CHAPTER FOUR

Leh Kashgar Routes through Karakoram and Changchenmo Valley and to China through Central Asia

Leh-Kashgar Route through Karakoram

The very first article of the Commercial Treaty of 1870 provided for a joint survey of the routes which connected Ladakh with Kashgar and Yarkand through the valley of Changchenmo river. (1) But before these routes were explored, the Leh-Karakoram route was frequently used by the merchants and travellers of Central Asia and the Panjab. The merchants had the option of two routes which they used according to the seasons. That is why these two routes were called the winter route (zamistani) and the summer route (Tabistani). (2)

Winter Route

From Leh to Diggar La the winter route ascends steeply about 18,000 feet high slopes of the

(1) Foreign Department Political A., July 1870, Nos. 74, 110-111; Also Foreign Department Political A., Jan. 1871, Nos. 560-97.

(2) Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh, 1890, p. 436.
trans-Himalayan ranges. The pass runs parallel to a tributary of the Indus river and is located in a saddle. After passing the Diggar Law the route descends on very steep slopes to reach Agham on the Shyok river.

From Agham the route follows Shyok towards east and then southward and reaches Shyok town which is a junction of several tracks. From Shyok town the route takes a complete detour around the great Karakoram range along the western bank of the river. Then it moves to the north along the Shyok river, and passing through several settlements, such as, Shukpa, Kungzon, Dong Yailak, Cutlong Chenmo, Yargulak, Kataklik, reaches Sasir pass (17,500 feet), located very near to the Shyok river. Sasir is the most difficult pass on this route and rarely free from snow. Moreover, most of the slopes surrounding Sasir pass are covered by perennial glaciers, thus increasing the utility of the pass.

From the Sasir pass the route moves northwards

(3) The topographical details of these routes and of the subsequent routes are the interpretation of Dr. A.B. Mukerjee, Reader in the Department of Geography in Panjab University, Chandigarh, from Survey of India Topographical Sheets of 1" to 1 mile scale - Surveyed in (1912-13). Henceforth abbreviated as SITS. (1912-13).

following the river Shyok, and flanked on both the sides by glacial slopes upto Gapsham. This segment is a very steep gorge and the travel must be very treacherous. All along this segment the route runs to the west of the river. A little north of Gapsham the route crosses the river and then extends along the western bank of the valley of Chip-chop river till Doulat Beg Ouldi is reached.

From Doulat Beg Ouldi the route again climbs up and reaches the Karakoram pass at an altitude of 18,317 feet.\(^5\) The Karakoram pass is situated on the saddle formed by two small streams diverging to the south and north. Here again most of the surrounding slopes are covered with perennial glaciers which has enhanced the utility of the pass. After getting down this pass the route follows the upper reaches of Yarkand stream to the north. The general elevation of the terrain is approximately 15,000 to 17,000 feet.

Through this terrain the route extends to reach Khapalung and then follows the Raskam stream (a tributary of Yarkand) upto Kirghiz Jungle which is located at an elevation of about 16,000 feet.\(^6\) From Kirghiz Jungle

\(^5\) SITS (1912-13).
\(^6\) Ibid.
the route runs to the west along the Raskam stream up to Kulan Ouldi and then, takes a sudden northward turn, moving along Tora Oghil stream reaches Ishak Art Aghzi. All through this stretch the gradient of descent is rather gentle. Ishak Art Aghzi is a junction of traders and tracks. North of this place the route crosses the Topa Dewan.\(^7\) Beyond this pass the route gradually descends over enormous gentle alluvial fan-slopes till it reaches Karghalik.

From Karghalik, crossing several dry streams and the Yarkand river, the route reaches Yarkand town. Along this segment are a large number of small settlements. Yarkand itself is a settlement of great significance as commercial centre. Several routes converge here. From Yarkand, the route runs towards the north-west, and moving over the desert flats at the base of the hills, reaches Kashgar. Inroute the track crosses a large number of dry streams and extends through several desert oasis. While the former creates severe difficulties in cross-country movements, the latter provides with water, milk, and dates for food. The two

important settlements along the route are Ying-chi Shah and su-le.

