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ARCHITECTURAL DECORATIONS
AND OTHER FINDS FROM THE
EXCAVATIONS OF THE FENGXIANSI
MONASTERY IN LONGMEN

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FOREWORD AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The remains of the Buddhist monastery Fengxiansi lie southwest of the celebrated Longmen Caves, 12 km south of the present town of Luoyang, in the Chinese province of Henan.

The archaeological survey and stratigraphic excavation of the site were carried out thanks to the agreement signed in March 1997 between the Istituto Universitario Orientale (Naples), the IsIAO (Rome), the Italian School of East Asian Studies (Kyōto), the Longmen Grottoes Academy (Longmen shiku yan-jiuyuan 龙门石窟研究院) and the Bureau for Cultural Relics of Luoyang (Luoyangshi wenwuju 洛阳市文物局).

From 1997 to 2004, the Chinese-Italian Mission conducted seven excavation campaigns, opening trial trenches in different areas of the site to obtain as much information as possible about its stratification. Additional campaigns were conducted in 2003 to consolidate building remains and in 2004 to study, draw, and photograph the finds.

The Fengxiansi complex is one of the few Chinese Buddhist monasteries to have been extensively excavated. The Italian and Chinese teams' efforts to gain the broadest possible understanding of the site and the surrounding area have already led to the publishing of several studies. Even before the beginning of the excavation, Wen Yucheng (1992) and Antonino Forte (1996) carried out studies of the monastery based on epigraphic sources. Wen Yucheng, who at the time was the director of the Longmen Grottoes Academy, had already published the results of the first survey of the site (Wen Yucheng 1986).

The first preliminary report, based on the excavation campaign of 1997, was published in volume 58 of the *Annali dell'Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli* (Verardi, Liu Jinglong 1998). This was followed by a second preliminary report published by the Chinese team, updated to 2001 (Fengxiansi 2001). Giovanni Verardi later provided a brief illustration of the structures and materials brought to light (Verardi 2001; 2005).

Erika Forte has focused on the inscriptions found on the site. She published one in 2003 and discussed another at the 50th Anniversary of the Longmen Grottoes Academy 2004 International Academic Symposium (Forte 2003; forth.).

Aurora Testa (2002) has conducted a detailed study of the sculptures brought to light at Fengxiansi, some of which have been shown at exhibitions in Japan (Miho Museum 2001), Belgium (Van Alphen 2001), and Italy (in Naples and, more recently, Florence; Caterina, Verardi 2005; Rastelli 2008).

Finally, Marco Guglielminotti Trivel (2004; 2005; 2006) has carried out further investigations of the Longmen area.

The present study is the first to concentrate mainly on the finds. It is divided in two parts. In the first one, the site, its stratigraphy, and the building structures brought to light are briefly described. The four periods in which the different use phases of the site have been grouped, the list of the units of stratification, and the matrix are to be regarded as a first step towards a more in-depth investigation. Indeed, all of the data presented in this part are to be regarded as preliminary. The final excavation report, presently being drawn up, will provide a much more detailed analysis and a finer periodization.

The second part is dedicated to the finds. Besides the pottery corpus, which, due to its size, requires a separate study, and the sculptures and inscriptions, which are already being investigated by other members of the mission, over 550 finds have been inventoried so far. I have chosen to focus mainly on architectural materials and decorations, especially those from the monastery. I also briefly illustrate other finds, notably metal objects, sundry every-day use objects, and coins.

The complete inventory of the finds will be presented in the final excavation report.

In my study of architectural decorations, I opted for a specifically archaeological approach, also in consideration of the fact that such materials are rarely dated. Western scholars prefer to study their function or symbolical meanings. The main reason for this is that architectural decorations from archaeological excavations are rarely available for study. The stratigraphic sequence of Fengxiansi hence offers an unprecedented opportunity. In China, scholars still tend to favour architectural reconstructions based on written and iconographic sources, and their dates are often based on the dynastic grid, which runs the risk of being ideological as well as chronological. I tried to go beyond these limitations.

In China archaeological research has seen a considerable boost in the last few years. An increasing number of excavation reports are being published, with consequent extension of the scope for comparison. Excavation techniques are in constant evolution, and more precise dating systems can be expected in the near future. It is my hope that Buddhist archaeology, so far all too neglected, will also be claiming the interest of scholars in the future, thus offering the possibility to place the material presented here in the broader context of the history of Buddhism in China.

While the responsibility for processing the data concerning the finds lies entirely with myself, it would have been impossible to carry out the related field work without the collaboration of the Chinese authorities, the Italian and Chinese archaeologists, the draftsmen, the photographers, and the local workers. Notably, I wish to thank the members of the Italian team: Enrica Cerchi, Stefano Coccia, Giulio Di Anastasio, Anna Giulia Fabiani, Erika Forte, Marco

Guglielminotti Trivel, Giannino Pastori, Aurora Testa, and the photographer Eugenio Monti. I am grateful to Prof. Silvio Vita for his commitment to the project. Thanks are also due to Elio Alongi and Daria Battista for their 3D renderings, and to all those who helped me with the publication of this book.

I express my deepest gratitude to Prof. Lucia Caterina, the Italian director of the project, for the confidence she always showed in me, and to Prof. Giovanni Verardi, fieldwork director of the Italian team, without whose teachings I would never have been able to complete this study. I will always be in their debt.

Finally, I wish to express all my gratitude to the undying memory of Prof. Antonino Forte, whose epigraphic studies led us to excavate the site.

PART ONE

THE SITE

1. INTRODUCTION

The city of Luoyang 洛阳, lying on the north bank of the Luo River 洛河, a tributary of the Yellow River, has since ancient times played a leading role in the political life of China, including, in certain periods, that of capital city. Luoyang was also one of the most important Buddhist centres of the empire. It was here, in 67 AD, that the Baimasi 白马寺, or White Horse Monastery – traditionally considered the first Chinese Buddhist monastery – came to be built.¹ Indeed, when the Indian religion was at its most widespread, during the Northern Wei 北魏 (386-534) and Sui 隋 (581-618) dynasties, and for most of the Tang 唐 dynasty (618-907), the city stood out as both a political and a religious centre. In fact, in 493 (Taihe 太和 17) Luoyang was chosen as capital by Xiaowendi 孝文帝 (r. 471-499), the seventh emperor of the Northern Wei dynasty. By the end of that dynasty the city alone contained 1367 of the roughly 30000 Buddhist monasteries then to be found in the empire (*Luoyang qielan ji* 5.349). The same period saw the excavation of the first sanctuaries cut in the limestone cliff along the banks of the Yi River 伊水, 12 km south of the modern city. The complex was to become famous with the name of Longmen 龙门, Dragon Gate, and was declared a world heritage of humanity site by UNESCO in 2000.

Buddhism continued to spread even when, in 581, after three centuries of divisions, the Chinese empire was reunited, and when Luoyang was designated Eastern Capital (Dongdu 东都) by the emperor Gaozong 高宗 (r. 649-683) in 657. Less subject to famine than Chang'an 长安 (present-day Xi'an 西安), the empire's major capital, and situated at the centre of a system of navigable canals making it readily accessible, Luoyang hosted the court for long periods of time. It was, moreover, from here that the empress Wu 武后 (Wu Zhao 武曌; ca 627-705) ruled the country having founded the Zhou 周 dynasty (690-705).

With imperial patronage new monasteries were built within and without the city walls, and the Longmen complex was further enhanced. In particular, as from her accession to the throne in 655 as consort to Gaozong, credit is due to the empress Wu for the birth of a great many rupestral sanctuaries including the most spectacular of all, commissioned in 662 and raised between 672 and 676 (pl. Ia).²

This sanctuary is known both as Da Lushena xiang kan, 大卢舍那像龕 (Cave of the Great Vairocana Statue) and, more commonly, as Fengxiansi 奉先寺, from the name of the monastery having control over it.³ In fact, the

¹ On Baimasi and other still extant ancient buildings in Luoyang, see He Guanbao (1987).

² After 655, Gaozong and Wu Zhao often resided at Luoyang and in 684 the empress dowager moved the capital here. For an account of Wu Zhao's patronage in Longmen, see McNair (1994; 2007).

³ For an account of the modes of patronage over the cave, see McNair (1996; 2007: 111-22). For the sculptural complex, see Liu Jinglong (1995).

caves of the Longmen complex were in a sense dependent on the monasteries in the area, often taking their names.⁴ Scant study has so far been devoted to these monasteries⁵ or the nearby Buddhist necropolis and, significantly, monastery and rock-cut sanctuary have often been confused in the case of the Fengxiansi (Li Yukun 1980: 25-26).

Little is known of the events that took place in the area subsequent to the great repression of Buddhism in 842-845, but many monasteries were certainly abandoned, at least temporarily, and even destroyed.⁶

Although much of the fervour of the previous centuries had been lost, activities associated with Buddhism also continued during the period of the Five Dynasties 五代 (907-960)⁷ and the Northern Song 北宋 dynasty (960-1127), when Luoyang was the auxiliary capital (Xijing 西京, Western Capital) of the empire. By the end of the Song dynasty Luoyang, and with it Longmen, was to lose its important role in the political and religious life of the country.

In general the historical sources on the monasteries in the Longmen area show considerable limitations, and are far from exhaustive, the Fengxiansi being no exception. The first mention of the monastery is to be found in the *Baoyujing* 宝雨经 and is dated 7 October 693. The sources makes mention of the abbot of the monastery, Huileng 慧棱, and attests to the fact that the Fengxiansi belonged to the category of the 'great' – *i.e.* dynastic – monasteries (Forte 1996: 375-79).

Almost all that was known of the Fengxiansi before the excavation campaigns was based on an inscription (probably dating to 723) displayed on the pedestal of the Rocana Buddha statue in the Longmen complex. This inscription, called *He Luo Shangdu Longmen shan zhi yang Da Lushena xiang kan ji* 河洛上都龙门山之阳大卢舍那像龕记, «Chronicle of the Cave of the Great Rocana Buddha to the south of the Longmen Mountain in the sovereign capital between the rivers He and Luo», was first translated by Chavannes (1915: 454-56) and recently reinterpreted by Forte (1996).

⁴ Such is the case of the sanctuaries known as Jingshansi 敬山寺 and Longhuasi 龙华寺. On the question see McNair (1996: 332; 2007: 104-10) and Testa (1998: 452, 456).

⁵ Marco Guglielminotti Trivel (2004; 2006) has summarized the archaeological evidence from the monastic settlements of the area; up to now, the Xiangshansi 香山寺 is the only monastery beside the Fengxiansi that has been object of stratigraphic excavation (Xiangshansi 1986).

⁶ After a series of restrictive interventions, in 845 (Huichang 会昌 5) the emperor Wuzong 武宗 adopted unprecedented measures against the Buddhist church: only one temple could be conserved in the most important prefectures, and four in the two capitals. All the other monasteries – some thousands – were to be destroyed, their assets confiscated and the monks reduced to lay condition. These measures were subsequently abrogated by the emperor Xuanzong 宣宗 (r. 847-859), but the Buddhist church would never completely recover from the blow.

⁷ During the period of the Five Dynasties, Luoyang was the capital of the Later Liang 后梁 (907-923) and Later Tang 后唐 (923-936).

Here I will summarise the essential points of the inscription following Forte's interpretation.

The foundation of the Fengxiansi monastery was decided on 25 September 679, three and a half years after completion of the sculptural complex in the homonymous cave. The monastery was situated to the south of the cave, accommodating fourteen monks. On 20 February 680 the tablet was offered bearing the name of the monastery, written by the emperor Gaozong, and sixteen more monks were assigned. No further events are recorded until 16 January 723, when incorporation of the Fengxiansi with the Longhuasi 龙华寺 monastery was ordained. The last date to appear in the inscription is 23 January 723, when an official letter was sent to the Fengxiansi.

The inscription does not tell us what led to the decision to merge the two monasteries, but here some help comes from the *Jiu Tang shu* 旧唐书 37.1357, which records the flood of the River Yi, destroying the Fengxiansi monastery on 23 February 722. It can be surmised that, instead of rebuilding the monastery, it was decided to incorporate it with the Longhuasi.⁸ In fact, we can gather from the expression «Longhuasi hezuo Fengxiansi» 龙华寺合作奉先寺, «The Longhuasi monastery and the Fengxiansi monastery work together», that the two monasteries rose close one to the other, but that the Longhuasi probably stood on higher ground and was thus safeguarded from the flood (Wen Yucheng 1992: 221). From this point in time on the sources make no further mention of the Longhuasi, while the Fengxiansi was to lose the status of 'dynastic monastery'.

Subsequent to 723, the Fengxiansi monastery was mentioned by Du Fu 杜甫 in the poem *You Longmen Fengxiansi* 游龙门奉先寺 (dated 736) and, in the 9th century, in the poem entitled *Xiu Xiangshansi* 修香山寺, where Bai Juyi 白居易 counts it among the 'ten monasteries' of Longmen. We also know that between the 8th and 9th centuries many Buddhist monks, including the Northern Chan master Yifu 义福 (658-736) and the master of Tantric Buddhism Vajrabodhi (Jingangzhi 金刚智 669-741) were buried in the north-east area of the monastery.

The monastery found further mention in the sources during the Northern Song dynasty, which is also the period of the inscriptions discovered in the course of the excavation, and on up to the Yuan 元 dynasty (1206-1368).

As we will see, the archaeological data have added much to this picture, providing evidence for the formulation of new hypotheses on the history of the monastery and, more generally, the history of Buddhism in the Longmen area.

⁸ Exactly when the Longhuasi was founded is still a matter of debate. Wen Yucheng (1992: 221) suggests dating it to the Northern Wei period, but archaeological investigation has so far failed to support the conjecture (cf. *infra*, 10).

2. THE PRELIMINARY SURVEYS

The site of Fengxiansi is situated on a small plateau at an altitude of about 180 m ASL, to the southwest of the Longmen complex and north of the village of Weiwan 魏湾 (fig. 1).⁹ The plateau consists of alternating loess and fluvial deposits attributable to the Pleistocene activity of the River Yi. The area morphology has been profoundly altered by human intervention. Long ago, in ancient times, the natural slope of the plateau had been levelled with the creation of a series of artificial terraces running north-south and west-east. Further terracing was carried out in modern times for agricultural exploitation of the area, in some cases entailing total removal of the archaeological deposit (pl. 1b).

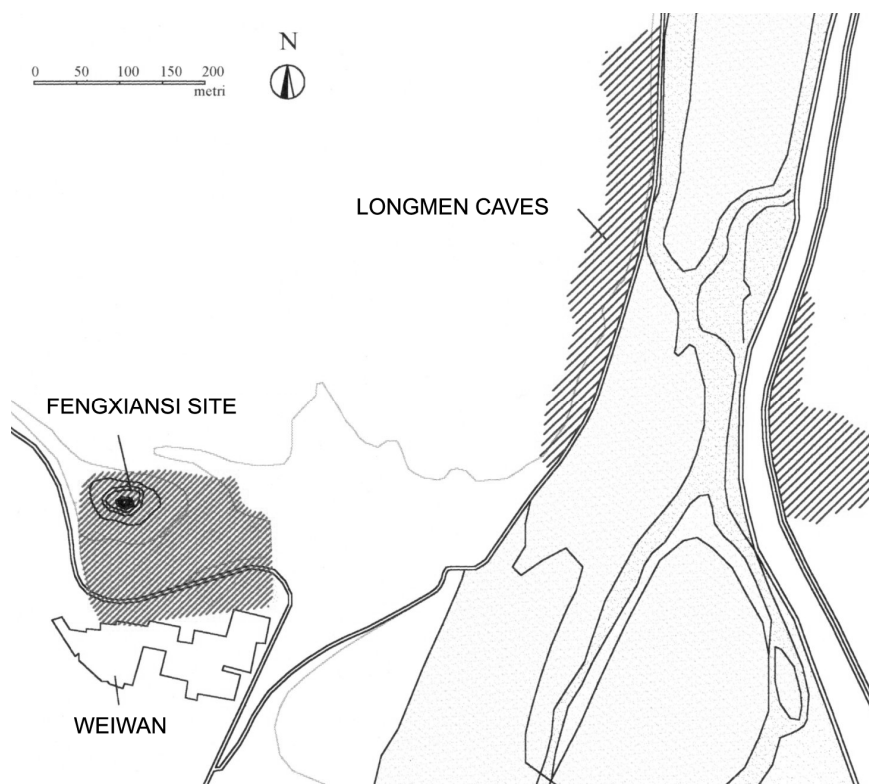


Fig. 1 – Weiwan village and excavation site.
Longmen Caves to the right. (Drawing by A.G. Fabiani).

⁹ For a description of the site, see also the report on the 1997 excavations (Verardi, Liu Jinglong 1998: 411-13), Forte (2003) and Verardi (2005).

The complex is bounded to the north by a deep ditch, while to the south the archaeological deposit is covered – and in part obliterated – by the modern village of Weiwan. The northern area – the best conserved – consists of three terraces created with fills of archaeologically sterile earth, the upper level rising about 7 metres above the lower. In the northeast corner of the site, on the upper terrace, the remains of the monastery *stūpa* (pl. Ic), built by compacting layers of tamped crude earth one upon another, rise for a height of about 10 metres (Verardi, Liu Jinglong 1998: 411-12).

Evidence of the remains of a monastery in this area was initially identified in the spring of 1981 when, during works on extension of the Luoyi gonglu 洛伊公路 – the highway crossing the site from east to west – the stone door of a tomb was found in the northwest area of the plateau. Measuring 133×144 cm, the door is decorated with parallel rows of bosses, *lokapāla*, *apsaras* and incised birds. Depicted in the lower corners are two *bhikṣu*, near which are inscribed the names of the ‘disciple Daoyan 道儼’ and ‘disciple Guangde 光德’. On the stylistic evidence the find is to be attributed to the mid-Tang dynasty (8th century), and Wen Yucheng (1986: 28) conjectures that it might have belonged to the tomb of the Northern Chan master Yifu.

Subsequent to this find initial survey was carried out in the area, rapidly revealing that the site had been badly damaged by agricultural activity and the construction of the Luoyi gonglu, together with the modern houses of the village of Weiwan further south. Nevertheless, evidence of pavement levels attributable to the monastic period appeared in the terrace cross-sections, while the remains of the *stūpa* were to be seen in the northwest area of the plateau. Various other objects were also found in this initial survey, including bricks, tiles and sherds, datable as from the Tang dynasty. A water pipe, also attributable to the monastery, was to be seen in one of the grottoes hollowed out in modern times along the sides of the plateau (Wen Yucheng 1986; Verardi, Liu Jinglong 1998: 410-11).

Subsequent to these first finds, a delegation from the Istituto Universitario Orientale of Naples visited the area in October 1994, preparing the way for the signing of an agreement which would allow for the start of excavations in the area in 1997.

3. THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION

Archaeological excavation of the Fengxiansi has been conducted mainly on the middle terrace, in the northern area of the site, where the deposit appeared best conserved. Since 1997 to the present day over 2500 m² were unearthed, mostly excavated by the Chinese team; while reference is to be made to the entire excavated area for an understanding of the monastery as a whole,

the stratigraphic sequence and diachronic development are best observable referring to the trial-trenches carried out by the Italian team.

Between 1997 and 2002 the Italian team dug seven trial-trenches in various parts of the site in order to have as complete as possible a picture of the situation (fig. 2).¹⁰

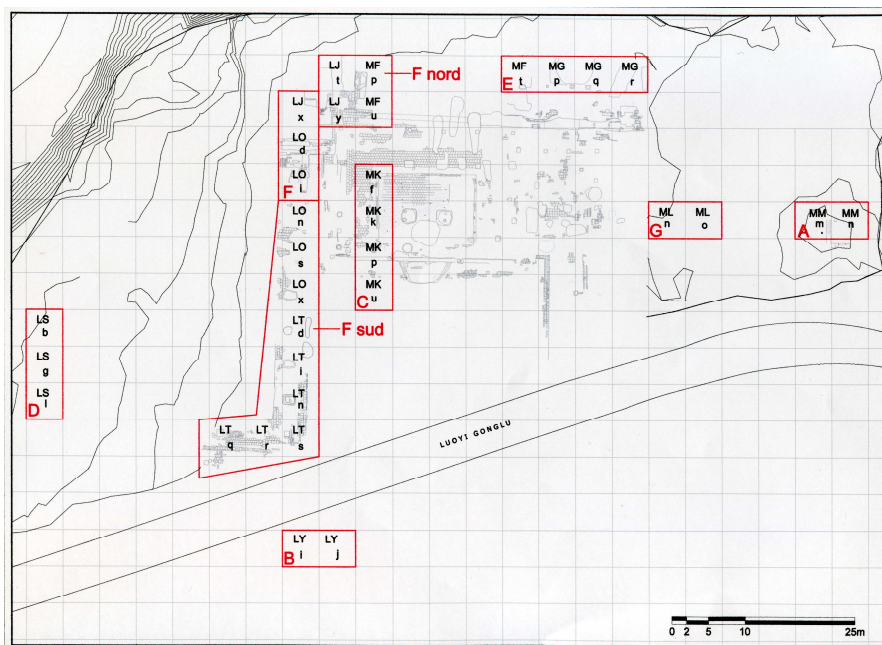


Fig. 2 – Site of the Fengxiansi. Excavation grid with the trenches excavated by the Italian team. (Drawing by A.G. Fabiani).

Trial-trench A, measuring 4×8 m, was opened in October 1997 in squares MMm/n, at the west end of the middle terrace. In this area of the site over three metres of deposit are conserved above the layers of frequentation of the 8th-century monastic period.

Trial-trench B, measuring 2×5 m, was cut in the same season in squares LYi/j in the southwest area of the site, on the other side of the Luoyi gonglu. Here the archaeological deposit appeared seriously damaged, no structures attributable to the monastic complex being brought to light. Evidence of an earlier period was however detected here (Verardi, Liu Jinglong 1998: 422).

¹⁰ Before beginning excavations, a reference grid was drawn up of 5×5 m, oriented to the north with a central M system, to be used for the positioning of the trenches.

In the autumn of 1999 Trial-trench C (5×20 m) was excavated in squares MKf/k/p/u, where an extensive stretch of pavement in fired bricks was conserved at about 1.30 m below the land surface. As we shall see in greater detail later on, this pavement can be dated between the late 9th and early 10th century and is thus associated with a second phase of the monastic complex.

Trial-trench D (5×15 m), in squares LSb/g/l, was opened in the spring of 2000 and completed in the autumn of the same year. Here, as also in the case of Trial-trench E (5×20 m), excavated in the spring of the following year in squares MFt, MGp/q/r, no structures attributable to the monastic complex were to be found. However, waste material from the kilns attested to a change in utilisation of the site datable to the end of the Northern Song dynasty (12th century).

Trial-trench F, in squares LJx, LOd/i, was excavated in the autumn of 2001, revealing the remains of a kiln that had been built on the monastery pavement, which was by now defunctionalized. It represents evidence confirming the data emerging in the previous years regarding the abandonment of the monastic structures.

In the autumn of 2002 Trial-trench F was extended southwards in squares LOn/s/x, LTd/i/n/q/r/s, revealing extensive stretches of paving and structures belonging to the second phase of the monastic complex. The excavation had been started upon by the Chinese team and we lack adequate documentation of the upper stratigraphy. In the same period two rooms dug in the loess in the northern area of the middle terrace (squares LJt/y, MFp/u) were brought to light: here, too, excavation had been begun by the Chinese team. A small trench (Trial-trench G) was also opened in squares MLn/o, in an area adjacent to Trial-trench A, for further verification of the data.

The Italian team also carried out limited controls and collected material in the area excavated by the Chinese colleagues. It has not so far proved possible to cut trenches under the pavement levels.¹¹

What emerges from the excavation is a long chronological sequence with practically uninterrupted frequentation of the site from the first centuries BC up to the 13th century AD. As a preliminary step, and in keeping with the aims of this study, I have grouped together the activities occurring on the site in four major chronological spans: Period I, with frequentation prior to the establishment of the monastery; Period II, during which the monastery was founded; Period III, during which the monastery was rebuilt; and Period IV, spanning the activities taking place on the site subsequent to abandonment of the monastic structures.¹²

¹¹ On the question see Verardi (2005: 86).

¹² A similar division into periods was presented by Verardi (2005). The excavation report, now being drawn up, will present a fuller breakdown of the phases.

4. PERIOD I (3RD CENTURY BC – SECOND HALF OF THE 7TH CENTURY AD)

Period I covers frequentation of the area before the monastery was founded.

Layers attributable to this period and, in particular, to activities datable to the end of the Warring States (Zhanguo 战国) period (475-221 BC) and the Western Han 西汉 dynasty (206 BC-8 AD), were excavated in trenches A (SUs 60, 65), B (SUs 1007, 1008, 1011 and 1012), D (SUs 605, 616, 618, 621, 622 and 623) and E (SU 727).

It has not yet proved possible to ascertain what function the area served in the closing centuries BC. Nor has it been possible – at least so far – to place the material and sherds datable to this period in interpretable contexts, but their very presence is significant.

In the early centuries of the Current Era the area was used as a burial place: two tombs datable to the Eastern Han 东汉 (25-220 AD), one of which complete with grave gifts, were excavated by the Chinese colleagues at the foot of the terrace on which the *stūpa* rises (squares LNI/m/n/q/s/y). Dug directly into the loess, the tombs conserve part of the brick facing (pl. IIa). In this part of the site agricultural activity has borne away almost all the archaeological deposit, and it has therefore proved impossible to reconstruct the entire stratigraphic sequence.

Evidence of intermediate frequentation, datable to the period of the Three Kingdoms 三国 (220-280) and the Southern and Northern Dynasties 南北朝 (420-589), emerged during the first excavation campaign but, here again, the archaeological deposit appeared too thoroughly disturbed for us to be able to reach any final conclusions about the activities performed in the area (Verardi, Liu Jinglong 1998: 422). Probably any evidence of this period in this area was obliterated when the monastery was founded. However, it is worth noting that no trace has been found of any monastic complex prior to the 7th century, which should rule out the hypothesis that the Longhuasi was founded during the Northern Wei dynasty (cf. *infra*, 5).

5. PERIOD II (LATE 7TH – MID-9TH CENTURY)

Period II saw foundation of the monastery.

Remains of structures were found in trench A, consisting of two stone foundations (SUs 54 and 55; pl. IIb), a wall (SU 58) and a basement in tamped earth (SU 63). These structures probably belonged to the Longhuasi monastery, with which the Fengxiansi was merged in 723 (Verardi, Liu Jinglong 1998: 416). To judge by the material brought to light, the Longhuasi is unlikely to have been founded before the end of the 7th century.

We may reasonably conjecture that these structures were abandoned in the 9th century, probably consequent upon the great repression of Buddhism in the years 842-845, never to be rebuilt.¹³ The layers (SUs 48, 51, 52, 53, 56 and 57) associated with abandonment and destruction contained material datable to, and no later than, the first half of the 9th century.

Also possibly belonging to the original monastery were the two rooms found in squares LJx/t and MFp/u, excavation of which is yet to be completed (pl. IIc).

Belonging to this initial monastic phase of the site from the very outset were the earliest sculptures found among the rubble that covered the central part of the terrace when life at the Fengxiansi came to an end.

The sculptures were found mostly by our Luoyang colleagues, who, as pointed out above, carried out extensive excavation on the site. The fragments came from various contexts: many were part of the layer of rubble covering the paving, while some were in direct contact with the pavement. A considerable number of fragments fitted together, and the original statues could thus be reconstructed, in some cases completely. The material used to sculpt the images is a grey limestone, obtained from the nearby Longmen rock formation. On the stylistic evidence the earliest of these statues can be dated precisely to the late 7th-early 8th century, thus belonging to a period in which the new Fengxiansi had yet to come into existence (Testa 2002). It is in fact this date that suggests they belonged to the Longhuasi, which is of course the monastery with which the Fengxiansi was eventually merged.

6. PERIOD III (LATE 9TH – 12TH CENTURY)

Period III is the most fully attested of the periods on the site. Attributable to this period are in fact the remains of the monastic complex found in the central terrace (fig. 3; pl. III).

Towards the mid-9th century the structures of the monastic establishment were abandoned in consequence, as we have seen, of a traumatic event. The area was probably reoccupied by the monastery after fifty years at the latest, and most of the structures were extensively restored or rebuilt, while the statues belonging to the original complex found new use.¹⁴ It may seem odd that

¹³ Epigraphic evidence of anti-Buddhist persecutions in the Longmen area has been found by Guglielminotti Trivel (2004). Although we cannot as yet state with certainty that the Fengxiansi was also involved in the events occurring between 842 and 845, the evidence so far brought to light seems to confirm the probability.

¹⁴ Excavation of the central terrace was mostly carried out by the Chinese team, and there was no opportunity to perform significant sondages below the pavement level. However, it seems probable that the Period II layers in this area were almost totally removed to allow for the monastery to be rebuilt.

no trace of any figurative Buddhist production whatsoever datable to this period has been found. In the late Tang period and under the Song Buddhism could be revived, but – at least to judge by the evidence of excavation – we can, it seems, only conclude that, deprived of imperial patronage, the monasteries that had been rebuilt or escaped repression remained devoid of the financial resources that had formerly served for the creation of grandiose iconographic programmes realised, in part, in stone.

Here I will only make brief mention of the structures found, referring to the second excavation report (now being drawn up), and the articles by Forte (2003) and Verardi (2005) for more detailed description.

The structures uncovered at the centre of the terrace, built on a basement of earth filling, in part compacted, belonged to a great quadrangular hall (25×17 m) accessed from the south by means of a trapezoidal ramp (SU 527; pl. IVa) connecting it with an external level. On either side of the ramp is a basement displaying slots for wooden fixtures (SUs 519 and 522), probably for an entrance portal of 3.40 m in breadth. The pavement in square bricks (34×34×6 cm; SU 511) and the bases of columns in stone (as SUs 558, 559, 560 and so on) are best conserved in the northern part. A drain with brick facing (SU 580) represents the northern limit of the hall.

