

after to recur frequently, and probably belonged to an official who was directly connected with the administration of the ancient settlement. Another and larger seal (seen in the reproduction of the covering tablet C, p. 394, also in the headpiece of this chapter) shows a well-modelled naked figure of pure classical outline, perhaps a seated Eros. Another Athene, a standing Eros, and probably Heracles, are also to be found among the Greek deities represented. On other seals, again, there appear portrait heads of men and women showing classical modelling, though barbarian features, &c.

Just as in the case of the engraved stones of similar make found in the débris layers of Yotkan, it is impossible to make sure which of these seals were actually engraved in Khotan territory and which were imported from the West or other parts of Asia reached by classical art. But though we have yet to learn the exact functions or place of residence of those who once used the seals, there can be no reasonable doubt that the documents bearing their impressions originated in the vicinity of the ancient site or at least within the borders of the Khotan kingdom. As the date, too, of the documents can, as we shall see, be fixed with fair accuracy, these seal-impressions are to us far more valuable than if chance had preserved the original seals. The vista thus opened out to us is one of far-reaching historical interest. We already knew that classical art had established itself in Bactria and on the north-west frontier of India. But there was little to prepare us for such tangible proofs of the fact that it had penetrated so much further to the east, half-way between Western Europe and Peking. As if to symbolise this strange mixture of influences from the Far West and the Far East, the covering tablet reproduced in Fig. A, p. 394, presents to us a seal with Chinese lapidary characters in juxtaposition with one showing a portrait head unmistakably cut after Western models.