The important feature on this route is that from Karghalik to Kashgar the route runs continuously between the vast sandy stretches on the east and dry rugged hills on the west. Thus, this route can be considered a typical example of a corridor which in addition to the commercial significance, also had a great strategic importance. Kashgar itself, the westernmost of the chief towns of Sinkiang, has always been of great commercial, political and strategic importance. Situated at a place where highways of Central Asia converge near the gap in the mountains, Kashgar separates Chinese Turkestan from Russian Turkestan.

Summer Route

The summer route (the Tabistani) is open only for four to five months in the year. From Leh a direct route leads along a tributary of the Shyok river and enters the high ranges of trans-Himalayas. The path, in places, is difficult for laden ponies. Hence, they are generally relieved of their loads and replaced


by yaks for the passes like Khardung, Sasir and Sanju. The route crosses these ranges through the Khardung pass (17,500 feet), and then it descends on the northern slopes. After crossing the village Khardung at the height of 13,500 feet, the route reaches Khalsar on the west bank of Shyok river. Near this village Shyok is crossed and the route reaches the Nubra valley to the east of Nubra river.

After crossing many small settlements as Tigur, Panamik etc. the route reaches Changlung. From Khalsar to Changlung the route does not encounter much of topographic difficulties. From Changlung the route reaches the banks of Shyok through the Sasir pass at the height of 17,500 feet.

From Sasir, the route runs northwards between the slopes covered with perennial glaciers along the Shyok gorge to Doulat Beg Ouldi. From Doulat Beg Ouldi to Karakoram pass route is the same as the winter route. But after crossing the Karakoram pass it branches out to the east through Balti-branza and passing through Buxambullock reaches Malikshah. This city is a flourishing market centre and a junction of many trade

---

(10) *JTS* (1912-13).

routes. Malikshah also functions as a reloading station, has facilities for overnight stay for the travellers and merchants and for the exchange of commodities.\footnote{(12)} Thus, it served as an entrepot centre.

From Malikshah the route continues and reaches Gulbasar Mazār (Shahdula Khoja) through Suget pass. By this route Shahdula Khoja is about 250 miles from Leh.\footnote{(13)} From Suget pass to Suget Karol the route extends along a small stream and reaches Ali Nazar Kurghan. The route in this section passes through a number of settlements and climbs up on an east-west ridge, some 16,000 feet high.\footnote{(14)} It is crossed through Sanju Dawan (16,708 feet), and then it gradually descends to Akaz Aghzi.

From Akaz Aghzi, following the Sanju darya (river), the route gradually moves on a 15,000 feet high plateau till it reaches Sanju Bazar. This place is the meeting point of a large number of tracks. From Sanju Bazar, keeping on to the same plateau, the route turns to the northwest and passing through Sulaghiz Lungar,\footnote{(15)} Kashtagh, Tughrak, Bora, Lok Lungar,

\begin{itemize}
\item [(13)] Foreign Department, Political Proceedings, A, June 1870, Nos. 560-97.
\item [(14)] SITS (1912-13).
\item [(15)] 'Lungar' is a Turki word for a rest-house; Fisher, Rose, Huttenback, \textit{op.cit.}, p.190.
\end{itemize}

\footnote{(12) SITS (1912-13).}
reaches Karghalik,\(^{(16)}\) where it joins the winter route to Yarkand and Kashgar.\(^{(17)}\)

**Leh-Kashgar Routes Through the Valley of Changchenmo\(^{(18)}\)**

**Western Changchenmo Route**

This route was advocated by Henry Cayley, the British Joint Commissioner of the Valley of Changchenmo\(^{(19)}\) and was traversed by Forsyth's party on its return journey from Kashgar in 1873. The route starts from Leh and moves south-east along the river Indus to Marsalang. From Marsalang it takes a north-east turn and crosses the high ridge through the Chang La. It then descends again south-east to Tangtse which is located at the northern end of a perennially glaciated ridge. From Tangtse the route follows the valley of one or the other river and after crossing various settlements

---

\(^{(16)}\) It is interesting to point out that this segment of the route (Sanju Bazar to Karghalik including three minor passes traversed by this route) formed part of Sino-Swedish expedition route of 1927-35. BTS (1912-13).

\(^{(17)}\) By this summer route the distance between Leh and Yarkand is 515 miles; Drew, *op.cit.*, p. 539.

\(^{(18)}\) The word 'Changchenmo' literally means 'a large plain'.

\(^{(19)}\) Before the Changchenmo routes were explored and advocated by the British surveyors, the local traders were quite familiar with these routes.
like Muglib, Lukung, and the Marsmik la (18,200 feet) descends to Tsogstsalu, on the river Changchenmo.

