite by humming a ditty in my head:⁹³¹ "Look at the shopkeepers, they don't burn in the sun, they don't sweat, they sprinkle water and sit in the shade, gaining comfort through their cheating".

It is truly said that 'Taking a harvest is like taking a city'.⁹³² One person had to break up the sheaves of wheat that had been piled up; one had to separate the wheat from the straw, dust and other things, and to pile up the clean wheat. When beggars came, we would give them one or two charity portions⁹³³. To people who helped us on

⁹²⁴ *Zunun Kadir Eserleri*, op.cit., p.79.

⁹²⁵ *otakh chilik*

⁹²⁶ *yillikchilari*

⁹²⁷ *otakhchi bay*

⁹²⁸ *tolukh*

⁹²⁹ *ara*

⁹³⁰ *köpüldigen avazi*

⁹³¹ *hıyal sürüp ketimen*

⁹³² *Haman almak sheher almak*

⁹³³ *görjek kepsen*

harvest day, we gave two *put*⁹³⁴ of grain. To the reapers, we gave four *ho* of wheat. We set one tenth of the harvest aside for the tithe.⁹³⁵ At the front of the pile, from the areas with the largest grains, we had to pack some grain for the government tax.⁹³⁶ Isn't this too harsh for the farmers? One of them should not be taken. Because we were Muslims, were paying both government taxes and the Islamic tax. The landowner would count his costs for labour and other things, and would buy our grain for half price. Who knew how much grain we would need for ourselves? For barley, hay taxes we would also have to sell some wheat. There was cart tax, and cow tax, and who knows what other calamities there might be.

Four *ho* of seed wheat might produce forty *ho*, if things went well. From this we might have twenty *ho*, of which ten *ho* went to tax, so would this be enough for food for the year and seed for the next year? No, it would not be enough. If the money is taken for government tax, we have to sell other things and save ten *ho* of wheat.... I should not sink into life's harsh and dark places. Thoughts of a better, happier life threw me into a bottomless, wavy sea, surrounded by reality...

The horse's whinnying⁹³⁷ brought me back to realise that I was still driving the threshing-roller. The horse stopped and began eating the wheat. The man who was supposed to be helping the threshing had gone to sleep, holding his fork. His colour was the colour of straw.⁹³⁸ His eyelids were swollen, and there was saliva foam on his cracked lips. He was making unintelligible noises. He wore his patched and decaying shirt without a singlet, and his oil-stained flat hat made him look even uglier. It was disturbing just looking at his nauseating condition. On the one hand, I was thinking "he is plain lazy", but on the other hand I sympathized with him: "This man is confused, and I would be just as bewildered if I could not find a better way".

Why do so many people live in this condition? I could find no answer. My thoughts were as knotted as a stork's dance. I looked at the horizon of endless fields...

⁹³⁴ 1 *put* = 16.38 kilograms

⁹³⁵ *öshir*, the religious tax

⁹³⁶ *dan*

⁹³⁷ *purhushi*

⁹³⁸ *saman*

From the distance came the sound of a harvesting song:

He beat me so often,
 Is your back tired, my dear?
 We played together a few days, then parted.
 Is your heart satisfied, my dear?
 My golden love, my golden love.⁹³⁹

What a beautiful song, with the words of the singers emerging from unsatisfied yearning hearts, like shining pearls. I wonder how much crop can be gained by the unceasing work of that young reaper, singing the melancholy song that crushes hearts? Not much, I think. By the time harvest time arrives, he will be deeply in debt to the exploiters. Many farmers, hoping for a better life, work hard all summer but at the end of the summer instead of crops are left only with their fork and their hoe under their arms.

All day long the horse pulled the hexagonal heavy stone roller, with me riding on top of it, making unending circles as the above thoughts went round endlessly in my mind. Our landlord came to the harvest, his stomach sticking out and his hands behind his back. Without looking at me, he stopped beside the sleeper. I think he himself had just risen from sleep. He glared with red eyes like a hungry wolf: “Hey, Baki!”, he shouted, pushing him with his foot. “Is this right, zombie!”

Baki got up nervously. “It has softened up. Why didn’t you wake me?”. He looked at me. Before I could answer him, the landlord said angrily “I didn’t send you here to the harvest to rest and sleep! You’ve got to earn your daily half-*put* of wheat legitimately!”

“I don’t feel well”, said Baki. Without much to say, he looked at the ground.

⁹³⁹ *O meni tola urup
 Beling taldimu yarim
 Az kün oynap ayrulduk
 Yüriking kandimu yarim,
 Altun omrikim, omrikum.*

“Drop that fork! Don’t feel well! If you don’t feel well you should say I can’t work! There are people strong enough to kick over a mountain who are looking for work! You don’t appreciate that, considering the fact that you have young children, I am trying to be helpful by giving you half a *put* per day. If you don’t feel well, go back to your grave for a rest. This is not a place for a sick person to rest - this is a harvest!”.

Swallowing the boss’s nastily-said bitter words, Baki licked his cracked lips, gave a long inward sigh and short outward sigh, then like a person in mourning, with his head held low, Baki walked off one step at a time towards his home district. He had also lost the previous three days wages, which he had worked in poor health. The boss knew of his bad health, but wanted to use him as cheap labour. Now he had the excuse not to pay him this half-*put* of wheat.

Baki was poor and did not look good, but he had a good and sensitive heart. He could not tolerate this kind of abuse. Secondly, he would die of hunger rather than go and ask for help. Having experienced so much injustice, he knew that justice was difficult to find for a poor person.

Bahar Han was tending to her baby, who was crying loudly. She was using oil from a lamp to sterilise the broken skin on her baby's foot. Baki threw her leather shoe⁹⁴⁰ on the floor, his hand hurting where he had stuck an awl⁹⁴¹ into it.

