

foundations, and of the others the original dimensions of only the western outer wall, 20 feet long, could be measured with certainty. Both inner and outer walls consisted of plaster laid on a framework of wood and reed matting, which itself was held in position by square posts fixed at regular intervals. The walls of structures subsequently excavated were far better preserved, and details as to this manner of construction may more conveniently be given in connexion with them. But it deserves to be noted that, however badly decayed the remains of walls were in D. I, traces of fresco decorations showing rows of miniature representations of Buddhas or Bodhisattvas, all uniform except in the colouring of dress and background, and evidently stencilled, could just be made out on them.

Decorative
remains of
D. I.

Before commencing the clearing, I had carefully examined the timber and plaster pieces which strewed the surface of the sand in the interior of the small shrine and immediately around it. Among this débris, evidently representing what former searchers had extracted but thrown away again, I was gratified to light upon fragments of coloured stucco reliefs which evidently had belonged to wall decorations³, as well as upon the remains of a rectangular upright post, 26 inches high (D. I. 04), showing on one side the elaborately-painted figure of a Buddha or Bodhisattva standing on a blue lotus (see Plate LXV). From the shape of the post and the decorations painted on part of one other side, it is clear that it must have served as a pilaster or jamb projecting from a plaster-covered wall. Considering the exposed position in which the piece had lain the preservation of the colours was certainly remarkable, and furnished reassuring proof of the preserving power of the dry desert air. Of the rich decoration which the upper portions of the inner cella walls, long ago decayed, had once borne I could not remain in doubt when fragments of small stucco reliefs (which must have originally belonged to plaques of regular patterns) turned up in dozens from the sand covering the interior.

Stucco
reliefs from
walls.

The numerous replicas by which most of the decorative pieces and the small reliefs of Buddhas and attendant figures are represented indicate that the whole of this stucco work must have been done in moulds. Owing to the smallness of the fragments, it would have been difficult to form an approximate idea of the manner in which the reliefs were arranged, had we not the examples of similar decorations brought to light from the shrine D. II to be described presently. On comparing the relief fragments D. I. 11, 42, 87, 99, reproduced in Plates LIV, LV, LVII, with corresponding pieces from D. II shown in the same Plates, it becomes very probable that, like the latter, they were mostly intended to fill decorative aureoles or vesicas round some larger images now completely perished⁴. Of the general effect aimed at we may judge by comparing the elaborate aureoles or vesicas in relief which surround some colossal Buddha figures of the Rawak Vihāra (see Figs. 63, 64, Plate XVIII), though the work in the latter is separated by centuries from that of the Dandān-Uiliq shrines. But among the stucco ornaments from D. I there are also some representing leaves and other decorative motives (see Plate LVII) which might have served to adorn relief friezes or cornices.

Analysis of
stucco.

The technique of these small decorative relics proved to be identical in all of the Dandān-Uiliq temples. They were treated in *appliqué* fashion, the figures or ornaments being separately moulded and subsequently attached, by a grooving or some other device intended to give tooth, to a plaster background⁵. The latter again is easily distinguished from the far coarser plaster of the wall. Prof. Church's chemical analysis, reproduced in Appendix F, shows that the hard stucco uniformly used in the decorative reliefs of Dandān-Uiliq shrines is essentially plaster of

³ See D. I. 03, 9-14, in list.

⁴ Compare, e. g., Mr. Andrews' remarks on D. I. 42, 94.

⁵ Compare notes on D. I. 70, in descriptive list.