

GERD CARLING

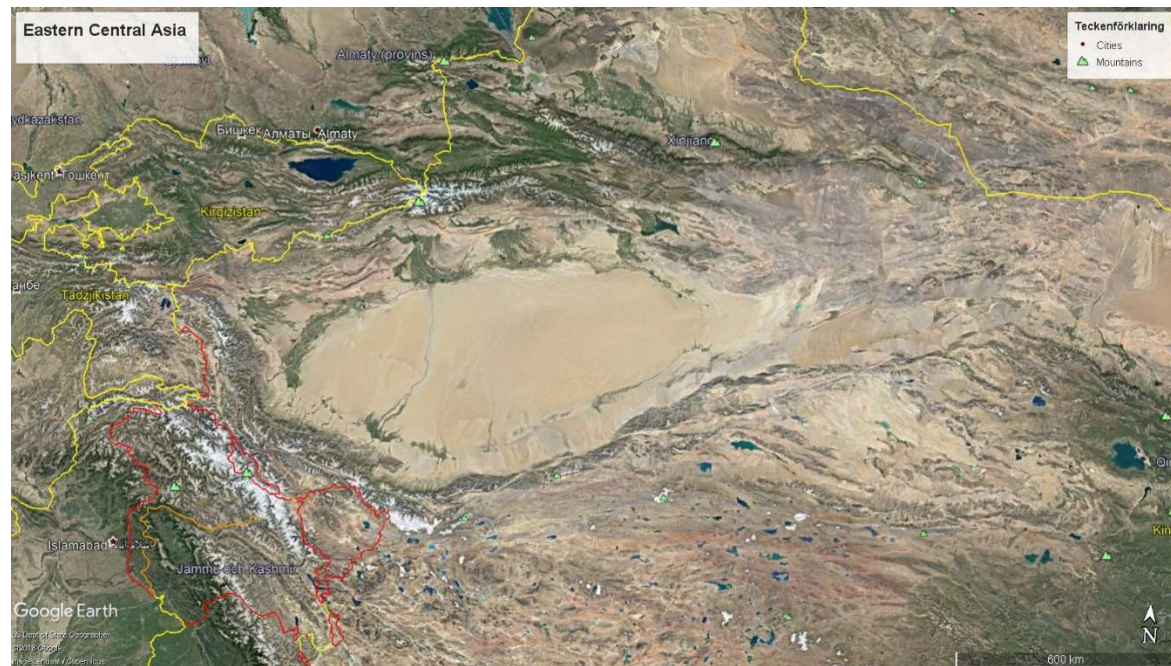
Tocharian

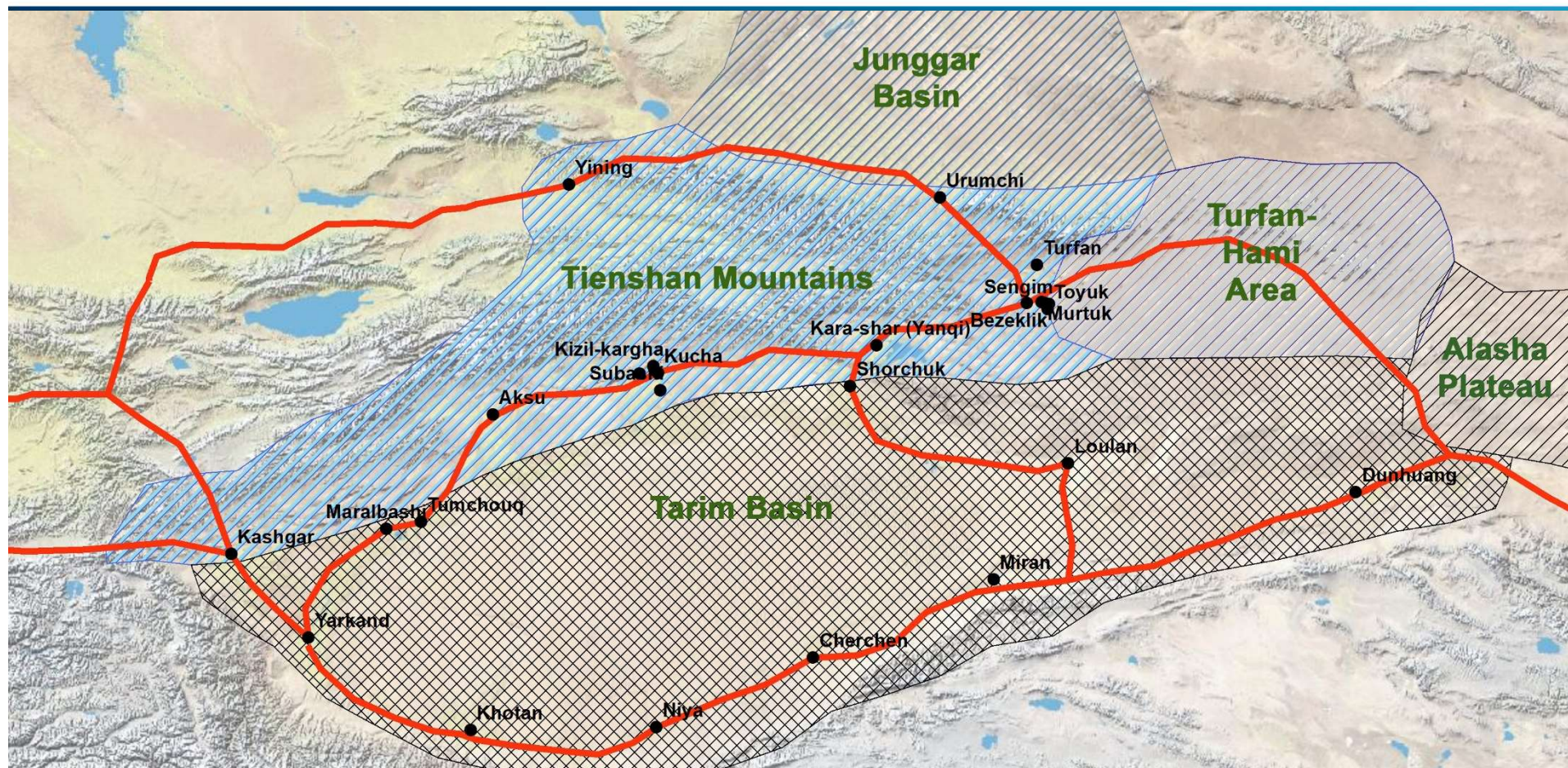
Introduction – Part 1



WHERE?

Eastern Central Asia (ECA)
Uighur Autonomous Region of
Xinjiang,
People's Republic of China





Eastern Central Asia

Teckenförklaring

- Cities
- ▲ Mountains



SUBSISTENCE: PRECONDITIONS FOR LIVING IN A HARSH CLIMATE