“I’ve had enough! This thing can go to the shitheap! The devil! I’ll burn it in the fire! Baki swore at it.

“Oh, even iron wears out. What do you expect! By winter this shoe will be five years old. All summer I wear no shoes, so that the shoes don't get worn out.”

Baki began to mend his wife’s shoe. He was not mending the shoe with a patch of leather, but strenuously using all his body's strength to pull the two sides of the shoe together with linen thread, making it wrinkle. It was doubtful that such old leather could survive this treatment. First he would spit where he was to push in the awl,

⁹⁴⁰ *bentinke*

⁹⁴¹ *bigiz*

then soften it with his fingers. In tightening the threads, he was careful not to tear the rotten leather.

The room they were in was only one handspan higher than a man. You could hardly call it a house - actually it was more like what old ladies call a 'ghost-hole'.⁹⁴² On one side was a pile of tattered bedding. On the floor were two small felt mats.⁹⁴³ A bucket⁹⁴⁴, a teapot⁹⁴⁵, a ladle⁹⁴⁶ (made not of steel, but of gourd), a small wok⁹⁴⁷ which could have been steel or earthenware, but probably earthenware because I have seen often that the peasants use earthenware teapots and woks.

In a corner of the house, three or four children were sitting like rabbits. The children had identical grimy faces, showing no sign of happy looks which make children attractive. All of them were frowning, and the room was filled with a depressed silence. Where was the old saying: "A house with children is a bazaar, but a house with no children is a graveyard".⁹⁴⁸

One of the children, I don't know which, was whimpering, and his father started to curse him: "Don't make me mad! Now I'll shut you up! They've been kicked by jinns, but they haven't died! Why doesn't God give children to people who want them?! That litter of pups!....."

Bahar Han was angry with him. "Why are you so angry? When there is pain, people moan. You yourself moan and cough all night."

Everything went quiet. The room was full of smoke from the oil lamp. I had come to give sympathy, but I decided not to say anything. But when I went home, that night I couldn't sleep. His children were so silent, not like other children noisily running around the street making lots of noise. They knew nothing of making a horse from a

⁹⁴² *alvaste kepsi*

⁹⁴³ *kigiz*

⁹⁴⁴ *chelek*

⁹⁴⁵ *chögün*

⁹⁴⁶ *chömüch*

⁹⁴⁷ *kazan*

⁹⁴⁸ "Balalik öy bazar, balasiz öy mazar"

tree branch to ride it around. They sat listlessly in a corner of the room. To play, they would need a full stomach and a happy heart. Their parents scolded them continuously. The parents themselves were sick and with no income, always praying for death. What a terrible life.

Baki lay everyday on his side in front of the Mosque. His wife Bahar Han would walk around the streets, sometimes with a little smile, sometimes frowning, her eyes red, hair messy, and her ash-coloured skin showing through her torn clothing. Whether smiling or frowning, she reminded people that Baki always scolded her as a "ghost".⁹⁴⁹

But Bahar Han's love was all that Baki had. One should believe in love. Some people didn't like to talk to Baki, because they felt nausea to look at him. But for Bahar Han, there was no man in the world more handsome than Baki. The arguments and name-calling are not caused within this family. Why would they hurt each other? Why would they want to frown at each other? There is no reason. It was only when intoxicated with the bitter poison of life that they hurt each other.

Bahar Han would help people baking their bread, and they would give her one or two rounds. Sometimes she would help to wash clothes, and be given a bowl of warm food. She would bring it home and put it in front of her family, standing aside while they ate. So when Baki saw Bahar Han coming home, he would follow her without giving anyone else a glance. He felt he should control himself like his wife, but the starving children could not understand such things, and went for the food straight away. Seeing this situation would touch Baki's sensitive heart. He could not describe the situation to anyone, because people would never understand.

Like this, the family was only half full most of the time. The children competed with each other for the food, not even pausing to chew. When it was finished they would lick their fingers, and look sadly at their mother as if asking "Is there any more?" Seeing children in this situation I could not stand to look at them, so I looked at the floor.

⁹⁴⁹ *alvasti*

One night in Autumn we were sitting around the bread-oven.⁹⁵⁰ Baki said, “By God, we are less than animals! No one gives us any value. They treat us like garbage. In the past, we were someone! We added rose to rose in Ili, and added kindness to kindness⁹⁵¹

“Sing, Baki!”, I said. “We can't solve the world's problems”.

Baki said, with a big sigh, “We used to sing. We had the strength to sing, in the past. We used to have a *ten-ho* farm, a horse and cart, a milking cow and a house. We used to get up early and work hard until sundown. We worked very strongly, but now we are weak, and have no strength to sing.”

“So you know that I am a singer! I was one of the best singers in our district. At weddings, parties and *meshrep*, everyone would ask me to sing. Among thirty young men, I would be the pearl. When we were young, we fooled around a lot!”

Baki was only forty five, but he seemed to be eighty or ninety years old. Because unjust fate choked him, and the leeches sucked his blood leaving him without strength, he had become a white-bearded old man at forty-five. He swallowed to moisten his throat and continued talking.

“It was during the time when the plums are ripe, and the weather was humid. I had unbuttoned my shirt. I had a white hat with a brim, and low-heeled boots on my feet. I would get over the walls in bushy orchards to choose the best plums to eat. Among the laden plum trees I saw a girl coming, with three or four children. I recognised her. She was the beautiful Bahar, with black braided hair, almond eyes and cherry lips. Whenever we met we would smile at each other and pass on. When Bahar smiled her two dimples made her look very lovable.

