

The hands of the dead, as in all other bodies found at Ast. ix, were by tight wrapping made to close round rough Vajra-shaped pieces of wood.⁵

Woman's
body in
coffin
ix. 2. c.

The third coffin, *c*, nearest to the back wall, was covered with a sheet of 'Khām', and was like that of *b* without paint. The body of a woman which lay in it was dressed in a shroud of cotton. Over this was extended a garment of silk, ix. 2. 025 (Pl. LXXVII), now discoloured, ornamented with a broad band of striped silk recalling the patterns common in modern silks from Margilān. Below this there lay a small Chinese manuscript roll, Ast. ix. 2. 053, tucked into the fold of the left arm. This, according to information kindly communicated by Dr. Lionel Giles, contains a record with a date corresponding to the 8th December, 667, to the effect that several Sūtras were copied and recited by monks on behalf of the Lady Tung, whose name in religion was Chên-ying, wife of the official Fan Yen-shih of Kao-ch'ang. A face-cover made of figured polychrome silk, ix. 2. 022 (Pl. LXXVIII), showing a 'Sasanian' design, stuck to the shrivelled skin and could only in part be removed. Of a pair of 'spectacles' placed over it the metal portion had completely decayed, while fragments ix. 2. 09 of their silk damask covering survived along the edges. To the right of the head were found a number of glass beads, ix. 2. 05 (Pl. LXXXIX), once probably strung; small corroded fragments of iron, ix. 2. 07, which probably belonged to a pair of scissors, and a number of thin bronze plates, ix. 2. 04 (Pl. LXXXIX), of varying shapes and evidently parts of a pendant.

Hanging of
painted silk.

While this coffin *c* was being opened, the silk hanging ix. 2. 054 (Pl. CIX), previously mentioned, fell down from the rough wooden pegs by which it was fastened to the back wall, merely through the movement of the air caused by that operation.⁶ It fortunately fell on the 'Khām' cover of the coffin and hence suffered damage only in the bottom portion. The two figures of Fu-hsi and his consort shown in embrace and with entwined serpentine bodies below are fully described by Mr. Andrews in the List below. For their representation in the tomb Sinologist scholarship will be able to account. Here it may suffice to draw attention to the mason's emblems in the hands of the two figures and the constellations marked around them. I may also note that the width of the silk used, 17½ inches, differs both from that ascertained by me to have been usual in silk textiles of Han and Chin times and that prevalent in the silk banners, &c., recovered at Ch'ien-fo-tung;⁷ this possibly indicates non-Chinese manufacture.

Sepulchral
inscription
of Ast. ix. 2.

The fortunate circumstance that this tomb had remained absolutely intact since the last of its inmates was laid to rest may claim all the more importance, because one of the inscribed slabs of burnt clay [for a translation of the inscription see Dr. Giles's App. I, under No. xii] supplies us with some exact details about the dead man buried here, and in particular with the date of his decease, A.D. 689. [The second inscribed brick, also translated by Dr. Giles in App. I, viii, records the burial of Chên-ying, Fan Yen-shih's wife, who died A.D. 667. It is her body which was found in coffin *c* with the document relating to the Sūtras which had been copied on her behalf; see above.] The special interest of these inscriptions lies in the fact that they allow us to connect certain burial customs widely represented among these tombs of Astāna with a definite period and with a local population of undoubtedly Chinese origin.

Finds in
tomb
Ast. ix. 3.

The tomb ix. 3, next opened in the same enclosure as ix. 1, contained little besides two badly battered bodies with heads severed. But we recovered from them two very interesting pieces of figured silk. One, ix. 3. 02 (Pl. LXXX), which probably had served as a large face-cover but was

⁵ For a specimen, Ast. i. 6. 05, see above, p. 649.

⁶ That the hanging had remained for twelve centuries on the wall in spite of the inadequate fastening and of its size, originally about 7 feet in length and 3½ feet across at

the top, suggests that the Turfān region cannot have experienced any serious earthquakes during this period.

⁷ Cf. *Serindia*, i. pp. 373, 374 note, 537 note; ii. pp. 701 sq., 991, 1005, &c.