From near the hot-springs (Gogra village)\(^{(20)}\) the route runs north and after crossing Changlung la and Dehra la reaches Sumdo. From Sumdo, along the valley of a river, it extends up to Qizil Jilga.\(^{(21)}\) Everywhere the route extends between the glacier covered ridges and reaches Shor Jilga. From Shor Jilga, after crossing the Qara Tagh pass the route joins the summer-route\(^{(22)}\) at Malikshah.

From Lukung up to Shor Jilga the route traverses through very high terrain reaching altitude of 17,000 feet to 20,000 feet.\(^{(23)}\) Generally the route takes detours along the transverse ridges thus increasing its length. But this route is considered to be the easiest of all the routes to Kashgar and can be traversed by camels of the two-humped species. It is closed in winter.\(^{(24)}\) Cayley considered this western

---

\(^{(20)}\) Gogra village is the starting place of two more routes recommended in 1870s by Hayward and Johnson: \textit{infra}, pp. 72, 80.

\(^{(21)}\) Jilga is a Turki word of 'deep valley' or 'gorge' cf. Fisher, Rose, Huttenback, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 188.

\(^{(22)}\) \textit{Supra}, p. 74.

\(^{(23)}\) \textit{SITS} (1912-13).

\(^{(24)}\) \textit{Foreign Department, Political Proceedings, A., June 1871, Nos. 592-97.}
Changchenmo route easier and more practical as compared to the eastern Changchenmo route across the Lingzithang which was suggested by Johnson. (25)

Middle Changchenmo Route

This route was suggested by Hayward as the more practical one. (26) From Leh to Gogra near Hot-springs, the route is the same as suggested by Cayley. From this place the route extends very near the crest of the ridge through the valley of Kongka La to Kyrmgo Traggar. At this point, the road takes a sharp and sudden northward turn. Crossing the Lumkang La, located at about 25,000 feet, (27) it enters the area permanently covered with glaciers. From here upto Bursta Tang the terrain remains very difficult, covered as it is, by glaciers. To add to the difficulty is the very steep sloping surface. The road descends from a height of about 20,000 feet to about 17,000 feet. (28)

(25) Ibid.
(26) For Hayward's account of this route see JhGS Vol. 40 (1870), pp. 37-42.
(27) SITS (1912-13).
(28) Ibid.
Midway between Lumkang La and Burtsa Tang is the small settlement of Nischu along a river. From Burtsa Tang to Lingzi Tang and beyond, the track covers a high terrain characterised by large number of features of sand accumulation. The route continues through Qizil Dawan and then enters the glaciated region and reaches the settlement of Sumna.

A little west of Sumna the route enters the Sumna pass and then descends along the valley of a stream upto Chung Tash. Here again the route descends from 21,000 feet to 15,000 feet, a fall of about 6,000 feet. At Qizil Jilga this middle route joins the western Changchenmo route.

Eastern Changchenmo Route

The eastern route, suggested by Johnson, originates from Lingzi Tang. It extends, in the first segment upto Tso Tang located near the lake. From Tso Tang, it extends over a high arid lands via Hizakhar, Thaldat, Mapho Tang, Yangpa, Khtai Dawan, and Haji Langar. A little west of Haji Langar, the route

(29) Supra, pp. 77.
(30) W.H. Johnson was a member of the Great Trignometrical Survey. He explored the country of Khotan in 1865 (Supra, p. 64 n. 78). For his account of this route see JHGS., Vol. 37 (1867).
takes complete turn to the west. And, passing through Palong Karpo, Tak Marpo, Sumnal, it reaches Shor Jilga and there joins the middle\(^{(31)}\) and the western\(^{(32)}\) Changchenmo routes. Another branch goes from Haji Langar to Gulbasar Mazar (Shahidulla Khoja), where again it joins the western route. The total distance of this eastern route from Leh to Yarkand is 362 miles; of the middle route 319 miles and of western Changchenmo route 365 miles.\(^{(33)}\)

Apparently at the recommendations of Cayley\(^{(34)}\) Shaw\(^{(35)}\) and Montgomrie,\(^{(36)}\) efforts were made to improve the western Changchenmo route. Though a bit longer, yet considered as more direct and convenient than the other two routes. A brief description of the routes which further linked Leh to China through Kashgar and Yarkand would help in better understanding.

