

view of the limited area capable of cultivation, not suffice to account for the flourishing trade of Turfan at the present time nor for its wealth in the past, as attested by history and the abundance of ruins; were it not for the facilities which Nature has provided for intercourse and exchange of produce with the region to the north of the T'ien-shan. There moister climatic conditions provide ample pastures, and with them those resources of live-stock, wool, etc., which Turfan lacks. Passes open all through the year both to the west and east of the Bogdo-ula massif allow of easy economic exchange.

The interdependence thus created between the Turfan basin and the tracts extending between the present Urumchi and Guchen is reflected throughout the political history of these territories. Thus in Han and T'ang times we find Cis-montane and Trans-montane Chu-shih, as the Chinese called them, always closely linked in their political fate, whether dominated by the Huns and Turkish tribes from the north or else under Chinese control. It was the same after the T'ang power in Central Asia had made its final stand just in these regions by the close of the eighth century A.D. The struggle had ended when Pei-t'ing, the capital of 'Posterior' or Trans-montane Chu-shih, succumbed A.D. 790 to the combined attacks of Tibetans and Turks.

When by the middle of the ninth century the great Turkish tribe of the Uigars had broken Tibetan power on the north-western marches of China and established their domination over the greater part of Eastern Turkistan, Turfan and the tract due north of it became for centuries the cherished seats of their rulers. Originally nomadic, the Uigurs proved more than any Turkish tribe in Central Asia capable and eager to adapt themselves to civilized