

towards what we took to be the main Kun-lun watershed. The hill-men stoutly denied the existence of any track leading hence across the great snowy range southward. But there was a special reason for me to test their statement by a closer survey. Six years before I had been greatly puzzled by the topographical features of the sketch map illustrating the route which Johnson claimed to have followed on his descent to Khotan in 1865. According to this map Johnson had made his way across the Kun-lun main range by a very high pass, which he called 'Yangi diwan' (*i.e.* 'Yangi Dawan,' 'the New Pass'), to an affluent of the Yurung-kash, and thence by a second pass, designated as 'Naia Khan Pass,' to another valley joining the main river from the south close to Karanghu-tagh.

It was true that the position assigned to the latter as well as other topographical features were found to differ widely from the actual configuration of these valleys as revealed by our survey, while none of the names of passes, etc., shown south of Karanghu-tagh were known to the hill-men. No help could be got from the very meagre record published of Johnson's remarkable feat. There was no reason to doubt the general fact of his having crossed the Kun-lun main range from the head-waters of the Kara-kash southwards, and it was thus a matter of considerable interest to ascertain where his actual route lay.

But owing to the wide discrepancy between his map and the real topography of these mountains only conjectures could guide me in the search for this route. And a number of conjectural indications, which it would be impossible to explain here without analysing in detail the relationship presented by certain features of Johnson's rough sketch map to the ground as our surveys had shown it, seemed to point to the Busat Valley as the most likely approach to his 'Naia Khan Pass.' If it were possible to trace from it a practicable crossing to the head of the nearest valley eastward, the Chomsha Jilga of our survey, we might then be justified in looking from the south-western end of the latter for that mysterious 'New Pass' by which Johnson at an elevation of