

Not far from the southern edge of this area rose the mass of ruined masonry known as *Arka-kuduk-Tim* ('the Mound of the Back Well', from a well in this vicinity sunk by woodcutters), and shown in Fig. 54, of which Turdi had spoken as the only structural ruin of the site. It proved to be the remains of a Stūpa, but so thoroughly destroyed by erosion, and probably also by diggings for 'treasure', that no approximate idea could be formed of its original shape or dimensions. The extant block of masonry stands 16 ft. high, and measures at its base about 20 ft. from east to west, and 8 ft. from north to south. Great masses of brickwork must have fallen, as the slopes of the conical mound on which the ruin now rises are thickly covered with brick débris. The masonry of the ruin consists mostly of sun-dried bricks measuring 19 by 13 in., and 4 in. thick, but smaller bricks, only 3½ in. thick, and apparently about 13 in. square, could also be distinguished in places. Beneath the lowest course of bricks there was what looked like a foundation or base of hard clayey loess, about 3½ ft. high, resting on the original ground-level. The latter (marked in Fig. 54 by the feet of the upper standing figure), owing to the great erosion that has taken place around the mound, now rises fully 20 ft. above the lowest point immediately to the south of the Stūpa (see the second figure in the photograph). But at a distance of 30 to 40 yards to the south the loess banks rise again in terraces, and the highest of these seemed only 4 to 5 ft. below the ground-level as marked by the foot of the ruin. All the hard loess soil left bare by the sand is covered with pottery fragments. The drift-sand near the Stūpa formed in most places ripple-like dunes, only 2 to 3 ft. high.

Ruin of
*Arka-kuduk-
Tim.*

Just below the Stūpa the men brought with me from Hanguya picked up a Chinese coin without a legend and a small broken ring in bronze, H. 1 (see Plate LI). From a Hanguya villager, whom Turdi knew and had summoned to the site as a *confrère*, I purchased the small collection of objects in metal, glass, and stone described under H. 001 in the list at the end of this section. Among these, all said to have been found at the site, the massive bronze ring, H. 001. h (see Plate XLIX), with a countersunk device showing a running deer, may be specially mentioned as of evident antiquity. Already in November a set of old coins with a few small antiques had been sold to me at Khotan as coming from the Hanguya Tati. The coins, of which a synopsis will be found in Appendix D, comprise over twenty Sino-Kharoṣṭhī pieces, among them one apparently of a unique type. If they were really found here they would prove great antiquity for the site, but the statement as to their origin could, as in most of such cases, not be depended upon with certainty. One of the antiques acquired with them is a small intaglio, H. 002 (see Plate XLIX), similar to those probably coming from Yōtkan. The Tati by its size clearly proves a considerable extension of the ancient cultivated area northward, but there was nothing to indicate, even approximately, when it ceased to be occupied. Seeing how steadily the irrigated area of Hanguya is now again being pushed northward, it is quite possible to suppose that part of the Tati might again be turned into fertile village land. The name *Hanguya* could claim considerable antiquity if its identity with the *Hang-gu-jo* of the Tibetan legend discussed in a previous chapter were to be established³.

Antiques
from
Hanguya
Tati.

I left the site in a mild but sufficiently disagreeable dust storm, and after returning to the northern edge of the Hanguya lands rode south-westwards to rejoin my camp at Yurung-kāsh. For nearly three miles the road led everywhere through young cultivation. The avenues of poplars, willows, and Jigda trees, planted only ten to fifteen years ago, and small enclaves of sandy ground left amidst the fields showed that this area had been recovered from the desert

March to
Yurung-
kāsh.

³ See above, p. 161.