\(^{(31)}\) Supra, pp. 79-80.
\(^{(32)}\) Supra, pp. 77-79.
\(^{(33)}\) Foreign Department Political Proceedings, A., June 1871, Nos. 560-97.
\(^{(34)}\) Ibid.
\(^{(35)}\) For Shaw's memorandum see: Foreign Department Political Proceedings, Nov. 1869, Nos. 202-206.
\(^{(36)}\) Memorandum of Montgomrie, Foreign Department Political Proceedings, June 1871, Nos. 585-595.
Central Asian Routes to China

From Kashgar to China there are two important routes which played a significant role in connecting the mysterious east with the ambitious west. Before the advent of communism in China, and the declaration of 'Sinkiang as closed area in 1951', these routes were quite renowned for the free exchange of western manufactures for the rarities of the east. These routes, skirting the northern and southern fringes of the Taklamakan desert were called the silk road (the northern route) and the Imperial Highway (the southern route). Ever since the dawn of history, through these two routes passed the travellers, traders, invaders and missionaries braving all the formidable natural barriers.

Silk Road or the Northern Route

Beginning from Kashgar (Su-Fu or Kone Shahr=Kashgar) and terminating at Tun-huang, this road extends upto Jade Gate of China. Kashgar, because

(37) Mehra, op. cit., p. 35, n. 33.
(38) Jade Gate (Yumen) was the limit of the old Chinese pale up-till modern times. Actually Chinese control beyond Jade Gate was seldom more than indirect, often only nominal: P.C. Bagchi, India and China: Thousand Years of Cultural Relations (Bombay, 1950), p. 17; also Basil Davidson, Turkestan Alive (London, 1957), p. 52.
of its central situation on the cross-roads of the east and west, remained quite popular throughout the centuries. It was the biggest terminous of the roads coming from all the four directions; an emporium of the rarities of the east and west; and a delta in which fell all the currents of civilizations of the east, west, north and south.

From Kashgar up to Seghizlik the road runs on the mountainous 'piedmound bajada' surface. This is a sandy area but there are several natural waterlines. East of Saghizlik the road enters the sandy desert of Shamai Kum. It then extends to a lower surface very similar to the Saharan reg infested extensively with sand-dunes. (39)

It is interesting to note that all through from Saghizlik to Pa-ch' u (Maralbashi), the road runs near the periphery of the desert and along the Kashgar-Darya or other natural drainage lines. Moreover, several small settlements located at distances of eight to twenty miles from each other must have provided the facilities for stopover and for the replenishment.

(39) SITS (1912-13).
of supplies.

An important landmark along the route is Anar Kol lake about ten miles west of Pa-Ch'u. It is an important regional trade centre and a junction of as many as eight trade routes.\(^{(40)}\) The location of Pa-Ch'u on a stream and at the periphery of the desert is significant. Moreover, along this route from Kashgar up to Kara Kichin, the road is flanked on one side by telegraph and telephone lines \(^{(41)}\) suggesting the strategic importance of this section in recent times.

From Pa-Ch'u the road continues in the same direction passing through several closely-spaced settlements and after taking a northward turn through Yaide reaches the important centre of Chilan. Up to Chilan again the road extends along the periphery of the sand-dune covered desert and also along the stream Kara Kol Jilga. From Chilan the road extends by the side of watch towers and the boundary of the desert and after crossing the Aksu stream reaches Aksu (Yangi Hissar) city. From Aksu it goes up to Wensu. The watch-towers are

\(^{(40)}\) Ibid.
\(^{(41)}\) Ibid.
very prominent on this section of the route. (42)

At Wensu the route turns to the east and extending along the northern edge of the unexplored sandy desert and passing through a large number of settlements reaches Pai-Ch'eng (Bai). Throughout, the route runs at an elevation of three to four thousand feet and crosses a large number of seasonal streams. At every stream there is at least one settlement. (43)

From Pai-Ch'eng the road continues eastwards, a little north of Muz Art stream and reaches K'u-Ch'e (Kucha) which is situated near the Kucha river. However, Kucha has the advantages of its geographical position which is particularly favourable for trade. At least four routes from Dzungaria, Kashgar, Khotan (through Khotan Darya), Keriya (through Keriyan Darya) converge on it. (44) All this accounts for Kucha's importance in political, (45) cultural (46) and

(42) Ibid.
(43) Ibid.
(44) Ibid.
(45) After the establishment of 'New Dominions', Kucha became one of the Four Garrisons of China.
(46) Indian religion, art and even music went to Kucha during ancient period. Perhaps the 'dominant cultural force which moulded the lives of the Kuchans was Indian art and religion': Bagchi, op. cit., pp. 175-76.
commercial spheres.

