

2. VASH-SHAHRI.

When travelling from Charchan to Charkhliq, in August 1928, I stopped at the Kohna-shahr of Vash-shahri for one day. This ruined site is of the same 'Tati' character as the Charchan Kohna-shahr, but it presents quite a different aspect as the ground is covered, to a very large extent, with huge, fantastic tamarisk mounds, Pl. XX a. These accumulations, which reach a height of 6—7 m., have in some places preserved small remains of brick structures. The ground is very sandy, and on the surface is exposed *débris* of various nature from the time of the occupation of the site.

It has been identified with Hsin-ch'eng of the T'ang Annals, a place which was also called Nu-chih and is said to have been founded by K'ANG YEN-TIEN, who was a Sogdian chief in the period 627—649. It is situated about 9.5 km. to the west of the present village of Vash-shahri. I never got an opportunity to determine the extent of the 'tati' *débris*, only that there were two separated 'tatis', which I called I and II, the former being situated about 3.5 km. to the NW of the latter. According to STEIN, the extent of the 'tati' surface is $1 \times 1/2$ mile.

The coins found by STEIN give a clue to the duration of the settlements here. He found three K'ai-yüan coins (618—627) an illegible T'ang coin and five Sung coins ranging between 1023 and 1107. I myself recovered a fragment which might be from a late Wu-ch'u coin, five indeterminable fragments of Sung or Yüan coins and one complete Ming dynasty coin: a T'ien-yüan-chung-pao which was issued between 1378 and 1388. It is likely that this early Ming coin was dropped here after the abandoning of the site.

The other metal objects are hardly worth mentioning; they consist of trifling fragments of bronze fittings and the like.¹ A small pendant is of lead, Pl. 38: 16.

There are some beads of glass and opal, Pl. 38: 6—15, a triangular pendant of white agate, Pl. 38: 17, resembling those from Charchan, a ring of a *Quadrula* shell, Pl. 38: 3, and a diminutive bird figure of glass or frit with a vertical hole for a string, Pl. 38: 4. The latter object might be compared with the small bird figures from Khotan (Montell 1938, Pl. VI: 10—11) though the latter are of metal.

Sherds of glass vessels of poor quality, greenish and only semi-translucent, are probably of local make from the Tarim Basin.

¹ HEDIN purchased an old copper pitcher when passing through the ruined site of Vash-shahri. It is depicted in Hedin 1898, II p. 223. In the Ethnographical Museum in Stockholm it bears the number 03.11.88. Height 14 cm., widest diam. 10.7 cm. The body is nearly globular with a well-shaped neck with a plain moulding round the middle. A strong handle with an indistinct pattern of V-shaped grooves runs from the rim to the widest part of the body. There is a stout spout with eight-sided section; its tip is damaged, a piece of the rim is broken away and there is also a small hole in the bottom. The surface has a dark brownish, uneven colour. The vessel has been used in modern times, possibly as a tea-pot. To give any absolute date for the manufacture of this rather handsome vessel is not so easy, but it may possibly be placed within the last five centuries of the first millenium A. D. Its origin is non-Chinese.