Another structure (east hall), delimited by column bases SUs 568, 569, 570, 571 and 572, rose to the east of the first hall, access being again from the south, by means of a small ramp that still conserves its brick facing (SU 573; pl. IVb).

On the opposite side another hall (west hall), set symmetrically to the east hall, was delimited to the south by the drain SUs 891 and 912 and stretched in a north-south direction for the entire length of the courtyard giving access to the central hall. At the time of writing excavation of the latter hall is still in the initial stage (fig. 3).

During the 10th-11th centuries the monastery structures underwent further restoration works, as attested, for example, by Pavement 576, made of re-used bricks, and restoration of Drain 861.

A small kiln (SUs 9, 30 and 31) installed on the layers of abandonment of the original monastery in squares MMm/n which was functioning in this phase could have served for the restoration works (Verardi, Liu Jinglong 1998: 416-17, pls. IVb and Va). Roof-tiles and brick were technically simple to produce and easy to fire, and temporary tile kilns were established and dismantled whenever needed. It was in fact fairly common in this period for tile kilns to be set up in areas adjacent to the work yards. In 1998, for example, four kilns, of which three for producing bricks and tiles, were discovered east of the enclosure of the Baimasi monastery in Luoyang. Built in the 7th century and abandoned in the late Tang period, the kilns must have been built when Wu Zhao had the monastery enlarged (Baimasi 2005).

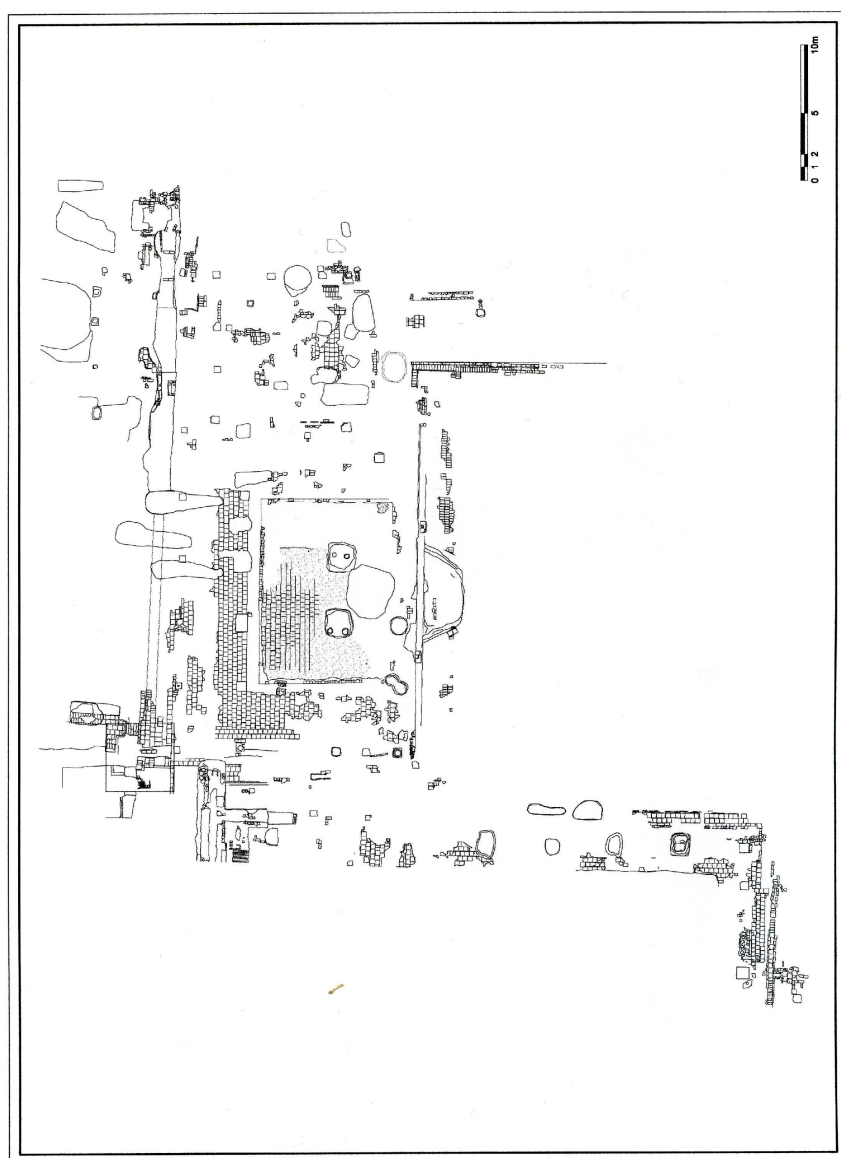


Fig. 3 – Site of the Fengxiansi. Plan of the structures in the excavated area.
(Drawing by A.G. Fabiani).

Evidence of this type in similar contexts has been observed also at Xi'an. In the Ciensi 慈恩寺 site, for example, at a distance of twenty metres from the Great Goose Pagoda (Dayanta 大雁塔) three kilns for tiles and bricks have been found which provided the materials necessary for the building work on the monastery (Han Baoquan 1986). The three kilns brought to light in the site of the Qinglongsi 青龙寺 monastery have been accounted for in the same way (Qinglongsi 1989: 248-51).

We know with certainty that the Fengxiansi continued to be a well-known monastery at least until the end of the 11th century. In fact, two inscriptions (WW-571 and 585) attesting to the existence of the monastery in this period have been found, dating to the mid-11th century and October 1081.¹⁵ Contrary to the evidence offered by the sources (cf. *infra*, 5), however, the life of the monastery came to an end shortly after, at least in the area so far investigated. Some of the structures were abandoned during the 12th century, while others were put to different uses. SU 846, in squares LTq/r, represents the only primary roof collapse on the site, offering material datable to, and no later than, the 12th century.

7. PERIOD IV (12TH–19TH CENTURY)

By the 12th or, at the latest, the 13th century the monastery had ceased to exist, and the site saw activities mainly associated with the presence of kilns on the site itself or in an adjacent area. A kiln of considerable dimensions (Kiln 818; pl. Va) installed on the monastery pavement, which had by then lost its original function, has in part been excavated in trial-trench F, and various other precarious structures probably connected with tending the fire have emerged in various parts of the site. Waste from the kilns has also been excavated in trial-trench D (SUs 630, 631, 632, 633 and 634), showing material dating largely to the 12th century.

At the same time, various rooms of the monastery were reused for different purposes while others were looted: in the central area, for example, the pavement in square bricks was removed, and a quadrangular area of 13×12 m was delimited with reused bricks (fig. 3). Structures built with rough technique were created over the Period III structures, while a number of stone bases were removed in the southwest area of the site (pl. Vb). Collapse of the monastery roof and of various other structures was attested in squares LTq/r (SUs 839, 846 and 848).

By the end of the 13th century activities on the site had ceased, and both the monastery structures and subsequent installations were covered by the lay-

¹⁵ WW-571 has been studied by Forte (2003: 131-41); for what it concerns WW-585 see Forte (forth.).

ers of rubble that began to form in this period. The find by the Chinese team of a string of coins (pl. Vc) provides us with a *terminus post quem* (first half of the 13th century) to date the abandonment of the kiln excavated in trench F.

Accumulations subsequent to the final abandonment of the structures led to the formation of an archaeological deposit of about 1.5 m on average.

An initial set of abandonment layers in trench C comprises SUs 515, 517, 518 and 520. These layers were in direct contact with the pavement levels but appeared to have been disturbed by levelling and stripping activities at a later date. Datable to the same period, *i.e.* between the end of the 13th and the 14th century, are the layers covering the Kiln 818 in squares LOd/i (SUs 805, 814, 816, 819, 820, 821, 823 and 826) and the layers of ash and rubble (SUs 701, 708, 709, 714 and 775) excavated in trench E.

A second set of abandonment layers is to be seen in trenches C (SUs 534, 539, 546, 547 and 548) and F (SUs 844, 845 and 850), in direct contact with the interface of spoliation of the monastery structures, largely yielding material attributable to the superstructures of the latter and sherds datable at the latest to the 13th century.

In the 18th-19th century the site began to see use as a burial place (SU 650). In many cases the graves cut through the abandonment levels, obliterating the Period III structures. Attributable to this stage are SUs 506 and 507, filling a large pit found at the centre of trench C, SU 532, and SUs 601, 603 and 649. These layers contained highly diversified material datable from the 11th to the 18th century.

In modern times the area has been used mainly for agricultural purposes and, again, as a burial place. With continual levelling and grave digging the residual material from the monastery complex has been brought to the surface and is thus also found in the layers of recent formation (SUs 1, 2, 3, 500, 501, 503, 504, 505, 624, 700, 800, 801, 807).

8. LIST OF THE UNITS OF STRATIFICATION AND MATRIX

The list of the units of stratification and the Harris matrix refer solely to the layers that yielded the material presented in this study.

The matrix and list of the units of stratification of trenches A and B are published in full in the first excavation report (Verardi, Liu Jinglong 1998: 418-23). A complete matrix is now being prepared and will be published in the next excavation report.

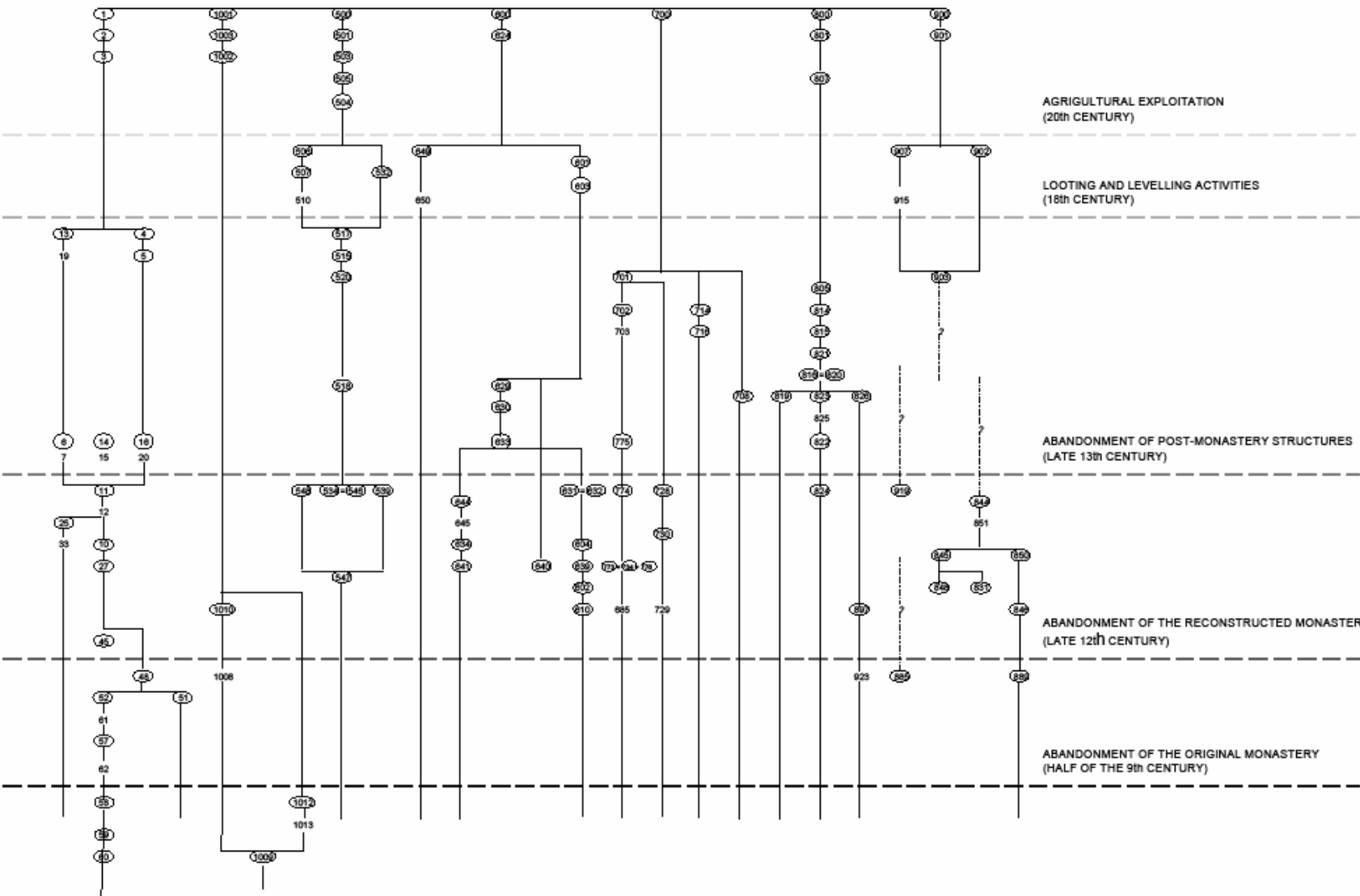
List of the Units of Stratification

SU	Trench	Squares	Description
SU 1	A	MMm/n	Topsoil.
SU 2	A	MMm/n	Layer of silty soil formed by modern accumulation distinguished from SU 1 by the different colour.
SU 3	A	MMm	Accumulation layer consisting of tiles laying flat in the southeast corner of the square.
SU 4	A	MMm/n	Silty layer in the northern part of the trench. Similar to SU 1.
SU 5	A	MMm/n	Accumulation layer in the northern part of the trench showing mainly silty matrix with rubble.
SU 6	A	MMm/n	Silty layer characterised by the presence of ash; fills pit 7.
SU 7	A	MMm/n	Pit, roughly quadrangular in shape; cuts SU 13; filled by SU 6.
SU 10	A	MMm/n	Accumulation layer characterised by the presence of rubble; cut by Pits 12, 19 and 20.
SU 11	A	MMm	Fill of Pit 12; cut by SU 15.
SU 12	A	MMm	Pit in the northeast part of the trial-trench; cuts SU 10; filled by SU 11.
SU 13	A	MMm/n	Layer characterised by marked presence of tiles; cut by SU 7; fills Pit 19.
SU 14	A	MMm	Silty layer with ash and ceramic material; fills Hole 15.
SU 15	A	MMm	Posthole (?); cuts SU 11; filled by SU 14.
SU 16	A	MMm	Layer of fill in the western area of the trench; fills Pit 20.
SU 19	A	MMm/n	Hollow to the south of the trench; cuts SU 10; filled by SU 13.
SU 20	A	MMm	Roughly circular hollow; cuts SU 10; filled by SU 16.
SU 25	A	MMn	Layer in the south-eastern corner of the trench, characterised by charcoal; fills Pit 33.
SU 27	A	MMm/n	Accumulation layer with few inclusions; cut by Pit 33.
SU 33	A	MMn	Hollow; cuts SU 27; filled by SU 25; cut through for the construction of SU 9. ¹⁶

¹⁶ SU 9 is a small kiln or oven built with unbaked bricks and reused material.

SU 45	A	MMn	Accumulation layer characterised by yellowish and reddish patches in the western part of the trench.
SU 48	A	MMn	Abandonment layer in the eastern part of the trench, characterised by marked presence of ceramics and rubble.
SU 51	A	MMn	Silty friable layer similar to SU 48 but with fewer inclusions.
SU 52	A	MMn	Friable light-brown layer, with fragments of tiles; fills Pit 61.
SU 57	A	MMn	Reddish layer characterised by the presence of tiles and pottery; cut by Pit 61; fills Pit 62.
SU 58	A	MMn	Structure orientated north-south with a foundation of compacted earth; fills Pit 59.
SU 59	A	MMn	Rectangular foundation pit; cuts SU 60; filled by SU 58.
SU 60	A	MMn	Layer of accumulation in the north-west zone of the trench; cut by Pit 62.
SU 61	A	MMn	Pit in the western part of the trench; cuts SU 57; filled by SU 52.
SU 62	A	MMn	Pit in the northern part of the trench; cuts SU 60; filled by SU 57.
SU 500	C	MKf/k/p/u	Topsoil.
SU 501	C	MKp/u	Ploughed surface layer, distinct from 500 by the presence of reddish patches.
SU 503	C	MKf/k/p/u	Accumulation layer characterised by the presence of pebbles.
SU 504	C	MKp/u	Accumulation layer composed of silty soil, in the southern part of the trench.
SU 505	C	MKf	Silty layer in the northern part of the trench.
SU 506	C	MKf	Silty layer with abundant rubble; fills Pit 510.
SU 507	C	MKf	Silty matrix layer, yellow in colour; fills Pit 510.
SU 510	C	MKf	Pit, roughly rectangular in plan, in the northern zone of the trench; cuts SU 517; filled by SUs 506 and 507.
SU 515	C	MKf/k/p	Silty layer characterised by abundant rubble.
SU 517	C	MKf/k/p/u	Compact silty layer with few inclusions; cut by Pit 510.
SU 518	C	MKf/k/p/u	Abandonment layer showing silty soil with scant rubble, in contact with the pavement levels.

SU 520	C	MKk/p	Abandonment layer showing silty soil with rubble.
SU 532	C	MKp/u	Accumulation layer characterised by the presence of pebbles.
SU 534	C	MKp	Layer of abandonment showing silty soil characterised by abundant rubble.
SU 539	C	MKp	Layer showing silty soil with few inclusions.
SU 546	C	LOt, MKq/v	Abandonment layer showing silty soil characterised by abundant rubble.
SU 547	C	LOt, MKq/v	Silt layer with few inclusions.
SU 548	C	LOt, MKp/q/ v	Layer characterised by marked presence of lime.
SU 600	D	LSb/g/l	Topsoil.
SU 601	D	LSb/g/l	Very compact layer of silt with pebbles.
SU 602	D	LSb/g	Layer showing silty soil with abundant potsherds.
SU 603	D	LSb	Layer showing silty soil characterised by abundant rubble.
SU 604	D	LSb	Layer showing silty soil characterised by abundant rubble. Very compact.
SU 610	D	LSb	Layer characterised by great concentration of pebbles.
SU 624	D	LSb	Reddish layer in the northern part of the trench.
SU 629	D	LSg/l	Layer showing silty-sandy soil.
SU 630	D	LSg/l	Layer showing silty soil with ash.
SU 631	D	LSg/l	Layer of ash and coals with abundant potsherds (kiln waste?) in the western part of the trench.
SU 632	D	LSg/l	Layer of ash and coals with abundant potsherds in the eastern part of the trench. Similar to SU 631.
SU 633	D	LSg/l	Accumulation layer with abundant rubble.
SU 634	D	LSg/l	Layer showing silty-sandy soil with abundant rubble; cut by Posthole 645.
SU 639	D	LSb	Layer of pebbles with few inclusions.
SU 640	D	LSb	Layer of ash and coals.
SU 641	D	LSb/g	Levelling layer, very compact with few inclusions; cut by Posthole 645.
SU 644	D	LSg	Layer, circular in shape, in the central part of the trench; fills Posthole 645.
SU 645	D	LSg	Posthole; cuts SUs 634 and 641; filled by SU 644.
SU 649	D	LSl	Layer with pebbles and rubble; fills Tomb 650.



SU 650	D	LSI	Tomb in the south-western corner of the trench, cut in the natural soil; filled by SU 649.
SU 685	E	MFv/w/ x/y	Interface of destruction of Drain 580; filled by SUs 734 and 773.
SU 700	E	MFt, MGp/q/r	Topsoil.
SU 701	E	MFt	Layer with abundant rubble in the western part of the trench.
SU 702	E	MFt/y	Silt layer with ceramics in the south-western zone of the trench; fills Tomb 703.
SU 703	E	MFt/y	Tomb; cuts SU 775; filled by SU 702.
SU 708	E	MGr	Layer of ash in the eastern zone of the trench.
SU 714	E	MGr	Layer showing silty soil, in the north-eastern part of the trench.
SU 716	E	MGr	Layer grey-brown in colour, in the eastern part of the trench.
SU 728	E	MFt, MGp/q	Layer characterised by abundant rubble and stones; fills Pit 729.
SU 729	E	MFt, MGp/q	Pit oriented E-W; filled by SUs 728 and 730.
SU 730	E	MFt, MGp/q	Layer showing silty soil with scant rubble; fills Pit 729.
SU 734	E	MFy	Layer characterised by the presence of lime and rubble; fills Drain 685.
SU 773	E	MFy	Layer characterised by abundant rubble.
SU 774	E	MGu	Accumulation layer, reddish in colour, with abundant rubble.
SU 775	E	MFy	Accumulation layer with rubble and lime; cut by Tomb 703.
SU 776	E	MGv/w	Same as SU 734.
SU 800	F	LJx, LOd/i/n	Topsoil.
SU 801	F	LJx, LOd/i/n	Layer of silty soil.
SU 805	F	LOd	Accumulation layer characterised by abundant rubble and lime.
SU 807	F	LOd	Accumulation layer showing silty matrix with few inclusions.
SU 814	F	LOd	Abandonment layer with ash and rubble.
SU 815	F	LJx, LOd	Abandonment layer with rubble.

SU 816	F	LJx, LOd/i	Accumulation layer with rubble, lime and coal (kiln waste?).
SU 818	F	LOd/i	Remains of kiln built with bricks, tiles and reused material.
SU 819	F	LOd/i	Accumulation layer with rubble.
SU 820	F	LOi	Same as SU 816.
SU 821	F	LOd/i	Layer of abandonment of Kiln 818.
SU 822	F	LOd	Layer of abandonment of Structure 824; cut by Pit 825.
SU 823	F	LOd/i	Layer showing silty soil with few inclusions; fills Pit 825.
SU 824	F	LOd	Plastered structure belonging to kiln SU 818; cut by Pit 825.
SU 825	F	LOd/i	Pit, elliptical in shape (chimney destruction?); cuts SUs 822 and 824; filled by SU 823.
SU 826	F	LOd	Layer showing silty soil with few inclusions.
SU 831	F	LTq/r	Abandonment layer, brown in colour, with rubble.
SU 844	F	LOs/x	Layer characterised by abundant rubble; fills Pit 851.
SU 845	F	LTq/r/s	Abandonment layer characterised by marked presence of rubble.
SU 846	F	LTq/r	Collapse layer characterised by marked presence of building materials.
SU 848	F	LTq	Abandonment layer characterised by strong concentration of mortar and presence of rubble.
SU 850	F	LOs/x, LTd/i/n/ s	Abandonment layer showing silty soil with much rubble; cut by Pit 851.
SU 851	F	LOs/x	Large pit, irregular in shape, to the north of the trench; cuts SU 850; filled by SU 844.
SU 885	F	LJx	Layer of destruction of Room 1.
SU 889	F	LTr/s	Accumulation layer showing silty soil, yellow in colour, with few inclusions.
SU 897	F	LJx	Silty layer with rubble; fills Pit 923.
SU 900	G	MLn/o	Accumulation of very compact soil, yellowish-brown in colour.
SU 901	G	MLn/o	Accumulation layer characterised by abundant rubble.
SU 902	G	MLo	Rubble layer located on the southern limit of the square.

SU 903	G	MLn/o	Levelling layer with few inclusions; cut by Pit 915.
SU 907	G	MLo	Layer with marked presence of ash; fills Pit 915.
SU 915	G	MLo	Pit, circular in plan, in the south-eastern part of the trench; cuts SU 903; filled by SU 907.
SU 919	G	MFp/u	Layer of destruction of Room 2.
SU 923	F	LJx	Foundation of wood structure (?) in the northern part of the trench; cuts natural soil; filled by SU 897.
SU 1001	B	LYi/j	Topsoil.
SU 1002	B	LYi/j	Accumulation layer showing silty soil.
SU 1003	B	LYi/j	Accumulation layer characterised by abundant rubble.
SU 1008	B	LYi	Storage pit; cuts SU 1009; filled by SU 1010.
SU 1009	B	LYi	Layer with very little potsherd above natural soil; cut by Pits 1008 and 1013.
SU 1010	B	LYi	Layer with ash and coal; fills Pit 1008.
SU 1012	B	LYi	Layer showing grey silty soil; fills Pit 1013.
SU 1013	B	LYi	Pit; cuts SU 1009; filled by SU 1012.

PART TWO

THE FINDS

9. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

The artefacts presented in this study were almost exclusively found in the excavation trenches performed by the Italian team. It amounts to a partial – albeit representative – sample of the finds accomplished on the site. It is desirable that in the near future, thanks to the work of Chinese colleagues, all the materials coming from the excavation may be jointly published.

Nearly 560 finds have been inventoried, showing considerable variety and covering a fairly extensive chronological span. Study of the finds began with identification and cataloguing of the objects – tasks that often proved challenging given their fragmentary conditions. Initial classification was made grouping the material together in four broad classes: architectural decorations and building materials, coins, metal objects, and furnishings. This study focuses on the architectural features, that clearly predominate, a considerable number of which relating to the monastery structures. A brief description is given of the finds of Periods I and IV and some remarks on the coins – which need a detailed study – are made with the aim of establishing an absolute chronology.

Within each class distinction was made in terms of the various *forms*, *types*, *sub-types* on the basis of functional criteria. For example, for the *class* of architectural decorations and building materials we have the *form*, tile-end, *type*, tile-end, circular in shape, with lotus flower decoration, *sub-type*, eight-petalled flower, and so on.

Grouping the finds according to classes was nothing but a preliminary step. The major effort was to ascribe as precise as possible a chronological horizon to the finds on the basis of the site's stratigraphy, and comparison with dated material from similar contexts.

The greatest difficulties resulted from the fact that hardly any of the finds were found in primary deposit, while early material was often found in recently formed layers. However, comparison with objects found in undisturbed units of stratification and a careful examination of their horizontal distribution allowed me to re-contextualize the majority of the finds.

The other fundamental criterion adopted to study the material was, as we have seen, comparison with similar finds from sites in the cities of Luoyang and Xi'an. The field was limited essentially to these two areas for a number of reasons. To begin with, all the finds are of local manufacture or show characteristics distinguishing them clearly from the productions of other regions in China. It was decided to extend consideration to material found in Xi'an as responding to similar patronage, Xi'an being the other capital of the empire for the Tang period. Moreover, the few extensive excavations of Buddhist monasteries so far carried out in China have been made mainly in these two areas, which thus offer the contexts closest to those of our excavation.

The most significant study sources are the excavation reports published over the last fifty years by the Institute of Archaeology of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan kaogu yanjiusuo 中国社会科学院考古研究所) and the Luoyang Bureau for Cultural Relics (Luoyangshi wenwuju 洛阳市文物局) for the sites of the Dongdu (Eastern Capital) of the Sui and Tang periods and the Xijing (Western Capital) of the Northern Song dynasty, situated in the eastern part of the modern city of Luoyang.¹⁷ Another precious source of information is the report on the archaeological investigation from 1992 to 1995 in the imperial necropolis of the Northern Song at Gongyi 巩义, 50 km to the east of Luoyang (Henan 1997a). Also of great interest, finally, has proved comparison with the material from the imperial residences of Chang'an, including the Daminggong 大明宫 (Daminggong 1997; 1998; 2001; 2005; 2006; 2007) and Huaqinggong 华清宫 (Luo Xizhe 1998), and from Buddhist monasteries such as the Qinglongsi (Qinglongsi 1989) and Ciensi (Han Baoquan 1986).

Here we must point out that quite often these reports do not offer exhaustive documentation. Some material – for example the metal objects – hardly ever finds publication, while most of the dates proposed cover quite a broad chronological span, being generally based on dynasties. Moreover, precise stratigraphic provenance is often missing for finds published before the 1990s.

The only way to narrow down dating of the finds was to make cross comparison between the data provided by the above-mentioned reports and other archaeological investigations and those emerging from our excavation. Thanks to this endeavour it is not only possible to present a descriptive catalogue of the material but also to arrange it according to the proposed periodization.

Within each Period the objects are grouped in the various *forms*. The paragraph introducing the objects descriptions for each type of material include remarks on the relevant problems and further chronological subdivisions. Following these paragraphs the objects are listed in progressive inventory number in order to facilitate consultation. The description of each object contains, in the following order, description of the object, material, size, state of preservation (if required) and stratigraphic provenance. All the references are presented in the introductory paragraph.

¹⁷ The Institute of Archaeology has been investigating the Dongdu since 1950s. The main field work areas are in the Imperial City (Huangcheng 皇城), Palace City (Gongcheng 宫城) and at the city gates. On the layout of the city, see Dongdu (1961; 1978; 1989a; 1989b; 2000). For a summary of the activities of the Institute both in Luoyang and Xi'an see CASS (2000).

10. THE FINDS OF PERIOD I (pl. VI)

Only five objects, none of which found in its original context, can be attributed to this Period. Despite the fact that frequentation of the site in an age prior to the foundation of the monastery is attested by the tombs of the Later Han Period (25-220 AD; pl. IIa), excavated in the spring of 2000, one of which complete with grave goods, and by various ceramic fragments, it has not been possible to reconstruct the earlier sequence satisfactorily given the impossibility of carrying out excavation below the floors of the monastery. Moreover, it is quite probable that the layers associated with frequentation of the area between the Han period and the establishment of the monastery were interfaced when the foundations were laid.

WW-570 is a potsherd reworked to be given a circular shape and reused. The sherd, decorated on one face with incised horizontal bands, is of a class datable to the early centuries BC, other fragments of which have been found on the site. The object in question could be a 'pottery disc', a token probably used to record performance of work in an unlettered society. In this case it would prove an important discovery, given that such material is not generally listed in the Chinese excavation reports, and never with this interpretation. Pottery discs are in fact of widespread occurrence from the Mediterranean to India and Southeast Asia. In the Ganges valley, for instance, pottery discs are attested as from the 2nd millennium BC up to the early centuries of the Current Era. Over the years various – but generally unconvincing – theories have been advanced on their function. Recently, in the light of the excavations carried out in the Nepalese Terai, they have been interpreted by Verardi (2007: 235-40) as tokens, used to keep a record of the work done by pieceworkers. Such use in a society like that of China, enjoying a written language from the earliest times, may seem anomalous, but we must bear in mind that writing was the prerogative of an elite, and that the pottery disc system, as interpreted by Verardi, offered a simple, efficient means for the control of labour.