Look, they were coming toward me! My heart was beating, and I climbed up into a large plum tree. When Bahar came under that very tree, she said “Children, pick

⁹⁵⁰ *tonur*

these. These are good plums”, and she put her basket down on the ground and began to collect plums. I was like a cat stalking a pigeon, looking through the leaves and enjoying her activity. Her cheeks were as red as buns⁹⁵² and on the top of her nose were some drops of perspiration like the morning dew on the flowers. When she bent down, her hair slipped across her cheeks in front of her, and she skillfully pushed the braids back. Now and then she would choose a beautiful plum and pop it in her mouth. I chose three or four good plums and tossed one of them down to land in front of her. She looked around, then went on collecting plums. The second one I tossed down landed on her head. She stood up and said angrily to the children behind her, “Which one of you did that.. and why??”

I could not stop myself from laughing out loud. She said, “Oh, you idiot!” and angrily she walked out of the orchard without taking her basket. I was in trouble. She is very sensitive, so why had I made a joke of her? How could I get her to forgive me? Together with the children, I filled the basket and walked in the direction of her house. What if she had complained to her mother? Her mother would scold me, “You devil, teasing my daughter”. What would I say? I should leave the basket at her door and call to her. Things didn’t work out like that. When I arrived with the plums, Bahar’s mother was coming out of the yard. I put the basket down at the door without saying anything.

“Thankyou, son. God grant you long life. Where is Bahar?”, she said.

I realised that she had yet made a complaint about my mischievous behaviour. I said, “She is coming”. I thought she might be happy now, but later she would scold me, so I turned away without saying any more.

“I made you work hard.” This voice startled me, coming from behind a ruined wall next to the tree. I look behind it and saw Bahar smiling at me. I said, “You are so sensitive - do you need to get angry with me for such a thing?” She looked down and played with the braids of her hair. In her soft look, there was no sign of anger. Her warm and soft look, not answering my sarcasm about her being “sensitive”, was as

⁹⁵¹ “Yilining gülüge gül, hılıgha hil koyghan”

good as her saying “I love you.” It was just as if I had called to a bird and it came to sit on my wrist. She created, for the first time in my young heart, a feeling of warmth one could not compare. I felt shy, and did not know what to say.

I said, “Today’s warm weather ripened the plums.”

Bahar said, with a smile, “In this warmth, you are still not ripe.”

I wondered what I could say next. At that moment I was in no condition to find words to say to her. Among my mates I was skillful, not only in work but in wit. But now my skill in conversation had left me completely, as if some power had bewitched me. Fortunately, her mother called her, and our conversation stopped there.

Since then, the beautiful name of Bahar was always in my heart. But I was not like some others, going around idly saying “I’m in love, I’m in pain.” I worked with inspiration, and turned the land into a garden. The waves of wheat, the melons around the trellis, and the flowers, impressed everybody. During that time I used to sing, with all my heart. There was nobody who didn’t praise me. Everyone used to hang around me. In those beautiful days Bahar and I were sweethearts to each other. We kissed under the vine trellis. She used to come to our trellis for melons. I would say “This melon patch is all yours, choose whatever you like.” But Bahar did not come empty-handed to the farm. Hiding it from her mother, she made an embroidered handkerchief and tobacco pouch as presents for me. She brought eggs, boiled with red onion skins. Our days passed happily and we had even sweeter expectations for the future...”

Baki sighed and went quiet. With the tongs I stirred the charcoal which had gone dull. In the light I noticed Baki’s face. Those beautiful words from Baki’s mouth - flowers, gardens nightingales and Spring - left my consciousness, because his face more brought to mind the little leave tremblingly falling in front of us in the cold wind of late Autumn. I didn’t like this silence, and I wanted to to see him has be had

been singing like a nightingale, not in his present condition. I said, “Brother Baki, can you sing me one of the songs from that time?”

“Song? Song? I told you, do we have the strength to sing? You don’t yet understand.” He resumed his story of former times.

"Bahar’s family did not have any land in our district, so they moved to Sultanveysi. So my Bahar also went to Sultanveysi. After she had gone, I looked sad and argued with my family over nothing. My father used to say, “This idiot’s nose is swollen”. I would take the excuse of looking after the horses to stay at the faraway pastures. The bright nights are very mysterious and beautiful... how beautiful it was to listen to the birds. One could see the Avral mountains in the distance. My beautiful Bahar was sleeping in the bosom of those Avral mountains. I would sing towards those mountains until sunset. Oh! Those songs came from my heart, I never knew such yearning and such joy”.

Baki spoke and sighed, and I was moved. I asked him, “Did you get together with your sweetheart?”

“In the end, we did get together. Although we were poor, we could get by with our labour. In Spring my father died from tuberculosis, after suffering for a long time. My father could read, so he was respected. So everyone came. Yes, I had forgotten why even in this horrible condition people still don’t use the familiar “*sen*” pronoun with me, but call me by the respectful “*siz*” plural pronoun. It is because, following my father, I learned to read. You see, for such a thing, people give respect. On the advice of my elders, I put ten *ho* of wheat in the cart and went to the city, early in the morning. I bought the white material⁹⁵³ and went inside the wall tell our relatives about my father’s funeral. I stopped before passing Dengdervazi - it was the Devil’s doing! All my troubles started from that. I arrived at lunchtime and waited until sunset. There were countless people like me waiting for the road to open, with horse carts, bullock-carts, on horseback, on donkeys and on foot. The inside of

⁹⁵³ *kipinlik*

Dengdarvazi was like a sea of mud. Horses seemed to be swimming, and the carts reminded one of boats...

In competing for space on the road, the rider's whips were hitting people in the head and face. People were slipping and falling in the mud, making an absurd spectacle. To see the humiliated condition of these people made one feel pity, or want to cry...

