

the position of this must be looked for beyond the right bank of the Kara-shahr River.²⁰ Another passage of the Annals confirms this and clearly shows that the capital must have been situated close to the shores of the Baghrash Lake, which is said to have protected it, at least partially, from attack.²¹

It is true that this passage estimates the circumference of the locality where the capital stood (not of the walled town itself) at 30 li, a measure much in excess of the actual perimeter of Baghdād-shahri. But, on the other hand, we have a very close approach to the two miles or so of the latter in Hsüan-tsang's statement that the circuit of the capital he visited was 6 to 7 li. That the site of Baghdād-shahri lies quite close to the marshy edge of Lake Baghrash is certain, though at the time of my visit it was difficult to determine the exact shore line on the *shōr*-covered flats extending to the south and east of the site, the lake being frozen at the time and shrunk to its winter limits.²² Chinese local opinion at Kara-shahr—whether based on tradition or on learned argument I could not find out—ascribes the ruined town to T'ang times, and the two coins actually found by me at the site distinctly support this view. But what appears to me to carry most weight are the topographical indications of the T'ang Annals and Hsüan-tsang, and the fact that no trace exists of any other ruined circumvallation by the western shores of the lake.

Vicinity
of lake.

OBJECTS FOUND AT SITES OF CHONG-KÖL (USHAK-TAL) AND BAGHDĀD-SHAHRI, KARA-SHAHR

Ushak-tal. 001. Fr. of pottery, hand-made from well-levigated clay, grey burning to brick-red; hearth-burned. Apparently had ochreous wash on outer surface; worn. $2\frac{1}{2}'' \times 1\frac{7}{8}''$.

Ushak-tal. 002. Fr. of pottery, wheel-made, kiln-fired, sulphur-yellow clay; outside face washed reddish-brown; orn. with appliqué leaf (?) pattern. $2\frac{3}{16}'' \times 2\frac{1}{16}''$.

Ushak-tal. 003. Fr. of rim of stoneware bowl, grey body with transparent celadon green glaze on either side; incised orn.; a combed-wave pattern inside, and a plain band outside. Chinese. $1\frac{3}{4}'' \times 1\frac{5}{8}''$.

Ushak-tal. 004. Fr. of bluish-white translucent glass; all faces broken. Gr. M. $1\frac{3}{4}''$.

Baghdād-shahri. 001. Fr. of pottery, hand-made, body of dull red-burning clay covered with a black-burning slip c. $\frac{1}{20}''$ thick; this prob. blackened by smothering which has not affected clay of body. Along top applied relief band (black) with V-shaped stamped orn. $1\frac{7}{8}'' \times 1\frac{5}{8}''$. Pl. IV.

Baghdād-shahri. 002. Fr. of pottery, hand-made, of fairly well-levigated clay burning a light brick red, kiln-fired. $1\frac{9}{16}'' \times 1\frac{1}{2}''$.

SECTION II.—THE 'MING-OI' SITE NORTH OF SHÖRCHUK

On December 11 I left Kara-shahr town and proceeded by the Korla high road to the little station of Shörchuk, some 16 miles to the south-south-west.¹ From it I visited on the same day the extensive collection of Buddhist shrines situated close on four miles to the north and known to the Turkī-speaking Muhammadans by the general designation of *Ming-oi*, the 'Thousand Houses'. The site, which from the north-west is approached to within three miles or so by the scattered

Arrival at
ruins. •

²⁰ See above, p. 1176.

²¹ Cf. Chavannes, *Tures occid.*, p. 112. The description of the position of the town corresponds closely to that given by the notice of the Later Han Annals; see Chavannes, *T'oung-pao*, 1907, p. 208: 'L'eau d'un lac entre en sinuosités à l'intérieur des quatre montagnes et environne cette ville sur une distance de plus de trente li.'

The passage of the T'ang Annals above quoted describes the sudden attack by which the Chinese general Kuo Hsiao-k'u, marching against Yen-ch'i from the side of Turfān by the main route, took the capital in A.D. 644. The description shows clearly, first that the river had to be crossed before arriving at the capital, and secondly that the town was open to assault on the land side. The whole suggests that the

town was built on a small peninsula projecting into the lake.

²² The careful survey which Roborovsky, as topographer of General Pievzoff's expedition (1889-90), made of Lake Baghrash shows Baghdād-shahri as situated immediately to the north of a small bay of the lake. This indicates that when the level of the lake is high the site is protected on two sides at least by water.

¹ See Map No. 49. B. 1. *Shörchuk* may be accepted with Professors Grünwedel and Pelliot as the correct form of the local name, derived as it obviously is from *shōr*, the Turkī term for the salt efflorescence which is plentiful on the steppe around. But the prevailing pronunciation I heard from the Korla Bēgs and labourers with me sounded *Chōrchuk*, the name shown in the map.