For WW-570 the only significant comparison which can be made in the Chinese world is with the discs found (and published) by the archaeological team of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences during excavation of a Han period tile and brick kiln in Xi'an (Beigong 1996: 30). Here the discs, obtained from fragments of both brick and pottery, have a diameter ranging between 4 and 7 cm (fig. 4). The Chinese archaeologists interpreted them as 'supports', *zhidian* 支垫, but the very fact that they were found in a kiln site represents evidence tending to favour interpretation as tokens.¹⁸

WW-50 is a hollow brick (*kongxin zhuan* 空心砖) fragment characteristic of the Han period. Its decoration, set in squares of 3.8 cm sides, is known in

¹⁸ The issue of pottery discs in China is really interesting and I hope to study it in depth in the near future.

China as ‘cloud ornament’ (*yunwen* 云纹) and similar examples are to be found on a great many tile-ends of the period (Zhao Liguang 1998: 200-53). Bricks very similar to WW-50 were found during the excavation of a Han dynasty site on the eastern bank of the Jianhe 涧河 River in Luoyang carried out by the Institute of Archaeology in the 1950s (Henan 2007: 81, fig. 9.2) and at the site of Jinyongcheng 金墉城 (Jinyongcheng 1999: 4), also in Luoyang, in layers dated to the Eastern Han period (fig. 5).¹⁹ The fragment can be dated between the 1st century BC and the 1st century AD.

WW-324 is the earliest coin found on the site.²⁰ It is a *Huoquan* 货泉 coin, issued by Wang Mang 王莽 during his short interregnum in the early years of the Current Era (9-23 AD). In 14 AD Wang Mang changed the monetary system, introducing two types of coins: the *Huoquan*, which was circular in shape, and the *Huobu* 货布, which was shovel-shaped, and worth 25 *Huoquan*.

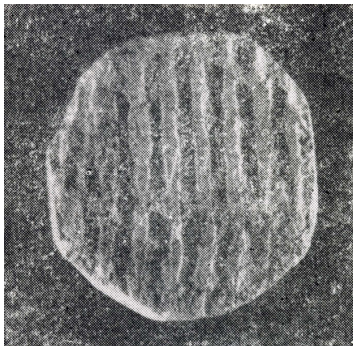


Fig. 4 – Pottery disc (?).
(From Beigong 1996: fig. 19).



Fig. 5 – Hollow brick.
(From Jinyongcheng 1999: fig. 5.2).

¹⁹ Jinyongcheng was a fortified area the Wei 魏 (220-265) retreated to in 265 when they were overthrown by the Western Jin 西晋 (265-317). A new plan for the city was initiated by Northern Wei in 493, when they moved the capital to Luoyang (Steinhardt 1999: 83). The archaeological research on the Han-Wei Luoyang sites started in the 1950s. The excavation reports are collected in various anthologies, most recently Yang Zuolong, Mao Yangguang (2007) and Du Jinpeng, Qian Guoxiang (2007).

²⁰ As I pointed out above, I will be making only a few remarks on coins in this study. For surveys of the history of Chinese coins with which to supplement this account, I refer to Thierry (1997; 2003) and Hartill (2005); on the coins found in Luoyang, see Cai Yunzhang, Li Yunxing (1993).

In 40 AD the Han dynasty, back in power by then for seventeen years, resumed use of the monetary system based on the *Wuzhu* 五铢 («Coin worth five *zhu*»), and the *Huoquan* coins disappeared from circulation.

WW-324 has a diameter of 2 cm, little short of the prescribed diameter of 2.3 cm, and weighs only 2.2 g, while coins of this type generally exceeded 3.5 g in weight (Zhu Huo 1998: 43-46). It can be conjectured that it is a forged coin of the period.

WW-123 is a *Wuzhu* coin. This coin was introduced by emperor Wudi 武帝 (r. 140-87 BC) of the Western Han in 118 BC and continued to be cast – albeit intermittently – up to the beginning of the Tang dynasty.²¹ The characteristics shown by WW-123 – diameter 2.2 cm, weight a mere 1.2 g, well below the prescribed weight – suggest that it was issued at a somewhat later date.²² The form of the character *wu* bears out this hypothesis, reminiscent of the *Wuzhu* coins issued in the 6th century. From the sources we know that during the Northern Wei dynasty an issue of *Wuzhu* came out in the third year of the Yongping 永平 reign period (510 AD), and that two further issues appeared in the 6th and 12th years of the Datong 大统 era (540 and 546 AD) of the Western Wei 西魏 (535-556).²³ The coin found at the Fengxiansi is likely to have been cast on one of these three occasions.

Again datable to the 6th century is coin WW-214, which bears the inscription *Changping wuzhu* 长平五铢 («Coin worth five *zhu* always equal»). This type of coin was issued by the emperor Wenxuandi 文宣帝 (r. 550-559) of the Northern Qi 北齐 dynasty (550-577) in the fourth year of the Tianbao 天保 reign period (554) and is marked out by its high quality and typological regularity, with a diameter generally of 2.5 cm (Zhu Huo 1998: 62).

WW-50 Fragment of hollow brick with decoration on the exposed face obtained with square moulds in a check pattern showing a ‘cloud’ motif.

Grey terracotta; 10.2 × 7.1 × 2.5 cm.
Squares MMm/n, SU 5.

WW-123 Circular coin with square hole in the middle.
Obverse: *Wuzhu* two-character inscription to be read from right to left.
Reverse: off-centre matrix.
Bronze; diam. 2.2 cm; weight 1.2 g.
Corroded.
Square LYi, SU 1001.

²¹ Unlike Western coins, Chinese coins were produced by casting (Hartill 2005: xviii).

²² *Wuzhu* literally means «five grains», and refers to the weight of the coin, *i.e.* 3.2-3.3 grams.

²³ *Wei shu* – *Shihuo zhi* 食货志.

- WW-214 Circular coin with square hole in the middle.
Obverse: *Changping wuzhu* four-character inscription to be read from top downwards and from right to left.
Reverse: blank.
 Bronze; diam. 2.5 cm; weight 4 g.
 Square LKt, unstratified.
- WW-324 Circular coin with square hole in the middle.
Obverse: *Huoquan* two-character inscription to be read from right to left.
Reverse: blank.
 Bronze; diam. 2 cm; weight 2 g.
 Square LSg, SU 633.
- WW-570 So-called 'pottery disc', with one side engraved with parallel bands.
 Grey earthenware; diam. 3.9 cm; th. 0.5 cm.
 Squares LTr/s, SU 889.

11. THE FINDS OF PERIOD II

The units of stratification serving as 'stratigraphic guide' for dating the finds attributable to this period are SUs 48, 51, 52 and 57. These are the layers of abandonment of the structures found in trench A, sealed off by the small Kiln 9 probably built in the 10th century.

To date these finds, the study of their horizontal distribution was particularly useful. It was in fact noted that, apart from the coins, which were in use for longer periods of time, almost all the material attributable to this phase comes from the eastern sector of the site (fig. 6). Some of the finds, found in more recent layers, are to be considered residual. It should be borne in mind that by the Song period this area had already lost its function, while the central area saw radical restoration works. In the restructured areas the material datable before the second half of the 9th century is extremely scant, apart from the statues.²⁴ This bears out our conjecture that what we see here is not so much restoration as nothing short of rebuilding, during which only the noble materials were conserved.

²⁴ The Chinese colleagues, who excavated the central area extensively, found only two fragments of tile-ends datable to the Tang period.

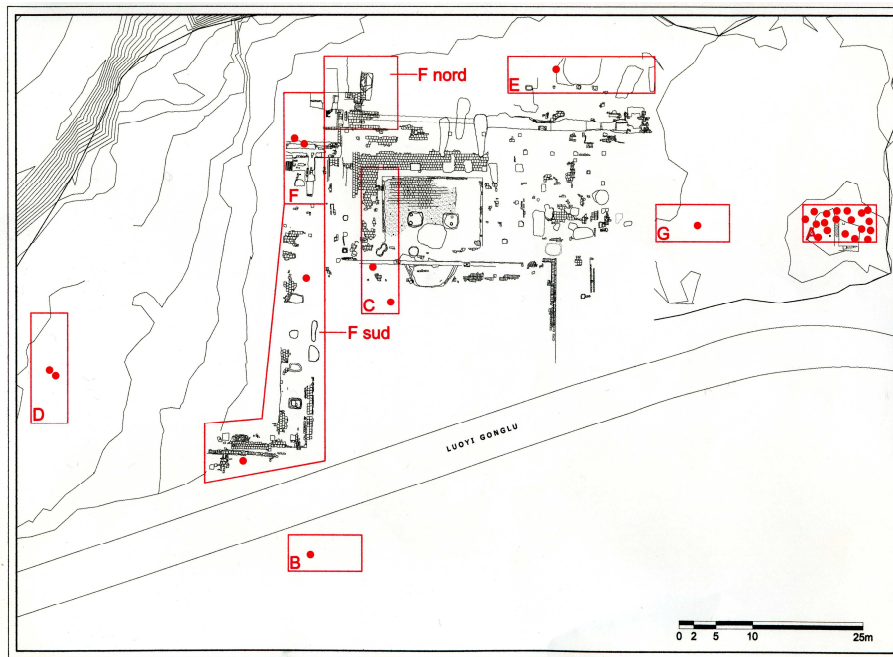


Fig. 6 – Site of the Fengxiansi. Finding location of the architectural material of Period II. (Drawing by A.G. Fabiani).

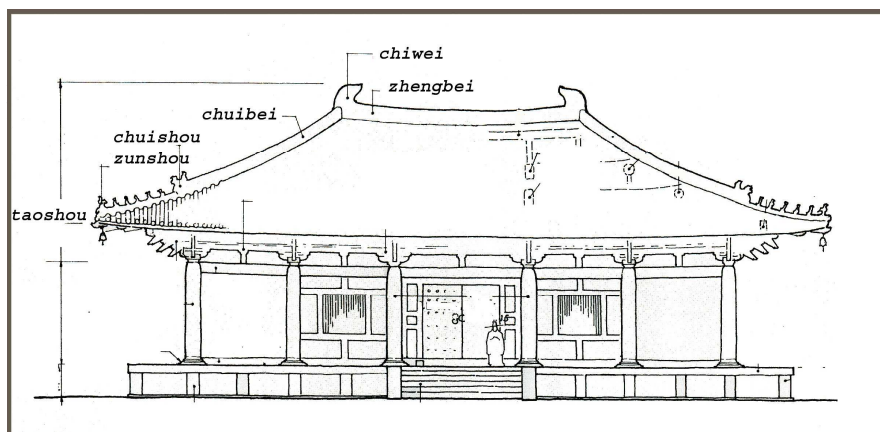


Fig. 7 – Sketch of Chinese traditional roof. (After Liang Ssu-Cheng 1984: fig. 1).

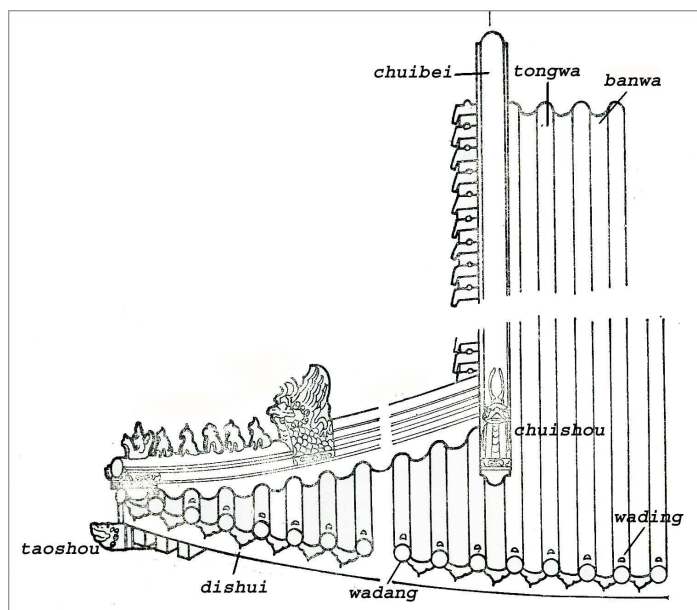


Fig. 8 – Sketch of Chinese traditional roof.
(After Liu Dake 2001: fig. 5.48).

Most of the fragments belong to architectural decoration. As is the case with the other Buddhist monasteries, the framework of columns and horizontal beams, made in perishable materials, does not survive. The wooden pillars, now lost, supported roofs covered with tiles, great quantities of which were found all over the area. Figs. 7 and 8 give some of the terms indicating the constituent elements of the roofs which will be found in the text. It should be borne in mind that roofs in China were normally covered with two types of tiles, already in use in the 1st millennium BC, set in rows running from the ridge to the eaves: the first is semi-cylindrical in shape with the convex part facing outwards, serving as over-tile – denominated *tongwa* 筒瓦; the second type – denominated *banwa* 板瓦 – consists of everted tiles, slightly arched and broader than the former type. It is similar to the western pantile, serving as flat roof tile or under-tile. The eaves are decorated with mould-cast ends. The *tongwa* tile-ends, generally circular or semicircular in shape, are called *wadang* 瓦当, term generally translated as tile-end; the flat tile ends are generally called *dishui* 滴水 («eaves»), while the flat tiles with decorated edges are usually called *huatou banwa* 花头板瓦 or *chongchun banwa* 重唇板瓦, the latter distinction being made solely on account of the form and type of decoration.²⁵

²⁵ The terms *huatou banwa* and *chongchun banwa* are actually used in *juan* 13 of the *Yingzao fashi*, the well-known compendium of Chinese traditional architecture published by Li Jie in

The roof ridges, *zhengbei* 正背 («main, or straight ridge») or *chubei* 垂背 («sloping ridge»), are usually decorated with zoomorphic figures, the names for which vary according to the subject depicted and the position occupied.²⁶

Finally, it is also to be borne in mind that Chinese Buddhist architecture, at least in the case of the wooden-built monasteries, applied the traditional forms of residential architecture. The very word *si* 寺, «monastery», originally meant «waiting», «art of serving», designating a hall for men waiting for the court. The first Chinese Buddhist monastery, the Baimasi, was in fact a *si* converted into a temple. However, the subjects depicted in the decoration of the ancient monasteries derived largely from Buddhist iconography and, in a continual play of rebounds, were soon also to be adopted in residential architecture, attaining an essentially novel synthesis.²⁷

Tile-ends with Lotus Flower Decoration (pls. VII-IX)

During the Northern Wei dynasty the lotus flower began to come into circulation as a decorative motif thanks to the influence of Buddhism. During the Tang dynasty the tile-ends decorated with this iconographic motif (*lianhua wen wadang* 莲花纹瓦当) found the widest diffusion, used not only for temples and monasteries, but also for imperial and official palaces, and even for common residences, losing something of their religious significance.²⁸ In the course of the 10th century decorations of this type gradually dwindled in number and, although lotus flowers were still being depicted during the Song dynasty, they lost predominance, other iconographic motifs coming into favour.²⁹

The first tile-ends with this type of decoration were published in 1955 (Luoyang 1955: *non vidi*). From then on, thanks to excavations carried out in

1103. Given the paucity of material remains, this book is fundamental work for our understanding of the architecture of the period.

²⁶ On Chinese roofs, roof-tiles and other decorations see, Yetts (1927-28); Qi Yingtao (1978); Rawson (1984); Krahle (1991); Lam Lai Sing (2001); Chen Genyuan (2002); Barnett, Durto (2004).

²⁷ On Chinese Buddhist architecture, see Prip-Møller (1982) and Chen Yaodong (1999). For surveys of Chinese traditional architecture, see Sirén (1930); Liang Ssu-Cheng (1984); Liu (1989); Qi Yingtao (1992); Steinhardt (2002).

²⁸ Suffice it to recall that of 2733 tile-ends found in the city of Luoyang and dated to the Sui-Tang period, 2458 are decorated with the lotus flower (Chen Liangwei 2003: 347). For the use of tile-ends with lotus flower decoration for the imperial palaces see, for instance, Luo Xizhe (1998) and Daminggong (1997); for their use for common residences, see Luoyang (1996). The motif was diffused throughout the Empire and even beyond it: tile-ends similar to those from Fengxiansi have been found as far as Zhenjiang to the south (Zhenjiang 2005: 42-44) and Bohai Kingdom to the north (Bohai 2000a: 10, fig. 8; Bohai 2000b: 19).

²⁹ During the Song dynasty, lotus flower decoration gradually lost its prominence. It was nonetheless used in some of the tombs of the Imperial Mausoleum at Gongyi (Henan 1997a).

the cities of Luoyang and Xi'an in particular, but also in remoter parts of the Chinese empire, a great many specimens have been brought to light and, indeed, the last few years have seen publication of the first typologies (Li Mei 2002; Chen Liangwei 2003). Drawn up on a stratigraphic basis, applying stylistic criteria such as the number of petals, the proportions, type of pistil and presence/absence of a crown of pearls, distinction is made of as many as forty different sub-types of ends decorated with lotus flower. Although they are not yet completely satisfying with the dating aspect, these classifications nevertheless constitute an appreciable advance in the study of these objects.

In the site of the Fengxiansi it was noted that although the lotus flower tile-ends occur rather less frequently (in fact, the fragments number only 17) than those with other decorations, they show greater variety. Indeed, on the basis of the moulds used, distinction has been made between nine different sub-types.³⁰ On the evidence of comparison with similar tile-ends found in other sites in the region they can be seen to have been produced in different periods, with a span of at least fifty years between the first and last sub-type. Although we have as yet no confirmation from the stratigraphic evidence, we may conjecture that by the Tang period the monastery roofs had already been subjected to a certain amount of limited restoration, with the addition of new material to replace worn and damaged elements (pl. XIV).

The tile-ends with lotus flower decoration found on the site are all of grey, unglazed terracotta, fired in reducing atmosphere, and are circular in shape.

WW-87 is from SU 48, in square MMn, and thus from the context of destruction and abandonment of the 7th-8th century monastery structures. Fragments of tile-ends (WW-9 and 507) were found in SUs 2 and 901 showing decoration obtained with the same type of mould, and so to be ascribed to the same chronological horizon. Originally this sub-type had a diameter of about 14 cm and was decorated with an eight-petalled flower (fig. 9). Similar *wadang* were found during excavations carried out between March 1995 and December 1996 in the Hanyuandian 含元殿 hall of the Daminggong (Daminggong 1997: 381, pl. XXVI.1), at Xi'an.³¹

³⁰ All the tile-ends as well as many of the architectural decorations were obtained from moulds, none of which has been found in our site.

³¹ Construction of the Daminggong was begun in 634 by the second emperor of the Tang dynasty, Taizong 太宗. In 663 the emperor Gaozong transferred the imperial court there. The complex consisted of three halls for reception, the Hanyuandian being the principal one, gardens and the private residences of members of the imperial family. The Hanyuandian hall, built in 662, was used for a span of 233 years, during which it was restored on various occasions but conserving the original characteristics, until 886, when it was destroyed during the riots that led to the end of the Tang dynasty. On the Hanyuandian hall, see also Daminggong (2001: 1-4; 2007).



Fig. 9 – WW-87: reconstruction.
(3D rendering by D. Battista).

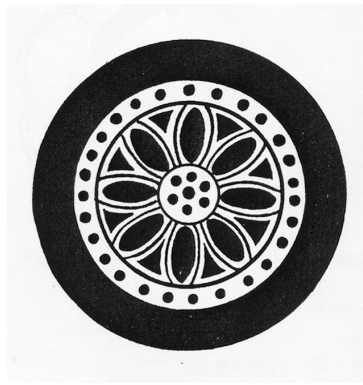


Fig. 10 – Drawing of tile-end with lotus
flower decoration; out of scale.
(From Shangyanggong 1998: fig. 10.1).

In the Luoyang area other such tile-ends, although of slightly larger dimensions, were found at the Chongguangmen 重光门 gate (Chongguangmen 2007: 53), at the Dingdingmen 定鼎门 gate (Dingdingmen 2004: 117, fig. 18.3) and in the Shangyanggong palace garden (Shangyanggong linyuan 上阳宫林园; Shangyanggong 1998: 43; here fig. 10), situated not far from the Youyemen 右掖门 gate of the Tang period imperial complex. At the latter site, the tile-ends emerged from the layer covering the structural levels of the garden, having as *terminus post quem* the year 675, when construction of the palace was begun by order of Gaozong.³² Another tile-end with similar decoration was brought to light in the excavation of a brick and tile kiln site east of the walls of the Tang city.³³ According to the reconstruction made by the Chinese archaeologists, the kilns had seen use from the beginning of the Sui dynasty until about 732 AD (Luoyang 1999a: 22). Finally, a tile-end decorated with a lotus flower similar to that of WW-87, retrieved during the excavations of the Tang city site in Luoyang, is listed in the typology drawn up by Li Mei (2002: 34), where it is dated to the beginning of the Tang dynasty. Matching these data with those obtained from our excavation the dating proposed for this tile-end sub-type is the beginning of the eighth century, shortly after the unification of the Fengxiansi with the Longhuasi.

³² Excavations of the garden of the Shangyanggong palace, where the emperor Gaozong and empress Wu resided for long periods, and whose beauties were sung by many poets of the Tang period, such as Bai Juyi, were carried out between 1989 and 1993 by the team of the Institute of Archaeology of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

³³ Archaeological excavation of the kiln site was performed by the Bureau of Cultural Relics of Luoyang in the autumn of 1992 (Luoyang 1999a).

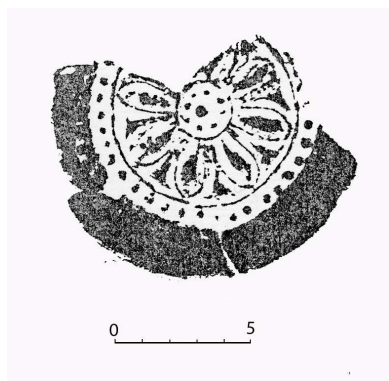


Fig. 11 – Rubbing of tile-end with lotus flower decoration.
(From Luo Xizhe 1998: fig. 57.4).



Fig. 12 – Tile-end with lotus flower decoration.
(From Luoyang 1998a: 83).

Much the same dating can be attributed to a small fragment, WW-96, from SU 57, obtained from a similar mould, but of slightly smaller dimensions.

Also yielded by the layers of abandonment datable around the mid-9th century are fragments WW-88 (SU 48) and WW-98 (SU 52), obtained from the same mould. Similar *wadang* (fig. 11) were found at Xi'an, in the site of the Huaqinggong,³⁴ in layers dated to the Tang period (Luo Xizhe 1998: 131, pl. XLIII.4) and in hall 37 of the Jiuchenggong 九成宫.³⁵ At Luoyang similar decoration was noted on a tile-end found in the corridor giving access to the Youyemen gate of the imperial city of Tang, during the surveys carried out by the team of the Institute of Archaeology of the Academy of Social Sciences at the end of the 1950s (Dongdu 1961: pl. VIII.1). Unfortunately, no stratigraphic provenance is supplied for this material. Tile-end attestations with decoration analogous to that of WW-88 and 98 found in the area of the Tang period city are also to be found in the typological study by Chen Liangwei (2003: 350), who proposes a dating between the early and mid-Tang dynasty. Given their provenance from the same stratigraphic context and their stylistic similarities, a likely dating for fragments WW-88 and 98 is that of WW-87, namely between the second quarter and the middle of the 8th century.

³⁴ The site of the Huaqinggong, the imperial garden of the Tang court, was situated at the foot of the north side of Mount Lishan 骊山, 30 kilometres east of present-day Xi'an. Extensive archaeological survey and numerous excavation trenches have been carried out on the site between 1982 and 1995, leading to the definition of three chronological phases of use during the Tang dynasty: the first between 618 and 711; the second from 712 to 779; the third from 780 to 907 (Luo Xizhe 1998).

³⁵ The emperor Taizong had the Jiuchenggong built in 631 over the remains of the Sui period Renshougong 仁寿宫. Investigations carried out on the site between 1978 and 1992 led the Chinese archaeologists to conclude that hall 37 of the Jiuchenggong was destroyed by a flood in 836 (Jiuchenggong 1995: 1095-96).

Fragment WW-59 also came from trench A, but from a layer of more recent formation (SU 5). Although the central decoration is in lower relief, it is stylistically close to the examples so far described, and datable to the same period. A similar tile-end, brought to light during the excavations of the Tang city, is now displayed in the Luoyang Branch of the Archaeological Museum (fig. 12).

WW-198 is one of the few tile ends decorated with lotus flowers coming from the central area of the excavation (square MKu, SU 504). The dimensions of the fragment do not suffice to arrive at certain conclusions on the dating. However, the treatment of the petals appears similar to that of WW-87 and the lack of a frame of pearls, usually to be seen on this type of element, does not constitute a discriminating factor. We may preliminarily date WW-198 to the mid-8th century.

As from the 9th century the manufacture of tile-ends displaying the lotus flower began to show rather less care. In the Luoyang area a great many *wadang* datable to this period have been found showing defects of manufacture on the surface and lack of uniformity in the width and thickness of the band framing the decoration (Chen Liangwei 2003: 366). From the stylistic point of view, petals that had in general been round or oval during the first half of the Tang dynasty now began to take on an oblong shape while increasing in number, almost to the point of losing the original lotus flower appearance, beginning to show some resemblance to the chrysanthemum (Chen Genyuan 2002: 116). In the light of these considerations dating to the second quarter of the 9th century can be suggested for WW-125, coming from SU 1002, and for fragment WW-255, from SU 600. Similar characteristics mark fragments WW-82, 285 and 347, obtained from a larger mould, but datable to the same period. It is probable that this tile-end sub-type was used for small restoration works immediately before the destruction of the monastery halls and their subsequent reconstruction in the 10th century.

The same period also saw forms of decoration beginning to find circulation in which the corolla of the flower opens about a single pearl at the centre. The Chinese archaeologists generally take this to be a variant of the lotus flower, but it is more probably an early depiction of the chrysanthemum, to become a very common decorative motif during the 10th-11th century. In the Fengxiansi site only one such fragment has been brought to light: WW-86. Tile-ends with similar decoration (fig. 13) have been found at Xi'an in the site of the Huaqinggong (Luo Xizhe 1998: pl. XLIII.1-2) and of the Qinglongsi monastery, where it appears to be the most frequent variant (Qinglongsi 1989: 255, pl. XIX.5).³⁶ Another such tile-end was unearthed in Luoyang at a site

³⁶ The Qinglongsi monastery, one of the few objects of extensive excavations, presents a story in many respects similar to that of the Fengxiansi. The complex brought to light was built over the ruins of an earlier monastery, the Linggansi 灵感寺, and renamed Qinglongsi during the Tang dynasty. Destroyed in 845, it was rebuilt the following year over the ruins of the previ-

within the Palace City (Gongcheng 宫城). It was found in a layer having as *terminus post quem* a *Kaiyuan tongbao* 开元通宝 coin of the Tang Dynasty (Luoyang 1997: fig. 6). This fragment, too, is datable to the first half of the 9th century.

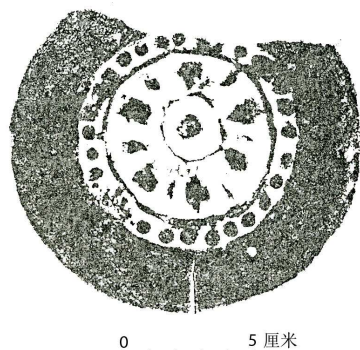


Fig. 13 – Rubbing of tile-end with lotus flower (?) decoration.
(From Luo Xizhe 1998: fig. 57.1).

- WW-9 Fragment of tile-end, circular in shape, mould-decorated with a lotus flower within a frame of pearls, of which only part of the flat band enclosing the decoration, three pearls of the frame and part of a petal are conserved.
Part of the semi-cylindrical tile also survives.
Similar to WW-87.
Grey terracotta; $5 \times 5.7 \times 2$ cm.
Very worn.
Squares MMm/n, SU 2.
- WW-59 Tile-end, circular in shape, mould-decorated with a lotus flower within a frame of pearls, of which only part of the upper half survives. The decoration is enclosed by a flat band.
On the reverse: parallel grooves for the laying of the tile.
Grey terracotta; $8.6 \times 6.4 \times 1.5$ cm.
Squares MMm/n, SU 5.

ous complex. On this occasion some of the rooms in the monastery lost their original function and were used for the installation of kilns in order to provide the material necessary for rebuilding. The excavations were carried out by the team of the Institute of Archaeology of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences between 1973 and 1980. See (Qinglongsi 1989).

- WW-82 Tile-end, circular in shape, mould-decorated with a lotus flower, only the right half of which survives. The corolla of the flower, in relief, shows oblong petals encircling a centre decorated with small pearls.
On the reverse: parallel grooves for the laying of the tile.
Similar to WW-125 but cast from a larger mould.
Grey terracotta; diam. 11 cm; th. 1.7 cm.
Much worn; the upper part of the petals lost in some cases.
Square MMn, SU 25.
- WW-86 Fragment of circular tile-end, mould-decorated with a lotus flower (?) within a frame of pearls. The flower retains four oval petals with triangular motifs appearing between and a pearl at the centre. The decoration is enclosed by a flat band.
Grey terracotta; $9 \times 9.8 \times 1.6$ cm.
Square MMn, SU 45.
- WW-87 Fragment of circular tile-end mould-decorated with a lotus flower within a frame of pearls. The corolla of the flower showing oval petals, of which only three are conserved, revolves about a centre decorated with a pearl in the middle and five lateral pearls representing the stamens. The empty spaces between the petals are decorated with a triangular motif.
Grey terracotta; $8 \times 6.2 \times 2$ cm.
Square MMn, SU 48.
- WW-88 Tile-end, circular in shape, mould-decorated with a lotus flower within a frame of pearls, only the lower half of which survives. The decoration is enclosed by a flat band.
Grey terracotta; $13.6 \times 7.6 \times 1.6$ cm.
Square MMn, SU 48.
- WW-96 Fragment of circular tile-end mould-decorated with a lotus flower within a frame of pearls. Only part of the band enclosing the decoration, six pearls of the frame and the point of a petal survive. Similar to WW-87 but obtained from a smaller mould.
Grey terracotta; $5.6 \times 4.4 \times 2$ cm.
Square MMn, SU 57.
- WW-98 Fragment of circular tile-end mould-decorated with a lotus flower within a frame of pearls, preserving only a small part of the flat band enclosing the decoration and of the frame of pearls, three petals and two central beads.