- Irrigation farming
- Tax collecting
- Sheep pastoralism



Pond for irrigation in the village of Qizil.
Photo: Gerd Carling

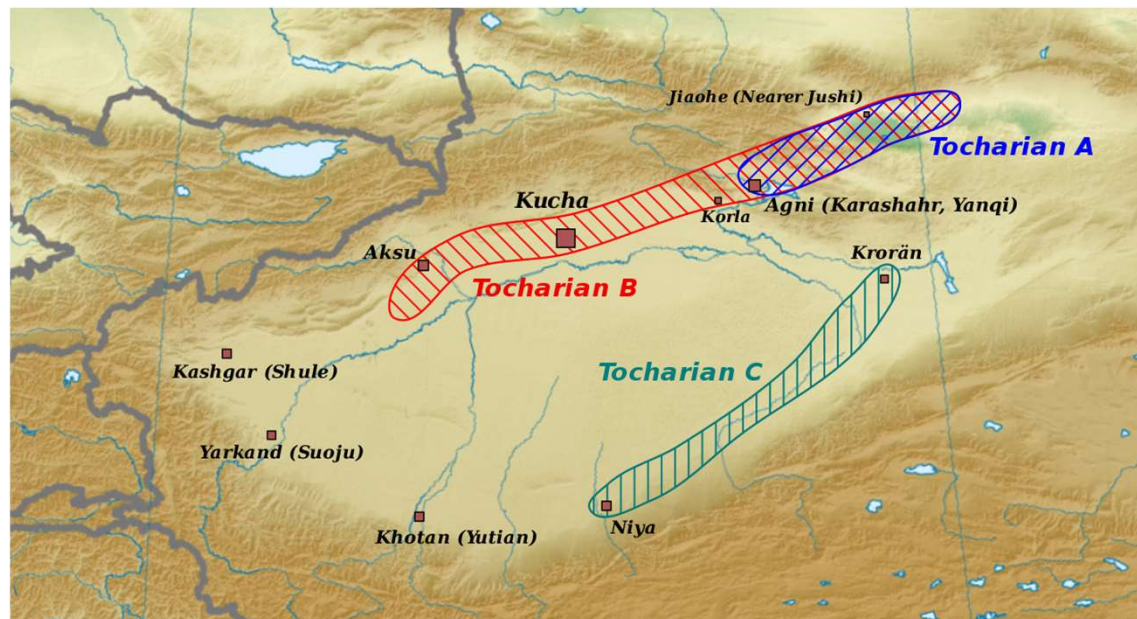
Environmental structures: overview

- Large resistance in topography.
- Naturally isolated oasis towns.
- Farming settlements and pastoralist areas.