From Kucha the road runs almost east between the rugged escarpments in the north and the sandy desert in the South and reaches Lun-t'ai (Bugur Bazar). From here the route takes a good sweep and crossing several small seasonal streams it reaches Korla. From Korla the road takes a north-eastern turn and following the western boundary of the marshy delta of Koncha Darya reaches Karashahr (Yen-chi). From Karashahr the route proceeds to Toksun. On the way it crosses the ranges of Kara Kizil through Kara Kizil pass and ranges of Khara Uula through Su-Bashi gorge and Nanan Chose Dawan. All along this segment the route follows a stream. At the northern mouth of Su-Bashi gorge there is Su-Bashi settlement. Nearby are several wells, springs and short canals.

(47) From Tash Anik, a little west of Lun-t'ai, to Korla now the route is flanked by a continuous telephone and telegraph line which extends upto Tun-huang. SITS (1912-13)


(49) SITS (1912-13).
From a little north of Su-Bashi the road descends down into Turfan depressions. Turfan is the hottest place on the earth. It is well below the sea level and reflects the heat of the Central Asian sun as though it were a 'brazen-bowl'. Having a climate of great extremes of temperature, its boiling fury is notorious in China. Moreover, Turfan for sometime served as one of the Four Garrisons of China.

From Turfan the route climbs up into the plateau section and crossing a large number of seasonal streams reaches the important settlement of Shan-shan, which is a road junction. From here the route runs northward almost parallel to the Lan-Chou-Sinkiang Rail Road upto Chi-chiao-Ching settlement, which is located on the eastern bank of a large salt lake.

Now from Chi-Chiao-Ching the route takes a broad eastward curve around Gashuun Gobi and passing

---

(50) Summers are so hot that 'every house of Turfan has its dug-out to which its inhabitants can retire for siesta until work is again possible' T.R. Tregear, A Geography of China (London, 1966), p. 291.

(51) Basil Davidson, op.cit., pp. 61, 81.


(53) Shan-shan has also railway and airport facilities now-a-days. SITS (1912-13).
through Hami (Qomul) and a large number of settlements reaches Tun-huang. (54) On the way, it crosses a few seasonal streams and throughout extends at an elevation of about two to four thousand feet. Tun-huang, situated as it is at the cross-roads of two principal highways of Central Asia and the routes from China, played a conspicuous role in the commercial and cultural history of India and China.

**Imperial Highway or the Southern Route**

The Imperial Highway, or the southern Central Asian route also begins from Kashgar and runs towards the south. Between Yangi Shahr and Yen-chi-Shahr the route crosses several seasonal streams and sand patches at an elevation of approximately three thousand feet. (55) Enroute a large number of settlements are encountered which function as water-supply points. From Yangi-Hissar the road takes a south-east turn and up to Yarkand extends on the pediment, flanked on the west by the high hills and mountains and on the east by the Shamal Kum Desert. The corridor location of the

---

(54) Tun-huang is modern Suchow in Khansu province of China. For further information about this city see Anil De Silva, 'The Spice and Silk Roads', *The Times of India Annual* (Bombay, 1969), p. 76.

(55) *SITS* (1912-13).
highway is very significant. A little west of Yarkand the highway crosses the Opa-Ustan river, and a little south of Yarkand it crosses the Yarkand river.

However, at Yarkand one finds the junction of several routes coming both from the desert and the hills. From Yarkand the highway goes south to Karghalik after crossing several desert streams. Karghalik is also a nodal trade point. From here the road again takes a south-eastern turn and reaches Guma-Bazar which is located exactly at the southern edge of the Taklamakan desert. As the name suggests, Guma Bazar is an important trade centre with several routes converging on it.

