

were practiced assiduously. Wood-turning was common; writing was apparently so well known an accomplishment that private persons often wrote letters and kept accounts. During the first four or five centuries of the Christian era, Tuholo appears to have lost much of its former size, though it was still a considerable town, with its forts, temple, shrine, and golden statue of Buddha. The old arts prevailed to the end, though the time was at hand when they were to perish.

The fall of Tuholo and the rise of its much smaller and less civilized successor, Bilel Konghan, were separated by the Mohammedan conquest. In more favored places, such as Khotan, the coming of Mohammedanism does not appear to have materially altered the conditions of life or the state of civilization. I doubt whether it did so in the Enderh region. There were certainly great changes, but they were exactly such as would naturally accompany desiccation. In architecture, fine timbers of the carved white poplar were replaced by the knotty, unhewn trunks of the wild poplar, because the increasing salinity of the soil prevented the growth of good trees. Reeds and tamarisks perhaps replaced adobe bricks because when clay becomes saline it loses its adhesive quality. This may account for the decay of the art of pottery-making, which would also be interfered with by the fact that the villages, in moving upstream after water, would necessarily occupy sandy sites, where such good clay could not be procured as farther downstream. The decay of pottery-making would entail that of the subsidiary decorative arts. These were perhaps doomed in any case by the Mohammedan prohibition of pictures. Mohammedanism may have had something to do with the falling off