

feet, I noticed near the centre rows of wooden posts just reaching above the sand dune which covered this part of the area. Their arrangement in two concentric squares at once recalled the temple cellas with enclosing passages I had excavated at Dandan-Uiliq. A little experimental digging at one of the corners of the inner square soon brought to light stucco fragments which had belonged to a large-sized image. So the whole of my little force, counting over twenty 'Madigars,' and supplemented by shepherd guides and other followers, was at once set to work here.

Within an hour I had conclusive proof that my surmise was correct. From the loose sand that filled the building more and more pieces of sculpture in stucco turned up, resembling in make and colouring the material used in the Dandan-Uiliq statues. My conclusion as to the approximate date of this shrine was soon verified by successive finds of portions of paper manuscripts. They comprised several leaves, broken in the middle, of a Sanskrit text in ancient Brahmi characters, as well as scraps of sheets written in that very cursive form of Brahmi which appeared so often in the non-Indian documents of Dandan-Uiliq. Here too the language for which this script was used was clearly not of Indian origin. The expectations roused by these first finds were not disappointed. It took nearly two days to clear the temple of the sand that had covered and preserved it. The shrine seen on p. 415 consisted of a cella, 20 feet square, having on each side a passage 5 feet wide, and was occupied in its centre by a large pedestal bearing originally four seated stucco images, presumably Buddhas. But of these only the legs and the lowest portions of the robes had survived. Life-sized statues in the same material, all broken above the waist, but retaining in part the vivid colouring of their robes, occupied the four corners.

At the feet of these statues and around the hexagonal base of the central pedestal our excavation revealed in rapid succession manuscript leaves on paper, evidently once deposited there as votive offerings. Among the finds made close in front of the central base the fragments of a Sanskrit text dealing with matters of Buddhist