

of the great deposit and partly through subsequent exposure. These plentiful examples of block illustration in Sung times with their wealth of ornamental details are of obvious importance for the history of wood-engraving as practised in the north-western marches of the Empire. At the same time they show the development which local Buddhist art underwent subsequently to the latest phase that we find represented among the corresponding relics from the 'Thousand Buddhas' of Tun-huang.

Of large compositions which in a more or less fragmentary condition are to be found among these block prints from K.K. II, I may specially mention the pieces K.K. II. 0229. a and 0239. c (Pl. LXIV) showing a scene, as yet unidentified, in which figures a large serpent; the representation of a Buddhist paradise in 0233. b, 0280. a, 0290. a (Pl. LXII); the series of what seem to be Jātaka scenes in 0284. a (Pl. LXIII); the 'Maṇḍala' picture, 0238. a (Pl. LXII). But far more numerous are the blocks showing groups of Buddhas or Bodhisattvas, inserted in the text after the fashion of miniatures in devotional manuscripts of mediaeval Europe (Pls. LXIII, LXV). Many of the decorative designs used for framing the block-printed columns of Hsi-hsia characters or for separating individual figures, &c., are elegant, even if the engraving is coarse. The definite indication of Tibetan influence in some of the block prints fully accords with evidence supplied by certain Ch'ien-fo-tung paintings of the same influence affecting Buddhist art as it prevailed in this border region centuries earlier.

Among the pen-and-ink drawings of which fragments were also recovered, though in a lesser number, we find some rapidly executed but distinctly spirited figure sketches in purely Chinese style, such as K.K. II. 0247. a, e; 0275. e, i; 0313. a, d, g (Pl. LVIII-LXI). Of special interest as specimens of Chinese landscape composition in Sung times are rough sketches such as the rocky gorge K.K. II. 0313. b (Pl. LXI); groups of trees growing amidst rocks, 0275. h. With these must be grouped also such sketches for landscapes as seen in K.K. II. 0313. c (Pl. LX). Just as at the 'Thousand Buddhas' of Tun-huang, so here we meet with drawings like K.K. II. 077; 0275. e, f (Pl. LX), which have been pricked for use as pounces, while in 0276. bbb we have the fragment of a stencil for a decorative pattern cut through paper bearing Hsi-hsia writing. These pictorial remains, in their tantalizingly fragmentary state, can only increase our hope that the wealth of far better preserved pictures which reached the Asiatic Museum of the Russian Academy of Sciences from this great deposit may yet be made accessible to us through an adequate publication.

I may finally refer to the numerous specimens of silk fabrics. They include, besides different coloured pieces of plain silk, K.K. II. 02, 4-7, 012, &c., which probably belonged either to flags or votive offerings, a series of printed silks, produced by the 'resist' process, 016, 19, 32-4 (Pl. LXXXVI, LXXXVII), or by blocks, 054. Damasks are represented in 015, 30, 37, 50, 53. Figured polychrome silk is found on the wallet 018 (Pl. LXXXIII), while the silk appliqué band, 067, with its fine dragon design work in gilded silk, might well have formed part of a manuscript cover resembling that found at Ch'ien-fo-tung.<sup>11</sup> A small piece of fine silk tapestry, 036, completes a range of textile remains that may offer interesting material for comparison with the corresponding fabrics from the Ch'ien-fo-tung hoard.<sup>12</sup>

After this synopsis of the remains yielded by our search of the 'waste' left behind by the Russian explorers, a few words may not be out of place concerning the period from which this remarkable deposit is likely to date. It is evident that a sure conclusion could be based only upon the far more abundant and better-preserved materials in the keeping of the Asiatic Museum at Petrograd. But if we take into account the general character of the relics, whether texts or artistic objects, together with the record to be discussed below of the taking of 'Etzina' by the Mongols

<sup>11</sup> Cf. *Serindia*, ii. pp. 1049 sq.; iv. Pl. CVI, CXI.

<sup>12</sup> See *ibid.*, ii. pp. 897 sqq.