That day, a farmer was blocking the road. If one thought of criticizing him, one should consider that his own condition was the worst of all. The farmer's horse could not pull his cart out of the bog, and the horse fell down in deep mud. People should have had compassion for him, as he struggled with hardship to pull his horse out of the mud. Finally, the horse died. The farmer came out with his few belongings on his shoulder, face covered in mud, and tears streaming down his face. How could one still blame him for blocking the road? Who or what was the real cause? It was the owner of the gate - the "great man" of the black gate that blocked the road. After much hardship, it was my turn to pass the toll-gate. What can I say - a soldier came and whipped my horse's face, and said, "Take your cart back!".

"Brother, I am in a hurry..." Before I could finish my words, I was whipped all over. Another soldier came and took the bridle of my horse, and turned my cart around. There is an old saying: "Good words will melt a stone".⁹⁵⁴ It is not true! I used all the good words in the world that day. I begged and howled like a dog, a begged for the sake of my dead father and all the saints. They would not let me pass. Their hearts were like stone, their bodies like ice. People come into this world to bully each other, but where are the people who will listen to our sufferings?

"Thirty farmers like me brought grain from Sang to transport it to the flour mill at Sarbulak. The begging was not over yet. It took us four days of hardship to deliver the wheat to the mill. Where were our thanks for working free, with my horse and cart, for four days? In stead of thanks, he said, "Look! This wheat is under weight!", and spat in my face. Seven of us were thrown into jail for three days... When I came out of the prison, they told me my horse was dead, and threw me four hooves.

⁹⁵⁴ "Yahshi söz tashni eritidu"

“Those are not the hooves of my horse! You thieves!” I swear to God, the officials themselves were the thieves, so who was I to complain to? To the one who did not sympathize when I said “My father is dead, dear brother”, and whipped me from Gulja to Köre? Or to the soldiers who imprisoned me, accusing me of being a thief? Or to their boss, the *Jingshu*? What could be achieved by that? So I lost both my father and my horse, and came back to Gulja. That is all in the past”.

Suddenly Baki became angry again. “What kind of humane behaviour⁹⁵⁵ is this? What kind of shamelessness?⁹⁵⁶ They are just like mad dogs...” And then he stopped...

..Baki started again. “At the funeral, I had to tie a white sash around my waist. I was supposed to hold on to a green stick and walk crying at the front of the crowd of mourners. My father had brought me up with many difficulties. I did not do anything in return for him - what a shame, what a pity. How could I face others? Thinking this, I went to the magistrate’s office.⁹⁵⁷ A man with a whip told me to stop, but I said it was urgent and continued walking. He hurried up to me and said, “Who are you cheating, pig! You have to pay tax!”, and he pushed me.

“What kind of tax? I have just come from paying tax!”

“Don't try to be clever! Just tell me the truth!”

“I swear, I just came from paying tax!”

“Come along then, pig! Or else!”

“You're the pig, you're the dog! I'm not going anywhere. What are you going to do about it!”

He hit me a few blows with his whip, and then I caught his arm. Then two guards came out and the three of them took me into the court. First they beat me thoroughly until my skin was bleeding, then they threw me into a cell. With hunger and

⁹⁵⁵ *ademgerchilikmu*

⁹⁵⁶ *uyatsizlik*

⁹⁵⁷ *Dotai Yamul*

exhaustion I was just about to fall asleep when that bad-tempered man with the whip said, “Get up, thief!”, and kicked me in the head.

I said, “Where should I go, brother?”

“Where do you think you're going - to (fuck) your mother!!”

“What do you want, Master⁹⁵⁸?”

“Right - just walk in front of me.”

He made me and another prisoner chop maize stalks for animal feed until evening. I am not the kind who would desert his father's dead body, but I could not help it. My family and community would hold me responsible, so for that reason I made a big wake⁹⁵⁹ for my father on the seventh day. From that time, I lost all my money and have been dependent on others. Even if I work day and night, I still can't wear good clothes and “my coat won't cover my knee”.⁹⁶⁰ After three or four years, we could not pay the land taxes and were forced to sell our land, and since then we have been completely dependent upon other people.....

As you see, this is what life is like “when strength is gone”. Where is youth? Where is the passion burning in our hearts? Where is the song that soothes our soul? No, for all these we need hope, we need strength.” He gave a long sigh and stopped.... Bahar Han died, and Baki developed tuberculosis. When I went to the village to visit him, he was many times worse off than before... It is not only Baki who is in this situation. Millions of ordinary people live in conditions in which even animals would die of despair. Millions will die in hunger, despair and disappointment.

I asked Baki's seven year old son: “Does your father recognise people?”

The son answered, “For three days now he has not spoken.”

“Why did you cover his face?”

“I didn't want the flies to get into his mouth.”

⁹⁵⁸ *Begim*

⁹⁵⁹ *nezir*

⁹⁶⁰ *chapanımız tizdin ashmaydu*

He smiled as he said this, trying to show, with that smile, some hope for his father's recovery. But contrary to its intention, the smile looked like someone disgusted with something. I uncovered Baki's face. I saw that his face was blue and his jaw had dropped. I was shocked, and without saying anything to the children, I walked out. The next day, some good-hearted people from our district made a burial litter from three branches, and buried him far from the neighbourhood.

His seven year-old son could not control himself from crying, from time to time losing his balance. After him ran the five year-old daughter, her hair matted and uncombed for months, her feet bare, wearing a dress patched with different coloured materials. She opened wide her black eyes, looking in front and behind, now running, now stopping and holding her brother's hand. Her innocent eyes asked the questions: "Where is my Mum? Where are you taking my Dad? What are we going to do?"

