

(A. D. 1032-1227), as its founder is known to have first introduced that script.<sup>5</sup> But its occupation, so far as this documentary guidance at present goes, might well have continued also long after the destruction of the Tangut kingdom by Chingiz Khān in 1227.

[Preliminary information which has reached me from M. Maspero while these pages are passing into print fully confirms this assumption. Among the miscellaneous fragmentary documents in Chinese which were picked up from refuse heaps within the ruined town his notes mention nine bearing exact dates. These dates all fall within the period of the Yüan or Mongol dynasty and extend from A. D. 1290 (or possibly 1266) to 1366. The latest thus precedes only by two years the downfall of the dynasty and the succession of the Ming (A. D. 1368). The contents of these dated documents relate mostly to petty criminal affairs, grain accounts and the like, and suggest that the local administration was carried on at the time on the customary Chinese lines.

Documents  
of Mongol  
period.

The discovery noted below, p. 444, of what Dr. Laufer has recognized as remains of a Chinese paper-note dated in the first regnal period, Chung-t'ung (1260-4), of the Emperor Kublai, in a room of the ruined Sarai, K.K. 1. viii, agrees with the chronological evidence of the documents just referred to.]

Direct evidence in support of the above theory could before be derived only from the identification of Khara-khoto with Marco Polo's 'City of Etzina', which will be discussed below; for the dates supplied by the coins that we found at the site do not extend beyond the third quarter of the twelfth century. A reference to the list of these coins in Appendix B will show that out of seventeen Chinese copper coins found within the town or immediately outside it no less than thirteen bear Nien-haos falling between the years A. D. 1008 and 1161, while three show the T'ang legend *K'ai-yüan* and one is a *Wu-chu* piece. It deserves to be noticed that all these thirteen coins, with the exception of a piece showing the Nien-hao Chêng-lung (A. D. 1156-61) of the Chin dynasty set up by the Nü-chên Tartars, belong to issues of the Sung dynasty. The total absence of coins of the Hsi-hsia rulers, issues of which are known to have been made between the years 1075 and 1226,<sup>6</sup> is certainly very curious. It may be explained, with some degree of probability, by the reflection that the circulation of the imperial coinage of the Sung must, owing to the preponderance of trade with China proper, have always been greater than that of the local rulers, even within the limits of the Tangut kingdom.

Numis-  
matic  
evidence.

Among the miscellaneous small objects recovered from the rubbish-heaps of the interior of the town, the very numerous and varied specimens of glazed pottery deserve special mention. Referring for details to the Descriptive List below and Mr. Hobson's Appendix D, it will suffice to call attention to the fine glazes, generally in varieties of blue and green, sometimes crackled, displayed by pieces like K.K. 021, 23, 36-48, 103-13 (Pl. XI, LI, LVII); to the celadon-like fragments 027, 29, 103; and the striking effect attained in decorated pottery as shown by the specimen 0116 (Pl. LVII), where the bold floral pattern in olive-green glaze is set off by the scraped ground in buff clay. Judging from the abundance of big potsherds of this ware both at Khara-khoto and at the rural settlement (K.E.) to the east, this ware may safely be assumed to be of local make. Mr. Hobson considers that the numerous specimens of different types of Northern Chinese celadon, including Chün Chou and Tzüchow wares, may be of Sung or Yüan times. On the other hand, he describes the few pieces of porcelain (K.K. 025, 26, 45, 47, 48) as probably of the Ming period. The coral ornamented with scroll-work, 085 (Pl. LXVI), shows fine work, while the numerous beads in jade, agate, cornelian, &c., 071, 75, 82, 83, &c., are plain. The remains of iron implements include fragments of a dagger, 018; a saw, 080 (Pl. LXVI); knives, 020, 66 (Pl. XI), 77. The well-preserved black lacquered wooden tablet, 013 (Pl. LXVI), shows incised Chinese characters. With the

Miscella-  
neous small  
objects.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Bushell, *The Hsi-hsia Dynasty of Tangut*, p. 8.

<sup>6</sup> See *ibid.*, pp. 14 sqq.