

1915 to Turfān, Kuchā, and other oases along the south foot of the T'ien-shan to convince myself how common such marks of ancient local worship are at points near canal-heads, there appropriately designated by the name of *Su-bāshi*, 'the water head'.<sup>4</sup> That the limpid stream which cascades down over the boulder-strewn slopes of the Ara-tam orchards deserved such local worship can easily be seen from the map; for apart from creating that profusion of fruit-trees and vines over some hundreds of acres at its very debouchure, it irrigates the fields of Tāsh-ara, and further down the long-stretched belt of village lands above and below Karmukchi.<sup>5</sup>

Buddhist  
temple  
ruins.

The ruined shrines of Ara-tam are divided into two main groups, both situated to the west of the Wang's garden palace and, as seen in Fig. 192, close to the foot of the steep outermost range of hills. The group which comprises the temple ruins marked A. I, II in the plans of Plates 47, 48, besides some smaller and badly decayed structures, occupies the top of the easternmost among a row of small gravel-covered hillocks, about 300 yards distant from the Wang's seat. The top of this hillock, seen in Fig. 256, rises to a height of about 120 feet above the level of the nearest irrigated ground. Along its south foot there extends a broad gravel terrace, partially seen on the extreme left of Fig. 192, and about 40 feet above the ground-level. Near its eastern edge were found the remnants of a few small cellas built of sun-dried bricks almost completely decayed. From this terrace a narrow flight of stairs, built over a substructure of boulders and preserved only in its upper portion, led up to the platform, partly artificial, occupied by the main temple A. I (Fig. 256; Plate 47). The walled-up portion of the platform at the south-west corner rises about 16 feet above the natural slope.

Ruined  
temple A. I.

The ruined temple contained, besides an outer hall measuring about  $33\frac{1}{2}$  feet by 20 inside, an oblong cella,  $23\frac{1}{2}$  feet by 13, and two flanking rooms apparently approached from without. The walls, varying in thickness from 1 foot 8 inches to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet, were built both here and in the shrine A. II of sun-dried bricks in rather friable clay, about  $12'' \times 6'' \times 4\frac{1}{2}''$ . These were set horizontally, the broad and narrow sides facing outwards in alternate layers. The whole interior of the ruin was covered with débris to a height of over 3 feet. Over this a partition wall of later date was found to have been built within the cella, thus proving renewed occupation after the shrine was abandoned. This is also suggested by the designation *Kōne-karaul*, 'the old guard-post', now borne by this group of ruins.

Remains  
from dé-  
bris in A. I.

The clearing of the interior of A. I brought to light within the cella a horseshoe-shaped image base 14 inches high and a mass of painted fragments from stucco reliefs, all much broken. As seen from the specimens A. I. 001-12 in the Descriptive List below,<sup>6</sup> these fragments must have belonged mainly to small rilievo images decorating the cella walls. The lower portion of a life-size stucco figure found in front of the eastern end of the base was badly decayed and had lost most of its painted surface; but the folds of a robe could still be distinguished. Of the frescoes once ornamenting the cella walls only very scanty remains survived among the débris (see A. 001; I. 0013). Plentiful pieces of completely charred woodwork were found within A. I and A. II, thus proving that both shrines had been destroyed by fire. But the poor preservation of the remnants of stucco relief and the almost complete decay of the wall plastering showed clearly the even more destructive effect of atmospheric conditions at this site. Snow was said to fall at Ara-tam in the

<sup>4</sup> It must suffice here to mention such sites as Toyuk, Sengim-aghzi, and Buluyuk of the Turfān district; *Su-bāshi* and the ruins above Kum-tura near Kuchā; Tezak-kāghe above Bai; cf. also *Bāsh-koyumal* above Charkhlik.

I may note here that the extensive group of modern Chinese shrines at the springs of Sai-bāshi near Hāmi town

marks in all probability an earlier Buddhist site of this character.

<sup>5</sup> See Map No. 73. c. I, d. I. In the latter section the second entry *Ara-tam* is an error for Tāsh-ara.

<sup>6</sup> See Pl. CXXXIX for A. I. 008, showing the lower portion of a human figure.