At this moment, Baki's smoky dark life became a heavy shadow over his funeral. I walked with my head bowed in sadness, because I knew how it felt - I had also lost my mother when I was five years old. Here we had arrived at the cemetery. Here thousands upon thousands of unlucky people said goodbye to life, and this old land had taken into its arms all the bodies of these people, as we could see from all the little mounds in the cemetery. Not all graves were the same. Graves without protection were lost and flattened. Some were marked by stone, or wood, or the horns of a ram. Occasionally one could see a grave covered by a dome. Some were built up with extra soil or sticks, or marked with fresh tree branches with leaves, or flowers were planted supplied with water. We put Baki's body among all these, in a grave of fresh soil. Every day, more funerals were adding to the graves. Nobody placed horns on Baki's grave, or planted flowers. Baki's grave, lacking the beautiful plants of Spring, looked naked and sad.

Gulja 1948

EXAMPLE B

Example B is taken from Zunun’s story “The Tightrope Walker” (*Dar Oyuni*) from the 1980s, written in the period when China was beginning to reconstruct a market economy. In this example, all the auxiliary phrases relate to the market.

By the bushy and grassy bank of the stream were a series of food stalls, tea stalls, and bakery stalls enclosed with straw mats, covered over with straw mats or shaded by trees, and numbers difficult to count of sellers of samosa, kebab, cold noodles, buttermilk, beer and bread.⁹⁶¹

Phrases:

1. On the river bank,
2. made by enclosing with straw mats
3. temporarily side by side
4. food stalls, tea stalls, and bakeries
5. in a bushy and grassy place
6. top covered or sheltered by trees shade
7. sellers of samosa, kebab, cold noodles, buttermilk, beer and bread
8. numbers difficult to count

Physical/psychological relationships:

<p>Stimulus (what he sees)</p>	<p>River bank, bushy and grassy place, food stalls under shade of trees, temporary construction of straw mats Food sellers</p>
<p>Psychological response (choice, insecurity)</p>	<p>Temporary constructions - insecurity</p>
<p>Physical response (challenged)</p>	<p>Difficulty to count the number</p>

⁹⁶¹ ibid p.489

Although Example B is from a text written in the 1980s, the sentence structure is similar in both A and B. Each example contains one or more descriptive phrases before the subject. Generally the order is

Descriptive phrases Subject Object Verb

Or

Descriptive phrases Subject Verb

In B the subject is the “hidden” 3rd person singular, in that the operative subject is the indeterminate “numbers difficult to count”, without identifying who would do the counting. The difference in structure means that in A the emphasis is on a man, whereas in B the emphasis is on the market. Even though the sentence patterns are the same, there are differences in the content. Example A reflects socialist realist context of the social class point of view. Example B reflects the market economy, with its greater degrees of choice but also greater degrees of uncertainty. But both these reflections of their own historical period are consistent with Zunun’s general theme of the insecurity of Uyghur society. Example B however shows a more indirect and toned-down expression than Example A. This may reflect some degree of acceptance of realities and a political maturity drawn from Zunun’s bitter experiences through the 60s and 70s.

Word by word:

1)

Ostenge *boyida* *borilar* *bilen* *tosup* *yasalgan*
Stream bank straw mat with covered made

3)

vakitlik *katar-katar* *ashhanilar,* *chayhanilar,* *navayhanilar ning;*
temporary one by one foodstalls, teastalls, bakeries

5)

sazlik ve *chimenliklar da ki*
bushy and grassy at

6)

usti yipilgan yaki derekh sayilirini dalda
 top covered or tree's shade make shelter

7)

khilghan samsa, kavap ashlempung, doghap piva, kuvas,
satkchilarning

(made) samosa kebab cold noodle yoghurt drink beer bread seller s

8)

hisaabini elish khiyin idi.
 counting taking is difficult

Text: The Tightrope Walker

[*Dar Oyuni*]⁹⁶²

In the north part of the old city of Ghulja, in an elevated area, there is a cemetery belonging to the ancestors of the Hakim Beg's of Ghulja, and inside this place was a domed tomb. The area around that tomb is known as "Altunluk" (the place of gold). In a valley to the west of Altunluk flows a river, and the area around this river is called "Sayboyi" (Riverside). At Saboyi there are trees with spreading branches. In Spring and Summer, many groups of people came there to enjoy themselves. In front of the Altunlukh was a sandy open area surrounded by water springs and some green grass pleasant for visitors.

One year in Spring time at Sayboyi a tightrope-walker performed. Big groups of people from the city walked towards Altunlukh. I also went, with my father, to see the tightrope-walking. The large area or the Riverside, the river bank, the bamboo groves, and the grassy swards and the surrounds of the high dome were all filled with thousands of people. By the bushy and grassy banks of the stream were a series of food stalls, tea stalls, food stalls and bakery stalls enclosed with straw mats or shaded by trees, and numbers difficult to count of vendors of samosa, kebabs, cold noodles,⁹⁶³ buttermilk, beer and bread. Calls for customers competed with each other as all the vendors shouted out their wares. Sitting next to a large earth oven⁹⁶⁴ people were selling meat-filled buns.⁹⁶⁵ With their chest-hair showing from their collars, they put one hand up to their ear and shouted in rhyme:

"Taste the fat, taste the sugar,
If you eat one, you'll say 'Oh!'
If you eat two, you'll call for water!"⁹⁶⁶,

⁹⁶² *Hatirleri*, op.cit., p.56.

⁹⁶³ *ashlempung*

⁹⁶⁴ *tonör*

⁹⁶⁵ *gosgirde*

⁹⁶⁶ *Yag yeysin, seker yeysin*

Birine yiseg, oh deysen

Ikini yiseg, su deysen

In the tea-houses, different musical instruments were being played, and lays⁹⁶⁷ and melodies⁹⁶⁸ came continuously. The owners of the shops competed with each other in inviting good musicians to attract customers, and they did not mind paying well. People went to drink in whichever shop had the best entertainment. Apart from this entertainment there were dogfights, fighting rams, and cockfights, with bystanders betting on the outcome, standing on the side of whichever contestant they were backing, the losers paying the winners. Many people were gathered in these kinds of places.

