

found detached in the sand covering the bodies, is made up of pieces of the same stuff, showing in characteristic 'Sasanian' design medallions with two pairs of confronting winged horses in different poses. The other fragment of a polychrome figured silk, ix. 3. 03 (Pl. LXXVIII), is decorated in bands. Of these, two are unmistakably Chinese in design, with motifs of confronting phoenixes and geometrical patterns, which show a connexion with early examples from the Tun-huang Limes and Ch'ien-fo-tung, while below is seen a band with stiff floral motifs treated in the 'Sasanian' fashion. We have here clearly a specimen of the figured stuffs produced in China under the influence of Western decorated textiles during T'ang times, and probably earlier also. An inscribed brick brought to me before excavation at this group of tombs started was said to have been found in the trench leading to Ast. ix. 3. Its date from the copy taken has been read by Dr. L. Giles as 625 [see App. I, II]. Among the remains of Chinese paper documents which were also recovered here some seem to relate to monastic affairs; none are dated.

The tombs ix. 4, 5 each yielded only an inscribed clay slab, showing dates read at the time as corresponding to A.D. 648 and 682 respectively. [For translations by Dr. L. Giles of the photographs taken of these inscriptions, see App. I, VI, XI; also Pl. CXXVII.] In the small tomb ix. 6, the last examined of this group, sand completely covered the badly damaged remains of bodies. Here were found the finely worked lid of a cane basket, ix. 6. 01 (Pl. XCIII); the small grass-stuffed canvas cushion ix. 6. 07 (Pl. C), once no doubt lying in a coffin; and the pottery jar ix. 6. 08 (Pl. XC), decorated in the fashion of the Ast. i pieces. The pieces of Chinese writing found in a paper shoe contain dates in months and days only.

The last tomb examined at the site was x. 1, situated in a small enclosure near the northern edge of the cemetery area (Pl. 31). It was, as the plan (Pl. 34) shows, of a somewhat elaborate construction, having two anterooms and oval niches opening on either side of the inner one. Mashik had re-searched this tomb after it had already been plundered at an earlier period, and remembered to have found in it a number of clay figures. These proved to be almost all badly broken, no doubt intentionally; but as they were of exactly the same type as those discovered in Ast. iii. 2 and vii. 2, only less carefully modelled, the loss was not great. The pieces removed by us comprise the large grotesque head of a demon x. 1. 09 (Pl. CI), and two figures of standing women, x. 1. 010-11 (Pl. CIII), of which the painted dress is of some interest. The two battered bodies lying below the platform of the tomb chamber had been wrapped in rags of miscellaneous garments, and among these a number of figured silk pieces were recovered, besides remains of other silk fabrics. Among the latter the fine gauze x. 1. 02 (Pl. XXXVI), and the large and well-preserved piece of printed silk x. 1. 04 (Pl. LXXXII), with motifs mainly floral, may be mentioned. Floral patterns prevail also among the figured silks, both polychrome and damask, x. 1. 05-7 (Pl. XXXVI, LXXVIII, LXXIX, LXXXIII, LXXXV). The collection of fragments of elaborately striped silk fabrics, x. 1. 08, closely recall designs represented among the patchwork pieces from the 'Thousand Buddhas' of Tun-huang.⁸

Tombs
Ast. ix. 4
and 5.

Clay figures
and silk
fabrics from
Ast. x. 1.

SECTION IV.—GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE ASTĀNA BURIALS AND THEIR TEXTILES

Before I explain why I was obliged to confine my work at the Astāna cemeteries to the tombs above described, it will be convenient at this point to review briefly the evidence afforded by them as regards the general character of the burials in them and the burial customs illustrated. From the sepulchral inscriptions translated by M. Maspero [and Dr. Lionel Giles] it is seen that the dates recorded by those inscribed slabs which were found *in situ* extend from A.D. 608 to A.D. 698,

Dates of
burials.

⁸ See e. g. *Serindia*, iv. Pl. CVII.