

From Kara-yantak I had to pay a rapid visit to Keriya, the district head-quarters, in order to arrange with its magistrate, a very intelligent and attentive Mandarin of the old type, for the help which I knew would be essential for the explorations I planned during the summer in the high K'un-lun ranges south of Polur. Having assured myself well in advance of the needful support, I returned to Domoko by March 19, and on the same day proceeded into the desert north-westwards in order to revisit the old sites around Ulūgh-mazār. On the way through Domoko and Gulakhma I had occasion to make interesting observations as to expanding cultivation and increasing prosperity on this ground, which I knew well from my former visits, and where, in view of geographical and antiquarian questions previously discussed, all changes in the occupied area deserve special attention. Since my visit of 1906 a large Bāzār had sprung up at Domoko, and to the east of it ground about Chigillik (Map No. 31. A. 4), then completely waste, had been brought under permanent irrigation by means of a new canal. Its surplus water was at the time being turned to use for the reclamation of open patches of ground at and above the Khādalik site.

Expanding
cultivation
about
Domoko.

Westwards, too, I found this extension in progress. The belt of scrubby desert with tamarisk-cones which before separated the village tracts of Domoko and Gulakhma was being rapidly reduced by newly levelled fields ready for irrigation, as seen in Figs. 316, 318. It was curious to observe the way in which irrigation channels, carried round the foot of the tamarisk-cones, were used for gradually removing the fertile loess dust accumulated in them centuries ago and spreading it over the new fields. This extension was being effected mainly by more careful use of the *kara-su* obtained from the springs in the 'akins' of Ponak and Gulakhma (Map No. 32. A. 1). Thus the latter village area had, according to reliable local information, doubled its population during the last sixteen years. This increase was all the more deserving of notice because there were complaints of the summer floods (*ak-su*) from the mountains having been generally below the mark during most of this period. It was clear that increased pressure of population and other economic factors play an important part in these changes affecting what might otherwise seem classic ground for watching 'pulsatory desiccation' at work.

Extension
of irrigated
area.

In *Ancient Khotan* I have already fully discussed the reasons which have led me to locate the site of Hsüan-tsang's P'i-mo and Sung Yün's Han-mo at the extensive débris areas to be found to the north of and around the desert pilgrimage place known as *Ulūgh-mazār* or *Ulūgh-ziārat*, 'the holy shrine' (Map No. 27. D. 4).³ My renewed visit to this ground has fully confirmed my belief in the correctness of this identification and enabled me to realize better the great extent of the 'Tatis' which lie to the south and south-east of *Ulūgh-mazār*. Following this time under Mullah Khwāja's competent guidance a direct line from Lachin-atā's Mazār (Map No. 31. A. 4) to *Ulūgh-mazār*, I found, after going about a mile, the whole ground thickly covered at short intervals with débris of the typical kind, fragments of old pottery, hard-burned bricks, slags, etc., wherever the eroded soil lay bare between dunes and tamarisk-cones. The same observation applies to the ground to the south and south-west of *Ulūgh-mazār* for a distance of about a mile and a half. At numerous points of these 'Tatis' the abundance of human remains laid bare by wind-erosion indicated old cemeteries. That these belonged to Muhammadan times was made quite certain by finding in several places rows of fairly intact skeletons laid regularly with the feet to the south, as required by orthodox Muslim custom. This further proof that the site continued to be occupied down to the Muhammadan period is of special value in view of the probable identity of Marco Polo's 'Pein' with P'i-mo.⁴

Débris areas
around
*Ulūgh-
mazār*.

Muhamma-
dan ceme-
teries.

The fresh numismatic evidence now secured from these 'Tatis' fully agrees with the conclusion arrived at on my former visit, and at the same time shows that the occupation of this area must have

³ Cf. *Ancient Khotan*, i. pp. 462 sq.

⁴ Cf. *Ancient Khotan*, i. pp. 457, 463.