In three or four places were bards,⁹⁶⁹ telling all kinds of epic tales of war⁹⁷⁰ and legends to the gathered people. I loved listening to folktales,⁹⁷¹ forgetting to eat as I listened to the storytellers. Once my father lost me and looked everywhere, finally finding me in front of the bards. He pulled me by the arm, took me roughly out of the crowd and slapped my face. Instead of eating samosa, I ate his slap as a reward for my interest! But my father, realising I was hungry from running about, bought me samosa to fill me up.

I heard the sound of shenai⁹⁷² and the drums, and thousands of people quickly gathered in a large circle around the tightrope-walker. Tall and fair Hashim Haji, addressing the audience, announced that before the rope-walking there would be some acrobatics. The music began again, and the tumbling act began. Among Hashim Haji's apprentices, the best in balancing was Tohta Ahun. He was fifteen or sixteen years old, slim and pale. In the ground tumbling, the best was Turdi Ahun, a dark youth about eighteen years old. He performed the most outstanding tumbling feats. Standing on a stool, he could pick a plate from the floor with his mouth, then do two or three somersaults in the air while dismounting, followed by five or six somersaults in the air from the ground. The rope-balancing now began.

⁹⁶⁷ *mukam*

⁹⁶⁸ *nagme*

⁹⁶⁹ *meddal*

⁹⁷⁰ *jeng name*

⁹⁷¹ *revayet*

⁹⁷² a short, double-reed wind instrument.

Tohta Ahun, the performer, wore red velvet trousers, a yellow turban on his head, and bare feet. He held a long balancing-pole. Before he began he turned towards Mecca,⁹⁷³ and his master, facing the same direction, recited the prayer “Munajet” as a blessing on his apprentice. Then the handsome, red-clothed youth set out to walk the rope. Below, the *dap*⁹⁷⁴ the *dumbak*⁹⁷⁵ and shenai could be heard. The eyes of thousands of people were raised to Tohta Ahun as he walked on the rope in time to the music. If you looked up to the highest point of the rope, your hat would fall off. The performer came to the scaffold at one end. He raised his right foot and placed it on his left leg, then standing there on one leg called out, “My master - a great hero!”⁹⁷⁶.

He stayed at the scaffold for one or two minutes, walked up to the other scaffold, then walked backwards down to where he had begun. Then he walked up again, and half way suddenly did the splits and dropped down onto the rope. This brought a gasp of surprise⁹⁷⁷ from the crowd. Then he brought his feet together and swung upside down from side to side. He brought his legs together, sat on the rope, got up and walked back to his starting point. Again he walked up the rope, then placed a blindfold across his eyes and walked backwards down the rope again. Next he tied two china plates to his feet and, still blindfold, walked up the rope again. The audience was silent with fear.

After a few more such tricks, he walked up to a point a few steps before the upper scaffold, then placed his head on the rope and raised his feet to the sky, calling out again, “My Master!”⁹⁷⁸

Below, Hashim Haji cried out,

“Life can bestow such riches,
In one moment, the universe can be paradise,

⁹⁷³ *kible*

⁹⁷⁴ a flat drum

⁹⁷⁵ drum

⁹⁷⁶ *Yar pirim, Shahi Merdan.*

⁹⁷⁷ *vay!*

⁹⁷⁸ *Yar pirim!*

Masters, a great hero!”⁹⁷⁹

Then placing his left hand on his breast and slapping it with his other hand, he cried, “For the sake of Hazreti Ali, the heroic teacher, give what you would like to give!”

Then he raised his two hands as in prayer, as blessing to the audience. Two of them, holding two ends of a table-cloth, walked throughout the crowd to collect money. Some in the crowd even gave their jackets, and they collected much money and valuables. The performer went in to a small booth on the scaffold to perform prayers. After that he did not descend by the rope he had gone up, but slid down from a spare rope to the ground. Thousands of the crowd wanted to put their hands on him in honour. People were climbing over each other to have Tohta Ahun take a bite from a round of their bread. The owner of such bread would joyfully tuck the remainder away inside his jacket. Why was this? Because if someone's wife was slow to conceive, the eating of bread bitten by such a performer could assist them to become pregnant.

After the performance, everyone wanted to invite Tohta Ahun to their homes, some pressing him to mount their horses, others to climb onto their carts, while his master called him back. In the midst of this excitement, two armed soldiers on horseback came to take him away. Why did this happen?

The Governor⁹⁸⁰ of the Ili district had a son who was cruel and licentious. He pressed some local young people into becoming a troop of private soldiers, dressing them in a ridiculous uniform, to form a personal army which he used to create violence and disorder in the district. For this reason he was known as “Mad *Shoye*”.⁹⁸¹ The two soldiers belonged to this Mad Shoye. Mad Shoye wanted to meet Tohta Ahun, but people did not want him to go. Hashim Haji quietened the crowd, saying they should listen to what the soldiers had to say.

⁹⁷⁹ *Janlan kishini shemsi bostan etken,
Bir lehside alemni gulistan etken,
Yar pirim shahi merdan*

⁹⁸⁰ *Dotai*

⁹⁸¹ Young Master

One of the soldiers said the Mad Shoye wanted to meet him and give him some presents. Hashim Haji said, “If we don't let Tohta Ahun go, the Shoye will stop us performing here. So we have to let him go.”

I went along with the crowd. Shoye was in a tea room. He touched Tohta Ahun in various places, asked for a needle, and stabbed Tohta Ahun in the middle finger with it. Tohta Ahun gave a yell and began to bleed. Mad Shoye laughed and said, “So, he's a mortal... I had thought he must be a ghost!”

