

invariably found a ground-level considerably below that of the neighbouring fields. This curious fact becomes easily intelligible if we remember that the fields are continually receiving a deposit of silt from irrigation, while the cemeteries are naturally kept clear of water and consequently of this accretion.

The Yar which passes through Yotkan from west to east, and the excavations of the gold washers to the south of it, enable us to form some idea as to the position and extent of the old town. The banks of the Yar cease to yield any remains about 200 yards below the houses of Khalche. Accordingly, digging has stopped there. In the south the diggings near the portion of Yotkan known as Allama have been discontinued, as the ground did not yield the coveted gold in paying quantities. It is on the banks to the west and north-west that the work of washing the soil still continues vigorously, and it is under the fields lying in that direction that the remaining parts of the old town are likely to have been situated. The Yars which intersect the ground to the south and east of Yotkan nowhere cut through layers containing old remains. The negative evidence thus furnished excludes the idea of the town having ever extended in those directions.

There can be no doubt that the site discovered under the fields of Yotkan is that of the old capital of Khotan, as already suggested by M. Grenard. The proof, however, does not lie in an alleged tradition of the villagers (this could only be a very modern growth if it really existed), but in the exact agreement of the site with the topographical indications furnished by the early Chinese Annals, and in the ease with which I was able to identify from this starting-point the positions assigned by Hiuen-Tsiang's narrative to the most prominent Buddhist shrines he visited in the vicinity of the capital.

On the morning of the 28th of November I started on a survey of the villages to the west of Yotkan, in order to trace, if possible, the positions of these sacred places. Nearest among them was the Stupa and convent of 'Sa-mo-joh' which the pilgrim visited at a distance of 5 or 6 li (a little over a mile) to the west of the city.