

possible, to save them from total destruction. The removal was skilfully done by his two assistants Naik Shamsuddīn and Miān Afrāz-gul Khān, who carefully packed the sections in over a hundred large cases, which safely reached New Delhi, where I reassembled, mounted, and set them up in the Central Asian Antiquities Museum. Some of these are reproduced on plates XII to XXXI.

A visit between 18 December and 3 January to Urumchi the provincial capital, mainly on diplomatic business, interrupted survey work. Returning to Murtuk, Turfān, certain ruined structures were examined and a few painted fragments were collected (M.C. IV, plate VIII).

The ancient burial-ground north of the village of Astāna, near Kara-khōja, was the next site to be explored; and here the results were indeed rich in archaeological matter. Although extensive plundering had already gone on for a long time, the silks and various trappings buried with the bodies, still remaining, provided material of intense interest for the archaeologist, historian, artist, and craftsman. They are fully described in *Innermost Asia*.

At this time disquieting information indicated the possibility of official obstruction to further archaeological activities by local Chinese representatives of 'Young China', on the ground of spoliation of China's ancient inheritance. So it was decided to move after ensuring the dispatch of the 145 cases of antiquities. Leaving the region of Turfān on 16 February 1915, the journey back to Kāshgar was by way of Singer, Ying-p'an, and along the glacis of the Kuruk-tāgh to Korla. From here to Kāshgar Stein travelled 938 miles in 55 days, along the foot of the T'ien-shan range to Kuchā, through Ak-su and Marāl-bāshi, arriving at Kāshgar on 31 May.

At Kāshgar, 'my familiar base', the collection of antiques was repacked—a long and tedious business—for their 'long and difficult journey across the Kara-koram to Ladāk and thence to Kashmir'.

This done, Stein now made arrangements for his long-projected journey over the Pamīrs—the 'Roof of the World'—towards the Trans-Caspian railway, north-eastern Persia, and Sīstān, 'by the route which the ancient silk trade may be assumed to have followed'. Permission to pass through Russian territory had been obtained from the Russian Government by the Foreign Department of the Indian Government.

As this fresh expedition, fully reported in *Innermost Asia*, did not furnish any of the paintings reproduced in this work it is not proposed to record its progress here.