

site, until the Tārīm's diversion into its present course in comparatively modern times. This theory could not be reconciled either with what our surveys had shown of the well-defined delta of the Kuruk-daryā traceable over a considerable area to the south and east of the Lou-lan site, or, what seemed even more significant, with early and definite data regarding the hydrography of this region furnished by an important Chinese record, not accessible to Dr. Hedin when his theory was formed. I mean the very interesting account which M. Chavannes has extracted and translated from Li Tao-yüan's commentary on the *Shui ching* in the 'Note additionnelle' to his masterly analysis of the *Wei lio's* notice of the 'Western countries'.² I have fully discussed in *Serindia* the statements contained in Li Tao-yüan's work, which was composed some time not later than A. D. 527, the date of the author's death, but undoubtedly embodies much information relating to earlier periods of Chinese relations with the Tārīm basin.³ A brief review, however, of those statements which have a direct bearing on the question of the Kuruk-daryā and its connexion with the Konche-daryā appears necessary here, all the more that they also help to throw light on the ruined site described in the preceding section.

Li Tao-yüan's
'River of the South',

With regard to the passage which interests us here it has to be noted that it follows an account which has been left untranslated by M. Chavannes, but which, according to a note furnished by him, treats of the 'River of the North', i. e. of the rivers of Kāshgar and Yārkan. Preceding that account we have in the commentary a long and interesting description of the course of the 'River of the South', i. e. of the river of Khotan, which in its terminal portion is said to unite itself with the river of Charchan and then flowing eastwards to pass north of Shan-shan into 'the lake of Lao-lan'. When discussing this description at length in *Serindia*,⁴ I believe that I have conclusively shown that by this terminal course of the 'River of the South' Li Tao-yüan means a course approximately corresponding to that of the present Tārīm, where it flows south to be joined by the Charchan-daryā and then passes north of Mīrān, 'the old eastern capital' of the kingdom of Shan-shan, into the marshes of Kara-koshun or, to use their modern Chinese, or more correctly Mongol, designation, into the present Lop-nōr.

Passage of
'River of the North',

The passage with which we are here concerned runs as follows:⁵ 'The waters of the *Ho* 河 [i. e. the River of the North] move farther east and pass to the south of the kingdom of *Mo-shan* 墨山. [This kingdom] has for its capital the town of *Mo-shan*; on the west it is 240 *li* from *Wei-li* 尉犁. The waters of the *Ho* move farther east and pass to the south of the town of *Chu-pin* 注賓; farther east they pass south of the town of *Lou-lan* 樓蘭 and then run off eastwards. This is, no doubt, the place where the colony of soldiers sent to clear the fields [for cultivation] was established, and this is why the town inherited the name of the kingdom. The waters of the *Ho* proceed farther east, to empty themselves in the *Yu* marshes 幼澤, which are those called by the [*Shui*] *ching* the *P'u-ch'ang* lake 薄昌海. The water accumulates in the north-east of Shan-shan and in the south-west of the Town of the Dragon.'

Course of
Konche-daryā
described.

The latter portion of this passage has already been fully analysed above. It has been shown there that it quite correctly describes the course taken by the river now represented by the beds of the Kuruk-daryā, as they pass from Ying-p'an south of the Lou-lan site and thence to the dried-up marshes eastwards fringing the salt-encrusted bed of the ancient Lop Sea.⁶ With regard to the preceding portion it is easy to show that, as already briefly stated in *Serindia*, the topographical indications take us necessarily to the ground along the foot of the glacis of the western Kuruk-tāgh now skirted by the Konche-daryā. We have seen before that the 'kingdom of Mo-shan', the

² See Chavannes, *T'oung-pao*, 1905, pp. 563 sqq.

³ Cf. *Serindia*, i. pp. 324 sqq., 419 sqq.

⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, i. pp. 325 sqq.

⁵ See Chavannes, *T'oung-pao*, 1905, p. 570.

⁶ Cf. above, pp. 293 sq.; also *Serindia*, i. pp. 420 sqq.