

In the present state of our knowledge it seems hazardous to decide definitely between these two dates. The later one, 791 A.D., would singularly agree with that recorded by the Annals for the final subversion of Chinese rule, and seems to find some support also in the fact that the latest Chinese document of Dandan-Uiliq dates from 790. In favour of the earlier date, 719 A.D., it may be mentioned that only Han coins were found among these ruins, and also that the sculptural remains of the Endere temple seemed to me to bear a somewhat older character than those of the Dandan-Uiliq shrines. However this may be, it can be considered quite certain that the date when this Chinese graffito was scratched into the wall could not have preceded by many years the deposition of the various votive manuscripts and the subsequent abandonment of the shrine. The rough, and not very hard, plaster of these cella walls was not a material that could remain intact for a long period without repair, and with its renewal all these casual scratchings of pious visitors would no doubt have vanished. This consideration fixes the second half of the eighth century as the latest possible time for the production of the Tibetan as well as the other manuscripts found here. The same applies to the Tibetan graffiti which, owing to their very cursive writing, have not yet been fully deciphered.

The very numerous little rags which were found scattered in front of the various image bases are undoubtedly votive offerings of a humbler kind. They comprise shreds of many fabrics, from elaborately woven Chinese silks and printed cottons to the simple 'Kham,' a kind of buckram, mentioned in Hiuen-Tsiang's account of Khotan, and still worn by the common folk throughout this region. The variety of this collection vividly reminded me of the wonderful display of rags that graces the approaches to the resting-place of the holy Imam Jafar and other saints throughout Turkestan. Islam has indeed little changed the popular type of ex-votos which were in vogue during Buddhist times, and which in this case have provided for us a sample collection of ancient fabrics of no small archæological interest.

During the days following I had almost all the buildings within