Hashim Haji said to the Shoye, with utmost respect, “He is the son of Haji Merdan, and the disciple of Hazireti Ali Shahi Merdan.”

Shoye asked “Who is this Ali Shahi Merdan?”

Someone who was angry with the Shoye's bullying said, “Ali is the kind of hero who could cut a mountain in two with his *zulpukar*.”⁹⁸²

Shoye asked, “What is a *zulpukar*?”

The same man answered, “A *zulpukar* is the kind of sword that with one shake can become forty *kez* long, and with one stroke can kill forty enemies.”

The Shoye said, “Oh, so he is an apprentice wizard!”⁹⁸³ He believed that this explained how Tohta Ahun could give such an impressive performance. Hashim Haji then stood on a step and said, “That will be the end of today's performance. Tomorrow there will be *chikrik* performance on the rope!” The people began to disperse. I was gazing tirelessly at Tohta Ahun. My father called me, “Hey, loverboy,⁹⁸⁴ did you have enough fun today? Let's go.” Holding my hand, he went to look for the cart, which we found with some difficulty, and went home.

Next day we were keen to see the tightrope performance again. Tohta Ahun showed two or three different dangerous tricks. He went to the top of the scaffold, and from there passed onto a trapeze, using one foot to hook on to the trapeze, then turning himself upside down and doing a few turns. Sometimes he held the trapeze with his arms and sometimes with his legs, as he swung beneath it. As he performed these

⁹⁸² sword

⁹⁸³ *xianren*

⁹⁸⁴ *asik*

difficult feats the stared at him like statues, hearts beating with concern for the performer. Then he passed to another trapeze on the left side, to perform even more frightening tricks. He swung on the trapeze, then suddenly let go with his hands. Everyone feared that he would fall, but at the last moment, with great skill, he grabbed the trapeze from below. Although this was frightening, we saw even more frightening performances. In one of them, the performer lay across the trapeze on his back, with arms and legs hanging down, then suddenly slid, head down. People worried that Tohta Ahun was falling, but he arrested his fall with his whole body hanging. We wondered how he had survived. The first time he let himself drop, he skilfully hooked his feet into the two ends of the trapeze, where the ropes were tied. The second time, he used the tops of his feet to catch himself. Think of it! If the toes could not bear the weight of his whole body, or the slipped, would it not be a disaster? In another performance he sat on the trapeze and swung backwards and forwards, then suddenly threw himself downwards. When you thought fearfully that he had had enough and thrown himself down deliberately, you realised that his two feet were tied, upside down. In reality, while he was swinging, without showing us he had hooked his feet into loops in the corners of the trapeze. So although this performance was not dangerous for the performer, it was fearful for the audience.

Along with this performance I must tell another recollection: An old man had brought his grain from his village and sold it to buy provisions, and while walking around he had tied his money up in a handkerchief and put it in his pocket. He heard about the tightrope performance and came to see it. At the moment when the performer threw himself down from the trapeze the farmer, in fear, grasped his chest with two hands and cried, "My God!". A rogue seized this opportunity to steal the money from his pocket. When the farmer checked his pocket he found the money gone. The old man began right then and there to cry "Allah1, Allah!" and beat himself with distress. We felt sorry seeing this disaster happen to the poor farmer, but on the other hand we also realised how tightrope-walking makes such a deep impression and bewitches people.

A few years before this another tightrope-walker, a man with a straight nose, of middle height and around thirty years old, set up his scaffolding and performed. In addition to Tohta Ahun's performance, he did some additional tricks such as walking on the rope in his boots, and placing a samovar on his head. After a couple of

performances, the old government stopped such performances, because performers loved by the Uyghur people disappeared.

There were no more such performances for about ten years, but then there was another one by a performer known as “Oil-presser's Apprentice”. This man had been trained to perform on the tightrope when he was young, in the South. He came with his equipment to the Ili district to perform, but the government did not allow him, so he sold his equipment to survive, and for some years wandered around penniless and homeless. Eventually, he obtained a job as apprentice to an oil-presser. While doing this job, he mentioned to some people his training and expressed interest in performing again. A group of respectable local people obtained permission for him to perform, and provided money to buy equipment and lent some assistants to set up the performance.

He was then able to begin performing. He was over forty years old, skinny and cross-eyed. Many people were sceptical that he could perform. However, he threw himself into the act, wearing red velvet costume, and performing all the tricks that Tohta Ahun had performed, such as walking blind-fold and tying plates to his feet, and in addition he even ran on the rope. But on the high pole, he could only achieve half of what Tohta Ahun had done.

Being older, this performer tired easily. When he came down after his performance, his clothes were soaked with his sweat, and his whole body trembling on the point of collapse. People seeing him in this state would pity him - but the next day, he would start all over again to perform on the tightrope.

EXAMPLE C

In this third example from “Leelshah” (full text in Appendix 9), we see Zunun writing from a position of disillusionment with politics, but this does not prevent him from continuing to advocate “good” as he sees it. In 1980, the market economy was being strongly advocated in China, and making money had been put forward by Deng Xiaoping as an important motivation for economic development. In the Leelshah story, Zunun gives subtle warnings that wealth alone does not satisfy people, and that some other kinds of meaning in life is needed. The “prosperous and wealthy” King looks for other fulfilment, or “good”, to prevent future disaster: “our light [being] extinguished and the world will disappear into darkness”.

Zunun uses traditional form of *chochek* folk tale in this example to refer back to cultural elements regarded as backward and superstitious, and restore virtue to some of these aspects of Uyghur culture.

