

be possible if the streams were of greater size. The forts mark the sites of larger villages or towns, located, like the villages, on watercourses where the water is insufficient or saline.

In addition to the ruins located in places where no water supply is now available, there are many in places where practically the whole of the present supply comes from kariz. Grum-Grshimailo suggests that the great density of the population in former times may have been due to the greater number of kariz in those days. During my stay in Turfan, I visited all the chief towns, and made careful inquiries as to the total population, the proportion of the total supported by kariz, the origin of kariz, and the location and age of abandoned kariz.

My most intelligent informants, the Beg of Lukchun and a learned mullah of the same place, both said that the kariz was introduced from Persia or Transcaspia about 1780 A. D., in the days of the Wangs Skender (Alexander) and Yunus (Jonah) of Lukchun, and Suliman (Solomon), who built the great brick tower at Turfan. Previously the people relied on surface water and wells. When I asked if there were no traces of abandoned kariz, they said:—

“No, none except those whose history is known. Among the ruins there are many old wells, half filled with rubbish, but no one has ever found any trace of a kariz. There are some old ones which are now dry, but they were all dug since 1780 or thereabouts. At Assa, about fifteen [two of which I saw] were dug sixty years ago [about 1845], but the water proved so saline that the diggers gave them up without even building houses. Most kariz water is a little salt