

### The 36 States of the Western Region

When Zhang Qian was sent on a mission to the Western Regions in 139 BC, 36 states already existed within that area. The 36 states of the ancient "Western Region," according to historical documents, were roughly located in the modern-day locations of: Wusun, Qiuci, Yanqi, Khotan, Ruoqiang, Loulan, Qiemo (Cherchen), Xiaoyuan, Ronglu, Yumi, Qulei, Pishan, Xiye, Puli, Yinai, Shule, Shache (Yarkand), Yutou, Wensu, Yuli, Gumo, Beilu, Wutanzi, Beiluhouguo, Danhuan, Pulei, Puleihouguo, Western Qiemi, Eastern Qiemi, Jieguo, Huhu, Shanguo, Cheshiqianguo, Cheshihouguo, Cheshiyuduguo, and Cheshihouchengguo.

the 36 states of the "Western Region," or today's southern Xinjiang. Therefore people used the term Western Region in a broad sense and a narrow sense to refer to the former and the latter areas. It wasn't until the Qing Dynasty (1616–1911), after the Emperor Qianlong (Aisin Gioro Hongli, who reigned from 1736–1796) suppressed the Zungar rebellion, that they gave the collective name of the Western Region to southern Xinjiang and the area north of Tianshan Mountains to the south and east of Balkhash Lake.

Even though a passageway between the East and West had already emerged prior to the Han Dynasty, sections of it were frequently blocked due to the clashes and wars between peoples and countries, keeping the road from prosperity and continuity. In addition to such hindrances caused by man, the road ran among mountains and