

Abundance  
of antiques.

It does not require much reflection to realize that it is just the limited extent of the Yōtkan site which makes the abundance of antiques yielded up by it all the more striking. And this very abundance, as well as the character of the remains, supplies strong evidence in support of the assumption that the site is indeed that of the ancient Khotan capital. Only at the site of a town that possessed a wealthy population and rich public buildings and shrines is it possible to account for débris-layers such as those of Yōtkan, which even the systematic digging operations of more than thirty years have failed to clear of their gold and other valuable contents. The culture-strata of Yōtkan are shown by unmistakable evidence to contain the débris accumulations of a thousand years, if not more. Where else but at the capital are conditions of affluence likely to have continued unchanged for so long a period?

Buildings of  
ancient  
capital.

The available Chinese records tell us little about the capital of ancient Yü-t'ien, but it is characteristic that almost all of these notices contain some reference to buildings of considerable magnificence. The most interesting among them is a passage of the Yin-i, composed by Hui-lin in the eighth or ninth century, which M. S. Lévi has brought to light, and to which we have had already occasion to refer in connexion with Mount Gośṛṅga<sup>11</sup>. It shows that the famous temple of Vaiśravaṇa, which the legends related by Hsüan-tsang and the Annals of Li-yul represent as the oldest shrine of the kingdom<sup>12</sup>, stood in the city of Yü-t'ien, and that it was 'a tower built in wood seven stories high'. The god was supposed to reside on the summit. Hsüan-tsang particularly extols the richness of the temple as it existed in his time. It is evident that we must think here of a structure imposing in its architecture notwithstanding its perishable materials, like the great temples and Stūpas built of wood which the Chinese pilgrims admired at Puruṣapura and elsewhere in the north-western borderland of India<sup>13</sup>.

As regards the royal palace we learn from the account of the Chinese mission sent in 938 that it comprised a number of buildings all facing to the east, and among them a pavilion called that of the seven Phoenixes<sup>14</sup>. An earlier notice, found in the Liang Annals, specially mentions the frescoes adorning the king's palace<sup>15</sup>. That the city was enclosed by walls we know from Hsüan-tsang. He adds that they were of no great height, though the capital passed for never having been taken by force<sup>16</sup>. The ancient fortifications still existing at the sites of Endere, Kara-dong, Ak-sipil show that we may safely assume those walls to have consisted mainly of ramparts of stamped loess. At the gate of the city there used to take place the solemn reception by the king and the ladies of his court of the procession of great image cars of which Fa-hsien has left us so vivid a description<sup>17</sup>.

Character of  
ancient  
remains.

The culture-strata of Yōtkan do not help us to reconstruct a picture of the city which once occupied the site. But in view of the observations detailed above we have no difficulty

p. 226). This shape would be approached more closely by the irregular but approximately equilateral oblong of the actually excavated area than by one having, say, double its length without an increase in width.

It is, of course, doubtful whether the legend can bear so strict an interpretation. Yet it deserves to be noted that the legend related in the 'Annals of Li-yul,' discussed above, p. 159, also makes the mysterious light sent forth by Buddha encircle three times the spot where the 'great city with five towers called U-then' was to be built in a future age; see Rockhill, *Life of the Buddha*, p. 233. That legends of this kind may sometimes reflect exact details of local topography is a fact illustrated, e. g., by the old Kashmīrian legend about the foundation of Pravarapura, in which the reference to the

demon's knee has been shown by me to be based on a topographical fact still clearly visible in the configuration of the present Śrinagar; see my *Rājāt*, I. pp. 100 sq.

<sup>11</sup> See above, p. 186; S. Lévi, *Notes chinoises sur l'Inde*, p. 39.

<sup>12</sup> See *Mémoires*, ii. p. 227; Rockhill, *Life of the Buddha*, p. 236.

<sup>13</sup> See Foucher, *L'Art du Gandhāra*, pp. 83 sqq.

<sup>14</sup> Rémusat, *Ville de Khotan*, p. 80, where the name of the palace is given as *Chin ts'ê tien* 金册殿.

<sup>15</sup> Rémusat, loc. cit., p. 16.

<sup>16</sup> See *Mémoires*, ii. p. 226.

<sup>17</sup> *Travels of Fa-hien*, transl. Legge, p. 19.