Similar to WW-88.

Grey terracotta; $7.6 \times 5.7 \times 1.6$ cm.

Square MMn, SU 52.

- WW-125 Tile-end, circular in shape, mould-decorated with a lotus flower. The corolla of the flower, in relief, has oblong petals opening out from a centre decorated with small beads. The decoration is enclosed by a flat band.
Of somewhat coarse manufacture.
On the reverse: grooves for the laying of the tile.
Grey terracotta; diam. 10 cm; band th. 1.8 cm.
Reconstructed from three fragments.
Square LYi, SU 1002.

- WW-198 Fragment of circular tile-end mould-decorated with a lotus flower within a flat band, preserving only part of the band and two petals.
Grey terracotta; $7.7 \times 4.8 \times 1.6$ cm.
Worn.
Square MKu, SU 504.

- WW-255 Fragment of semi-cylindrical tile, of which only a small portion and the tile-end are conserved. The tile-end is circular in shape and mould-decorated with a lotus flower, the upper half of which only survives.
Similar to WW-125.
Grey terracotta; $10 \times 7.5 \times 1.5$ cm; th. of the tile 1.5 cm.
Much worn.
Square LSg, SU 600.

- WW-285 Tile-end, circular in shape, mould-decorated with a lotus flower, the right half of which only survives.
Similar to WW-82.
Grey terracotta; diam. 10.5 cm; band th. 1.5 cm.
Much worn.
Square LSg, SU 600.

- WW-347 Tile-end, circular in shape, mould-decorated with a lotus flower, the left half of which only survives.
Similar to WW-82.
Grey terracotta; diam. 10.5 cm; band th. 1.7 cm.
Worn.
Squares MGp/q/r, SU 700.

- WW-507 Fragment of circular tile-end mould-decorated with a lotus flower, of which only two petals survive, within a frame of pearls.
Similar to WW-87.
Grey terracotta; $7.7 \times 8.9 \times 2$ cm.
Squares MLn/o, SU 901.

Bricks with Lotus Flower Decoration (pls. X-XI)

Much as we have already seen in the case of the tile-ends, during this phase the lotus flower also found frequent representation on the bricks (*lian-hua wen zhuan* 莲花纹砖).

Only a few fragments of decorated bricks were brought to light from the Fengxiansi site. In this case, too, most of the material (WW-15, 42, 43, 44, 135, 581) comes from the eastern sector, but mainly from stratigraphic units of relatively recent formation (SUs 4, 5 and 13). A few fragments were also found in trench C (WW-299) and trench F (WW-151, 562 and 563). Of the latter, only WW-151 came from the layers of abandonment of the monastery (SU 848), while the others were from the accumulations formed in subsequent periods.

Given the paucity of the material and the extremely poor state of conservation, it has not so far been possible to draw up a typology proper. It has, however, been noted that the thickness of the bricks – all square in shape – ranges from 4.5 to 6 cm, and that some fragments show squaring with a row of beads running along the edge. Apart from this particular, the decoration appears much the same on all the fragments. Two sub-types were, then, distinguished, the original decoration of which I have attempted to reconstruct (pl. XI). Only a few of the bricks (WW-135, 151, 581 and 582) show impressions on the non-exposed face to facilitate laying.

Although no significant matches have been found, given the poor state of conservation of the fragments, it is worth noting that material of this type, frequently found in Tang sites,³⁷ began to dwindle as from the 10th century. In the site of the Qinglongsi at Xi'an, and in particular in the excavation of Hall 3, bricks decorated with the lotus flower were observed to be frequent in the layer evidencing the monastery structure prior to destruction in 845, to become extremely rare after reconstruction in the following year (Qinglongsi 1989: 254). No decorated bricks are to be found in the pavement levels

³⁷ A great many bricks with lotus flower decoration have been found, for example, in the Daminggong Palace. The ones from the Hanyuandian Hall and the Taiyechi 太液池 Spring, in particular, are similar to those from Fengxiansi (Daminggong 2005: pl. X.5; 2007: fig. 3). In Luoyang, bricks with a decoration similar to that illustrated on pl. Xa were found in a site close to the Palace City of the Tang dynasty (Dongdu 1983: fig. 10) and in a Tang storage building excavated on the northern bank of the Luo River (Ye Wansong, Yu Fuwei 1983: fig. 2).

brought to light in the central area of the Fengxiansi, which lends support to the conjecture that the fragments found are datable to the first monastery structure, between the 8th and the first half of the 9th century.

- WW-15 Fragment of square brick, mould-decorated with lotus flower motif (?), of which only one of the corners and a few squaring beads survive.
Grey terracotta; $12 \times 8 \times 6$ cm.
Squares MMm/n, SU 4.
- WW-42 Fragment of square brick, mould-decorated with lotus flower motif within a framework of beads.
Grey terracotta; $21.4 \times 10.3 \times 6$ cm.
Worn.
Squares MMm/n, SU 5.
- WW-43 Fragment of square brick, mould-decorated with lotus flower motif within a framework of beads.
Probably cast from the same mould as WW-42.
Grey terracotta; $19.5 \times 12 \times 6$ cm.
Much worn.
Squares MMm/n, SU 5.
- WW-44 Fragment of square brick, mould-decorated with lotus flower motif. The fragment is from one of the corners, showing some of the squaring beads and a spiral motif.
Grey terracotta; $13 \times 11.3 \times 6$ cm.
Worn and encrusted.
Squares MMm/n, SU 5.
- WW-135 Fragment of square brick, mould-decorated with lotus flower motif within a framework of beads.
On the reverse: parallel scoring to facilitate laying.
Grey terracotta; $19 \times 18 \times 5.5$ cm.
Much worn.
Squares MMm/n, unstratified.
- WW-151 Fragment of square brick, mould-decorated with lotus flower motif, of which only three petals and some squaring beads survive.
On the reverse: parallel scoring to facilitate laying.
Grey terracotta; $10.6 \times 11.1 \times 6$ cm.
Square LTq, SU 848.

- WW-299 Fragment of square brick, mould-decorated with lotus flower motif, of which only two petals survive.
Grey terracotta; $11.5 \times 5.1 \times 2.5$ cm.
Much worn.
Square MKp, SU 515.
- WW-562 Fragment of square brick, mould-decorated with lotus flower motif.
Grey terracotta; $17.7 \times 12.5 \times 4.5$ cm.
Square LOd, SU 814.
- WW-563 Fragment of square brick, mould-decorated with lotus flower motif.
Probably cast from the same mould as WW-562.
Grey Terracotta; $14 \times 11.8 \times 4.5$ cm.
Squares LOs/x, SU 844.
- WW-581 Fragment of square brick, mould-decorated with lotus flower motif, of which only the central part is conserved.
On the reverse: geometric motifs to facilitate laying.
Traces of lime.
Grey terracotta; $10.5 \times 11 \times 6$ cm.
Much worn.
Square MMn, SU 13.
- WW-582 Fragment of square brick, mould-decorated with lotus flower motif within a frame of beads. Only a few of the squaring beads are conserved, and part of the spiral motif that decorated one of the corners.
On the reverse: geometric motifs to facilitate laying.
Grey terracotta; $12.3 \times 9 \times 6$ cm.
Squares MMm/n, SU 10.

Semi-cylindrical Tiles, Flat Tiles and Akroteria (pls. XII-XIII)

By far most of the architectural decoration belonging to the two monastery periods is of unglazed grey terracotta. Although the roof-tiles showing lead glazing (*luliwa* 琉璃瓦)³⁸ are characteristic of the Tang period, in the city of Luoyang they were only found in sites associated with the imperial family (Chen Liangwei 2003: 365). It is therefore hardly surprising that only one glazed tile was found in the Fengxiansi site, datable on the basis of the fabric and colour of glaze between the 8th and 9th century. Fragment WW-372 is from SU 805, of relatively recent formation, and might well not have belonged to the structures of the monastery complex. The most significant match is with the green glazed tiles from the layers of abandonment of the Shangyanggong garden, which exhibit similar diameter and thickness as well as the same colour of glaze (Shangyanggong 1998:42; here fig. 14). The Fengxiansi site also yielded some other small fragments of glazed tiles which, however, are to be dated to a subsequent period to judge by their stratigraphic provenance and stylistic characteristics.



Fig. 14 – Semi-cylindrical tile with green glaze.
(From Luoyang 1998a: 89).

³⁸ The glaze was obtained from a compound of SiO₂ with the addition of oxidised minerals. The first glazed tiles date back to the period of the Northern and Southern Dynasties (420-581 AD) and were found at Datong, in Shanxi province, which was to become one of the main centres of glazed tile manufacture (Krahl 1991: 48; Chen Wanli 1956; Gao Shoutian 1962); they are believed to have become more common during the Sui and Tang dynasties, when, however, they were only used for the most important buildings and, judging by the archaeological finds and the few still extant buildings, were actually not widespread. In the following centuries they became of common use.

Also attributable to this period according to the stratigraphic evidence is a fragment of flat tile with decorated edge, WW-181, which came from SU 48, one of the layers of abandonment of the Tang period monastery structures in trench A. Flat tiles with decorated edges of this type are generally called *hua-tou banwa* (as they are designated in the *Yingzao fashi* 13) or *huabian banwa* 花边板瓦. They were eaves tiles whose purpose was to let rainwater run off the roof. Thus they served the same function as the *dishui* tiles, characteristic of the following centuries. The highly polished surface on both sides of the fragment is characteristic of the tiles produced in the 7th-8th centuries. The edge decoration also appears very widespread in this period, although it began to disappear as from the 10th century.

Flat tiles showing decoration practically identical to that of WW-181, but of much greater thickness (3 cm; fig. 15), were found in the northeast area of the Hanyuandian hall and in the Danfengmen 丹凤门 gate³⁹ of the Daminggong (Daminggong 1997: 379-80, fig. 31.3; 2006: 45). Again at Xi'an, similar tiles, also in terms of thickness in this case, were brought to light in the theatre (*liyuan* 梨园) excavated within the Huaqinggong site (Luo Xizhe 1998: 386-87, 403, tab. 52, pl. CXLVI.2-3). The Chinese archaeologists identify two major building phases for the theatre, the first datable between 644 and 712, the second between 712 and 743, to which is added a restoration phase for certain rooms datable between 780 and 907 (*ibid.*: 440-41). The flat tiles similar to WW-181 are attributed to the second phase. In the Luoyang area, significant comparisons are possible with the material from the Shangyanggong palace, construction of which began, as we have seen, in 675 (Shangyanggong 1998: 42, pl. VI.3). In the light of these considerations, dating around the mid-8th century is proposed for fragment WW-181.

³⁹ The Danfengmen Gate, the middle southern gate of Daminggong, was built in 662 and destroyed at the end of the Tang dynasty. It was excavated in 2005 (Daminggong 2006).

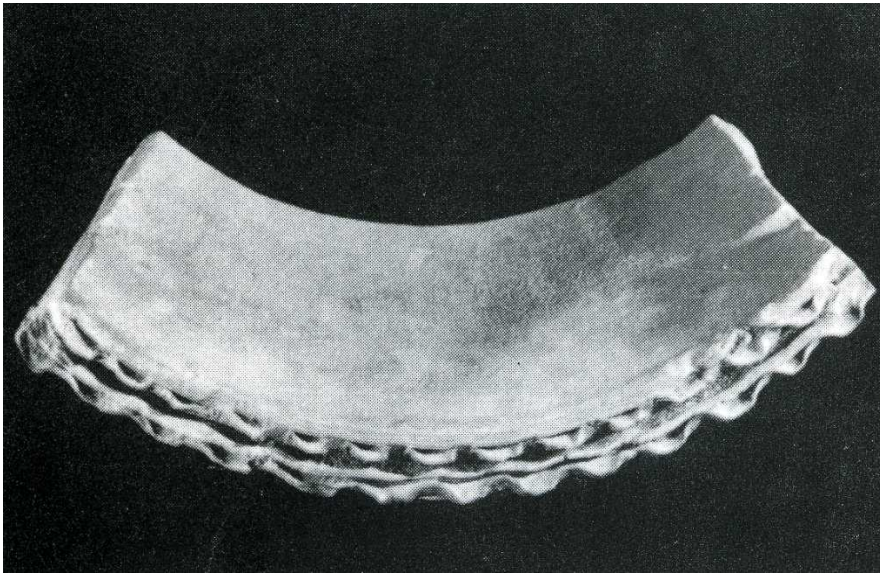


Fig. 15 – Flat tile with decorated edge. (From Daminggong 1997: pl. XXIII.3).

The abandonment layers (SUs 48 and 52) of the structures found in trench A also yielded three fragments of akroteria in grey terracotta with broad curving bands in relief (WW-92, 93 and 97). The decorative devices to which the fragments belonged are known as *chiwei* 鸱尾, «owl's tail», and were placed at the sides of the top ridge (*zhengbei*) of the roof (pl. XIV). Between the 7th and 10th century, or in other words during the Sui and Tang dynasties, *chiwei* were very common, to the extent that they were used not only in the imperial palaces, Buddhist monasteries and government offices, but also, albeit less often, in the residences of the nobility and important functionaries (Fu Xinian 2001: 615). In the Daminggong site at Xi'an the *chiwei* retain much the same proportions but vary greatly in size: indeed, the largest come to over a metre in height, while the smallest measure about 30 cm (Daminggong 2001: 18; 2006: 45-46). Thus they were adapted to the various sizes of buildings. To judge by the measurements of the fragments found, the Fengxiansi *chiwei* must have been quite large. No such material was yielded by the central area of the excavation, but rather a great many akroteria in composite animal form.

WW-92 Fragment of 'owl's tail' (*chiwei*) architectural decoration with broad parallel curving bands in relief on the exposed face.

Grey terracotta; 20.6 × 13 × 14.5 cm.

Square MMn, SU 48.

- WW-93 Fragment of 'owl's tail' (*chiwei*) architectural decoration with broad parallel curving bands in relief on the exposed face, which was probably on the upper part of the object.
Grey terracotta; $26.4 \times 26 \times 2.8$ cm.
Reconstructed from two pieces.
Square MMn, SU 48.
- WW-97 Fragment of 'owl's tail' (*chiwei*) architectural decoration with broad parallel curving bands in relief on the exposed face.
Grey terracotta; $21.4 \times 19.4 \times 2.9$ cm.
Square MMn, SU 52.
- WW-181 Flat tile fragment. The edge is mould-decorated with a ribbon motif, wavy on the lower side. Polished surface.
Grey terracotta; $11.5 \times 8.4 \times 1.6$ cm.
Square MMn, SU 48.
- WW-372 Semi-circular tile fragment. Green lead glazing on the convex side. Cloth impression on the inner side. Traces of lime.
Red terracotta with monochrome green glaze; $13 \times 18 \times 3$ cm.
The glaze is somewhat fragmentary and poorly conserved.
Squares LOd, SU 805.

Column Bases (pls. XV-XVI)

It is quite probable that, besides the statues, certain architectural elements of the original Fengxiansi were salvaged and reused, or may have still been in place when the monastery was reconstructed after the mid-9th century. Such seems to be the case of the stone base of column SU 856, the only decorated one to have come to light in square LTs (pl. XVa). The SU, in grey calcareous stone, displays a square plinth with sides of 72 cm, upon which rests a circular base in the form of an inverted lotus flower with double corolla. The decoration looks very much like that on the seats of *bodhisattva* statues WW-199 and 517 (pl. XVb), dated to the first half of the 8th century (Testa 2002: 142-46, pls. X-XI and XVI-XVII). Column bases similar in terms of decoration and dimensions, and again dated to the Tang period, were brought to light in the area of excavation I in the Huaqinggong site, at Xi'an (Luo Xizhe 1998: 235, 242, 354-55, pl. CXXV.3).

Fragments WW-413, 414 and 430, all from SU 844 in square LOs, probably belonged to one and the same column base, and show the same decoration as SU 856. Other fragments with the same decoration (WW-496, 497 and 498) were uncovered in SU 850, again in the southeast area of the excava-

tion. It is therefore probable that in this area the stone bases of the original monastery were conserved or reused, and that when the monastery was finally abandoned the only base of this type left in place was SU 856.

Another fragment similar to SU 856 came from SU 546. This fragment, WW-339, is much corroded and it is hard to make out the decoration.

Attributable to the same chronological horizon are fragments WW-45 and 330, also belonging to column bases decorated with the inverted lotus flower.

- WW-45 Fragment of column base decorated with inverted lotus flower, of which only the end part of one petal is conserved. The decoration rests on a smooth plinth.
Red veining.
Grey limestone; 5.3×5.8 cm.
Squares MMm/n, SU 5.
- WW-330 Fragment of column base decorated with inverted lotus flower showing double corolla, of which only two petals and the beginning of a third are conserved. The decoration rests on a smooth plinth.
Red veining.
Grey limestone; 20.4×7.4 cm.
Somewhat worn.
Squares LOt, MKq/v, SU 546.
- WW-339 Fragment of column base decorated with inverted lotus flower showing double corolla, of which only two petals are conserved together with part of the circular base showing parallel striae.
Red veining.
Grey limestone; $15 \times 11.7 \times 4.5$ cm.
Much worn; the petals can hardly be made out.
Squares LOt, MKq/v, SU 546.
- WW-413 Fragment of column base decorated with inverted lotus flower showing double corolla, of which only two petals are conserved. The fragment belonged to the same base as WW-414 and 430.
Grey limestone; 15×9.2 cm.
Square LOs, SU 844.
- WW-414 Fragment of column base decorated with inverted lotus flower showing double corolla, of which only one petal is conserved.
Red veining.
The fragment belonged to the same base as WW-413 and 430.

Grey limestone; 7.4×11.3 cm.
Square LOs, SU 844.

- WW-430 Fragment of column base decorated with inverted lotus flower showing double corolla, of which only the end part of a petal is conserved.

Red veining.

The fragment belonged to the same base as WW-413 and 414.

Grey limestone; 11.7×8.1 cm.
Square LOs, SU 844.

- WW-496 Fragment of column base decorated with inverted lotus flower showing double corolla, of which only one petal and part of a second are conserved.

Red veining.

The fragment probably belonged to the same base as WW-497.

Grey limestone; 10.6×6.4 cm.
Much worn.
Squares LTd/i, SU 850.

- WW-497 Fragment of column base decorated with inverted lotus flower showing double corolla, of which only part of the decoration between the petals is conserved.

Red veining.

The fragment probably belonged to the same base as WW-496.

Grey limestone; 5.4×9.2 cm.
Much worn.
Squares LTd/i, SU 850.

- WW-498 Fragment of column base decorated with inverted lotus flower showing double corolla, of which only one petal and part of the decoration between the petals are conserved.

Red veining.

Grey limestone; 10.6×12.2 cm.
Square LOs, SU 850.

Other Finds (pls. XVII-XVIII)

Datable to this period on the stratigraphic evidence is the small bronze stud with decorated head, WW-95, from SU 51. The decoration – hard to interpret – was probably of the lotus flower type (*lianhua wen maoding* 莲花纹帽钉). Bosses of the kind were generally assembled on bronze bars used to decorate doors and windows (fig. 16). Examples similar to WW-95 have been found aplenty in the Tang period layers of the theatre site (*liyuan*) excavated within the Huaqinggong (Luo Xizhe 1998: 410-14, pl. CLV.1-6).

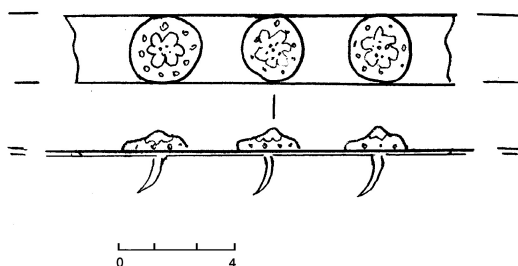


Fig. 16 – Proposed reconstruction of the original position of WW-95.
(Drawing by the author).

Also attributable to this period, and again on the stratigraphic evidence, is the small bronze buckle, WW-134, found in the foundation of SU 58, and WW-133, from SU 1012.

The small drum-shaped table, WW-584, was found in fragments but *in situ*, destroyed by the collapse of the vault of room 1 (pl. XVIIc). So far no matches serving to date the object have been found.

To make the dating even more difficult is the fact that it was not associated with any other material; moreover, excavation of the room, that was dug in the loess, has yet to be completed. In terms of shape and decoration the examples showing the closest similarity found so far are the containers discovered in 1989 inside the pagoda of the Songyuesi 嵩岳寺 monastery⁴⁰ at Dengfeng 登封, dated around the 9th-10th century, although they differ greatly in terms of both dimensions and the functions they served (Songyuesi 1999b: 292-93). The Chinese ceramologists who examined the object proposed datings alternatively to the Tang and Song dynasties. My preliminary attribution of WW-584 is to this period, conjecturing that the rooms dug in the loess be-

⁴⁰ The Songyuesi pagoda was built in 520 and it is the oldest surviving pagoda in China. For this and other still extant buildings in Henan, see Yang Huancheng (1989) and Wu Xuede, Liu Yan (2001).

longed to the first phase of the monastery and were already in disuse in the subsequent period.

- WW-95 Small decorative stud with hemispherical cap decorated with a lotus flower (?).
Bronze; diam. 1.6 cm; h. of the nail 1 cm.
Fragmentary and oxidised.
Square MMn, SU 51.
- WW-133 Lock fragment (?) consisting of a hollow rectangular part and a flat heart-shaped end, decorated with three small studs.
Traces of gilding.
Bronze; $2.9 \times 0.8 \times 0.5$ cm.
Square LYi, SU 1012.
- WW-133 Buckle fragment (?), quadrangular and flat, with rectangular hole and small studs at the corners and at the lower end of the hole.
Bronze; $2.6 \times 2.2 \times 0.15$ cm.
Oxidised.
Square MMn, SU 58.
- WW-584 Small table (?), drum-shaped with open bottom, with a row of studs along the upper and lower edges. The object displays trilobate handles below the upper row of studs.
Grey terracotta; h. 54 cm; circumference 183 cm; th. 1.2 cm.
Reconstructed from many fragments.
Square LJx, SU 885.

Coins (pl. XIX)

Only four coins are attributed to this phase, none of which found in primary deposit or at least in a significant context.

All the coins are of the *Kaiyuan tongbao* 开元通宝 type, cast as from 621 AD until the end of the Tang dynasty (907 AD). In the *Jiu Tang shu – Shihuo zhi* 48.2094 we read: «After the accession to the throne of Gaozu [618] use continued to be made of the *Wuzhu* coins of the Sui; in the seventh moon of the fourth year of the age of Wude [August 621], the *Wuzhu* coins are replaced by the *Kaiyuan tongbao*, of a diameter of 8 *fen* [2.5-2.56 cm] and weight of 8 *zhu* and 4 *lei* [4.1 g]». The characters *kaiyuan* mean «new beginning», while *tongbao* can be translated as «currency». As from this date, the *Kaiyuan tongbao* became the most widely used coins of the Tang period.

On the basis of the dimensions of the coins, the script of the legends and the distinctive marks to be seen on some specimens, the *Kaiyuan tongbao* are generally divided into three or four types corresponding to as many chronological phases. Here I look in particular to the typology drawn up by Thierry (1991), who distinguished four main types: type I, issued from 621 to 718 ca; type II, from 718 to 732 ca; type III, from 732 up to the revolt instigated by An Lushan 安祿山 (755-763); type IV, issued from the mid-8th century up to the end of the dynasty (907).

WW-359 shows the prescribed diameter of 2.5 cm with above-normal weight exceeding. The inscription is not clearly legible, but the script seems to correspond to that of type I. In particular, the second stroke of the character *yuan*, arched on the right (a characteristic also noted on type II coins), suggests a date at the beginning of the 8th century.

WW-33 is slightly larger than normal. The script – of the character *kai*, in particular – elongated in form with non-parallel outer vertical strokes, suggests a date between 718 and 732, during the reign of the emperor Xuanzong 玄宗, that is.

The diameter of WW-317 suggests that the coin was issued some time after the mid-8th century, when the *Kaiyuan tongbao* generally showed a diameter of less than 2.5 cm and, in many cases, mediocre manufacture. The off-centre matrix on the reverse is also a characteristic often shown by coins issued as from the end of the 8th century.

Given the particularly poor state of conservation of fragment WW-225 we cannot offer more precise dating than generic Tang period.

- WW-33 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Kaiyuan tongbao* four-character inscription to be read from top downwards and from right to left.
Reverse: blank.
 Bronze; diam. 2.59 cm; weight 4.7 g.
 Squares MMm/n, SU 5.
- WW-225 Fragment of circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Kaiyuan tongbao* four-character inscription to be read from top downwards and from right to left.
Reverse: blank.
 Bronze; diam. 2.5 cm; weight 1.55 g.
 Oxidized.
 Square MKk, SU 520.
- WW-317 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Kaiyuan tongbao* four-character inscription to be read from top downwards and from right to left.

Reverse: off-centre matrix.

Bronze; diam. 2.4 cm; weight 4 g.

Oxidized.

Square LSg, SU 634.

WW-359 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.

Obverse: *Kaiyuan tongbao* four-character inscription to be read from top downwards and from right to left.

Reverse: horizontal mark above the hole and slightly off-centre matrix.

Bronze; diam. 2.5 cm; weight 5.6 g.

Encrusted and oxidised.

Square MGr, SU 714.

12. THE FINDS OF PERIOD III

Most of the material found on the site belongs to this Period, corresponding to the large-scale restructure of the monastery and the chronological span of about two centuries constituting its second period of life. It is in fact on the evidence of the finds that we conjecture reconstruction of the monastery between the end of the 9th and the first half of the 10th century, with subsequent abandonment in the 12th century.

By far the majority of the material belongs to the class of architectural decoration. As previously pointed out, no superstructures built with perishable materials are conserved, while roofing elements have been found aplenty throughout the site. Consequent upon the continual destructive and levelling activities carried out over the centuries, such material has also been found in layers of recent formation.

The stratigraphic unit that has served more than any other as 'guide' to revise the chronological placing of the residual objects is SU 846, the only primary roof collapse, excavated in squares LTq/r. The layer contained a great many tiles, tile-ends, architectural decorations, nails, roof beam fragments and other building materials. The find of coin WW-533, issued during the Jiayou 嘉祐 reign period (1056-1063), offers us a *terminus post quem* to date the collapse (cf. *infra*, 95).

From the assemblage of material found we can reconstruct a picture of the monasteries roofs: they consisted of elements in grey terracotta, neither painted nor glazed except for a few subsequent additions and small details, such as the glazed 'tile-stops' that decorated the eaves tiles (pl. XXXVIII). The tile-ends were decorated mainly with animal masks or dragons and phoenixes (pl. XXXIX). Various different ends were used in the same roof for both flat and semi-cylindrical tiles. The 'owl's tale' decorations characteristic of the

previous period give way to composite animal protomes (*chiwen* 鸱吻) deriving from the contamination between the autochthonous tradition of the dragon and the Indian *makara*.

Tile-ends

The Period III tile-ends can be divided into four types according to the decoration: animal mask; dragon; dragon and phoenix; floral. A number of sub-types can be distinguished for each type according to the moulds used.⁴¹

a. Tile-ends with Animal Mask Decoration (pls. XX-XXIII)

The decorative motif of composite animal masks has its origins in the early centuries BC and, with its many sub-types, has remained in use to the present day. Confining our attention to the examples relevant to study of the Fengxiansi material, a similar type of decoration is attested at Luoyang as early as the period of the Northern Wei in the Yongningsi 永宁寺 monastery, excavated by the Institute of Archaeology of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences between 1979 and 1994 (Yongningsi 1996: pl. CXIII.2), and in the sites of the Han-Wei city.⁴² Used in the Tang period, the ends decorated with composite animal masks (*shoumian wen wadang* 兽面纹瓦当) found their widest circulation between the 10th and the 13th century. At Luoyang, in the sites of the western capital Xijing of the Five Dynasties – Northern Song period, of the 744 ends found 506 belong to this type (Chen Liangwei 2003: 359). In the Fengxiansi, too, this type of decoration predominated, appearing both on the circular ends and on the triangular or oval examples.

In the case of the circular tile-ends that can safely be attributed to this phase, three main sub-types have been distinguished on the basis of the moulds used to decorate them.

Sub-type a includes fifteen examples, the best-conserved being WW-244, which will be taken for reference. This is a circular tile-end with a diameter of 14.5 cm, decorated with a large composite animal mask enclosed within a flat band. Fragments obtained from this mould have been found in all the trenches

⁴¹ Only in this case, given the great number of fragments brought to light, I will provide only a description of the best preserved specimen of each sub-type, followed by a list of the other fragments from the same mould and their stratigraphic provenance.

⁴² See, for instance, Huang Shibin (1962: 491) and Qian Guoxiang (1996). During the Six Dynasties period, tile-ends with animal mask decoration were also used in South China. Their relationship with their counterparts in the Central Plain has been studied by Liu Jianguo, Pan Meiyun (2005).

(except for trench B), notably in trench F. It is, moreover, one of the two circular sub-types yielded by collapse layer SU 846 (WW-454 and 464).

The most significant matches for WW-244 are generally dated to the Tang dynasty although, at least as far as the Luoyang area is concerned, in this period the animal mask seems to have appeared more often as decoration for bricks than for tiles-ends. In fact, some examples are to be found among the bricks bearing decoration stylistically very close to that of WW-244, in particular those from a Tang kiln site excavated in 1991 within the Dongdu (Luoyang 1992: pl. VI.3,5; Luoyang 1998a: 84).

