

much moisture both in atmosphere and soil. The same conclusion was suggested by the condition of the interior. This is almost everywhere honeycombed with pits dug by the people of the neighbouring villages, who have evidently for a long time been accustomed to extract soil for manuring. It is the same process that causes all old village and town sites in northern India to be excavated for what is known in the Panjāb as *khaura*. The absence of clearly recognizable structural remains of any size within the enclosed area may be partly due also to the extensive use which was probably made of timber, so easily secured here from the mountain forests, in the construction of all buildings. Only in a few places could I distinguish mounds, none of them large, which may mark more important structures. All of them have been excavated for manure.

About 250 yards to the south-east of the north-western corner of the outer circumvallation I came upon remains of what evidently was a small Chinese temple. Much-broken walls of vertically set brickwork rose half a dozen feet above the debris that filled the interior. The condition of the ruin suggested at first sight that it must have survived longer than the rest of the structures which once occupied the interior. Local worship had probably continued at the shrine for some period after the abandonment of the site. This was confirmed by the result of a little clearing carried out with the help of a few Turfān labourers who had joined us at Guchen in the hope of future employment in their own district. Along the centre of the north wall the floor of an image platform was laid bare at a depth of about 3 feet from the surface. Among debris of burnt timber and bricks we recovered a number of relievo fragments in stucco, all showing the effects of accidental burning by their hardened and discoloured condition. Among these stucco remains, described in the List below, two small well-modelled heads, Hu. 01, 05 (Pl. LXIX), and a relief group of two fighting sheep, of excellent execution, Hu. 02 (Pl. LXIX), may be specially mentioned. The use of iron wire as a core in the last-named relief and in some other pieces deserves to be noted. The end of a pottery antefixa with Gorgon head, Hu. 013 (Pl. LXIX), closely resembles pieces found at the temple K.K. 1 of Khara-khoto. Neither the fragments of stucco relievos nor those of decorated hard bricks, Hu. 012 (Pl. L), 014, permit of a definite dating. But their treatment and motifs are quite reconcilable with the assumption that the ruined temple was still occupied in Ming times or possibly even later. A small much-worn Chinese coin which was picked up near the ruin has not yet been identified.

Remains of ruined shrine.

Of the inscription which Hsü Sung saw and reproduced I was unable to obtain any information, either locally or at Jimasa. But some Russian visitors were believed to have removed some sculptured or inscribed stone found at the site. The general impression conveyed to me by a rapid examination of the ruined town was that its much-decayed remains are those of the *Pei-t'ing* of T'ang times. The locality probably continued to be occupied well into the period when both this tract and the Turfān district were under Uigur dominion. The exploitation of the soil must have proceeded ever since the town was abandoned. This and the moisture of the site, where, as the springs in the adjacent depression show, subsoil water is struck at a depth of 15 feet or less, account for the apparent rarity of finds of antiques. This rarity is indicated by the fact that inquiries I made at Hu-p'u-tzū produced only three T'ang coins with the legend *K'ai-yüan*, for each of which the ridiculous price of two Taëls was demanded.

Rarity of antiques.

I regret not to have made a close examination of a high and large mound, situated about 1,100 yards outside the western wall face, which appears to have been occupied at one time as a watch-station, and which accordingly is known to the few local Turkī people by the name of 'Karaul'. It has occurred to me since that it might possibly mark the position of that Stūpa of a Western Turk chief from which the town took its appellation 'Kagan-stūpa' previously referred to.⁷

Large mound outside walls.

⁷ See above, p. 556.