

(T. XXIX. k, l. 12) and two of undoubted Chinese porcelain (T. XXIX. i, j). As the latter is definitely known to have first made its appearance among the ceramic products of China at the beginning of the Sung period (A.D. 963),⁴ occupation of the site, continued or intermittent, down to that period, and possibly even later, may now be considered as proved. The glazes of the stoneware pieces vary greatly, including a number of fine colours, such as black, creamy, greenish turquoise, brown, etc., some with minutely crackled surface, as well as several mottled tints.

The presence here of later ceramic débris, the first I had come across on this ground, helps towards the approximate dating of the sculptured remains which were brought to light by the clearing of a small ruined structure about fifty-two yards to the west of the south-west corner of the enclosure. It proved to be a little shrine, measuring only nine feet by eleven inside and having its completely broken entrance on the narrower side to the south. The walls, preserved elsewhere to a height of four or five feet, were twenty inches in thickness and built with fairly hard bricks of two sizes, one twelve by seven and a half inches with a thickness of five inches, the other twelve by six inches and three inches thick. Débris of broken bricks, reed wattle, and partially charred timber filled the interior. This was mainly occupied by a brick-built platform, four feet broad to the north and three feet elsewhere, running all round it except at the entrance on the south. Numerous fragments of stucco sculpture, found mainly in the débris covering the platform along the north wall, left no doubt that the little ruin had been a Buddhist shrine.

Ruin of
small
Buddhist
shrine.

The fragments, T. XXIX. 002-0012, though all badly broken, are of unusually hard clay which, as the darkened colour of the surface and the partially charred wooden core in the larger pieces suggest, probably owes this quality to accidental firing in a conflagration. They comprise hands (003) and portions of arms (0012. a, b) probably from more than one relievo figure, life-size or somewhat smaller, together with miscellaneous pieces of fingers, drapery, and ornaments. The details of the modelling and appliqué decoration show close dependence on the models of Graeco-Buddhist art. Considering the very conservative development of this Buddhist art on Chinese soil, and also the present inadequacy of our chronological knowledge concerning it, I do not think it safe to attempt any very accurate dating. But, with this reservation, I should be inclined to attribute these remains to a period not later than T'ang times. Instructive and interesting in this respect is the fragment, T. XXIX. 002 (Plate CXXXIX), which has two small heads, one above the other, each only about three inches high, but very carefully modelled. The look of placid contemplation in the upper head and the intense anger and passion in the lower one, with its frowning brows and eyes and mouth wide open, are very cleverly expressed. As a third head is evidently missing below, it is probable that a 'Trimūrti' representation of some Buddhist divinity was intended. We may trace a certain resemblance in style to the small naturalistically treated relievo heads recovered in numbers from the ruins of 'Ming-oi' in the Karashahr district (cf. Plates CXXXII, CXXXIII).^{4a}

Remains of
stucco
sculptures.

It is clear that the remains of the small Buddhist shrine here uncovered must have had some relation to the watch-station close by and the wall which passed it. That they belong to a period much later than the construction and maintenance of the wall is equally certain. The question was how to account for their presence at a point of the Limes which, as proved by the dated records found at T. XXVII, XXVIII, must have already been abandoned during the Later Han period, or at least soon after. The same question obviously arose as regards the fragments of ceramic products of manifestly later origin found within and outside the enclosure adjoining T. XXIX. From the first there presented itself the conjectural explanation that it was probably the tenacity of local worship—such as I had so often seen exemplified elsewhere, and last among the ruins of Shih-pan-tung—which had here caused a small shrine to be maintained and restored centuries after the wall was

Later origin
of shrine.

⁴ Cf. Brinkley, *China, its History, Art, etc.*, ix. p. 12.

^{4a} See below, chap. XXIX. sec. iii.