Again attributed to the Tang period are two tile-ends showing decoration much the same (although obtained from a different mould) as is seen on the Fengxiansi examples. The first comes from the Yingtianmen 应天门, the southern gate of the Sui-Tang period Gongcheng, built in 605 to remain in use for the following three centuries (Yingtianmen 1988: 24, fig. 4),⁴³ while the second is recorded in the typological dictionary of tile-ends drawn up by Zhao Liguang (1998: 763) with indication simply of provenance from the city of Luoyang (fig. 17). Moreover, in the typology drawn up by Chen Liangwei (2003: 361, 366) the formal characteristics of this sub-type, arched horns and snarling jaws, are traced back to a period between the end of the Tang dynasty and the beginning of the Song, *i.e.* the 10th century. At Xi'an ends showing a similar decoration were found in Tang layers during excavation of the *xiao-tang* 小汤, «small pool», situated in the southeast corner of the Huaqinggong excavation area II (Luo Xizhe 1998: 463).

On the basis of these considerations and of the stratigraphic evidence of the site, this sub-type is to be dated between the end of the 9th and the beginning of the 10th century. This is particularly significant, since it indicates that the Fengxiansi monastery was reconstructed at the most fifty years after having been abandoned towards the middle of the 9th century.

Sub-type b. In collapse layer SU 846 the *wadang* so far described were associated with this sub-type, again with animal mask decoration (WW-450, 451, 452, 453, 463, 485). Besides the six examples found in SU 846, sixteen more come from various parts of the site: WW-394 (SU 816) is the best conserved and will be used henceforth for reference. The diameter of the object is 14.5 cm and the decoration consists of a composite animal mask of much smaller dimensions than the one displayed by WW-244, set within a frame of beads. On the evidence of certain microdifferences, and in particular the rendering of the eyebrows and fur of the animal, two different moulds are observed to have been used for this sub-type.⁴⁴ The two moulds were used at the

⁴³ The gate was rebuilt in the High Tang period and restored during the 10th century (Yingtianmen 2007).

⁴⁴ WW-2, 185, 188, 394, 443 and 453 have been obtained from mould 1; WW-1, 11, 103, 196, 251, 274, 281, 379, 387, 450, 451, 452, 463, 485, 491 and 492 have been obtained from mould 2.

same time, since tile-ends cast from both have been found in collapse layer SU 846.



Fig. 17 – Rubbing of tile-end with animal mask decoration.
(From Zhao Liguang 1998: 763).

Similar tile-ends were found at Luoyang in the Sui-Tang period Dongdu (Dongdu 1961: pl. VIII.14-16) and, in far greater number, in sites dated to the Song dynasty. In particular, tile-ends (fig. 18) bearing a decoration very similar to that of WW-394, but slightly larger, were brought to light during excavation of a kiln site of the Song period, carried out by the Luoyang Bureau for Cultural Relics between 1982 and 1983 in present-day Shachang lu 沙厂路 (Luoyang 1984: 62, pl. VIII.6). Unfortunately, no stratigraphic provenance was indicated in this case. Other tile-ends showing similarity in both decoration and size were found in Song layers during excavation of a site frequented as from the 7th century in present-day Tanggong lu 唐宫路 (fig. 19). It was again in Tanggong lu that excavation of a building carried out between 1995 and 1996 revealed various other tile-ends with decoration similar to WW-394 in layers dated to the second half of the 10th-early 11th century (Luoyang 1999c: 50-51, fig. 8.2) Finally, tile-ends showing decoration stylistically close to that of Sub-type b are to be found in Chen Liangwei's typology (2003: 360,

pl. II.4). On display in the museums of Luoyang and Zhengzhou, they all bear generic dating to the Song dynasty.

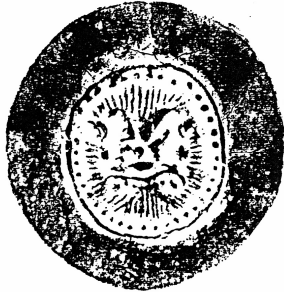


Fig. 18 – Rubbing of tile-end with animal mask decoration.
(From Luoyang 1984: XXX).

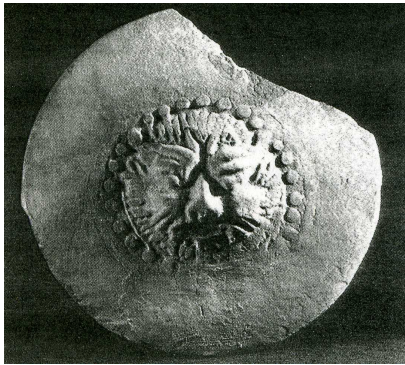


Fig. 19 – Tile-end with animal mask decoration.
(From Luoyang 1999b: pl. VIII.3).

With cross-comparison between the data from other excavations and the data assembled for the Fengxiansi, this sub-type can be dated to the second half of the 10th century.

It is worth noting that Sub-type a and Sub-type b were associated in one and the same roof, possibly due to further restoration work (pl. XXXVIII). It is likely that, given the need to repair the eaves and replace various tile-ends, the choice fell on tiles showing decoration matching that already in place, although cast from notably different moulds. Another hypothesis would be that the roof of this monastery hall was double-eaved, but it does not seem compatible with the different date of the two sub-types.

Sub-type c is documented by five examples (WW-371, 385, 390, 565, 566). It is a circular tile-end, smaller than the previous examples (diam. 12 cm), displaying a composite animal mask enclosed by a flat band. WW-390 is

the best conserved specimen. All the fragments except WW-371 (SU 801), which however came from the same area, were found in the accumulation layers that covered Kiln 818 in squares LJx, LOd/i. Initially, therefore, I was inclined to a rather late chronology, within Period IV. Nevertheless, it is to be noted that in SU 816 this sub-type was found in association with tile-ends of both Sub-type a (WW-393) and Sub-type b (WW-394), together with other material attributable to the monastery phase (WW-383, 384, 392). Thus it is probable that in the 12th century, when the site was put to a different use, some of the monastery roofing was conserved.

At Xi'an, tile-ends (fig. 20) closely resembling Sub-type c in both dimensions and decoration were found in the same stratigraphic context as those resembling Sub-type a (Luo Xizhe 1998: 463, pl. CLXXVII). Although this decoration is also to be found with some differences in later contexts,⁴⁵ dating close to that of Sub-type a, late 9th-10th century, seems to be the most probable for WW-390.



Fig. 20 – Tile-end with animal mask decoration.
(From Luo Xizhe 1998: fig. 202.2).

⁴⁵ See, for instance, Chen Liangwei (2003: 360) and the objects found in the imperial mausoleum of the Song dynasty (Henan 1997a: 425).

The composite animal mask decoration also appears on non-circular tile-ends (*yangwa wadang* 阳瓦瓦当 or *kouwa wadang* 扣瓦瓦当).⁴⁶

WW-3 is roughly triangular in shape with polylobate edge and shows animal mask decoration at the centre within a frame of pearls. Nine more fragments of ends cast from the same mould have been inventoried, mostly from units of stratification of recent formation, except for WW-381 and 392, found respectively in SUs 815 and 816, and WW-267, from SU 630. Nevertheless, the characteristics of the mask, and in particular the pearl depicted between the arched horns, are to be associated with decoration produced in the 10th century.⁴⁷

Similar dating, which can be narrowed down to the second half of the 10th century, can be attributed to WW-144, whose decoration shows characteristics close to those of the decoration on circular tile-end WW-394, and can thus be ascribed to the same chronological horizon (cf. *infra*, 55-57).

Finally we come to a tile-end sub-type with composite animal mask tending to oval in shape, found only in trench D (SUs 600, 603 and 604). Altogether five fragments (WW-247, 248, 250, 254 and 279) have been inventoried. Similar decoration is attested on the ends of flat tiles (fig. 21) found in the Chan Buddhism temple Yongding chanyuan 永定禅院, inside the Song imperial mausoleum of Gongyi (Henan 1997a: 423, 438). In this case the tiles were found in the rubble in direct contact with the interface relating to the robbing of the structures of the temple, which was built in the same year as the mausoleum of Zhenzong 真宗, *i.e.* 1022.



Fig. 21 – Flat tile Tile-end with animal mask decoration.
(From Henan 1997a: pl. LXXX.5).

⁴⁶ The *yangwa* or *kouwa* tiles have the convex face turned upwards like the *tongwa* tiles, but are broader and less curved.

⁴⁷ A similar decoration has to be noted on tile-ends found during a survey in the Luoyang Sui-Tang Dongdu (Dongdu 1961: pl. VII.15; Chen Liangwei 2003: 360).

The context in which this end sub-type was found, which conserved no monastery remains, could raise some doubts about its attribution to the Fengxiansi roofing. It is nonetheless worth noting that elements cast from the same mould were also found by the Chinese team in the central part of the site and in the layers of abandonment of the monastery.

WW-3 Tile-end, triangular in shape, mould-decorated. The decoration consists of a central medallion in which a composite animal mask is depicted within a frame of pearls. The mask displays pearl ornamentation between the curved horns, globular eyes and prominent snout. The triangles left by the central medallion are decorated with circle motifs. The lower, polylobate edge is decorated with incised lines.

On the back: grooves to facilitate the laying of the tile.

We have also the following inventoried examples obtained from the same mould: WW-8 (Squares MMm/n, SU 2); 48 and 49 (Squares MMm/n, SU 5); 192 (Square MKu, SU 500); 256 (Square LSg, SU 600); 267 (Square LSl, SU 630); 375 (Square LOd, SU 805); 381 (Squares LJx/LOd, SU 815); 392 (Square LJx, SU 816).

Grey terracotta; $19 \times 12.8 \times 1.4$ cm.

The right corner is chipped; the decoration of the lower triangle is much worn. Unstratified.

WW-144 Tile-end, triangular in shape, mould-decorated. The decoration consists of a central medallion in which a composite animal mask is depicted within a frame of pearls. The mask displays curved horns, globular eyes and prominent snout. The remaining space is covered by wavy lines radiating from the medallion. Polylobate edge.

On the back: grooves to facilitate the laying of the tile.

Grey terracotta; $18 \times 12.5 \times 1.5$ cm.

Reconstructed from two fragments. Chipped on the lower side.

Unstratified.

WW-244 Tile-end, circular in shape, mould-decorated with a composite animal mask enclosed within a flat band, the inner edge of which is highlighted with a slender incised line. The mask is in low relief, displaying curved horns, wide-open eyes and snarling jaws. The animal's fur is shown with incised lines ending in small volutes.

On the back: grooves to facilitate the laying of the tile.

We have also the following inventoried examples obtained from the same mould: WW-47 (Squares MMm/n, SU 5); 153 and 442

(Square LTq, SU 848); 165 (Square LTs, SU 850); 245 (Square LSb, SU 603); 393 (Square LJx, SU 816); 416, 417, 419 and 486 (Squares LTq/r, SU 845); 454 and 464 (Squares LTq/r, SU 846); 508 (Squares MLn/o, SU 901); 564 (Squares LTq/r, SU 547).

Grey terracotta; diam. 14.5 cm; band th. 1.3 cm.

Slightly chipped along the edge.

Square LSb, SU 602.

- WW-250 Tile-end, oval in shape, mould-decorated with a composite animal mask within a flat band. The mask is in low relief, displaying horns pointing downward, a pearl-like ornament between horns, globular eyes and snarling jaws. The animal's fur is shown with incised lines. The upper part of the decoration is framed by a line of pearls.

On the back: grooves to facilitate the laying of the tile.

We have also the following inventoried examples obtained from the same mould: WW-247 and 248 (Square LSb, SU 603); 254 (Square LSg, SU 600); 279 (Square LSb, SU 604).

Grey terracotta; $20 \times 11.4 \times 1.2$ cm.

Chipped on the left corner; left eye has been lost.

Square LSb, SU 603.

- WW-379 Tile-end, circular in shape, mould-decorated with a composite animal mask enclosed within a circle of pearls.

Similar to WW-394 but obtained from a different mould as certain microdifferences bear out, notably the rendering of the eyebrows and fur of the animal.

We have also the following inventoried examples obtained from the same mould: WW-1 and 196 (Unstratified); 11 (Squares MMm/n, SU 2); 103 (Squares MMm/n, SU 10); 251 (Square LSb, SU 603); 274 (Square LSg, SU 633); 281 (Square LSb, SU 601); 387 (Squares MfT/MGp, SU 728); 450, 451, 452, 463 and 485 (Squares LTq/r, SU 846); 491 and 492 (Square LTs, SU 850).

Grey terracotta; diam. 14.5 cm; band th. 1.6 cm.

Chipped on the upper side.

Squares LJx/LOd, SU 815.

- WW-390 Tile-end, circular in shape, mould-decorated with a composite animal mask enclosed within a flat band traced out somewhat unevenly. The mask is in slight relief, displaying downward arching horns, thick eyebrows, small pointed ears and globular eyes. The animal's fur is rendered below the jaws with slender incised lines ending in two lateral volutes, and with small volutes at the sides.

On the back: grooves to facilitate the laying of the tile.

Traces of lime.

We have also the following inventoried examples obtained from the same mould: WW-371 (Squares LJx/LOd, SU 801); 385 (Square LOd, SU 816); 565 and 566 (Square LOd, SU 819).

Grey terracotta; diam. 12 cm; band th. 1.2 cm.

Slightly worn.

Square LOi, SU 819.

WW-394 Tile-end, circular in shape, mould-decorated with a composite animal mask enclosed within a circle of pearls. The mask is in relief, displaying downward arching horns, globular eyes and prominent snout. The animal's fur is rendered with incised lines in a radial pattern. The decoration is enclosed within a flat band.

We have also the following inventoried examples obtained from the same mould: WW-2 and 185 (Unstratified); 188 (Square MKu, SU 501); 443 (Square LTq, SU 848); 453 (Squares LTq/r, SU 846).

Grey terracotta; diam. 14.5 cm; band th. 1.5 cm.

Square LJx, SU 816.

b. Tile-ends with Dragon Decoration (pls. XXIV-XXV)

Three sub-types of tile-ends with dragon decoration (*panlong wen wadang* 盘龙纹瓦当) have been found, all of them circular in shape. This type of decoration, at least in the form relevant to this study, began to be produced between the end of the 9th and the beginning of the 10th century, finding diffusion in the following centuries. At Luoyang tile-ends with such decoration came mainly from the Gongcheng of the Five Dynasties – Song period (Chen Liangwei 2003: 364).

Sub-type a is documented by five fragments (WW-99, 104, 145, 149, 150) from trenches A and B and from the south part of trench F, where they were found in SU 850. Comparison with some tile-ends found at Luoyang (fig. 22) in Tang contexts suggests dating between the end of the 9th and the beginning of the 10th century, that is the period of reconstruction of the monastery.

Sub-type b includes WW-246 and 378, respectively from SUs 603 and 805, both of relatively recent formation. However, these tile-ends display characteristics analogous to those of Sub-type a: same diameter (15 cm), same rendering of the dragon's body and of the protome. Thus it is probable that the two sub-types date back to the same period.

Sub-type c has a diameter of 14.5 cm, coming short of the diameter of the previous sub-types, displaying more detailed and refined decoration. Five

fragments (WW-101, 189, 215, 308 and 388) cast from the same mould have been inventoried. From the horizontal distribution of the fragments it is to be noted that this sub-type is also attested in trench C, in the central area of the excavation, and in trench E, unlike the first two sub-types. It was therefore most probably associated with other types of tile-ends, and in particular those decorated with dragon and phoenix (SU 515) and with animal mask (SU 728). Similar tile-ends come, in particular, from Song contexts (ibid.: 364, pl. IV.4). Their date should be the same of Sub-type b of the tile-ends decorated with animal masks, *i.e.* the second half of the 10th century (cf. *infra*, 55-57).



Fig. 22 – Tile-end with dragon decoration.
(From Luoyang 1998a: 82).

WW-99 Fragment of roof-tile, of which only a small portion and the tile-end survive. The tile-end, circular in shape, is mould-decorated with a dragon framed by a flat band, the inner edge of which is highlighted with a slender incised line.

Cloth impression is visible on the inner side of the tile.

Traces of lime.

We have also the following examples obtained from the same mould: WW-104 (Squares MMm/n, SU 10); 145 (Square LYi, SU 1003); 149 and 150 (Squares LTs/y, SU 850).

Grey terracotta; diam. 15 cm; band th. 1.4 cm; tile th. 2.7 cm.

Fragmentary in the lower part.
Squares LYi/j, unstratified.

- WW-378 Fragment of roof-tile, of which only a small portion and the tile-end survive. The tile-end, circular in shape, is mould-decorated with a dragon enclosed in a circle executed with two concentric incisions. The dragon shows a serpentiform body folded in coils with gaping jaws. The decoration appears somewhat coarse. Cloth impression is visible on the inner side of the tile. We have also the following example obtained from the same mould: WW-246 (Square LSb, SU 603).

Grey terracotta; diam. 15 cm; band th. 1.6 cm.
Fragmentary in the lower part; much worn.
Square LOd, SU 805.

- WW-388 Right half of tile-end, circular in shape, mould-decorated with a dragon framed by a plain tapered band, the inner edge of which is highlighted with an incised line. The dragon's body is in coils and the snout, with gaping jaws, is turned towards the left. The details are minutely rendered; the mould must have been new. On the back: grooves to facilitate the laying of the tile. We have also the following examples obtained from the same mould: WW-101 (Squares MMm/n, SU 10); 189 (Square MKu, SU 501); 215 (Square MKk, SU 515); 308 (Square LSl, SU 649).

Grey terracotta; diam. 14.5 cm; band th. 1.2 cm.
Squares MFt/MGp, SU 728.

c. Tile-ends with Dragon and Phoenix decoration (pl. XXVI)

Thirteen fragments of tile-ends decorated with dragon and phoenix (*long-feng wen wadang* 龙凤纹瓦当) found in different excavation areas have been inventoried.

Although both dragon and phoenix are among the principal iconographic motifs of Chinese art, and had been individually depicted on the tile-ends since the early centuries BC at least, no such tile-ends had so far come to light from contexts of this sort. In order to date these tile-ends the stratigraphic evidence is crucial.

The earliest layers yielding these tile-ends are SUs 547 (WW-568), which covered the monastery structures subsequent to abandonment, and 774 (WW-107), formed in the same period. Together with SU 534 (WW-268), they contained material attributable to the monastery complex only. Fragments of tile-ends decorated with dragon and phoenix have been found in association with

Sub-type a and b of the tile-ends decorated with animal mask in SUs 547 and 10 respectively, with Sub-type a of the tile-ends with dragon decoration in SU 10, and with Sub-type c of the latter typology in SUs 10 and 515. Disregarding the material from SU 515, where it was deposited through later activities, the association with other types of tile-ends in SUs 10 and 547 is significant. The find spot, the size of the tile-end – diameter of 14.5 cm, equal to that of the others which was found in association – and the number of fragments suffice to dispel all doubts about attribution of this type to the monastery complex. Moreover, the rendering of the dragon's body suggests association with the tile-ends decorated with the dragon alone (cf. *infra*, 62-64). I therefore propose to date them to the 10th century.

In terms of the horizontal distribution, it is to be noted that none of these tile-end came from the southwest area of the excavation, which by contrast yielded a great many tile-ends decorated with animal masks (fig. 23). It is probable that the tile-ends with dragons and phoenixes decorated the roof of the central hall, possibly in association with the Sub-type c dragon tile-ends, while the tile-ends with animal masks probably graced the west hall (pl. XXXIX) or, at least, a different eaves of the same roof.⁴⁸

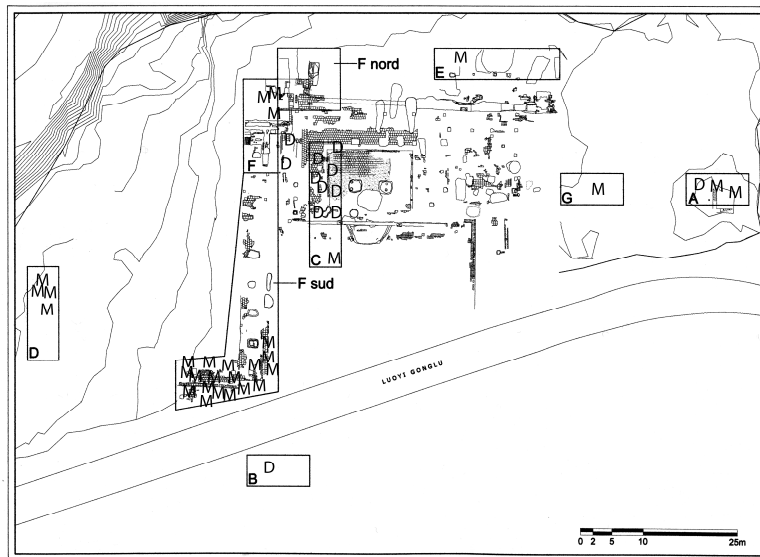


Fig. 23 – Site of the Fengxiansi. Finding location of the tile-ends decorated with animal mask (M) and with dragon and phoenix (D).
(Drawing by A.G. Fabiani).

⁴⁸ As noted above, the southwest area of the excavation was by the side of the central hall.

- WW-140 Fragment of roof-tile, of which only a small portion and part of the circular tile-end survive. The tile-end, of which only a little fragment survives, is mould-decorated with dragon and phoenix within a flat band and, compared to the others of the same type, was attached to the tile in an unusual position.

Cloth impression on the inner side of the tile.

Cast from the same mould as WW-377.

Grey terracotta; $10 \times 5 \times 1.6$ cm; tile th. 2.2 cm.

Square LYi, unstratified.

- WW-377 Tile-end, circular in shape, mould-decorated with dragon and phoenix within a flat band. The dragon's snout is depicted up-turned at the centre of the decoration, while the serpentiform body coils on the left side. The phoenix, on the right, has its beak half-open, with a long, curving neck and plumed body.

Grooves on the back to facilitate the laying of the tile.

We have also the following examples obtained from the same mould: WW-102 (Squares MMm/n, SU 10); 107 (Square MGu, SU 774); 206 (Square MKf, SU 506); 209 (Square MKk, SU 515); 216, 427 and 560 (Unstratified); 268 (Square MKp, SU 534); 406 (Square LOd, SU 814); 568 (Squares LOt/MKq, SU 547).

Grey terracotta; diam. 14.5 cm; band th. 2 cm.

Square LOd, SU 805.

- WW-466 Fragment of the right half of tile-end, circular in shape, mould-decorated with dragon and phoenix within a flat band.

Similar to WW-377 but cast from a different mould as shown by the rendering of the phoenix plumed body.

Grey terracotta; $7.3 \times 6.4 \times 1.8$ cm.

Square LOs, SU 844.

d. Tile-end with Floral Decoration (pl. XXVII)

Two tile-end sub-types with floral decoration (*hua wen wadang* 花纹瓦当) have been found, both triangular in shape.

Sub-type a is represented by two fragments, WW-166 and 455, respectively from SUs 850 and 846. It is decorated with a chrysanthemum flower sprouting from the top together with shell motifs, and its maximum width is of 21.5 cm.

The chrysanthemum flower decoration began to be produced at the beginning of the 10th century, although it was not particularly widespread at the time. However, the form of the flower depicted on WW-166 and 455 points to

somewhat late production, datable to the mid-10th century (Chen Liangwei 2003: 366). A similar flower is depicted on the circular tile-ends from the earliest layers of the excavation of a government office's garden at Luoyang (Luoyang 1996: 4; 1998a: 112), in use from the 10th to the 12th-13th century (fig. 24). The stratigraphic provenance of WW-455 too excludes any date later than the beginning of the 12th century.



Fig. 24 – Tile-end with chrysanthemum flower decoration.
(From Luoyang 1998a: 112).

Sub-type b is documented by five examples (WW-277, 384, 389, 391, 569), largely from squares LOd/i, in the layers of abandonment of the Period IV Kiln 818. However, as already seen in the case of Sub-type c of the tile-ends decorated with animal mask, these tile-ends were probably used in the monastery roofing (cf. *infra*, 57-58).

These tile-ends are decorated with a flower sprouting from the bottom and two buds arranged symmetrically at the sides. Flowers of this kind are interpreted alternatively as chrysanthemums (Chen Liangwei 2003: 363-64; Luoyang 1999c: 51) or lotuses (Henan 1997a: 288). In any case, the composition with central flower and two buds at the sides appears to be rather late: in fact, tile-ends with this decoration have been found in great number in the Song imperial necropolis, and in particular in the mausoleums of Taizong (d. 998) and his wife, and in the mausoleum of Zhenzong, who died in 1022 (*ibid.*: 286, 306, 366). The Fengxiansi examples, therefore, should be dated between the end of the 10th and the beginning of the 11th century.

WW-166 Tile-end, triangular in shape, mould-decorated with a chrysanthemum flower sprouting from the bottom and shell motifs. Polylobate edge.

Traces of lime.

We have also the following example obtained from the same mould: WW-455 (Squares LTq/r, SU 846).

Grey terracotta; $11 \times 10.2 \times 1.5$ cm.

Left side and upper part of the band missing; worn.

Squares LTn/s, SU 850.

WW-391 Tile-end, triangular in shape, mould-decorated with a floral motif. The composition displays a chrysanthemum flower (?) at the centre, from which sprout two curved stems ending in two similar but smaller flowers in the corners. Leaves of various forms and dimensions are depicted around the flowers. Polylobate edge.

The back is fragmentary where it connected with the tile.

We have also the following examples obtained from the same mould: WW-277 (Square MKp, SU 534); WW-384 (Square LOd, SU 816); 389 (Squares LOd/i, SU 825); 569 (Square LOi, SU 819).

Grey terracotta; $15.5 \times 11.3 \times 1.2$ cm.

Square LOi, SU 819.

Flat Tiles with Decorated Edges (pls. XXVIII-XXXII)

Depending on their shape and type of decoration, the end under-tiles along the eaves are generally called *dishui* or *chongchun banwa*.⁴⁹

Only one type of *dishui* flat tile was found, but many *chongchun banwa* flat tiles with decorated edges, which must hence have been the shape most used for the roofing of the monastery buildings. The distinction between the two shapes generally adopted by the Chinese archaeologists is actually of little significance since both were utilised in the same way, namely to decorate the eaves and drain off water. It is however to be noted that between the 7th and 11th centuries the *chongchun banwa* seems to have been more common.

The two examples of *dishui* flat tiles WW-253 and 333 are from upper layers and from areas where structural monastery remains are not conserved. Thus their attribution to this phase remains somewhat uncertain, although the decorative style is suggestive of the 11th-12th century.

The *chongchun banwa* come mainly from the monastery abandonment layers (SUs 534, 546, 547, 844 and 846) in trench C and from the southwest

⁴⁹ For Chinese names used to indicate various kinds of flat tiles see *infra*, 32-33.

area of the site. In comparison with the semi-cylindrical tile of the eaves we find a greater variety of moulds.

The width of the flat tiles can only be determined in a few cases, where it is around 23 cm. The thickness ranges from 1.4 to 3.3 cm, while the original length remains impossible to determine in all cases.⁵⁰ The height of the moulded edges ranges from a minimum of 3 to a maximum of 5.7 cm.

On the basis of the decoration three types have been distinguished, each showing a number of sub-types. While the stratigraphic provenance leaves no room for doubt about attribution to this phase, it is more difficult to narrow down the dating for each individual sub-type. To begin with, it is practically certain that various different moulds were used at the same time.⁵¹ No significant difference has been noted in the fabric or manufacture (for example, the flat tiles may or may not display cloth impression on the concave face with no apparent distinction). The size of tile-ends and flat tiles alike do not seem to represent a significant parameter since the same decoration can appear on edges of various heights and flat tiles of varying thickness. Moreover under-tiles differing in thickness (WW-576 and 577) were found in one and the same unit of stratification (SU 846, collapsed material) and must have been associated in the same eaves. Finally, the literature on this type of material is notably limited, offering no significant comparisons.⁵²

Type 1 includes flat tiles displaying a decoration obtained with small circular cavities. Of the four fragments inventoried, all obtained from different moulds, WW-334 and 336 are from SU 534, which has only yielded material belonging to the monastery; WW-577 is from collapse layer SU 846; WW-224 is an unstratified find which, by analogy with the previous examples, can be ascribed to the same chronological horizon.

Type 2 includes the flat tiles with edges decorated with double register displaying cord motifs. Similar tiles (fig. 25) were found during the investigations carried out in the pagoda of the Songyuesi monastery at Dengfeng, dated to the Tang dynasty (Songyuesi 1999a: 287). Other examples (fig. 26), larger in size, were found in the abandonment layers of the Yongding temple in the Song imperial necropolis (Henan 1997a: 423).⁵³

The twelve fragments of this type, belonging to diverse sub-types, are from trenches C and F, mainly from the abandonment layers of the monastery

⁵⁰ Roof-tiles, except for the decorated end tiles along the eaves, were included among the potsherds, but were weighed separately in order to facilitate the identification of layers with roof collapses and/or destruction. Several thousand kg were found.

⁵¹ Much the same situation is to be seen, for example, in the Song imperial necropolis at Gongyi (Henan 1997a: 283).

⁵² Similar tiles have been found, for example, at a kiln site in Renmin lu 人民路 at Luoyang, but they are generically dated to the Northern Song dynasty (Luoyang 2007: 41).

⁵³ On the excavations of the Yongding temple cf. *infra*, 59.

structures. Two fragments, WW-331 and 576, were found respectively in SUs 534 and 846, and thus in association with Type 1 tiles. The same decoration seen on WW-331 also appears on fragments WW-575 and 579, again found in abandonment layers (SUs 844 and 546). WW-234 and 580 are from SUs 515 and 814, of fairly recent formation, but exhibit the same decoration as WW-574 from SU 844, and are also to be attributed to this Period.



