

buildings, etc., stops further exploitation. The risk of injuring the canal which here skirts the excavated area, acts also as a deterrent as its water might break away and run to waste below. Finally there is the broad fact that with agricultural labour risen greatly in value the average profits produced by gold-washing at Yōtkan have ceased to be sufficiently attractive except for the least steady of workers. Thus at the time of my visit the number of men and children at work was only about a score, and the soil which they were washing was wholly confined to low banks of earth left unexploited from previous excavations. Since about 1901, I was told, these had scarcely been extended at all laterally. In spite of the restricted working the yield in small antiques, such as terra-cotta figurines, coins, cut stones, etc., still continued. This was proved by the relatively ample collection of such objects I was able to acquire that year both at Yōtkan itself and at Khotan and during my subsequent visits in 1908. I shall return to these acquisitions presently.

In view of the survival of local worship at practically all old religious sites in Chinese Turkeṣtān, which are still within inhabited ground or near it, the absence of any prominent Muhammadan sanctuary at Yōtkan might well have caused surprise. For though no shrine of special importance is singled out for mention at the ancient Khotan capital itself by Hsüan-tsang, who has recorded such interesting legends about a number of Buddhist convents and Stūpas in its vicinity,<sup>10</sup> it is obvious that the city itself must have contained more than one sacred building of note. Hence it was gratifying to me when approaching the site this time from a new direction, to find that a locally well-known Mazār, that of Rukn-ud-dīn Ṣāhib, was established quite close to the south-eastern corner of the excavated area. Tradition ascribed to portions of the extant shrine an age of some three hundred years, and the fine old wood-carving in the mosque attached to the supposed resting-place of the saint, and the magnificent trees in the adjoining harbour, seemed fully to bear out this claim.<sup>11</sup>

Mazār of  
Rukn-ud-  
dīn Ṣāhib  
at Yōtkan.

My way from Yōtkan to Lānghru enabled me to revisit the Kohmārī Mazār which marks, as recognized long ago, the sacred site famous in the Buddhist accounts of Khotan as Mount Goṣṛinga, 'the Cow's Horn', or Goṣīrṣa, 'the Cow's Head'.<sup>12</sup> Nothing had changed at the modest shrine where the Muhammadan saint who has succeeded to Hsüan-tsang's Arhat is supposed to rest, nor at the smoke-begrimed sacred cave below it overlooking the Karā-kāsh River. But a rough track had recently been built giving access to a small and precipitous gully which descends the face of the conglomerate cliff down to the river bank and could before be approached only over very rough ladders. On descending here I passed some two or three shallow grottos at an elevation of about a hundred feet above the river. Some sixty feet lower down I found about half a dozen more. They were manifestly natural, recalling the shelters in the rocks I had seen about Rājgir and Jēṭhian in Bihār, and might well have served, as the latter were supposed at one time to have done,<sup>13</sup> for the accommodation of holy mendicants and the like. From four to twelve feet deep, these grottos, when partially filled with débris from their rock walls, could well give protection to ancient relics. Thus the thought suggested itself whether it was not from one of them that those famous birch-bark fragments of the Dutreuil de Rhins MS. were originally obtained, the discovery of which was connected in 1892 with the Kohmārī cave itself.<sup>14</sup>

Kohmārī  
Mazār  
revisited.

As I continued my way up the right bank of the Karā-kāsh River beyond the village of Nussia, I noticed at a distance of about one mile from the upper end of the latter that the banks of a small

'Tati'  
beyond  
Nussia.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *Ancient Khotan*, i. pp. 223 sqq.

<sup>11</sup> For illustrations see *Desert Cathay*, i. Fig. 54; ii. Fig. 312.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. for this identification, *Ancient Khotan*, i. pp. 185 sqq.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. my 'Notes on an archaeological tour in South Bihār', *Ind. Ant.*, 1901, pp. 54 sqq.

<sup>14</sup> For my doubts as to the real provenance, see *Ancient Khotan*, i. p. 188.