

shrines built into the slope of a broad hillock opposite; the curious structure M.C. III on the top of this hillock, and a number of detached cellas found partly on the low ridges overlooking the mouth of the valley and partly on flat ground near M.C. I. Both the last-named ruin and the structure M.C. II, in which important finds of manuscripts and block-prints had been made, had apparently suffered so much from later burrowing, &c., that various peculiar details of construction in M.C. II, which Professor Grünwedel had already duly recognized as a building non-Buddhist in its original character,⁸ could no longer be made out with the requisite clearness. The remains of Buddhist paintings that Professor Grünwedel had noted in M.C. II on the walls of the small cella raised on a platform and surrounded by a double court had completely disappeared. In the small detached cella M.C. III (Pl. 29), however, which occupies a conspicuous position on a precipitous spur above M.C. I, the accumulated debris still protected a number of fragments of boldly executed frescoes representing Bodhisattvas, &c., which are described in the List below. Similarly in one of three completely destroyed small shrines, M.C. IV, which could be traced on level ground from 100 to 150 yards to the east of M.C. I, we recovered from the debris numerous fragments of mural paintings, showing figures on a small scale executed with much freedom of design and drawing.

Ruined
structures
of M.C.,
Murtuk.

Some 300 yards to the west of M.C. II there issues in a narrow tree-lined gully a little bubbling brook which, judging from the great collection of flags and votive rags hung around it, seems to be an object of special veneration for pilgrims to the site. The contrast here presented by the life-giving element to the utter barrenness of the hill chain sufficiently accounts for this local worship. About 400 yards farther along the foot of the hills a fifth spring rises in another little valley, and is used for irrigating a patch of cultivation below. Here, too, two ruined temple cellas, M.D., built on ridges overlooking the valley mouth, bear witness to worship in former times. Bare broken walls is all that remains of them. The whole plateau along the foot of these hills near Murtuk commands a magnificent view of the great snow-crowned range to the north, extending from above Örtang-aghzi to the peaks near the Pa-no-p'a route, and of the vast gravel glacis over which it rises. The springs above mentioned and some others farther to the north-west rise at the foot of these forbiddingly bare outer hills, which from the red colour of their clay and sandstone and their terrific summer heat are appropriately known to the Chinese as the 'Fire Mountains'. This seems a clear indication that the northern slopes of these hills receive here some occasional moisture in consequence of the closer proximity of the snowy T'ien-shan range to the Turfān basin just north of Murtuk.

Worship
clinging to
springs.

ANTIQUES EXCAVATED AT RUINED SHRINES OF MURTUK

OBJECTS FOUND IN DEBRIS OUTSIDE CAVE-SHRINES viii, xii, BEZEKLIK

Bez. viii. 01. Five ragged scraps of paper, with rough block impressions, in dull red, of seated figure on lotus; repeated as a diaper. Av. c. $2\frac{1}{2}'' \times 2\frac{1}{2}''$.

Bez. xii. 01. Fr. of inscribed stone with one complete Chinese character, and two imperfect. [Read by Dr. L. Giles: 爲 *wei*—be . . . 相 (?) *hsiang*—mutual, minister.] Broken on all sides. Well preserved. $2\frac{5}{8}'' \times 3''$.

Bez. xii. 02. Fr. of stucco relief, much damaged, but showing monster head in profile. Front of forehead and muzzle lost, but prob. fairly perpendicular; eye remains, long and finely upcurved at end with heavy curled brow above, painted white with black pupil and two successive black curves behind. Traces of grinning mouth, making

wrinkles at corners; upright pointed ear; head flat on top and mane (?) rising up between ears. Surface much destroyed, but mane, eyebrow, and jowl were painted dark red; remainder gilded. Good modelling and well-finished work; cf. Toy. IV. v. 01, Pl. LXXII. H. $2\frac{1}{2}''$, width $2\frac{1}{4}''$, thickness c. $1\frac{1}{4}''$.

Bez. xii. 03. Fr. of fresco, on burnt pottery, apparently corner of tile, showing on deep yellow ground part of lotus flower. Petals painted with rich red heart and outer bands successively of yellow, dark brown, broad red, yellow and dark brown (outline). The lime *intonaco* spread on the surface of tile varies in thickness from $\frac{1}{4}''$ to a thin film. Good work, discoloured. $5\frac{1}{2}'' \times 6\frac{3}{4}'' \times 2''$.

⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 313, with Fig. 624.