From Guma-Bazar the road runs up to Khotan hugging the southern boundary of the desert through the narrow corridor, overlooked on the west and the south by the hills. Just west of Khotan the highway crosses a large number of canals taken out from the hill-streams and reaches the important settlement of Khotan. (56)

(56) For a long time Khotan was a centre of Buddhist learning. For a detailed description of this City's religious importance see Watter, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 166-76; also see H. Giles, The Travels of Fa-hsien (Cambridge, 1930), pp. 4-6

Moreover before the advent of the Mohammedans in this area Khotan was for a long time inhabited by the Indians: A. Stein, Ancient Khotan (Oxford, 1907) pp. 167-68; Also Bagchi, op. cit., p. 27.
the pivot of the Central Asian silk-trade. (57) Many important routes converge on Khotan. It is linked with Kucha through Khotan river and with Kashgar through this highway. With Leh Khotan is linked by two routes i.e. the direct Leh-Karakoram route; and through Yangi-Dawan and Nissa, which joins Karakoram-Khotan route at Ulugh-Art Dawan. (58)

From Khotan the highway extends eastward to Keriya (Yue-t'ien) (59). This important city was the halting place of all the travellers trading between India and China and the west. Even upto the first decades of the twentieth century perhaps twice a year, a camel caravan used to bring silk, tea and porcelain from China proper to Khotan and Yarkand by this route and returned with Khotan carpets, jades and Kashgar cotton cloth. (60)

(57) In ancient times Khotan was famous for raising mulberry trees for silkworms and was a centre of spinning and weaving: Waters, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 170; Also A. Grousset, In the Footsteps of the Buddha (London 1932), pp. 233; Also see Gasten Mahler, The Westerners among the Figurines of the T'ang dynasty of China (Rome, 1959), pp. 94-96.


(60) C.P. Skrine, Chinese Central Asia (London, 1926), p. 117.
Some eighty miles north-east of Keriya is Niya site. It was here that Dr. Stein found valuable relics of the previous links between India and China and also series of objects illustrating the industrial arts of the period.

From Keriya eastwards the road moves at places over the desert and at others on the pediment. Near Andere Lungar the highway enters the desert proper, and crosses a large number of settlements having wells and located at the ends of the hill streams. During early period Andere was an important centre of trade and a sort of fortified post intended to guard the route between Keriya and Charchan, the next settlement on this route. Moreover, a considerable number of manuscripts in Brahmi, Tibetan and Chinese found by Dr. Stein from the Andere site prove beyond doubt that

(61) C.D. Bruce, *In the Footsteps of Marco Polo* (Edinburgh, 1907), p.104.


(63) Among the articles of wood-carving Dr. Stein found a chair. It shows decorative art familiar to us from the relievo sculpture of the Buddhist monasteries of ancient Gandhara. He also found pieces of coloured rug, resembling in make an Indian 'Durrie', an interesting specimen of Indian textile industry. *Ibid.*, p.46.
this place was an established centre of trade. (64)

While moving towards east the next stage on the road is Charchan. The journey between Andere and Charchan was quite difficult due to the large desert of moving sands. (65) It was only in eighteen thirties that the Chinese started developing this city as a small penal station. (66) Afterwards when the rebellion of Yakub Beg was suppressed in 1877, the Chinese established much improved administration at Charchan. Hence with the general rise of the economic condition of the country, commercial importance of Charchan as a convenient halfway station between Khotan and Tun-huang much increased. (67)

From Charchan (Charchan Bazar) the highway follows Charchan Darya, and after crossing many settlements the

(64) Ibid., p. 56.

(65) The route here mostly consisted of a desert of moving sands. According to Marco Polo's observation, 'the only road-marks were the bones left behind by the animals. There was neither water nor grazing grounds but singing, whistling and wailing winds blow frequently. Henry Yule, op.cit. (1871), Vol. I, p. 196; Also Watters, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 304.


(67) A. Stein, Serindia, Vol. I., p. 300.
route extends to Charkhalik, (68) which is the last halting place before the route reaches Tun-huang after one month's journey. (69) The commercial and strategic importance of this city lies in the fact that it is the junction of several routes. (70)

From Charkhalik to the east the route again encounters the rocky surface, and near Chindelk it hugs the lake Lop-nor. Crossing a few other salt-lakes it reaches Tun-huang, which is a very large trade centre. Situated as it is at the cross roads of two principal highways, Tun-huang was the last meeting place of different currents of civilizations before twentieth century.

(68) During 1930-40 the Chinese established at Charkhalik a penal-colony with exiles from Khotan: Ibid, p. 312.


(70) SITS (1912-13)