

ditions in which I found the Uigur books in question are in full accord. The two 'mixed' bundles in which, as my notes taken at the time show, they turned up came from the top of the solid pile of regular 'library' packets, and were but loosely wrapped up in large sheets of canvas once painted. The bundle Ch. xix, from which the Uigur book with the colophon apparently dated came, was handed out to me, as I distinctly remember, practically open, and the Uigur books were lying exposed on the top. In addition to them it contained big packets of Tibetan Pōthī leaves, of different sizes and all mixed in confusion, besides small parcels, tightly fastened, of votive rags in a variety of fabrics.

Summing up the facts just stated, there appears to be a strong presumption that the dated Uigur book and those of similar character represent an addition made to the old deposit between 1900 and 1907, just like the modern Taoist print above referred to. It is, of course, impossible definitely to prove that they are the *only* additions received by the hoard during those years in which, as we know, it was kept accessible for occasional visitors, repeatedly disarranged, and drawn upon for presents to donors and persons of consequence.¹⁰ But considering that the close search made by M. Pelliot and that which, in the case of my own collection, was subsequently carried out at the British Museum have failed to bring to light among those many thousands of texts and documents any others of probably later origin, it must appear very unlikely that any other additions actually occurred within those few years following the discovery of 1900. The same argument holds good also, as far as archaeological reasoning can go, against any theory which would assume that the deposit was walled up at some date later than the early part of the eleventh century, and, perhaps, was reopened and closed again between that period and the year 1900. But it must be admitted that the antiquarian evidence available for the *terminus ad quem* is not such as would be accepted as conclusive in a court of law. Nor would it be reasonable to expect this, considering the conditions under which the discovery of 1900 actually took place and those since prevailing at the site.¹¹

Probable
terminus ad
quem of
original
deposit.

It only remains for me to relate briefly the fortunes of the still very considerable stock of the old library which remained in Wang Tao-shih's keeping after M. Pelliot's visit. The news of the important Chinese manuscripts discovered and brought away by him had quickly spread among men of learning in China, through the report published at Hanoi and probably otherwise also. During Professor Pelliot's stay at Peking in the early part of 1909, Chinese scholars of the capital, including a learned viceroy, had eagerly studied and photographed any precious manuscripts that he had kept with him.¹² So it did not take long before an order was issued by the central Government directing the prompt transmission of the whole library to the capital, a substantial sum in compensation being decreed for those in charge of the temple.

Fate of
manuscripts
left behind
with the
Tao-shih.

The information I received on my return to Tun-huang in March, 1914, left little doubt as to the characteristic manner in which this well-intentioned order from headquarters had been carried out, apparently towards the close of 1909 or soon after. According to the statement of Wang Tao-shih, who hastened to welcome me back as an old and cherished patron, the large sum of money assigned in compensation to his temple had completely vanished *en route*, being duly absorbed, no doubt, in its transit through the different Ya-mêns. The whole collection of manuscripts

Removal of
manuscripts
to Peking;
losses *en*
route.

¹⁰ Cf. Pelliot, *B.É.F.E.O.*, 1908, p. 506.

¹¹ The explanations here given render it unnecessary specially to discuss the remarks made by the late Mr. H. Amedroz in his note, *J.R.A.S.*, 1913, pp. 694 sqq., with reference to Dr. Ross's above-quoted statement. Based as they necessarily are on preliminary information obtained second-hand, they can touch only what may be called the

quasi-legal aspect of the question. I may, however, rectify a statement (p. 695, clause 2) which is due to some misapprehension. There is nothing in my narrative—*Desert Cathay* is meant—justifying the belief that the manuscript dated A.D. 1350 'came out of one of the "compact bundles" piled in the walled-up library'.

¹² Cf. *Bulletin du Comité de l'Asie fr.*, 1910, pp. 23 sq.