“In the olden days there was a great king whose country was prosperous and wealthy, who ruled over several small kingdoms. Although his kingdom was so great, because he had no child he felt sad, yearning day and night and frequently would say to his queen “If we pass from this world without a child as heir to our crown and throne, then our light will be extinguished and the world we hold will disappear into darkness”, and so saying he expressed his worries⁹⁸⁵”.

Clauses:

(Clause 1)

In the olden days
there was a great King
whose country was prosperous and wealthy,
who ruled over several small kingdoms.

(Clause 2)

⁹⁸⁵ ibid p.715

Although his kingdom was so great,
because he had no child he felt sad,
yearning day and night

(Clause 3)

and frequently would say to his Queen
“If we pass from this world
without a child as heir to our crown and throne,
then our light will be extinguished
and the world we hold will disappear into darkness”,
and so saying he expressed his worries.

The main clause in the above passage is the King expressing his worries to the Queen. The King is the subject, the worry is the object, the verb is “expressing”. Other than this, there are descriptive clauses. The sentence can be separated into three different clauses. The first clause describes the King; the second clause describes the King and his yearning for offspring; and the third is the main clause, conveying to the Queen the King’s concerns about the consequences of their situation - that their world will disappear into darkness.

Most of the phrases contain verbs that are grammatically transformed into adjectives, and contribute to building up a description of the king and his state of mind.

Word by word:

(Clause 1)

<i>Burunkhe</i>	<i>zamanda</i>	<i>el yurti</i>	<i>avat, mal mulki</i>	<i>kop, birnechche</i>
In olden	times	the country	prosperous, possessions a lot,	a few

<i>kichik</i>	<i>shaliklar</i>	<i>ustidin</i>	<i>hukumranlikh</i>	<i>khilidighan</i>
small	kingdoms	over	rule	the person who

<i>chong</i>	<i>bir</i>	<i>padishah</i>	<i>bolup,</i>
great	a	king	was,

This clause follows the structure (descriptive phrases)+(subject)+(verb)

The second clause describes the King's yearning for offspring:

(Clause 2)

uning doleti shunche ziyade bolsumu, birer perzenti
 his nation that big although, an offspring

bolmigheni uchun kongli yirim bolup kiche kunduz
 is not because heart half become day and night

hesret chekidiken
 yearning he felt

The structure is (descriptive phrase)+(hidden subject)+(verb)

In this second clause are three descriptive phrases, with the structure:

uning doleti shunche ziyade bolsumu (though his country is so big)

birer perzenti bolmigheni (because there is no offspring)

kiche kunduz hesret chekidiken (he yearning day and night)

The third clause describes the King's discourse with the Queen:

(Clause 3)

ve pat patla hanishigha "Biz alemdin otsek tachu tehtimizge
 and often to his queen "Us from world if we pass crown and throne

varislik khilghudek birer persentimiz boligheni uchun
 heir person to be one our offspring there isn't because

chirighimiz uchup tutkhan jahanimiz kapkarag gu chilik ichide
 lamp extinguished holding our world will become darkness inside

kayip bolidighan boldi" dep khaygusini ezhar khilidiken.
 Lost will become so saying his worry expression made

The structure of this sentence is (main clause)+(direct speech (main clause)+(conditional phrases))

pat patla hanishigha..... khaygusini ezhar khilidiken (often he presents his worries to his queen)(main clause)

Biz alemdin otsek (if we pass away)(conditional phrase)

tachu tehtimizge varislik khilghudek birer persentimiz boligheni (there being no offspring to be heir to our crown and throne)(conditional phrase)

chirighimiz uchup (our light being extinguished)(conditional phrase)

tutkhan jahanimiz kapkarag gu chilik ichide kayip bolidighan boldi (the world we are holding will be lost in darkness)(main clause)

Most of the phrases contain verbs that are grammatically transformed into adjectives, and contribute to building up a description of the king and his state of mind. The treatment of quotation is also an innovation that differs from the traditional Hakaniye. Abdurup Polat says that in Chagatai usage, the word identifying that words are quoted, or a variant of it, is used both before the quotation and at the end of the quotation. For example:

Ol aydiki, man tanbur qelixni bilmasman....kizim qalidur, dep adi

He said, I don't know how to play the tambur...my daughter plays, so he said⁹⁸⁶

In Zunun's sentence describing the King's words to his Queen, there is no such usage of repeated "he said" formulation. The main clause, which surrounds the quoted passage, indicates that the King addresses (the Queen (*hanishi gha*)), but the direct quotation is a separate sentence enclosed by punctuated quotation marks, which in the Arabic orthography are rendered as <<.....>> (inverted for left-to-right script). Chagatai literature used no punctuated quotation marks.

⁹⁸⁶ Abdurup Polat in *Turki Tillar Tahkikati* op cit, p.225

Appendix 16

Conjunctions in Uyghur Sentences

Most of the conjunctions found in Uyghur language have foreign origins – eg *ve* (and) and *hem* (also). There are a very few conjunctions – the most common of these is *kim* or “*ki*”.⁹⁸⁷ This conjunction indicates that the following clause is related to the preceding clause (Table 1).⁹⁸⁸ According to Prof. Dr. Muharrem Ergin, “In Turkic language there is generally no conjunction. Conjunctions came into Turkic languages from other languages such as Arabic and Persian. Because of this, the Turkic conjunctions that we have are derived from nouns or verbs”.⁹⁸⁹

⁹⁸⁷ Robert Underhill, “Turkish” in D.I Slobin and K.Zimmer (eds) *Studies in Turkish Linguistics*, Vol.8, University of California, Berkeley, John Benjamin, Philadelphia, 1986, p.8.

⁹⁸⁸ This table draws upon the method used in *Turki Tillar Tahkikati*, op.cit., p.258.

⁹⁸⁹ Kashgarli, *Modern UyghurTürkçesi Grameri*, op.cit. p.216.

Table 1.