Fig. 25 – Flat tile with decorated edge.
(From Songyuesi 1999a: fig. 18).

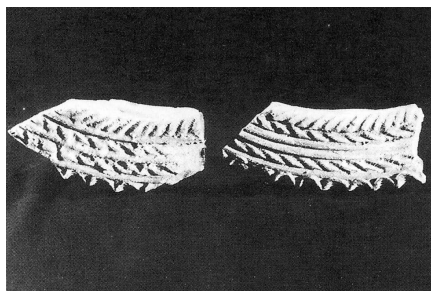


Fig. 26 – Fragments of flat tiles with decorated edges.
(From Henan 1997a: LXXX.3).

Type 3 shows edges decorated with only one register, displaying cord or festoon motifs. Sub-types have been found in trenches A, B and D, as well as trenches C and F. In this case the horizontal distribution of the material does not, however, appear to be a significant parameter given that the same decoration is to be seen, for example, in SU 534 (in association with flat tiles of Type 1 and Type 2) and in SU 1010 (trench B). Moreover, in some cases the distinction between the sub-types is based solely on the different orientation of the cord motif; in other respects they are the same.

On the assembled evidence we cannot determine exactly which flat tile type or sub-type was used during reconstruction of the monastery, and which if any in the subsequent restoration works. However, the *chongchun* flat tiles represent a form preceding that of the *dishui* (Songyuesi 1999a: 287), and all the fragments inventoried can in fact be dated between the end of the 9th and the 10th century.

WW-5 Flat tile fragment with mould-decorated end. The decoration is arranged in two equal registers with cord motifs oriented in the same direction, divided by a band in relief.

Wavy lower edge, decorated in the lower part with small incised lines.

Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 3.4 cm; tile th. 2.3 cm.
Unstratified.

- WW-31 Flat tile fragment with mould-decorated end.
Similar to WW-236 but cast from a different mould.
Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 3.7 cm; tile th. 2.3 cm.
Squares MMm/n, SU 5.
- WW-158 Flat tile fragment with mould-decorated end. The decoration, arranged in two registers separated by a band in relief, shows cord motifs oriented in opposite directions.
Wavy lower edge, decorated with small incised cavities.
Similar to WW-583 but cast from a different mould.
Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 4.2 cm; tile th. 2.8 cm.
Unstratified.
- WW-184 Flat tile fragment with mould-decorated end. On one register only, delimited above and below with two plain bands, the decoration consists of a festoon motif.
Wavy lower edge.
Cast from the same mould as WW-335.
Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 4.5 cm; tile th. 2.2 cm.
Square LYi, SU 1010.
- WW-201 Flat tile fragment with mould-decorated end. The decoration, on a single register, shows a cord motif between two plain bands.
Wavy lower edge.
Cloth impression on the concave face of the tile.
Similar to WW-314 but cast from a different mould.
Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 4.8 cm; tile th. 2.3 cm.
Chipped along the upper edge.
Square LYi, SU 1010.
- WW-210 Flat tile, which is conserved with its original width, with mould-decorated end. The decoration is arranged in two equal registers, separated by a band in relief, each displaying a cord motif.
Wavy lower edge, decorated with small incised cavities.
Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 4 cm; tile width 25 cm; tile th. 2.3 cm.
Reassembled from two fragments; chipped along the upper edge.
Square MKf, SU 506.
- WW-224 Flat tile fragment with mould-decorated end. On one register only, delimited above and below with two incised lines, the decoration consists of parallel transversal rows of small circular cavities.
Wavy lower edge.
Cloth impression on the concave face of the tile.

Coarse manufacture.

Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 3.9 cm; tile th. 1.4 cm.
Unstratified.

- WW-233 Flat tile fragment with mould-decorated end. The decoration, arranged in two registers separated by an incised line, shows cord motifs oriented in opposite directions.
Cloth impression on the concave face of the tile.
Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 3.3 cm; tile th. 2 cm.
Much worn and encrusted.
Square MKf, SU 518.
- WW-234 Flat tile fragment with mould-decorated end. The decoration, arranged in two registers separated by an incised line, shows cord motifs oriented in opposite directions.
Wavy lower edge, decorated with small incised lines.
Similar to WW-574 and 580 but cast from a different mould.
Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 3 cm; tile th. 2 cm.
Much worn.
Square MKp, SU 515.
- WW-236 Flat tile fragment with mould-decorated end. The decoration, on a single register, shows a cord motif between two plain bands.
Wavy lower edge.
Similar to WW-31 but cast from a different mould.
Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 3.7 cm; tile th. 2.3 cm.
Worn.
Square MKk, SU 515.
- WW-253 Flat tile fragment with mould-decorated end, triangular in shape. The decoration consists of a bat (?), the animal's body in relief occupying the centre of the tile-end. The wings, rendered with incised lines and small pearls, follow the curve of the piece.
Cloth impression on the concave face of the tile.
Cast from the same mould as WW-333.
Grey terracotta; moulded end 18 × 7.7 cm; tile th. 1.7 cm.
Slightly chipped at the corners.
Square LSb, SU 603.
- WW-314 Fragment of flat tile end. The moulded decoration, on a single register, shows a cord motif between two plain bands.
Wavy lower edge.
Similar to WW-201 but cast from a different mould.

Grey terracotta; h. 4.1 cm.
Chipped along the upper edge.
Square LSI, SU 649.

- WW-331 Flat tile fragment with mould-decorated end. The decoration is arranged in two equal registers, separated by a band in relief, each displaying a cord motif.

Wavy lower edge, decorated with small incised lines.

Traces of lime.

Similar to WW-575 and 579 but cast from a different mould.

Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 4.3 cm; tile th. 2.5 cm.

Worn.

Square MKp, SU 534.

- WW-333 Tile-end, triangular in shape, mould-decorated. Part of the flat tile is also conserved, showing cloth impression on the concave side.
Cast from the same mould as WW-253.

Grey terracotta; moulded end 18×7.7 cm; tile th. 1.7 cm.

Slightly worn.

Square MFt, SU 700.

- WW-334 Flat tile with mould-decorated end. The decoration is arranged in two equal registers divided by a band in relief, each of them showing two parallel rows of small circular cavities.

Wavy lower edge.

Cloth impression on the concave face of the tile.

Traces of lime.

Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 5.7 cm; tile th. 2.3 cm.

Square MKp, SU 534.

- WW-335 Flat tile fragment with mould-decorated end.

Cast from the same mould as WW-184.

Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 4.5 cm; tile th. 2.2 cm.

Upper edge much worn.

Square MKp, SU 534.

- WW-336 Flat tile fragment with mould-decorated end. The decoration consists of a broad band with two parallel rows of small circular cavities.

The lower edge is wavy and decorated with transversal rows of incised lines.

Cloth impression on the concave face of the tile.

Traces of lime.

Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 4.6 cm; tile th. 2.2 cm.

Upper edge much worn.
Squares MKp, SU 534.

- WW-351 Flat tile fragment with mould-decorated end. The decoration, on a single register, shows a cord motif between two plain bands.
Wavy lower edge.
Cast from the same mould as WW-573.
Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 3.4 cm; tile th. 2 cm.
Lower edge only partly preserved.
Squares MKq/v, SU 547.
- WW-573 Flat tile fragment with mould-decorated end. The decoration, on a single register, shows a cord motif between two plain bands.
Wavy lower edge.
Cloth impression on the concave face of the tile, which is conserved with almost its original width.
Cast from the same mould as WW-351.
Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 3.4 cm; tile th. 3.3 cm.
Chipped on the lower edge.
Squares LSg/l, SU 633.
- WW-574 Flat tile with mould-decorated end. The decoration, arranged in two registers separated by an incised line, shows cord motifs oriented in opposite directions.
Wavy lower edge, decorated with small incised lines.
Cloth impression along the edges of the tile, which is conserved with its original width.
Similar to WW-234 and 580 but cast from a different mould.
Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 3.3 cm; tile width 23 cm; tile th. 2.4 cm.
Much worn.
Squares LOs/x, SU 844.
- WW-575 Flat tile fragment with mould-decorated end. The decoration is arranged in two equal registers, separated by a band in relief, each displaying a cord motif.
Wavy lower edge, decorated with small incised lines.
Similar to WW-331 and 579 but cast from a different mould.
Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 4.5 cm; tile th. 2.7 cm.
Worn.
Square LOs, SU 844.
- WW-576 Flat tile fragment with mould-decorated end. The decoration is arranged in two registers, separated by a band in relief, each displaying a different cord motif.

Wavy lower edge.

Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 4 cm; tile th. 2.5 cm.

Squares LTq/r, SU 846.

- WW-577 Flat tile fragment with mould-decorated end. The decoration is arranged in two registers, separated by an incised line, and shows transversal rows of small circular cavities arranged so as to form a herringbone pattern.

The decoration also extends along the lower, wavy edge.

Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 4.2 cm; tile th. 2 cm.

Squares LTq/r, SU 846.

- WW-578 Fragment of flat tile with mould-decorated end. The decoration is on a single register, showing a highly stylised festoon motif framed within two plain bands.

The lower, wavy edge is decorated with small incised lines.

Cloth impression along the one conserved edge of the tile.

Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 3.5 cm; tile th. 2.5 cm.

Square LOi, SU 820.

- WW-579 Flat tile fragment with mould-decorated end. The decoration is arranged in two equal registers, separated by a band in relief, each displaying a cord motif.

Wavy lower edge, decorated with small incised lines.

Similar to WW-331 and 575 but cast from a different mould.

Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 4.6 cm; tile th. 2.6 cm.

Squares MKq/v, SU 546.

- WW-580 Flat tile with mould-decorated end. The decoration, arranged in two registers separated by an incised line, shows cord motifs oriented in opposite directions.

Wavy lower edge, decorated with small incised lines.

Cloth impression along the edges of the tile, which is conserved with its original width.

Traces of lime.

Similar to WW-234 and 574 but cast from a different mould.

Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 3.3 cm; tile width 23 cm; tile th. 2.3 cm.

Left side chipped.

Square LOd, SU 814.

- WW-583 Flat tile fragment with mould-decorated end. The decoration, arranged in two registers separated by a band in relief, shows cord motifs oriented in opposite directions.
 Wavy lower edge, decorated with small incised cavities.
 The tile is conserved with its original width.
 Traces of lime.
 Similar to WW-158 but cast from a different mould.
 Grey terracotta; h. of the moulded end 3.6 cm; tile width 23 cm; tile th. 3 cm.
 Traces of lime.
 Square MKe, unstratified.

Akroteria (pls. XXXIII-XXXVII)

A great many akroteria in composite animal form have been found in various parts of the site. They are known as *chiwen* 鸱吻, *taoshou* 套兽 or *chuishou* 垂兽 according to the position they occupy in relation to the roof ridge (figs. 7 and 8). However, given the extremely fragmentary conditions in which they were found it has in most cases proved impossible to determine their original positions.

In the monastery context these decorations, which had by now come to replace the *chiwei* 'owl's tail' decorations characteristic of the previous centuries, are to be seen as the outcome of contamination between the dragon, characteristic of the Chinese tradition, and the Indian *makara*.

The decorations were obtained from moulds, the various components generally modelled separately and then assembled.

WW-482, found in collapse layer SU 846, is the best-conserved example: it is a *taoshou*, fixed to the corner beam supporting the roof and displaying the form of a composite animal protome (pl. XXXVIII). On the basis of the stratigraphic and stylistic evidence the object can be dated to the second half of the 11th century. A very similar rendering of the animal's scales, like so many small fans, was observed in an akroterion found during excavation of a government office in the city of Luoyang (Luoyang 1996: 3, pl. II). The archaeologists date the foundation of the office to the beginning of the Song dynasty (second half of 10th century), and its destruction during the Jin dynasty (12th-13th century). A *chuishou* ornament to the oblique ridge of the roof, now displayed in the Luoyang Branch of the Archaeological Museum, also shows the same treatment of the jaws, palate, eyes and ears as WW-482 (fig. 27). The same formal characteristics are to be seen in a *chuishou* (fig. 28) found in the southern gate to the mausoleum of the consort of emperor Shenzong 神宗 (d. 1085), in the Song imperial necropolis at Gongyi (Henan 1997a: 289). Fragments displaying similar decoration were also found during the survey of the Youyemen gate of the Tang Dongdu, at Luoyang, carried out at the end of the

1950s (Dongdu 1961: pl.VII.6-8). The gate was still in use during the Song dynasty but the published details of the survey provide no indication of the exact context in which the fragments were found.

Thanks to the fact that WW-482 comes from a unit of stratification (SU 846) easily interpretable and its state of conservation is excellent, it has also been possible to identify and date some residual fragments from higher layers and other badly disturbed contexts. They are attributable to the same chronological horizon. WW-46, from the same squares (LTq/r) as WW-482 but in a higher layer (SU 845), displays identical decoration of the upper jaw. The size of the fragment does not allow to determine the form and position of the decoration, but in both respects it seems much like that of WW-482. WW-141, found in trench B, also shows scales similar to those of WW-482. Again, it should be a *taoshou*, i.e. an ornament for roof beams, but in this case in geometrical form.



Fig. 27 – Roof decoration for the end of the sloping ridge.
(From Luoyang 1998a: 111).

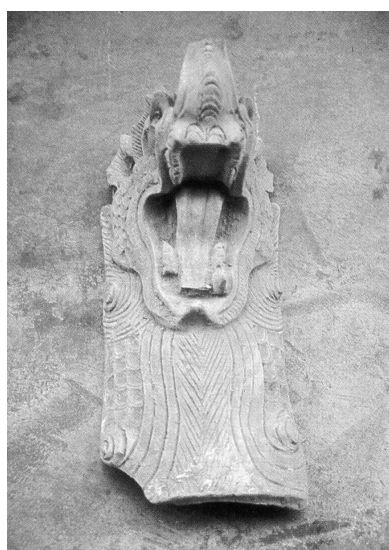


Fig. 28 – Roof decoration for the end of the sloping ridge.
(From Henan 1997a: col. pl. VIII.3).

WW-332, from the abandonment layer of the monastery SU 534, shows the same 'beard' and scales as WW-482, and must have formed part of a similar decoration. Finally, WW-223 (SU 515), attributable to the ear of a composite animal, shows execution, polylobate and incised line decoration analogous to that of WW-482.

All these fragments are attributable to the same chronological horizon as WW-482, *i.e.* the second half of the 11th century.

SU 515 has yielded a great variety of material: apart from fragments more or less coeval with the formation of the layer and attributable to Period IV, it yielded a considerable quantity of residual objects belonging to the monastery phases, including WW-223, discussed above, WW-221 and 222. The last two fragments probably formed part of the same composite animal decoration. The quadrangular cavity in WW-221 suggests that the decoration was fixed to a roof beam. Comparison with similar material, and in particular with a fragment from the Qinglongsi monastery at Xi'an, interpreted, somewhat strangely, as the head of a phoenix (Qinglongsi 1989: 256, pl. XVIII.4), suggests a date the first half of the 10th century.

WW-249 and 252, belonging to the same decoration, and WW-52, similar to the previous examples but larger, can be similarly dated. The fragments are from recent layers (SUs 603 and 5) and are therefore to be considered residual, brought up to the surface as a result of levelling and robbing activities. Similar material was found in the kilns situated not far from the Youyemen gate, already functioning in the first half of the 8th century (Luoyang 1978: 115, fig. 17). The excavation report does not suggest any date, but the Fengxiansi stratigraphy rules out any date of origin prior to the end of the 9th century.

The layer of rubble SU 773 resulting from spoliation of Drain 580 yielded WW-18, belonging to the same object of which WW-476, an unstratified find, is also part. In this case, to judge by the two fragments – an eye and upper jaw of an animal – the decoration is on a relatively large scale. The stylistic execution as well as the stratigraphic provenance suggest once again a date between the 10th and 11th century.

Also yielded by the abandonment layers of the monastery were WW-269, 338, 342 (SU 534) and 341 (SU 547), found in direct contact with Pavement 511. WW-341, of modest dimensions, must have been set below the eaves of the roof.

WW-180 is an unstratified find, belonging to a composite animal protome differing stylistically from the material so far considered. On the evidence of comparison with a decoration from Tang layers in the Xingchentang 星辰汤 site,⁵⁴ within the Huaqinggong complex at Xi'an, however, a likely date seems

⁵⁴ The Xingchentang, or «Constellation Baths», comprise a main hall, with an Ursa Major shaped pool at its centre, and a south hall (Luo Xizhe 1998: 34-116).

to be between the end of the 9th and the beginning of the 10th century (Luo Xizhe 1998: 33, 81, pl. XXXIII.3).

WW-16 and 383 belonged to a *chuishou*, or roof ridge ornament consisting of a tile with animal protome attached. A fragment very similar to WW-383 was found in the Yongyuling 永裕陵, *i.e.* the mausoleum of emperor Shenzong, who died in 1085 (Henan 1997a: 289, pl. LX.5).

All these fragments, together with the others presented in the data sheets, are in unglazed grey terracotta and, as we have seen, come largely from the abandonment layers of the monastery, where they were found in association with tile-ends and other decorative devices that can be associated with the monastery roofing. The fact that the dating of the individual fragments runs from the end of the 9th to the end of the 12th century bears out the point made above, to the effect that subsequent to reconstruction at the end of the 9th century various maintenance and restoration works were carried out on the monastery throughout its lifespan,⁵⁵ which presumably came to an end within the second half of the 12th century.

- WW-16 Tile fragment with composite animal protome applied to the convex face. The decoration displays two overlapping semicircular bands from which sprouts the animal's 'beard', rendered with curving incised lines, which ends on the tile.
The edge of the tile is highlighted with two parallel incised lines.
Grey terracotta; 18.4 × 20 × 2.4 cm.
Much worn.
Unstratified.
- WW-18 Fragment of composite animal, of which only the right eye is conserved, composed of various pieces separately moulded. Two perforating holes, presumably to insert metal elements.
Hollow.
Traces of lime.
Belonging to the same object as WW-476.
Grey terracotta; 16.5 × 9 cm.
Square MFy, SU 773.
- WW-46 Akroterion in composite animal form, of which only part of the – upturned – upper jaw is conserved.
Grey terracotta; 8.3 × 8.7 cm.
Broken off at the tip.
Squares LTq/r, SU 845.

⁵⁵ This is hardly surprising: since the tilework degrades and breaks easily, any tiled roof has to be periodically restored and some decorations need to be replaced.

- WW-52 Left part of composite animal showing a separately moulded, globular eye with hollow pupil, curved eyelid and eyebrow in the form of a crest, in relief, decorated with slender parallel incised lines. At the bottom, the decoration rests on a flat base.
Hollow.
Grey terracotta; $14 \times 12.5 \times 1.5$ cm.
Chipped in various parts.
Squares MMm/n, SU 5.
- WW-141 Fragment of composite animal (?) made up of two flat surfaces set at a right angle. The incised decoration shows a scales motif on one face, and parallel curved lines on the other.
Grey terracotta; $17 \times 10.4 \times 6.7$ cm.
Squares LYi/j, unstratified.
- WW-180 Akroterion in the form of a composite animal. The animal's eyes are tubular in form, decorated with slender incised lines, and the gaping, upturned jaws end in two small volutes above the snout. The object ends with two smooth walls, which suggests that it was not designed to have back or lower parts. Some fingerprints can be seen on the inside, probably left when assembling the various parts, which were moulded separately.
Grey terracotta; 16×16.2 cm.
Eyebrows chipped; tusks broken off.
Unstratified.
- WW-221 Right side of akroterion in the form of a composite animal. The fragment shows a globular eye, gaping jaws and part of the animal's fur, which is rendered with incised lines ending in lateral volutes. A quadrangular cavity served to set the piece in position. Traces of red paint along the edge of the eyelid and within the jaws; traces of lime on the eyeball and in the positioning cavity. Probably part of the same object as WW-222.
Grey terracotta; $21.5 \times 15 \times 5$ cm.
Squares MKf/k, SU 515.
- WW-222 Fragment of composite animal consisting of a tuft of fur, rendered with incised lines ending in a lateral volute. On the reverse: small holes not piercing through.
Traces of lime.
Probably part of the same object as WW-221.
Grey terracotta; $11.7 \times 8 \times 3$ cm.
Squares MKf/k, SU 515.

- WW-223 Fragment of architectural composite animal decoration, of which only the left ear is conserved, showing polylobate edge and incised lines which form a floral motif within the cavity.
Grey terracotta; 13×8.7 cm.
Chipped and worn.
Squares MKf/k, SU 515.
- WW-249 Fragment of the central part of an akroterion in the form of composite animal protome. The eyes, modelled separately, are globular with hollow pupils, curvilinear eyelids and eyebrows in crest form, in relief and decorated with slender parallel incised lines ending in a small volute. At the bottom the decoration rests on a flat base.
Hollow.
Grey terracotta; $11 \times 5.6 \times 1.5$ cm.
Joined to WW-252.
Square LSb, SU 603.
- WW-269 Fragment of akroterion in composite animal form, consisting of the left eye, globular in form, with curvilinear eyelid.
Grey terracotta; 7.9×6.3 cm.
Square MKp, SU 534.
- WW-332 Fragment of akroterion in the form of composite animal protome, consisting of the part below the jaws. The animal's beard is rendered with curvilinear incised lines, at the sides of which small overlapping fan motifs suggest scales.
Grey terracotta; 13.2×17.7 cm.
Square MKp, SU 534.
- WW- 338 Fragment of architectural decoration in the form of a dragon (?), of which only part of the body showing overlapping scales is conserved. On the back a band in relief runs along the edge, probably serving to set the object in place.
Grey terracotta; $13 \times 18.5 \times 9$ cm.
Square MKp, SU 534.
- WW-341 Fragment of architectural decoration in composite animal form, tubular in shape. The animal displays somewhat pointed ears in relief and eyes in spiral form. It shows gaping, upturned jaws, the palate decorated with parallel bands in relief. The sides and lower part of the animal's body are rendered with scale decoration. Hollow.

Grey terracotta; $14.6 \times 6.2 \times 6.5$ cm.
Upper part of the jaws, snout and much of the body missing.
Squares MKq/v, SU 547.

- WW-342 Left part of akroterion in the form of a composite animal, showing an eye surmounted by a crest and the beginning of an ear.

Grey terracotta; $10.5 \times 17.5 \times 5.9$ cm.
Square MKp, SU 534.

- WW-383 Tile fragment with composite animal decoration applied to the convex face. Only the lower part of the animal is conserved, executed with incised lines ending in two lateral volutes. A circular hole in the centre of the fragment served to facilitate the laying of the piece.

Traces of white slip and lime.

Grey terracotta; $29 \times 18.5 \times 1.8$ cm; hole diam. 4.5 cm.
Square LOd, SU 816.

- WW-476 Fragment of akroterion with large composite animal decoration, consisting of the animal's upper jaw ending in a volute. The palate is decorated with incised lines, curved and parallel.

Belonging to the same object as WW-18.

Grey terracotta; 16.8×19 cm.
Unstratified.

- WW-482 Akroterion in the form of a composite animal protome, showing globular eyes and curved eyelids surmounted by a half sphere decorated with circular incision, and eyebrows in the form of crests. The upturned ears display polylobate edges, while the pointed snout is set between the eyebrows. The snarling jaws are upturned, the palate decorated with a central band of overlapping scales and parallel incised lines. Small fan motifs at the corners of the mouth suggest the animal's scales, while the 'beard' is rendered with wavy incised lines. The sharp tusks point downwards. A circular hole at the back of the piece served to assemble it.

Hollow.

Traces of lime.

Grey terracotta; $33 \times 23 \times 3.3$ cm; hole diam. 1.2 cm.
End part of the jaws, left ear and a tooth broken off.
Squares LTq/r, SU 846.

Decorated Bricks and Column Bases (pls. XL-XLI)

On the basis of the stratigraphic evidence only three decorated brick fragments can be attributed to this period with certainty. Moulded bricks of this type, decorated along one of the edges, were used for doorsills or to frame doors and windows.

In contrast with finds for the previous period (cf. *infra*, 41-43), no bricks with decoration on the exposed side have come to light, either among the displaced material or in situ.

WW-446 and 484 are from SU 848, which formed after the monastery pavement in square LTq was no longer in use. This unit of stratification has also yielded a great many tile-ends belonging to the monastery roofing (cf. *infra*, 61-62).

WW-547 is from recently formed layer SU 902 but shows the same decoration as WW-446 and is therefore attributable to this phase.

As a result of the robbing of the column bases some fragments (WW-415) were found in SU 845. The fragments show the same manufacture as some of the column bases found still *in situ*, such as SUs 558-561 which delimit the perimeter of the central hall (pl. XL), being therefore attributable to the period when the monastery was reconstructed. As is the norm in Chinese traditional architecture, the wooden columns stood on, but not in, stone bases, giving them freedom to move in earthquakes.

WW-415 Four fragments (a-d) of a square column base, decorated with oblique incised lines that intersect on the exposed face.

Grey limestone; fragment a: $17 \times 9.4 \times 6.7$ cm; fragment b: $14 \times 12.5 \times 4.7$ cm; fragment c: $12.2 \times 7.5 \times 6.2$ cm; fragment d: 10.9×3.4 cm.
Squares LTq/r, SU 845.

WW-446 Rectangular brick fragment with one of the long edges decorated. The decoration consisted of a row of triangles, only one of which survives, within which were depicted five-petalled half flowers. The space between the triangles is filled with a motif suggesting overlapping petals, decorated with incised lines.

Grey terracotta; $15.9 \times 15 \times 4.7$ cm.
Only one of the short sides of the brick is intact.
Square LTq, SU 848.

WW-484 Brick fragment, trapezoidal in shape, tapering in profile, decorated along the edge with two parallel incised lines. The back is impressed with rhomboidal motifs herringbone-wise to facilitate laying.

Grey terracotta; $18 \times 10.6 \times 6.5$ cm.

Porous fabric.
Square LTq, SU 848.

WW-547 Fragment of a brick similar to WW-446, but cast from a larger mould.

Grey terracotta; $15 \times 19 \times 6$ cm.
Square MLo, SU 902.

Other Finds (pls. XLII-XLIII)

As we have seen, the roof-tiles, tile-ends and architectural decoration attributable to the monastery were produced mainly in grey terracotta. Traces of paint have been observed on only a very few fragments, such as WW-221; too few, in fact, to be able to conclude that the Fengxiansi roofs were coloured. Nevertheless, the material from collapse layer SU 846 shows that at least some of the architectural elements of the roofing were manufactured in glazed ceramic. Indeed, the layer contained a certain amount of *wading* 瓦顶, i.e. decorative glazed ceramic features that concealed the nails used to fix the semi-cylindrical tiles of the eaves. The nineteen examples of *wading* inventoried are from the southwest sector of the excavation. The fact that they were found only in this area seems to confirm our conjecture that the roofing they belonged to was that of west hall or gallery adjoining the central hall (pl. XXXVIII).⁵⁶

Two sub-types have been distinguished in the *wading*: the first and most common shows a grey fabric with few inclusions and black glaze with brown shades. The second, for which only two fragments have been inventoried, is of a red fabric far coarser than that of the first one, and dark green glaze. The two sub-types, which are associated in SU 850, have also different shape.

Besides the architectural fragments, there are other objects that illustrate the material aspects of everyday life in the monastery. Of these we may mention a small votive plaque obtained from a mould (WW-58), of which the lower part displays a *bodhisattva* (?) standing on a pedestal, and two glazed fragments of a pillow from SU 10 (WW-110 and 111), in too poor a state of conservation to allow for reconstruction of the original decoration and form. Particularly interesting, too, is the find of some small objects for games. In SU 897 three dice (WW-501, 502, 503) of various sizes were brought to light. Three *weiqi* 围棋⁵⁷ pieces were retrieved from different parts of the excava-

⁵⁶ Cf. *infra*, chap.6.

⁵⁷ *Weiqi* is one of the most ancient Chinese table games. According to legend, the mythical emperor Yao 尧 invented it for the instruction of his son Danzhu 丹朱. The first certain references to the game date back to the period of the Warring States, when it was mentioned by Confu-

tion, two of which, WW-326 and 366, bearing decoration. Although they came from high layers – respectively SUs 601 and 700 – they can be ascribed to this period. The decoration of WW-326, in particular, is identical to that of the pieces (fig. 29) found in the Song layers of the Yongding temple, in the dynasty's imperial necropolis (Henan 1997a: 436). As previously noted, the temple was founded in 1022, and the most recent material retrieved from layers of abandonment of the structures consists of coins of the Zhenghe 政和 reign period (1111-1118). It is worth noting that many of the objects from this excavation are similar if not identical to objects found in the Fengxiansi site. Beside the game pieces, dice much like WW-501-503 have been published (ibid.: pl. LXXXV.2), as well as metal objects, potsherds, tiles and tile-ends closely resembling those discovered on our site.

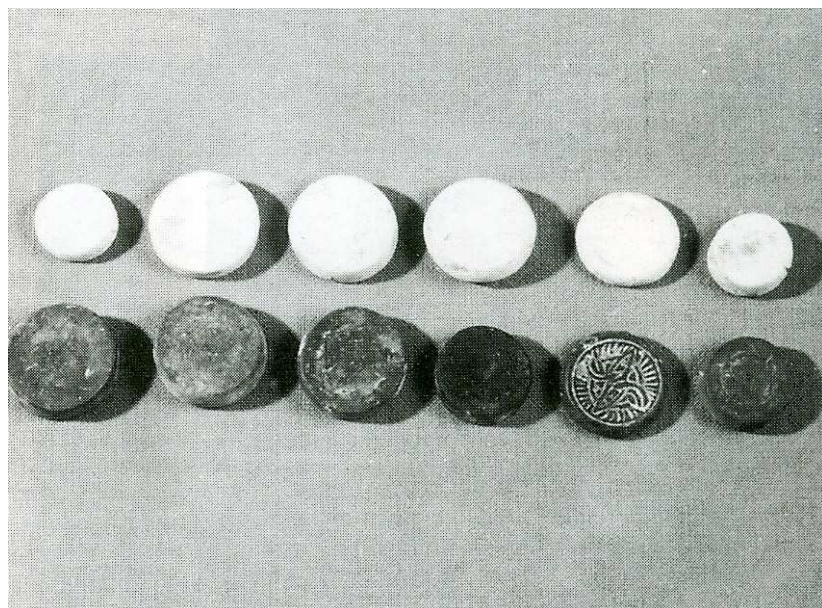


Fig. 29 – Weiqi game pieces. (From Henan 1997a: pl. LXXXIV.6).

cius and Mencius. The earliest complete treatise on *weiqi*, the *Qijing Shisanpian* 棋经十三篇, «The Classic of Weiqi in Thirteen Chapters», was compiled between 1049 and 1054.

