

of prayer and of accommodation for pilgrims, we found there a Ziārat wholly built in carved timber and believed to mark his grave (Fig. 30). The legend I heard at the site tells of Shāha-khēl Bāba as a holy man who came from Swāt to convert the heathen and show them the path which leads to bliss in Muḥammad's Paradise. He was a 'Chishti' and much rejoiced in music. In the course of his pious wanderings he was killed at Poguch by the 'Kāfirs', who cut off his head and carried it hundreds of 'Kōs' down the Indus valley. But miraculously the head flew back through the air and rejoined the martyr's corpse. By this proof of his holiness he converted the Darēl people to the true faith and has ever since been worshipped at the place of his death as the most effective protector of the pious who need help. His shrine is certainly the best known in Darēl and the valleys immediately adjoining it. We were told that, on account of the saint's miraculous powers, it was visited by pilgrims from places as far as 'twenty days' journey' all over the Indus and Swāt Kōhistān and elsewhere in the Hindukush mountains.

In view of what we know from other sources of the continuity of local worship in these regions,² we may be justified in looking upon Poguch as the most likely site of that colossal image in wood representing Maitreya Bodhisattva which the above-quoted accounts of Fa-hsien and Hsüan-tsang mention as a special object of worship in what is now Darēl. The material and the size of the image as they describe it are both in keeping with what we now know of the magnificent timber of the valley. If it was gilded all over, as Hsüan-tsang's notice seems to imply, its complete disappearance is still more easily accounted for. Whether the proposed identification can also be supported by philological indications is a matter on which, in view of my lack of special qualifications, I can only venture to touch with hesitation in the note below.³

Location of
miraculous
Maitreya
image.

The view from Shāha-khēl Bāba's Ziārat had shown the increasing barrenness of the lower slopes of the valley, suggestive of the vicinity of the Indus gorge and changed climatic conditions. So I was not surprised, when proceeding below Poguch along a narrow plateau which rises steeply to a height of some 400 feet above the left bank of the river, to find that it was almost bare of vegetation and the ruined fort crowning its highest point built of stamped clay. The use of such material clearly indicated that this ground received little of the abundant moisture enjoyed by the higher portion of Darēl. The walls of *Lohilo-kōt*—the 'Red Fort', a name derived from the reddish hue of the clay—were for the most part badly decayed, but in places still stood to a height of over ten feet (Fig. 16). They enclosed a rectangle about 174 feet long from NNW. to SSE. and 115 feet across. There were remains of corner bastions, about twelve feet square, and indications

Ruins of
Lohilo-kōt.

² Cf. my *Note on Buddhist local worship in Muhammadan Central Asia*, *J.R.A.S.*, 1910, pp. 839 sqq.; also *Serindia*, i. pp. 41, 71, and iii. p. 1546 (Index).

³ As regards *Poguch* I may call attention to the fact that the second portion of the name may contain the same word *-guch* as is found in the designation *mahajātu-guch* which I heard applied at Charrun in Mastūj to a place with remains of Buddhist worship. It was there interpreted to me as meaning 'the sacred corner'; cf. *Serindia*, i. p. 41.

As the Khōwār of Mastūj and the Shiṇā of Darēl are closely allied Dardic languages the word *guch* may be assumed to be in both of identical origin and meaning. With reference to the first portion *Po-* the conjecture might be hazarded that it represents the phonetic derivative of *Buddha*. The tendency to harden original unaspirated sonants (*b > p*, *g > k*, *d > t*) into mutes, both at the beginning and in the middle of words, is well attested in the Dardic languages; cf. Grierson, *The Piśāca languages*, pp. 96, 110, 116.

[In view of such forms as Shiṇā *puch*, *push*, also Gārwi *pūch*, Shighnī *puch*, 'son', derived from Aryan *putra*, the question deserves consideration whether *-guch* may not be an alternative form for Shiṇā *gōsh*, *gōzh* (connected with Skr. *gotra*), meaning 'house'; cf. Grierson, *ibid.*, p. 107.]

I feel on still more dangerous ground as regards the name *Moyubaike*, applied to the lower Ziārat. But as apocope of original *tr* is well known in Dardic languages (cf. Grierson, *ibid.* p. 107), it would be quite possible to recognize in *Moyu* a direct phonetic derivative of *Maitreya*. The fact that the extant local legend points to that site as the resting-place of the brothers of the chief saint might suggest a connexion between *-baike* and the Dardic word for 'brother' (Skr. *bhrātar*, Avestic *brātar*) which appears in such forms as Kalāshā *bāya*, Kashmīrī *bāy*, Veron *wayeh*. But it must be noted that in Shiṇā the word presents itself as *jrā*, *zhā*; see Grierson, *loc. cit.*, p. 107.