

there is a zangi and his deputy, a kundö. Five zangis are subordinated to a zalyng. The district of a kuzda and his deputy, a merin, includes two zalyngs. Their duties consist in collecting taxes and acting as judges. Whenever a case of slightly graver importance occurs, it is referred from one official to another until it reaches the Khan. The complete want of independence and unbounded submission to the officials among the Torguts is astonishing. The celebrated freedom of the nomads is strictly limited here. The zangi is elected by the yurts of the sumun and his election is confirmed by the Khan. A zalyng is paid 3—6 lan yearly, a kuzda 12—20. These salaries are paid by the Khan. The population is apparently not taxed by these modest officials. It has, however, to pay the Khan a very considerable annual tax. The poorest yurts, i.e. those not possessing more cattle than is necessary for domestic needs, pay 1 1/2 lan yearly. Wealthier ones pay 200 lan for 100 cows, 20 lan for 10 cows and so on. A horse or 20 sheep are considered equal to a cow. In other words, they are taxed far more heavily than the Kirghiz in the Tekes valley. All taxes are paid in cash. Like the Torguts, a small number of Khoshut yurts in the neighbourhood of Qarashahr till the land.

In Qarashahr there are no begs, but Shang-ja, as in China, one for the Sarts, one for the Dungans, one for the Chinese and one for the Kalmuks. The soil is very salty. A 6—7 fold yield can be regarded as the average. Trade is done mostly in Russian goods, some in Chinese and very little in Indian. Qarashahr has a great reputation for its horses, especially Torgut horses which are called Qarashahr horses and fetch prices up to several hundred lan, and for the leather produced by Chinese and Dungans. In Korla there are 4 begs (with a senior beg) with 6—700 houses of 5—6 people each. The land may be divided into three categories of approximately equal size, giving an 8—10, 6—7 and 4—5 fold yield. Trade is much livelier than in Qarashahr. More than half the merchandise is of Russian origin; there are some Chinese goods, and an insignificant quantity of Indian. Many Russian subjects (Sarts) carry on trade there. In Bugur there are 4 begs (besides a senior beg) with about 500 houses each. The land gives an 8—9 fold yield. Trade consists of the same goods as in Korla. Tchakharlyk has 4 begs (and a senior beg) with 50—60 houses of 4 persons each. The soil is said to be good, but there is a shortage of water. About half the land gives up to a 10 fold yield, while the other half does not yield more than 6—7 fold. The quantity of cattle is comparatively large, but some seed is bought annually from Korla.

In Lop Nor there is a beg and a Shang-ja in each of the 9 villages of the district. The population increases annually, principally by Sarts immigrating from the Khotan and Keriya districts. Chinese apparently only act as merchants. There is no mention of Chinese settlement. The land gives a 4—7 fold yield. Cattle are plentiful and there is much fishing.

The communications are said to be comparatively good. You can reach Tchakharlyk in 15 days in an arbah. Water, grass and fuel are obtainable. Two horse-roads lead from Lop Nor to Tun-huang. The southern road is mountainous and is used in the summer. The northern road runs across the plain and is used in winter. The journey takes 20—25 days, during 3—4 of which the water supply is bad. In general there is said to be little water on this route. It is drawn from small springs, but is said to be sufficient for a caravan of 300 horses.