The discovery of Tocharian

- Prussian, French, Russian and Japanese expeditions to Eastern Central Asia.
- Identified as an Indo-European language in 1908.
- Two closely related languages: Tocharian A (East Tocharian; Agnean; endonym TA *ārśi*) and Tocharian B (West Tocharian, Kuchean; endonym TB *k_uśiññe*).

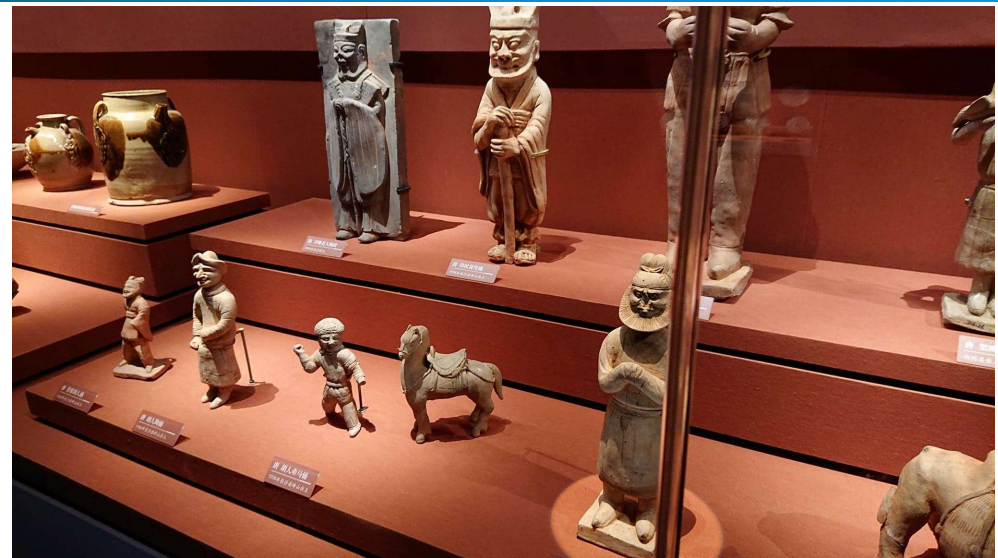
Historical data: Han source Hanshu (1st ct. BCE)



Tocharian Languages A, B and C with the oasis towns mentioned in the Hanshu. [User Yug](#) – [CC BY-SA 3.0](#).

XIONGNU, YUEZHI AND WUSUN IN CHINESE SOURCES

- “Barbaric” tribes in the north, Xiongnu 匈奴 (likely Mongolians), and Yuezhi and Wusun.
- Yuezhi 月氏 and Wusun in Gansu: probably Tocharians.
- Yuezhi and Wusun were pushed out of Gansu by the Xiongnu.



European-looking farmers or traders in a Chinese tomb from 2nd c. BCE, Hunan province. From Hunan Provincial Museum. Photo: Gerd Carling

WHO WERE THE TOCHARIANS?

Buddhists

Tocharian Buddhist monk Kumārajīva (鸠摩罗什 *Jiūmóluóshī*) came around 400 CE to Chang'an, the capital of the later Qin dynasty.

Translated Buddhist texts from Sanskrit and Tocharian into Chinese.



Statue of Kumārajīva at
Qizil.
Photo Gerd Carling

WHO WERE THE TOCHARIANS?

- Warriors
- Farmers
- Traders

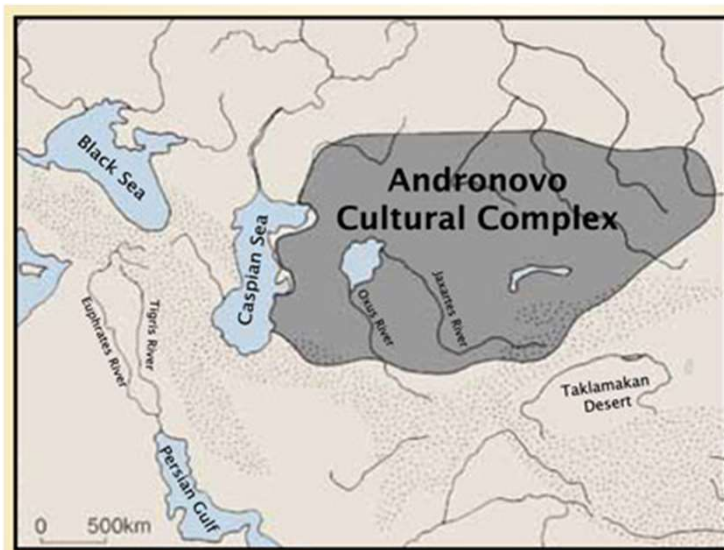


IOL Toch 258, bussiness letter in Tocharian B, written in cursive script and demanding payment.
Image source: idp.bl.uk



East meets west at Bezeklik, 9-10th c. BCE. 'Western' and 'Oriental' monks depicted together. Albert von Le Coq, 1913. *Chotscho*, Berlin, D. Reimer, 21.

PREHISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY: BRONZE AGE CULTURES IN ECA



Andronovo Cultural complex (2000-900 BCE).
Map by James P. Mallory.



The Afanasievo Culture (3500-2500 BCE).
Map by James P. Mallory.

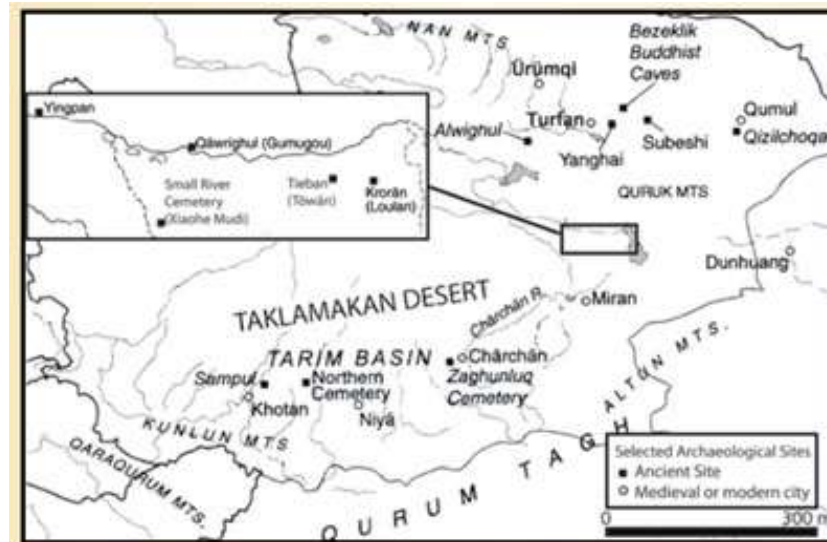
PREHISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY: BRONZE AGE TARIM MUMMIES



"The witch of Subeshi"



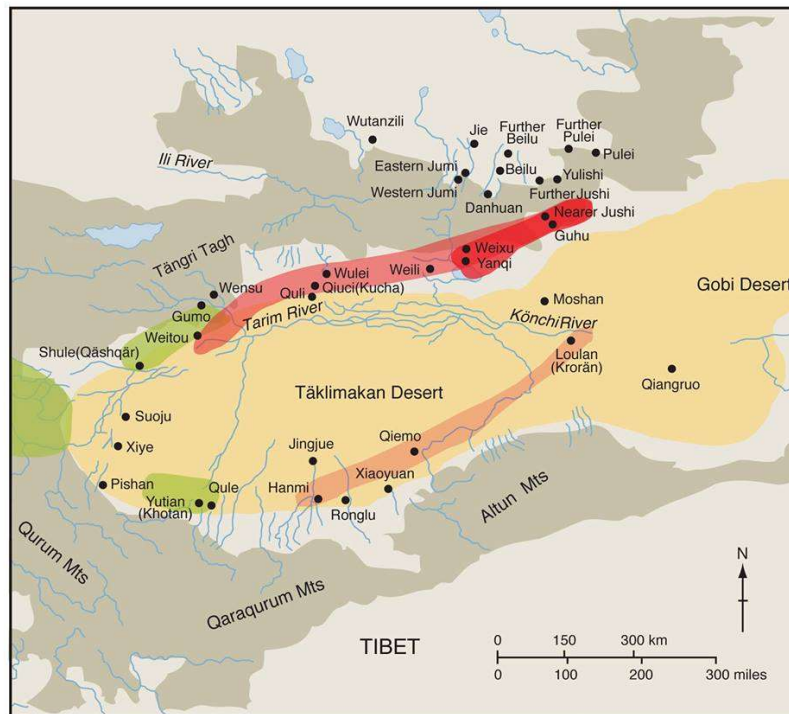
"Cherchen man"



Map of archaeological sites in Xinjiang.
Emily Toner after Victor Mair.

Photos by Jeffery Newbury.

LOCATION OF TOCHARIAN A, B, AND C



Map by James P. Mallory.