- WW-58 Fragment of plaque obtained from a mould, showing the lower part of a *bodhisattva* (?) standing on a pedestal. The sleeves of the robe are decorated with a rosette motif.
Red terracotta; $3.9 \times 4 \times 1.5$ cm.
Squares MMm/n, SU 5.
- WW-79 Table game piece.
White stoneware; diam. 1.7 cm.
Square MMm, SU 16.
- WW-110 Fragment of quadrangular pillow with underglaze decoration.
Buff ware, monochrome green glaze; $6 \times 3.5 \times 1.2$ cm.
Glaze poorly preserved.
Squares MMm/n, SU 10.
- WW-111 Fragment of the corner of a pillow showing green and white glaze.
Red ware, three-colour glaze; $5 \times 3.4 \times 0.8$ cm.
Glaze poorly preserved.
Squares MMm/n, SU 10.
- WW-326 Table game piece decorated on both faces with a geometric motif within a frame of radiating incised lines.
White stoneware; diam. 1.8 cm.
Square LSb, SU 601.
- WW-366 Table game piece decorated on both faces with a geometric motif, hard to make out, within a frame formed with a double incised line.
White stoneware; diam. 1.2 cm.
Square MGr, SU 700.
- WW-426 Half of decorative *wading* in the form of a flower, with circular hole at the centre for insertion of a nail (now lost). Dark green glaze, coarse red fabric.
We have also the following example obtained from the same mould: WW-499 (Square LOs, SU 850).
Red terracotta, green glaze; h. 2.1 cm; hole diam. 0.4 cm.
Glaze poorly preserved; traces of burning.
Square LOs, SU 844.

WW-483 Decorative *wading* in the form of a half sphere, polylobate, with a circular hole at the centre for insertion of the nail. Black glaze, light grey fabric with scant inclusions.

We have also the following examples obtained from the same mould: WW-175 (Square LOs, SU 850); 420, 421, 422, 423, 457 (Squares LTq/r, SU 845); 424, 425 (Square LTr, SU 831); 445 (Square LTq, SU 848); 448, 449, 461, 462, 473, 474, 475 (Squares LTq/r, SU 846).

Light grey stoneware, black glaze; diam. 5.3 cm; nail th. 0.4 cm.

Encrusted.

Square LTq, SU 846.

WW-501 Die.

Bone; side 0.7 cm.

Square LJx, SU 897.

WW-502 Die.

Bone; side 0.6 cm.

Square LJx, SU 897.

WW-503 Die.

Bone; side 0.8 cm.

Square LJx, SU 897.

Metal Objects (pl. XLIV)

The monastery structure being of wood, and the beams connected with the aid of metal elements, iron studs, nails, cramps, staples and bars were found.⁵⁸ Most of this material came from the layers of rubble covering the pavements, in particular in the southwest excavation area (Squares LTq/r/s, SUs 845, 846 and 850), where the post-abandonment deposit was less disturbed in later times. The attribution of the material from upper layers (as SUs 4, 5, 901, 1001) and of the unstratified examples to this Period remains uncertain.

Almost all the nails and cramps are square or rectangular in section, while showing considerable variation in size and in shape of the head. Formal typologies can be drawn up for these objects, and are used in the descriptions below. They are based on the forms of the most significant parts, *i.e.* cross

⁵⁸ Metal objects are not as many as one could imagine because all the joints of Chinese roofs were mortised and tenoned with the minimum of nails.

section, head and tooth, and thus provide the data for the definition of types and sub-types. The following formal typology is proposed:

Nails

- Type I – Body rectangular in section;
- Type II – Body square in section;
 - Sub-type a – Flat head;
 - Sub-type b – Round flat head;
 - Sub-type c – Convex round head;
 - Sub-type d – Globular head.

Cramps

- Type I – Body rectangular in section;
- Type II – Body square in section;
 - Sub-type a – Terminal teeth (U-shaped);
 - Sub-type b – Long terminal teeth.

Two decorations in flower form for doors or windows can also be mentioned, WW-155 and 506 from SUs 776 and 773. Studs of the sort, generally displaying six-petalled flowers, were very common during the Tang dynasty.⁵⁹

Also found in SU 776 is an iron door handle (WW-179).

The finds included a great many objects, in iron or bronze alike, associated with the everyday life of the monastery. In particular, a large quantity of fragments of iron vessels, tweezers and tools came to light, including WW-241, a precision tool in bronze. A very similar object, made of iron, comes from the Yongding temple, in the imperial necropolis of Gongyi (Henan 1997a: 437, fig. 36.7, pl. LXXXV.3); the object has been identified as a medicine measure (*yaoshao* 药勺).

An arrowhead, WW-182, is unstratified, and it cannot therefore be determined whether its presence is connected with episodes of destruction.

- WW-22 Tweezers.
Bronze; 7 cm; th. of arm 0.19 cm.
Squares MMm/n, SU 4.
- WW-23 Nail (Type Ia).
Iron; 6.5 cm.
Squares MMm/n, SU 4.
- WW-24 Fragment of a vessel.
Iron; 3 × 2.5 × 0.35 cm.
Squares MMm/n, SU 4.

⁵⁹See, for instance, the ones found in the Shangyanggong at Luoyang (Shangyanggong 1998: 44) and those from the Huaqinggong site at Xi'an (Luo Xizhe 1998: pl. CLV. 5).

- WW-32 Fragment of hemispherical object (lid of a vessel?), decorated on the convex face with a floral motif, of which only two petals survive.
Bronze; diam. 6 cm; th. 0.4 cm.
Squares MMm/n, SU 5.
- WW-34 Fragment of cutting tool. Internal groove for the laying of a lost wooden (?) element.
Iron; 11 × 4.5 cm.
Squares MMm/n, SU 5.
- WW-35 Nail (Type IIb).
Iron; 6 cm.
Squares MMm/n, SU 5.
- WW-37 Nail (Type IIb).
Iron; 8.7 cm.
Squares MMm/n, SU 5.
- WW-38 Nail (Type IIa).
Iron; 12 cm.
Bent; encrusted.
Squares MMm/n, SU 5.
- WW-39 Nail (Type Ia).
Iron; 5.8 cm.
Squares MMm/n, SU 5.
- WW-40 Buckle (?), rectangular in shape, with two tubular loops.
Bronze; 3.5 × 1.8 cm.
Squares MMm/n, SU 5.
- WW-41 Fragment of vessel wall.
Iron; 5 × 4.3 × 0.5 cm.
Squares MMm/n, SU 5.
- WW-70 Tweezers with two rings, one for hanging and the other along the arms.
Bronze; 7.5 cm; th. of arm 0.2 cm.
Bent.
Squares MMm/n, SU 6.

- WW-72 Nail (Type Ia).
Iron; 6.4 cm.
Squares MMm/n, SU 6.
- WW-81 Nail (Type Ib).
Iron; 7.6 cm.
Square MMn, SU 25.
- WW-105 Fragment of vessel wall.
Iron; $5.8 \times 7.2 \times 0.4$ cm.
Square LOt, unstratified.
- WW-116 Fragment of low, flat vessel with slightly out-turned rim.
Iron; $18.5 \times 10 \times 2.5$ cm.
In two pieces.
Squares MMm/n, SU 10.
- WW-117 Cramp (Type Ia).
Iron; 12.2×2.5 cm.
Squares MMm/n, SU 10.
- WW-118 Staple with loop head, square in section.
Iron; 6×5 cm.
Squares MMm/n, SU 10.
- WW-119 Nail (Type IIa).
Iron; 12 cm.
Slightly bent.
Squares MMm/n, SU 10.
- WW-124 Nail (Type IIb).
Iron; 2.7 cm.
Bent.
Square LYi, SU 1001.
- WW-155 Stud, displaying a six-petalled flower, with a central hole for a nail, square in section, which is partly preserved.
Similar to WW-506.
Iron; 8 cm; th. 0.6 cm; nail th. 0.6 cm.
Much encrusted.
Squares MGv/w, SU 776.

- WW-167 Nail (Type IIc).
Iron; 30 cm.
Squares LTn/s, SU 850.
- WW-168 Fragment of a tool (?), triangular in shape.
Iron; $6 \times 2.7 \times 1.1$ cm.
Squares LTn/s, SU 850.
- WW-169 Nail (Type IIb).
Iron; 8 cm.
Squares LTn/s, SU 850.
- WW-171 Fragment of the ring foot of a bowl.
Iron; diam. 3.5 cm; th. 0.5 cm.
Much encrusted.
Squares LTn/s, SU 850.
- WW-172 Nail (Type IIb).
Iron; 6.5 cm.
Bent.
Squares LTn/s, SU 850.
- WW-174 Nail (Type IIb).
Iron; 3.8 cm.
Squares LTn/s, SU 850.
- WW-179 Handle (?) composed of two linked elements: one rectangular and hollow, and the other ring-shaped.
Iron; 6 cm; diam. of the ring 5.8 cm.
Rusted.
Squares MGv/w, SU 776.
- WW-182 Arrowhead.
Iron; 7.5 cm.
Unstratified.
- WW-241 Small precision tool.
Bronze; $14.1 \times 0.4 \times 0.15$ cm.
Square LSI, SU 633.
- WW-346 Staple (?), square in section, with a hole at one end for a nail of circular cross section.

Iron; 11.6 cm.
Square LOt, SU 547.

- WW-370 Fragment of a buckle (?), semi-oval in shape, with a small hole.
Only one face is polished.

Bronze; 2.8 cm; th. 0.15 cm.
Square MGr, SU 714.

- WW-456 Cramp (Type Ib). Two circular holes for the insertion of nails.

Iron; $36 \times 2.9 \times 0.5$ cm; hole diam. 0.5 cm.
One of the teeth diverging.
Squares LTq/r, SU 846.

- WW-458 Nail (Type IIc).

Iron; 15.2 cm.
Squares LTq/r, SU 845.

- WW-467 Metal element, square in section, for connecting the beams of the roof (?).

Iron; 16.3 cm; th. 0.5 cm.
Squares LTq/r, SU 845.

- WW-468 S-shaped eyelet hook, square in section.

Iron; th. 0.4 cm.
Squares LTq/r, SU 845.

- WW-469 Nail (Type IIc).

Iron; 14.3 cm.
Squares LTq/r, SU 845.

- WW-470 Nail (Type IIA).

Iron; 9.4 cm.
Squares LTq/r, SU 845.

- WW-471 Cramp (Type IIa).

Iron; th. 0.9 cm.
One end missing.
Squares LTq/r, SU 846.

- WW-472 Nail with hooked head (Type IIc).

Iron; 9.4 cm.
Squares LTq/r, SU 846.

- WW-480 Nail (Type IIc).
Iron; 28 cm.
Squares LOs/t, unstratified.
- WW-487 Nail (Type IIc).
Iron; 25 cm.
Squares LTq/r, SU 845.
- WW-488 Fragment of vessel with out-turned rim.
Iron; $8.9 \times 5.7 \times 0.5$ cm.
Squares LTq/r, SU 845.
- WW-489 Cramp with pointed ends, square in section.
Iron; 29.2 cm.
Squares LTq/r, SU 845.
- WW-506 Stud, displaying a six-petalled flower, with a central hole for a nail, square in section, which is only partly preserved.
Similar to WW-155 but smaller in size.
Iron; 5.1 cm; th. 0.3 cm; nail th. 0.7 cm.
Encrusted.
Square MFy, SU 773.
- WW-539 Fragment of wedge-shaped cutting tool (?), with a small circular hole.
Iron; $7.1 \times 3.6 \times 1$ cm.
Squares MLn/o, SU 901.
- WW-545 Spatula.
Iron; $8.6 \times 1.7 \times 0.2$ cm.
Slightly bent.
Squares MLn/o, SU 901.
- WW-546 Nail (Type IIa).
Iron; 6 cm.
Bent.
Squares MLn/o, SU 901.
- WW-548 Nail (Type IIa).
Iron; 6.7 cm.
Square MLo, SU 902.

WW-549 Nail (Type IId).

Iron; 20.9 cm.

Bent.

Squares MLn/o, SU 903.

WW-550 Nail (Type IIc).

Iron; 5 cm.

Squares MLn/o, SU 903.

Coins (pls. XLV-XLVIII)

Coins datable to this period were found in all the trenches, mainly in the accumulation layers subsequent to abandonment of the monastery; they were all cast during the Song dynasty.

The earliest of the coins with distinguishable features is WW-226, which came from SU 515 – one of the abandonment layers of the monastery structures. The coin bears the inscription *Songyuan tongbao* 宋元通宝 («Currency of the beginning of the Song»). This coin was issued by Song dynasty emperor Taizu 太祖 (r. 960-975), who took up the practice of the Later Zhou 后周 (951-960) of not inscribing the *nianhao* 年号 («reign period») but rather the *guohao* 国号 («state name»). Coin WW-226 bears on the reverse a vertical line to the left of the hole. Marks of this kind – or possibly round or crescent shaped – are characteristic of this type of coin. WW-399 belongs to the same typology but shows a blank reverse.

Subsequently the Song age coins bore inscribed the reign period during which they were cast, which makes their identification very simple.⁶⁰ Such is the case of the *Chunhua yuanbao* 淳化元宝 («Primary currency of the Chunhua reign period»), issued by the emperor Taizong (r. 976-997) in the fourth period of his reign (990-995). This emperor had the inscription written in three different styles: *kaishu* 楷书 («regular»), *xingshu* 行书 («cursive») and *caoshu* 草书 («‘grass’ cursive»).

Two coins bearing the inscription *Chunhua yuanbao* were found in the Fengxiansi site. The first, WW-20, from SU 4, a layer of recent formation, is written in *caoshu* script. Of the second, WW-534, brought to light in the layer of rubble covering the monastery structures in the western sector of the site (SU 850), only the left half is conserved, displaying the characters *hua* and *yuan*, and a small part of the character *chun*. In this case the inscription is in

⁶⁰ The practice of inscribing the reign period on coins was introduced by the emperor of the Northern Wei Xiaowendi, who decided to issue *Taihe wuzhu* 太和五铢 («Coin worth five *zhu* of the Taihe reign period») in 496, and continued over a great proportion of the successive periods.

xingshu script. In both cases the coins do not seem to show any distinctive marks on the reverse.

WW-343 and 400 are coins of the *Xiangfu yuanbao* 祥符元宝 type, introduced by the emperor Zhenzong (r. 998-1022) in the third year of the Dazhong xiangfu 大中祥符 reign period (1008-1016). In this case, not being able to make use of the complete *nianhao*, which consisted of four characters, only the last two were chosen. There exist both *Xiangfu yuanbao* and *Xiangfu tongbao* (WW-363) in different graphic styles, but all deriving from *kaishu* (regular script).

WW-286 is a *Tiansheng yuanbao* 天圣元宝 coin, issue of which was decreed by the emperor Renzong 仁宗 (r. 1023-1063) in the first year of the Tiansheng reign period (1023-1032). The inscription is in *zhuanshu* 篆书 («seal script»), one of the two scripts in which the coin was cast (the other was *kaishu*).

WW-407 is a *Jingyou yuanbao* 景祐元宝 coin, dating back to the third year of Renzong's Jingyou reign period (1034-1038).

Dating to the time of the emperor Renzong, too, is coin WW-533, a very important find since it provides us with a *terminus post quem* to date the collapse of roof SU 846. In this case we have a coin issued during the Jiayou reign period (1056-1063), bearing an inscription, *Jiayou yuanbao* 嘉祐元宝, in *kaishu* style. The same period also saw the issue of *Jiayou tongbao* coins, the typology to which WW-538 should belong, although its inscription is not to be read clockwise, as was the norm, but from the top downwards and from right to left.

Coins WW-272 and 344, both from trench D, and WW-112, an unstratified find, date to the Xining reign period (1068-1077), the first of the emperor Shenzong (r. 1068-1085). In this period a great variety of script styles appeared on the coins. Coin WW-344 bears the inscription *Xining yuanbao* 熙宁元宝 («Primary currency of the Xining reign period») in the seal style, as it is termed. This type of coin generally has a diameter of 2.5 cm and weight between 3.5 and 4 g, although the example found on the site departs from this standard weighing nearly 6 g. Closer to the standard is coin WW-112, bearing the same inscription but in *kaishu* style.

The inscription displayed by WW-272, in *lishu* 隶书 style, is *Xining zhongbao* 熙宁重宝 («Heavy currency of the Xining reign period»). The latter type of coin was cast as from the year 1071 with a value of ten *Xining yuanbao*, subsequently reduced to three in 1073, and to two the following year. The diameter in general just exceeds 3 cm, the weight normally ranging between 7.5 and 8.5 g.

Also issued during the reign of Shenzong were the *Yuanfeng tongbao* 元丰通宝 coins («Currency of the Yuanfeng reign period [1068-1085]»), which is by far the most common typology in the Fengxiansi. It was at this time that the monetary economy saw a giddy rise, unprecedented in the history of

China, thanks in part to the exploitation of new copper mines. The scripts used for the inscriptions show great variety in this case, too, and on the basis of diameter and weight two types of *Yuanfeng tongbao* are distinguished, the first with a diameter of about 2.5 cm and weight ranging between 3.5 and 4 g, the second, worth twice the value of the first, having a diameter of about 3 cm and weight exceeding 7 g. Of the eight *Yuanfeng tongbao* coins only fragment WW-323, with inscription in cursive, belongs to the second type. WW-316, 318 and 361 bear inscriptions in seal style; WW-227, 315, 320 and 398 are inscribed in various types of cursive. Coins of this type have been found in all the trenches except A and B, in the monastery abandonment layers and, in some cases, also in stratigraphic units of contemporaneous formation (SU 700) containing residual material brought up to the surface.

WW-131 and 532 are two coins issued during the Yuanyou 元祐 period of the reign (1086-1094), the first of the emperor Zhezong 哲宗 (1086-1100). In this case, too, two types of *tongbao* coins were cast, the second worth twice the first, while the styles adopted for the inscriptions were the seal script and *xingshu* cursive, with their numerous variants. WW-131 is a coin of which only the left half is conserved; of the first type, it bears an inscription in cursive. WW-532, from SU 845, is another coin of the first type, but with inscription in seal script.

During the Yuanfu period (1098-1100), the last of the reign of Zhezong, the same styles of script continued to be used as in the Yuanyou period. Of the three *Yuanfu tongbao* 元符通宝 coins found on the site, two (WW-319 and 401) bear inscriptions with seal characters, the third (WW-356) with cursive characters. WW-319 and 356 have diameters below the standard, which was about 2.5 cm.

The last three coins attributable to this phase are WW-402, 36 and 535. The first is a *Shensong yuanbao* 神宗元宝 («Primary currency of the sacred Song [dynasty]»), issued by the emperor Huizong 徽宗 (r. 1101-1125), in the first year of his reign. This is one of the rare coin types of the period that do not bear the *nianhao* inscribed.

WW-36 and 535 are coins of the *Daguan tongbao* 大观通宝 type, issued between 1107 and 1110. There were five types of *Daguan tongbao*, with values of one, two, three, five and ten determined by the dimensions. Coin WW-535 belonged to the first type, while fragment WW-36, with a diameter of 3 cm, belonged to the second.

- WW-20 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Chunhua yuanbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
 Bronze; diam. 2.4 cm; weight 3.8 g.
 Squares MMm/n, SU 4.

- WW-36 Half of circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Daguan tongbao* four-character inscription, of which only *guan* and *bao* characters survive, to be read from top downwards and from right to left.
Reverse: blank.
 Bronze; diam. 3 cm; weight 3.9 g.
 Squares MMm/n, SU 5.
- WW-112 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Xining yuanbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
 Bronze; diam. 2.4 cm; weight 4.2 g.
 Encrusted.
 Unstratified.
- WW-131 Half of circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Yuanyou tongbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top. Only *yuan*, *you* and part of *tong* characters are conserved.
Reverse: blank.
 Bronze; diam. 2.5 cm; weight 2.6 g.
 Square LYi, SU 1001.
- WW-226 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Songyuan tongbao* four-character inscription to be read from top downwards and from right to left.
Reverse: vertical mark above the hole.
 Bronze; diam. 2.6 cm; weight 3.8 g.
 Square MKk, SU 515.
- WW-227 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Yuanfeng tongbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
 Bronze; diam. 2.6 cm; weight 3.3 g.
 Square MKk, SU 518.
- WW-272 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Xining zhongbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
 Bronze; diam. 3.2 cm; weight 8.5 g.

Square LSg, SU 631.

- WW-286 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Tiansheng yuanbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: off-centre matrix.
Bronze; diam. 2.3 cm; weight 4.3 g.
Slightly chipped.
Unstratified.
- WW-315 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Yuanfeng tongbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
Bronze; diam. 2.4 cm; weight 3.9 g.
Square LSg, SU 629.
- WW-316 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Yuanfeng tongbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
Bronze; diam. 2 cm; weight 4 g.
Square LSg, SU 634.
- WW-318 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Yuanfeng tongbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
Bronze; diam. 2.4 cm; weight 5 g.
Square LSg, SU 601.
- WW-319 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Yuanfu tongbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
Bronze; diam. 2 cm; weight 3.2 g.
Square LSI, SU 631.
- WW-320 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Yuanfeng tongbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
Bronze; diam. 2.5 cm; weight 4.4 g.

Square LSb, SU 601.

- WW-323 Fragment of circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Yuanfeng tongbao* four-character inscription, of which only *yuan* and *feng* characters are conserved, to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
Bronze; diam. 2.9 cm; weight 4.8 g.
Square MKp, SU 534.
- WW-343 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Xiangfu yuanbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
Bronze; diam. 2.9 cm; weight 3.9 g.
Square MKv, SU 546.
- WW-344 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Xining yuanbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
Bronze; diam. 3 cm; weight 6 g.
Square LSg, SU 641.
- WW-356 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Yuanfu tongbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
Bronze; diam. 1.9 cm; weight 1.2 g.
Square MFt, SU 700.
- WW-361 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Yuanfeng tongbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
Bronze; diam. 2.5 cm; weight 4.1 g.
Square MGq, SU 700.
- WW-363 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Xiangfu tongbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
Bronze; diam. 2.4 cm; weight 4.3 g.

Fragmentary in correspondence of *bao* character.
Square MFu, unstratified.

- WW-398 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Yuanfeng tongbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
Bronze; diam. 2.5 cm; weight 4 g.
Squares LOd/i, SU 823.
- WW-399 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Songyuan tongbao* four-character inscription to be read from top downwards and from right to left.
Reverse: blank.
Bronze; diam. 2.5 cm; weight 3.2 g.
Square LOd, SU 807.
- WW-400 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Xiangfu yuanbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
Bronze; diam. 2.5 cm; weight 4.6 g.
Square LOd, SU 821.
- WW-401 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Yuanfu tongbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
Bronze; diam. 2.5 cm; weight 3.2 g.
Squares LOd/i, SU 825.
- WW-402 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Shensong yuanbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
Bronze; diam. 2.4 cm; weight 3.7 g.
Square LOd, SU 805.
- WW-407 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Jingyou yuanbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
Bronze; diam. 2.5 cm; weight 3.7 g.

Square LOd, SU 814.

- WW-532 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Yuanyou tongbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
Bronze; diam. 2.4 cm; weight 3.6 g.
Chipped along the edge.
Square LTr, SU 845.
- WW-533 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Jiayou yuanbao* four-character inscription to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
Bronze; diam. 2.4 cm; weight 4.4 g.
Square LTq, SU 846.
- WW-534 Right half of circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Chunhua yuanbao* four-character inscription, of which only *hua* and *yuan* characters survive, to be read clockwise starting from the top.
Reverse: blank.
Bronze; diam. 2.5 cm; weight 2.2 g.
Squares LTd/i, SU 850.
- WW-535 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Daguan tongbao* four-character inscription to be read from top downwards and from right to left.
Reverse: crescent above the upper right corner of the hole.
Bronze; diam. 2.5 cm; weight 4.2 g.
Unstratified.
- WW-538 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Jiayou tongbao* four-character inscription to be read from top downwards and from right to left.
Reverse: blank.
Bronze; diam. 2.6 cm; weight 4.4 g.
Unstratified.

13. THE FINDS OF PERIOD IV

At the present stage of research we can divide the Period IV finds into two groups. The first includes the objects from the kilns that were installed on the site after the abandonment of the monastery, or from other kilns, presumably situated in neighbouring areas. This material is largely datable to the end of the Northern Song dynasty and the beginning of the Jin 金 dynasty, *i.e.* 12th century. As we have seen, during this period the monastery – at least in the investigated area – had in part already been destroyed, and in part had lost its original function.

The second group of material, consisting mainly of coins, can be dated to the Qing 清 dynasty (1616-1911) and associated with the funerary activities that took place on the site, and which indeed continue to the present day.

In the centuries intervening between the first and second group of material we may conjecture that the site was abandoned, or at least that no activities of any moment were performed here. This conclusion finds confirmation in the fact that while coins dating to the Song dynasty occur in great number, only one coin subsequent to this period and anterior to the Qing dynasty has so far come to light. Nevertheless, it is to be noted that some fragments of glazed architectural decorations have been found – too few to be able to hypothesise their original location – for which dating remains uncertain. The difficulties encountered in the study of this material have proved rife: to begin with, it comes from extremely disturbed stratigraphic contexts. Moreover, very few excavations have been made in the region to investigate periods subsequent to the 12th century, and there is consequently scant material for comparison. On top of all this is the fact that neither in the West nor in China have specific studies so far been carried out in the area of the dating and variations of this type of material. We will only be able to obtain further evidence to trace out the history of the site in this period as field investigation proceeds.

Ceramic Pillows (pl. XLIX)

Almost all the ceramic pillow (*cizhen* 瓷枕) fragments found on the site came from trench D, where waste layers were excavated (SUs 631, 632 and 634), yielding a vast quantity of ceramics datable between the 12th and 13th centuries. Although no structural remains of the monastery were found in the trench, it is hard to imagine activities of the sort being carried out when the Fengxiansi was still functioning. Dating these sherds of various classes is still at the study stage, and is crucial for the dating of abandonment of the monastery.

As for the pillow fragments, comparison with similar material suggests dating to the Northern Song dynasty (Yao Xiangqin 2002; Suo Dehao 2004). However, as we learn from the inscriptions found, in 1081 the Fengxiansi was

still in existence, and it may therefore be concluded that the sherds belonging to different ceramic classes were produced between the early and mid-12th century, and were deposited in the soil between the 12th and 13th century. In the present stage of study it is impossible to tell exactly where this material came from, although it is quite certainly of local production.

Recent archaeological surveys have revealed that between the 10th and 12th centuries over three hundred kilns were at work in Henan, scattered over twenty-four districts in the northern and western areas of the region, where the raw material was more readily available (Henan 1997b: 25). Of these kilns at least a hundred were at a distance of no more than 200 km from present-day Luoyang (Guo Huaxiao 2000: 48). The pillows produced in these kilns showed great variety in terms of both forms and type of decoration and glaze. Let us take a brief look at some typologies, examining the sherds found in the excavation.

WW-240 and 313, respectively from SUs 631 and 632, are the best-conserved examples. They represent two pillows, quadrangular in shape and of fairly modest dimensions, with glazing of the *sancai* 三彩 type. Generally this shape is considered to be quite late and is dated to the 13th-14th centuries (Tregear 1982: 97). For these particular examples, however, on the evidence of the comparable pieces found I would date them to the beginning of the 12th century. In particular, I may mention a pillow with inscription found at Luoyang in 1969 and dated to the Song dynasty (Guo Huaxiao 2000: 49). During the latest excavation campaign I also happened to see a pillow much like the examples found on the site for sale in the town's antique market (fig. 30). This pillow – probably plundered from a tomb – was dated between the 11th and 12th centuries.



Fig. 30 – Ceramic pillow for sale in Luoyang market, 2004.
(Photo by the author).

WW-311, from SU 640, is a sherd from the side wall of a pillow that must have resembled WW-240 and 313 in both shape and size. The glaze also looks much like that of WW-313 and dating of the sherd will therefore be the same as that of the previous examples.

WW-259 is from a layer of fairly recent formation (SU 601). It is a very small sherd, but it can still be made out to have belonged to a pillow of ovoidal shape. The glaze is of the *sancai* type; the incised decoration must have represented a floral theme. This type of pillow was very common during the Song dynasty. An example showing similarity also in the detail of the double incised line framing the decoration was found in 1989 in the Qingliangsi 清凉寺 kiln site at Baofeng 宝丰 (Henan 1997b: 73). More pillows of the sort, dated to the same period, are conserved in the Luoyang Museum (Wang Xiu 2001: 220-21). However, given the size of the fragment no further conclusions can be drawn.

WW-263 is a fragment of a quadrangular pillow, with green glaze and underglaze decoration. The stratigraphic provenance (SU 634) suggests for this sherd, too, a date to the beginning of the 12th century.

Various other sherds with green lead glaze and underglaze decoration (WW-348, 349 and 556) have been found in the central area of the site. In this case the decoration probably represented a flower motif. However, the original shape of the pillow cannot be deduced from sherds of such small size.

