

which cross each other at every interval between picks, and while one of the pair is always behind the weft, the other is always on the face. The result is a strong fabric in which warp and weft threads are held apart by the crossing, and by varying the crossing and grouping the threads the effect of pattern is obtained. By closing a number of threads together and at intervals opening them out further patterns can be formed, and again, by allowing warp and weft to interweave at regular intervals as in plain cloth, figuring such as that of Ch. 00346, Pl. CXX, may be made.

There is considerable variety as regards the uses to which all the fabrics to be discussed here had originally been put and which account for their presence in the chapel deposit. A rich source of supply of silk specimens of all sorts is furnished by the temple banners, distinct from those bearing paintings, and their usual accessories in the way of triangular head-pieces, streamers, etc. The banners, whether made up of pieces of plain silk, damask, or printed silk,<sup>8</sup> conform closely in shape and arrangement to the model of the painted ones described above.<sup>9</sup> Most frequent among portions of banners which had become detached, probably long before the deposit received them, are triangular head-pieces, and as for them rich fabrics appear to have been particularly in favour, these head-pieces and their accessories, such as borders and suspension loops, have proved a specially wealthy mine for finds of interesting decorated silk fabrics.<sup>10</sup>

Silk fabrics from banners and their accessories.

Equally numerous and important are the materials furnished by the miscellaneous small pieces of fabrics which have found their way into the deposit of the walled-up chapel, undoubtedly owing to their character as votive offerings, whatever their use may have been originally in garments, etc. The custom of offering as ex-votos textile fragments, often mere shreds torn from the clothing of devout visitors, at shrines or other sacred places is too well known and too widely spread both in the East and in the West to require special explanation or evidence. Ever since my first explorations in the Tārīm Basin I have repeatedly had occasion to refer to the archaeological value and interest possessed by such deposits of 'votive rags', whether found at ancient or modern sites of pious pilgrimage.<sup>11</sup> Wherever their preservation is assured by the dryness of climate or any other cause, they are likely to provide small textile exhibitions, as it were, for the benefit of the future antiquarian explorer. In the deposit of the Thousand Buddhas we find them not merely represented by a mass of strips and cuttings from decorated and plain silk fabrics of all sorts,<sup>12</sup> but also by various composite pieces made up from such fragments in ancient times. As these may safely be assumed to contain mainly textiles of presumably contemporary origin and use, they obviously are capable of providing chronological indications which may yet prove of value hereafter.

Textile fragments as votive offerings.

These gatherings of textile ex-votos just referred to consist chiefly of two large silk valances, Ch. 00278, 00279 (Plates CIX, CX), and a number of smaller pieces which undoubtedly once formed part of such.<sup>13</sup> That these valances were intended for use as curtains to drape the lower parts of

Valances made of textile ex-votos.

<sup>8</sup> For specimens of banners proper in plain silk, complete, or of streamers, etc., cf., e.g., Ch. i. 0011, 0020; 00318, 00319, 00321, etc.; for the same in damasks, see, e.g., Ch. 00339-41, 00454, etc.; in printed silks, Ch. 00358, 00372, 00455, etc.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. above, pp. 843 sq.

<sup>10</sup> For more or less complete head-pieces in polychrome figured silks, see, e.g., Ch. 009, 0076, 00118, 00165. a, b, etc., with specimens illustrated in Pl. CXI, CXII; in damask, 0086, 00294; in printed silks, 00292, 00304. a, b, 00371; in embroidery, xxvi. 002 (Pl. CXI).

For suspension loops in figured silks, see, e.g., Ch. 00170, 00182, 00296, 00297, etc.; in embroidered gauze, 00259; in tapestry, 00300. For detached borders of banner head-pieces, see, e.g., Ch. 0058 in tapestry; 00432 in figured silk. In Ch. xxvi. 002 the old suspension loop in figured silk, worn

to threads by prolonged use and replaced by another one, furnishes interesting proof of the antiquity of the banner top.

<sup>11</sup> Cf., e.g., *Ancient Khotan*, i. p. 413, regarding the great and varied collection of textile ex-votos hung upon trees at the modern pilgrimage site of Imām Ja'far Sādiq, south of the Niya Site; *ibid.* pp. 429 sq., 441 sq. for the many interesting votive offerings of this kind excavated at the shrine of the ancient fort of Endere, etc.; see also above, pp. 167, 687.

<sup>12</sup> See for such miscellaneous textile pieces, e.g., Ch. 00231-58, 00314, 00320-6, etc., in damasks, gauzes, plain silks; 00228-30 (Pl. CVI), 00362, 00367-9 in polychrome figured silks.

<sup>13</sup> See Ch. 00280 (portion of a large altar valance); 00181, 00227, 00437, 00447 (tabs from valances); xxiv. 009 (Pl. CXIII; streamers from do.).