

Muhammad Yāqūb then resigned himself to staying with the camels and remained content with the survey of the route to Kungurche and of the neighbouring ground.

It was due to the alertness and keen sense of curiosity of my head camel-man Hasan Ākhūn, who besides taking devoted care of his charges on all my Central Asian journeys never failed to show an intelligent interest in 'old things',¹⁵ that this summer excursion of my brave camels was attended by an archaeological discovery. Hasan Ākhūn was marching his camels leisurely back along the Etsin-gol in order to reach Mao-mei in time for our prearranged reunion by the last week of August, and was grazing them to the east of Shara-nazek (Map No. 44. c. 4), about 25 miles NNW. of Khara-khoto, when he came upon the remains, amidst scrub and Toghrak jungle, of a walled enclosure which, according to his account, resembled Khara-khoto but was smaller. He subsequently showed the ruined site to Muhammad Yāqūb, who recorded its position on his plane-table about four and a half miles to the east of Shara-nazek and close to the right bank of the dry river-bed known as Owang-gol. The Surveyor described the walls of stamped clay as enclosing a square of approximately 200 yards and the interior as containing a large ruin, presumably of a temple, besides numerous small structures of which the timber was sticking out above the sand and debris. Hasan Ākhūn compared the condition of these smaller sand-buried ruins with that in which we had, in 1900, found the shrines and dwellings of Dandān-oilik.

From some pieces of decorated pottery, E.G. 07-9 (Pl. L), brought away by Muhammad Yāqūb, which include an antefixa with a fine relief design of a dragon, and an ornamental brick, as described in the List, it seems safe to conclude that the ruined temple at which they were picked up was a structure of a style not unlike that represented by the similar remains of K.K. 1. i within Khara-khoto. Occupation of the site down to a somewhat later time is suggested by a collection of manuscript and other remains which Hasan Ākhūn stated that he had secured on his first discovery of the site, apparently by burrowing at the foot of a ruined Stūpa of small size outside the circumvallation. I must, however, note that the description he gave me of the find-place was vague, and that he omitted to show it to the Surveyor when they visited the site together. Nevertheless the character and condition of these remains support the belief that they were found by Hasan Ākhūn in the manner he alleged, near the place in question.

They consist mainly of a mass of detached paper leaves of which the vast majority contain Tibetan writing or print,^{15a} some two hundred being complete or nearly so, besides a much larger number of fragments. In addition some twenty leaves contain Mongolian script. Very curious are two small books and a few detached leaves of very thin Chinese paper covered with extremely cursive writing, apparently Tibetan accounts. On a number of leaves and fragments we have drawings and block-printed diagrams Tibetan in type and Buddhist in character, as described in the List below (E.G. 01, 03-4). Tibetan work of a rough kind is also seen in the small painting on canvas, E.G. 02, showing a seated divinity. The much-defaced wooden board, E.G. 012 (Pl. LXVI), resembling the painted panels of Dandān-oilik and other Khotan sites, is decorated with a block-printed mystic design. Among small objects in wood may be mentioned the panel, 010 (Pl. LXVI), decorated on its convex side with the head of a dragon in gilt gesso over a red-lacquered ground, and the wooden lacquered frame, 011 (Pl. LXVI), which evidently once served to protect a small painted panel. As this last piece was picked up by Muhammad Yāqūb at the ruined temple, it helps to confirm Hasan Ākhūn's statement about the provenance of his own finds.

The fact that all the decorative remains brought in by Hasan Ākhūn are distinctly Tibetan in character does not furnish an absolutely conclusive chronological criterion as to the site; for

Ruined site near Owang-gol.

Find of Hasan Ākhūn.

Tibetan and Mongolian leaves.

Late date of remains.

¹⁵ Regarding the useful help rendered before by Hasan Ākhūn in our search for remains, cf. *Anc. Khotan*, i. pp. 312,

379; *Serindia*, ii. p. 575.

^{15a} For specimens, see Pl. CXXXII.