

establishments in Kucha and the ample resources of the population that maintained them.

Situated for the most part at points where the rivers debouch from the foot-hills and not far from the main routes, these ruins could not fail to attract early attention. They had in consequence been thoroughly explored by German, French and Russian expeditions even before my second journey had allowed me in 1908 to pay a short visit to Kucha. Thus most of the very interesting wall paintings which once adorned the cave-shrines of Kizil and Kumtura had found their way to the Berlin Museum of Ethnography to form the subject of important publications by Professors Grünwedel and Von LeCoq. The finds of manuscripts which rewarded those explorations had also been of considerable value; for though limited in extent they have acquainted us with the tongue of ancient Kucha, which, like that once spoken in the Turfan area, has proved to belong to the Indo-European language family and to be more closely related to the Italo-Slavonic branch than to the Aryan.

Notwithstanding the limitations resulting from these earlier labours, there was enough of useful archaeological and geographical work to keep me occupied during three busy weeks spent within and around the Kucha oasis. With Afrazgul Khan's help a careful survey was made both of its actually cultivated area and of that which, by the evidence of numerous old sites found scattered in the scrubby desert to the south, east and west, must have once formed part of it. At several of these sites archaeological finds of interest were secured affording definite evidence as to the period of occupation reaching back to Buddhist times. The survey