

of two miles indicated by Hsüan-tsang which, on the ground of local tradition or worship, could be connected with the ancient Buddhist shrine. There is, indeed, a much-frequented Muhammadan shrine, the Mazār of Imām-Mūsā-Qāsim, at Kōsa due south of Yōtkan, but the distance is close on six miles, and thus far beyond Hsüan-tsang's estimate. If we adopt the *Pei shih's* distance of 50 li, or approximately 10 miles, the difficulty seems at first sight equally great, for beyond Imām-Mūsā-Qāsim's Mazār and the village of Kōsa there stretches towards the hills the barren pebble Sai, where a grove, such as both Hsüan-tsang and the Annals of Li-yul mention in connexion with Vairocana's convent, could never have existed.

The difficulties thus encountered will explain why I feel induced to discuss here the possibility of an identification which, though purely conjectural for the present, deserves some attention. Immediately before proceeding to Yōtkan I had, on November 24, visited the ancient sites of Jamada and Chalma-kazān to the south of the oasis, and not far from the left bank of the Yurung-kāsh. The former is a typical *Tati* closely adjoining the irrigated area of Jamada village (see map), where the eroded loess soil for a distance of about one mile from east to west and for about half a mile across is strewn with ancient potsherds. Old Chinese coins are said to be picked up here; but Wang-Daloi, an intelligent Chinaman trading in jade who acted as my guide here as well as at the jade-pits further south, had unfortunately mixed up his specimens with those he had collected from Yōtkan and elsewhere. Hence no certain conclusion could be drawn from his collection, which seemed to consist chiefly of 'cash' of the T'ang dynasty. On the west and south rise loess banks, which the people of the neighbourhood take for the *sipil* (wall) of the 'old town'; but probably they are only 'witnesses' of the original ground-level which have escaped the erosion that lowered the unprotected loess soil around⁴³.

Site of
Jamada.

Far more extensive and, judging from the mass of débris, more important is another ruined area known as *Chalma-kazān* about five miles further south, which occupies the plain, about 1½ miles broad, between the west bank of the Yurung-kāsh and the foot of a low gravel ridge flanking the *débouchement* of the river. It is strewn with a vast quantity of coarse potsherds, mixed here and there with small bits of broken glass and slag, and to a larger extent with stones from the river which no doubt had served for rough walls. The soil is loess, manifestly of the riverine type; and with irrigation the plain, now a barren waste, would present a very different aspect. The eroded loess banks seen at various points of the area showed no great height, from which it would appear either that the erosive power of the winds was less in the Yurung-kāsh Valley than in the open plain northward, or that the period since cultivation has ceased does not lie so far back as in the case of some of the ancient sites to be described hereafter.

Site of
Chalma-
kazān.

In the middle of this area a low mound, covered with large rounded stones from the river-bed, at once attracted my attention. It had been mentioned to me before by the villagers of Jamada and Bīzil, who apply the name of *Chalma-kazān* in particular to it. Its well-defined round shape suggested a Stūpa, and a closer examination proved this to be the case. Unfortunately, others before me had guessed the nature of the structure; and a large trench cut from the east into the centre of the mound and down to the present level of the surrounding ground showed that 'treasure-seekers' had been at work. The mound in its present state has a diameter of about 98 feet and rises about 15 feet above the ground. From the excavation made it could be seen that the lower portion, which evidently served as a base, and of which a height of about 8 feet lay exposed, was constructed of closely packed layers of rough stones. The cavity which the burrowing 'treasure-seekers' had made in the centre of the mound lay above this, and disclosed

Mound of
Chalma-
kazān.

⁴³ For such 'witnesses' see above, p. 107.