

Wei-hsü
absorbed in
Yen-ch'i.

After the 'Epoch of the Three Kingdoms', from which the *Wei liö's* information dates, Wei-hsü seems to disappear from Chinese historical records as a separate petty state. The Chin dynasty's Annals make Yen-ch'i conterminous on the south with Wei-li.^{7a} We find the same statement also in the T'ang Annals' description of Yen-ch'i.⁸ It may hence be concluded with some probability that Wei-hsü in Chin times became absorbed in Yen-ch'i, just as Korla at the present day is included in the Kara-shahr district, or *hsien*.

Site of
Uzgen-
bulak.

In an area so abundantly watered as the Korla tract not much could be hoped for in the way of ruins of early date. In the course of my local inquiries I could learn of only three 'old towns', and at none of them were any datable remains traceable. Uzgen-bulak, the largest of them, proved to be a large oblong enclosure, situated about three-quarters of a mile from the south-west corner of the crumbling wall which Yāqūb Bēg built round Korla town. The earth ramparts of Uzgen-bulak form roughly a rectangle, measuring about 380 yards from north to south and about 250 yards across. They rise from 12 to 15 feet above the water-logged ground. Towards the north-west corner a large shapeless mound of stamped clay rises to a height of about 18-20 feet. Outside the south-east corner and near by lies a Ziārat with some Muhammadan tombs, suggesting the survival of local worship from earlier times.

Walled
enclosures
of Yantak-
shahr, Shāh
Kalandar.

Yantak-shahr is the name of a smaller walled enclosure of the same type, lying among fields about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the south-south-east of Korla town. It forms a square of about 140 yards near the south-east corner of which the remains of stamped clay walls are still recognizable. Elsewhere they have decayed into mere earth-mounds now partly occupied by farm dwellings. 'Shāh Kalandar town', the third *kōne-shahr*, lies about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the south-west from Korla, also amidst cultivation and close to a stream fed by springs. It is enclosed by much-decayed circular walls of earth, about 510 yards in circumference and measuring 30 to 40 feet across at their base. They rise 12 to 15 feet above the level of the interior, which contains a mound in the centre but is elsewhere marsh ground. On the north-west a much-frequented Muhammadan shrine adjoins the circumvallation, which by its shape suggests antiquity.

Local re-
ports of
ruined town.

The satisfaction I felt at having once more reached the vicinity of the Taklamakān, my own favourite working-ground, acted as a special inducement for testing the persistent reports about an 'old town' which Korla people declared that they had seen, half-buried amidst the dunes in the desert south-westwards. Such information about this local *kōtek-shahri* as had reached us while at 'Ming-oi' from the fear-bound tongues of Korla labourers had sounded rather vague and romantic. It assumed, however, a more substantial form when Tāhir Bēg, whom the prefect of Kara-shahr had deputed to act as my local factotum, avowed knowledge of this 'old town'. His own cousin Mūsā, the 'Hājī', a well-to-do farmer from the village of Tazken, he declared, had some five years before come upon the ruins, while on a hunting expedition, in the desert west of the Konche-daryā. When subsequently the discoverer himself was produced at Korla, he described the place he had seen as a small ruined fort with a conspicuous gate. The details he gave seemed matter of fact and at any rate to agree in essential points with the previously communicated report. Mūsā Hājī averred that he had not seen the ruins again since a big dust-storm immediately after the discovery had prevented return, but was prepared to guide me to the site. His statement appeared circumstantial enough to deserve to be followed up on the spot, especially as the existence of some ruined *gumbaz*, or domed structures, in the belt of riverine jungle near the Inchike-daryā was attested independently by several Korla people, and had also been reported to Dr. Hedin on his way from Shahyār to Korla in 1896.⁹

^{7a} Cf. Chavannes, *Ancient Khotan*, i. p. 540.

⁸ Cf. Chavannes, *Turcs occid.*, p. 110.

⁹ Cf. Hedin, *Reisen in Z.-A.*, p. 65.