WW-554 is a small pillow sherd, ivory white in colour, decorated on the bottom with small incised circles. Ceramic bearing this type of decoration is known in China as *zhenzhu dihua hua ci* 珍珠地划花瓷 and probably belongs to a tradition dating before the 10th century, although it then found diffusion above all during the Song dynasty (Tregear 1982: 95). In this period, in Henan ceramic of this type was produced in particular at Mixian 密县, Dengfeng 登封 and Xinmi 新密. A great variety of subjects were depicted, from inscriptions and phoenixes to figures of the Buddhist and Taoist pantheon, flowers, etc. (Liu Tao 2002). The sherd found on the site was decorated with an inscription, alas no longer legible.

WW-240 Pillow of quadrangular shape. Displaying *sancai* glazing, the pillow bears on the long, slightly concave side decoration with a dark green central band, brown bands at the sides, and small underglaze barley grain incisions. To judge by the small fragment left, the square end sides must have borne the same type of decoration.

Light buff stoneware, three-colour glaze; $21.5 \times 12 \times 0.5$ cm.

Reconstructed from many fragments; incomplete.

Square LSg, SU 631.

WW-259 Fragment of – presumably ovoidal – pillow. Outer surface showing *sancai* glaze with incised floral type decoration.

Buff stoneware, three-colour glaze; $7 \times 4.2 \times 0.5$ cm.
Square LSb, SU 601.

- WW-263 Fragment of quadrangular pillow with underglaze decoration.
Buff stoneware, monochrome green glaze; $7.3 \times 6.3 \times 0.3$ cm.
Reconstructed from three fragments; glaze somewhat poorly conserved.
Square LSg, SU 634.
- WW-311 Quadrangular pillow, of which only one of the square end sides is conserved. Showing an ochre glaze, the fragment bears underglaze incised decoration on the exposed face.
Buff stoneware, ochre glaze; side 9.3 cm; th. 0.5 cm.
Chipped along the edges.
Square LSb, SU 640.
- WW-313 Quadrangular pillow. On the long, slightly concave walls the pillow shows a *sancai* glaze with trickles of brown, ochre and light green colour. The end side is square and shows ochre glazing with small underglaze barley grain incisions.
Buff stoneware, three-colour glaze; $21 \times 12.3 \times 0.5$ cm.
Reconstructed from numerous fragments; incomplete.
Square LSg, SU 632.
- WW-348 Part of a pillow, ovoidal (?) in shape. The five fragments (a-e), of which four fit together, display a green glaze and underglaze floral type decoration.
Light buff earthenware, white slip, monochrome green glaze; th. 0.8 cm.
Squares MLa/b, unstratified.
- WW-349 Three pillow fragments (a-c), not fitting together. Green glaze with wavy incised line decoration under the glaze.
Similar to WW-348.
Light buff earthenware, white slip, monochrome green glaze; th. 0.7 cm.
Unstratified.
- WW-554 Fragment of pillow with ivory white glaze and brown engobe. The underglaze decoration is incised and ring punched; it shows a cartouche with an inscription, of which only part of the character *jia* 家 (?) can be made out. The edge is highlighted with three incised lines.
Buff stoneware, white slip, colourless glaze; 4.5×5.3 cm; th. 0.5 cm.
Traces of burning.
Square MLy, unstratified.

WW-556 Fragment of pillow with underglaze incised decoration showing wavy lines.

Buff stoneware, monochrome green glaze; 5.4×3.6 cm; th. 0.7 cm.

Square MFy, SU 775.

Architectural Decorations (pl. L)

As previously pointed out, a few fragments of glazed architectural decoration attributable to a period subsequent to the abandonment of the monastery were found on the site. However, it has not yet been possible to ascertain whether this is waste material, as seems increasingly probable, or decorative elements from structures installed on the site in Period IV. Also as yet uncertain is the dating of this material, which should not, however, be later than the 14th century.

Below are listed some of the objects found, which can be divided into two groups on the basis of the glaze colour and the fabric.

The first group consists of fragments, possibly once belonging to a single object, found in SU 844. All the sherds (WW-431, 434, 435, 436, 437, 440) are in red terracotta with lead glazing. Here it must be pointed out that SU 844 is of early formation and has very largely yielded material that belonged to the monastery. However, excavation in this sector of the site, begun by the Chinese team and continued by the Italians, has entailed prolonged exposure of the layer with the very real possibility of the material being adulterated. Moreover, it is also possible that the fragments were deposited in the fill of a pit, later than the formation of the layer and no longer visible when the material was collected. At this stage of the research I am therefore inclined to consider the object as infiltrated.

The second group of objects (WW-219, 235, 380 and 395) came from the central area of the excavation, and in particular from the SUs that covered the kiln excavated in trench F. In this case the sherds are in red terracotta, with white engobe and shiny green glaze. No absolute dating can be supplied, but given the stratigraphic provenance the material in this group certainly seems later than that of the first group.

The dimensions of the fragments are too modest, and the state of conservation too poor for reconstruction of the original form and location of any of the objects.

WW-219 Fragment of architectural decoration in composite animal (?) form. Discernable on the fragment is part of the body (?) decorated with parallel bands, and a lateral crest decorated with incised circular motifs.

Non-exposed face undecorated, flat, and with a band in relief for assembly.

Red terracotta, white slip, green and brown glazes; $24.4 \times 12.5 \times 3$ cm.
Square MKk, SU 515.

- WW-235 Fragment of architectural decoration (?). The fragment shows a plain projecting band and a part decorated with incised curved lines.

Red terracotta, white slip, monochrome green glaze; 8.6×5.9 cm.
Square MKp, SU 515.

- WW-380 Fragment of architectural decoration in composite animal form, showing part of the jaws and four teeth.

Red terracotta, white slip, brown and green glazes; 10×6.5 cm.
Glaze poorly preserved.
Squares LJx/LOd, SU 815.

- WW-395 Fragment of architectural decoration (?) in the form of a leaf.

Red terracotta, white slip, monochrome green glaze; $16 \times 8.5 \times 1.2$ cm.
Glaze poorly conserved.
Square LJx, SU 816.

- WW-431 Fragment of architectural decoration in composite animal form, showing part of the jaws.

Probably belonging to the same object as WW-434, 435, 436, 437 and 440.

Red terracotta, three-colour glaze; 8.4×5 cm.
Square LOs, SU 844.

- WW-434 Fragment of architectural decoration in composite animal form, showing part of the jaws.

Probably belonging to the same object as WW-431, 435, 436, 437 and 440.

Red terracotta, three-colour glaze; 5.7×4.2 cm.
Square LOs, SU 844.

- WW-435 Tusk from an architectural decoration in composite animal form.

Probably belonging to the same object as WW-431, 434, 436, 437 and 440.

Red terracotta, white glaze; h. 7.8 cm.
Square LOs, SU 844.

- WW-436 Fragment of architectural decoration in composite animal form, showing two teeth.
Probably belonging to the same object as WW-431, 434, 435, 437 and 440.
Red terracotta, three-colour glaze; 5.6×4.9 cm.
Square LOs, SU 844.
- WW-437 Fragment of architectural decoration in composite animal form, showing part of an ear.
Probably belonging to the same object as WW-431, 434, 435, 436 and 440.
Red terracotta, three-colour glaze; 10.7×8.9 cm.
Glaze poorly preserved.
Square LOs, SU 844.
- WW-440 Fragment of architectural decoration in composite animal form (?).
The fragment follows a curving shape with triangular cross-section, and must have belonged to a projecting part of the object. Along the break can be seen a pattern of incised lines.
Probably belonging to the same object as WW-431, 434, 435, 436 and 437.
Red terracotta, monochrome green glaze; h. 15 cm; th. 3.5 cm.
Reassembled from three fragments.
Square LOs, SU 844.

Other Finds

The material to be found here can be divided into two groups, the first associated with the kiln activities taking place on the site between the 12th and 13th centuries, the second with the funerary activities that began during the Qing dynasty.

Belonging to the first group are WW-74, 264 and 283.

WW-74 is a spacer for kilns found in trench A, while WW-264 and 283 are decorative objects that came to light in the waste excavated in trench D, which also contained the pillow fragments illustrated above. The stratigraphic provenance (SUs 632 and 634) suggests for the latter two pieces dating in the 12th century.

The mirror fragment in bronze, WW-586, and the accessory in bone, WW-367, found in trench E, belong to the second group. It is probable that they formed part of a set of grave gifts, already plundered when excavation was carried out.

- WW-74 Spacer for a kiln, trilobate in form.
Terracotta; $4.7 \times 4.7 \times 0.5$ cm.
Squares MMm/n, SU 6.
- WW-264 Fictile statuette representing a horse (?) of which only the left front leg and part of the body with the saddle are conserved.
Red terracotta, three-colour glaze; $11.5 \times 8.5 \times 0.5$ cm.
Square LSg, SU 632.
- WW-283 Half of a statuette in the form of a turtle with underglaze incised decoration.
Red terracotta, monochrome green glaze; 4×2 cm.
Chipped along the edges.
Square LSI, SU 634.
- WW-367 Slender, flat accessory. The one tip conserved is rounded.
Bone; 9.2 cm; th. 0.1 cm.
Reassembled from three pieces.
Square MGr, SU 716.
- WW-586 Mirror fragment with polylobate edge and central stud. No decoration is visible.
Bronze; $5.8 \times 3.2 \times 0.2$ cm.
Reassembled from two pieces.
Square MGr, SU 714.

Coins (pl. LI)

Only one coin attributed to this Period was not cast during the Qing dynasty: WW-122 is a *Dading tongbao* 大定通宝 («Currency of the Dading reign period») issued during the Jin dynasty. The Dading reign period was inaugurated by the emperor Shizong 世宗 (r. 1161-1189) in 1161 and casting of this coin began in the eighteenth year, *i.e.* in 1178. The *Dading tongbao*, marked out by their excellent quality, were issued in huge quantities and circulated throughout the Far East. Some examples bear on the reverse a cyclic character indicating the year of issue, but such is not the case of the coin found on the site. The stratigraphic provenance of WW-122 (SU 1001) makes it clear that this is a residual find.

Five coins, only three of which show clearly legible features, issued during the Qing dynasty were found on the site.

WW- 345 (SU 649) is from a tomb partially excavated in Trial-trench D. The coin is a *Kangxi tongbao* 康熙通宝 («Currency of the Kangxi reign pe-

riod [1662-1722]»). This find is important since it probably provides a *terminus post quem* for the beginning of the funerary activities on the site in the modern age. The diameter of WW-345 is the standard 2.5 cm, while the weight, coming to no more than 2.2 grams, is below standard. The *Kangxi tongbao* bear on the reverse the name in Manchu of the mint where they were issued. In the case of the coin found on the site, we have the inscription *boo chiowan*, transcription of the Chinese *baquan* 宝泉, to indicate that it was cast by the Ministry of Finances. Besides this mint, there was also the mint of the Ministry of Public Works, as well as twenty-one regional mints, whose names were inscribed with a Chinese character indicating the name of the region, to the left of the hole, and the Manchu transcription of *ju* 局, to the right (Zhu Huo 1998: 160).

WW-228, from SU 503, is a *Daoguang tongbao* 道光通宝 («Currency of the Daoguang reign period»), issued during the Daoguang period of the reign (1821-1850) of the emperor Xuanzong 宣宗. Only ‘common currency’ or *tongbao* coins were cast during the era. The inscription in Manchu on the reverse is practically illegible, but in this case, too, it probably indicates the mint of the Ministry of Finance.

Also yielded by SU 503, in the central area of the excavation, is coin WW-230, issued during the Xianfeng 咸丰 period of the reign (1851-1861) of the emperor Wenzong 文宗. This period saw the issue of both ‘common currency’ and ‘primary currency’ (*yuanbao* 元宝), and indeed of ‘heavy currency’ (*zhongbao* 重宝). WW-230 is a *Xianfeng tongbao* 咸丰通宝. Here, again, the inscription in Manchu on the reverse of the coin is *boo chiowan*.

The inscription on coin WW-321 is practically illegible: it may also be a *Xianfeng tongbao*, but there can be no real certainty. The inscription in Manchu on the reverse seems, however, to suggest that it was issued by the Ministry of Public Works, *baoyuan* 宝原 (in Manchu: *boo tchiuan*).

Finally, in the case of coin WW-229 oxidation has gone too far for it to be legible. The sole presence of Manchu characters on the reverse suggests that it was cast during the Qing dynasty.

- WW-122 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Dading tongbao* four-character inscription to be read from top downwards and from right to left.
Reverse: blank.
 Bronze; diam. 2.5 cm; weight 3.8 g.
 Square LYi, SU 1001.
- WW-228 Fragment of circular coin with square hole in the centre.
Obverse: *Daoguang tongbao* four-character inscription to be read from top downwards and from right to left.

Reverse: Inscription in Manchu *boo chiowan* (?) to be read from left to right.

Bronze; diam. 2 cm; weight 1.5 g.

Oxidised and corroded.

Square MKp, SU 503.

WW-229 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.

Obverse: Four-character inscription, no longer legible.

Reverse: Inscription in Manchu, no longer legible.

Bronze; diam. 1.6 cm; weight 0.62 g.

Much oxidised and corroded; chipped along the edge.

Square MKu, SU 501.

WW-230 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.

Obverse: *Xianfeng tongbao* four-character inscription to be read from top downwards and from right to left.

Reverse: Inscription in Manchu *boo chiowan* to be read from left to right.

Bronze; diam. 1.9 cm; weight 17 g.

Square MKf, SU 503.

WW-321 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.

Obverse: Four-character inscription, of which only *tong* character is legible, to be read clockwise starting from the top.

Reverse: Inscription in Manchu *boo tchiuan* to be read from left to right.

Bronze; diam. 2.5 cm; weight 3.8 g.

Square LSb, SU 610.

WW-345 Circular coin with square hole in the centre.

Obverse: *Kangxi tongbao* four-character inscription to be read from top downwards and from right to left.

Reverse: Inscription in Manchu *boo chiowan* to be read from left to right.

Bronze; diam. 2.5 cm; weight 2.2 g.

Slightly chipped along the edge.

Square LSl, SU 649.

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PLATES



a) Longmen Caves. Fengxiansi Shrine. Copyright IsIAO (photo by E. Monti).



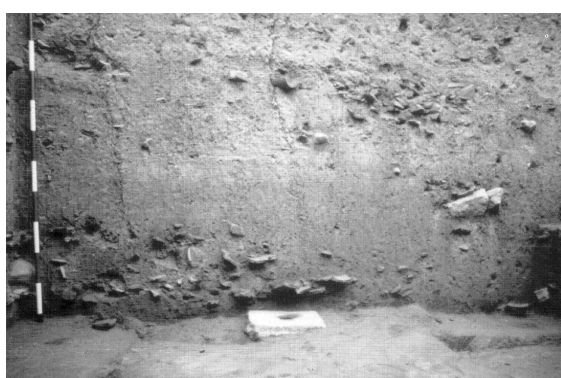
b) Site of the Fengxiansi.
Aerial view before excavation.
Courtesy of the Longmen Grottoes
Academy.



c) Site of the Fengxiansi. *Stūpa* mound.
Copyright IsIAO (photo by E. Monti).



a) Site of the Fengxiansi. Eastern Han tombs.
Copyright IsIAO (photo by E. Monti).



b) Site of the Fengxiansi.
Trench A, foundation stone (SU 54).
Copyright IsIAO (photo by S. Coccia).



c) Site of the Fengxiansi. Rooms dug in the loess.
Copyright IsIAO (photo by E. Monti).



Site of the Fengxiansi. General view of the excavated area with the central hall.
Copyright IsIAO (photo by E. Monti).



a) Site of the Fengxiansi. Ramp (SU 527) giving access to the central hall.
Copyright IsIAO (photo by E. Monti).



b) Site of the Fengxiansi. Ramp (SU 573) giving access to the east hall.
Copyright IsIAO (photo by E. Monti).



a) Site of the Fengxiansi. Trench F, Kiln (SU 818).
Copyright IsIAO (photo by E. Monti).



b) Site of the Fengxiansi.
Wall built over drain (SU 580).
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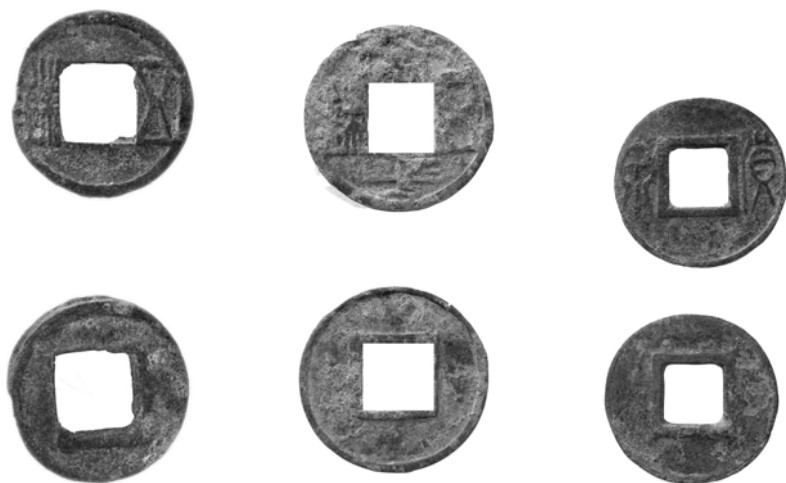


c) Site of the Fengxiansi.
String of coin found in the layer
covering Kiln 818.
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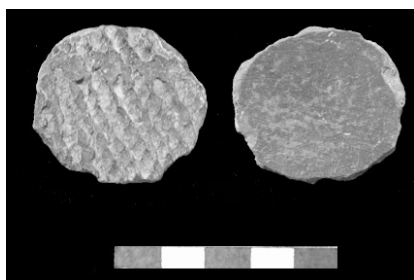
FINDS OF PERIOD I



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b-c-d) From left to right: WW-123, WW-214, WW-324.
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FINDS OF PERIOD II, TILE-ENDS WITH LOTUS FLOWER DECORATION



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FINDS OF PERIOD II, TILE-ENDS WITH LOTUS FLOWER DECORATION



a) WW-86.

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b) WW-87.

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c) WW-88.

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FINDS OF PERIOD II, TILE-ENDS WITH LOTUS FLOWER DECORATION



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c) WW-255.
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FINDS OF PERIOD II, BRICKS WITH LOTUS FLOWER DECORATION



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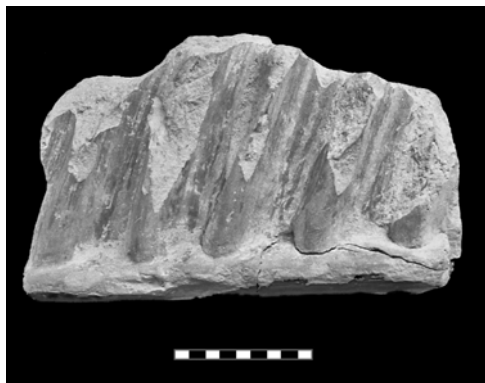


a) Brick with lotus flower decoration: reconstruction.
(3D rendering by D. Battista).



b) Brick with lotus flower decoration: reconstruction.
(3D rendering by D. Battista).

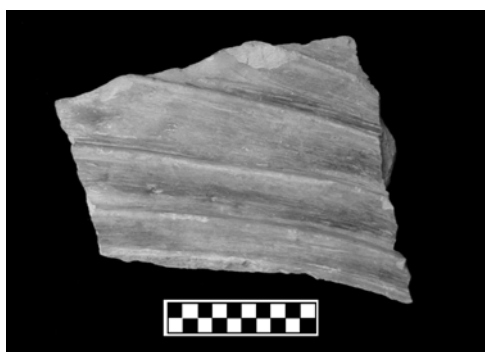
FINDS OF PERIOD II, AKROTERIA



a) WW-92.
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b) WW-93.
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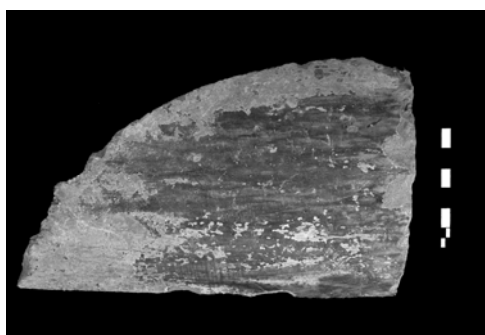


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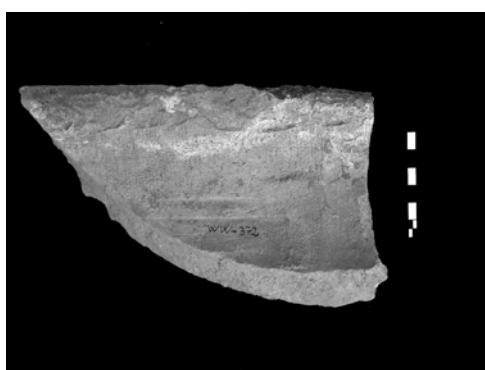
FINDS OF PERIOD II, ROOF-TILES



a) WW-181. Copyright IsIAO
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b) WW-372. Copyright IsIAO
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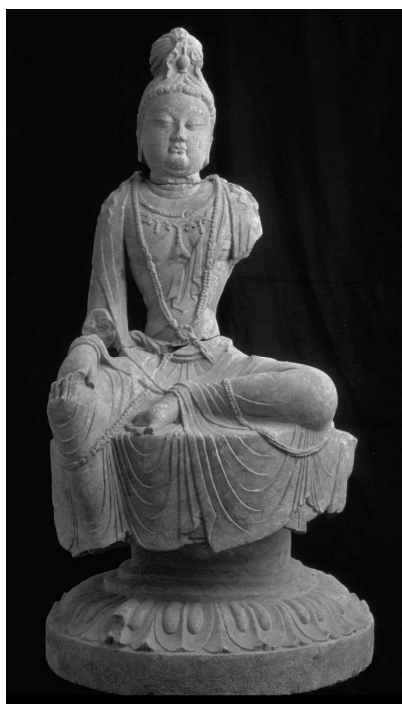
c) WW-372 (reverse).
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Proposed reconstruction of the monastery roof during Period II (3D rendering by E. Alongi).



a) Site of the Fengxiansi. Stone base of column (SU 856).
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b) WW- 517. Copyright IsIAO
(photo by E. Monti).

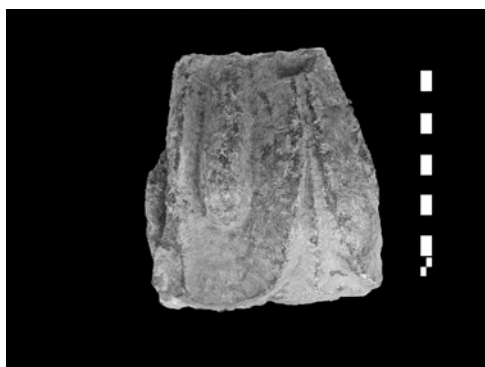
FINDS OF PERIOD II, COLUMN BASES DECORATED WITH LOTUS FLOWERS



a) WW- 330.
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FINDS OF PERIOD II



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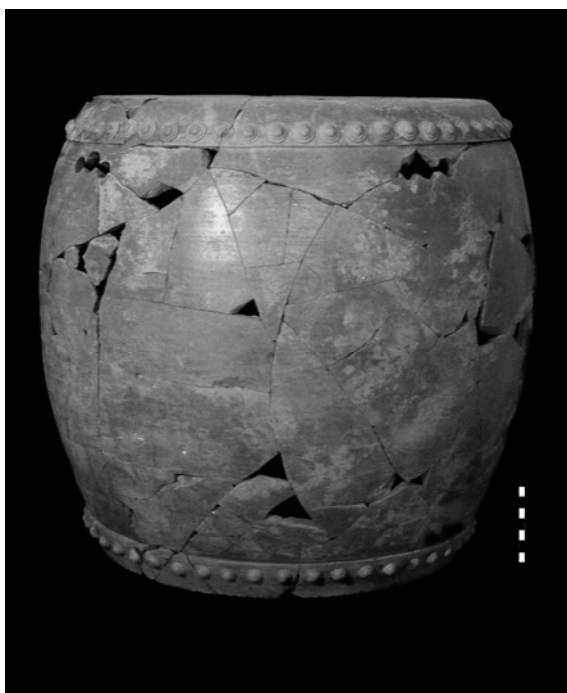


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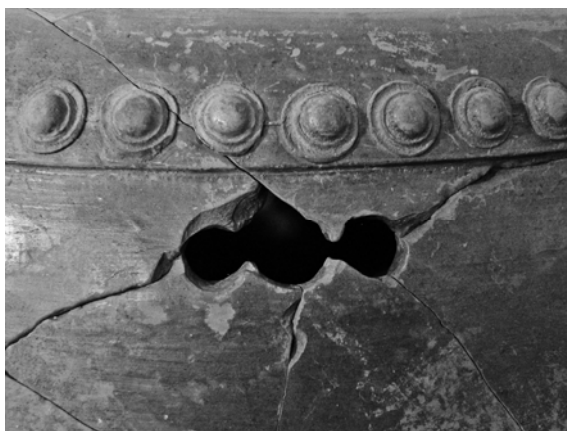


c) WW-584, finding spot. Copyright IsIAO (photo by E. Monti).

FINDS OF PERIOD II



a) WW-584. Copyright IsIAO (photo by E. Monti).



b) WW-584 (detail).
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FINDS OF PERIOD II, COINS



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b) WW-225. Copyright IsIAO
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FINDS OF PERIOD III, TILE-ENDS WITH ANIMAL MASK DECORATION



a) WW-3. Copyright IsIAO (photo by E. Monti).



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FINDS OF PERIOD III, TILE-ENDS WITH ANIMAL MASK DECORATION



a) WW-244. Copyright IsIAO (photo by E. Monti).



b) WW-244 (reverse).
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FINDS OF PERIOD III, TILE-ENDS WITH ANIMAL MASK DECORATION



a) WW-250. Copyright IsIAO (photo by E. Monti).

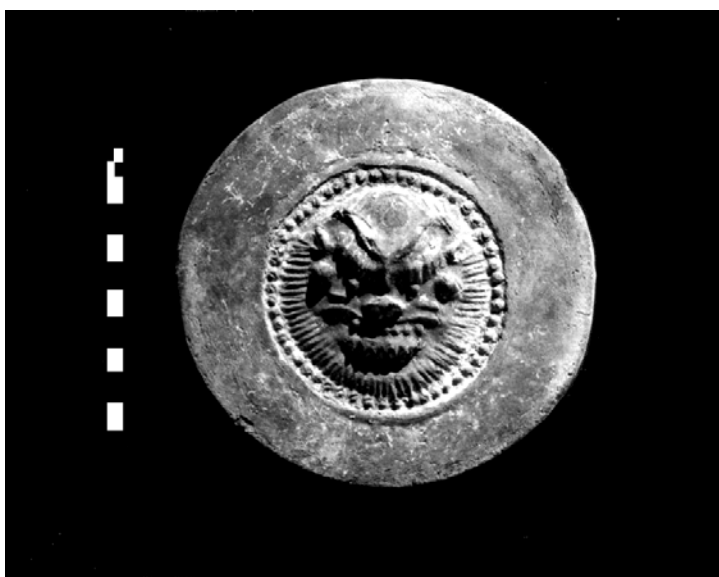


b) WW-390. Copyright IsIAO (photo by E. Monti).

FINDS OF PERIOD III, TILE-ENDS WITH ANIMAL MASK DECORATION



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FINDS OF PERIOD III, TILE-ENDS WITH DRAGON DECORATION



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a) WW-388.

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b) From left to right: WW-101, 189, 215, 308.
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b) From left to right: WW-427, 406 and 560. Copyright IsIAO (photo by E. Monti).

FINDS OF PERIOD III, TILE-ENDS WITH FLOWER DECORATION



a) WW-166.
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FINDS OF PERIOD III, FLAT TILES WITH DECORATED EDGES



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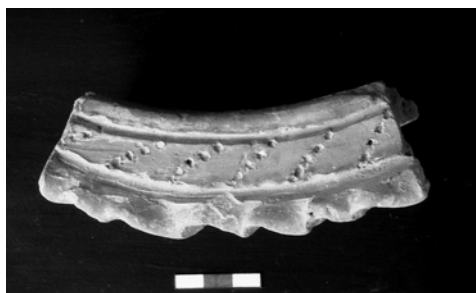


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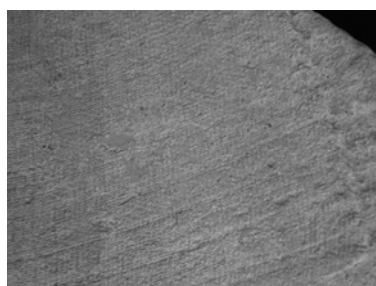
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a) WW-334. Copyright IsIAO
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b) WW-335. Copyright IsIAO
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a) WW-574. Copyright IsIAO (photo by E. Monti).

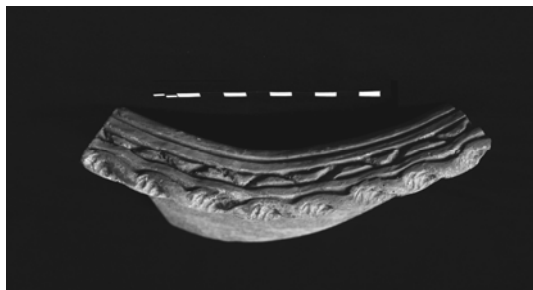


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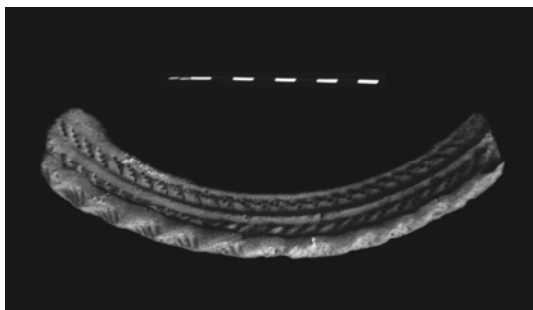
FINDS OF PERIOD III, FLAT TILES WITH DECORATED EDGES



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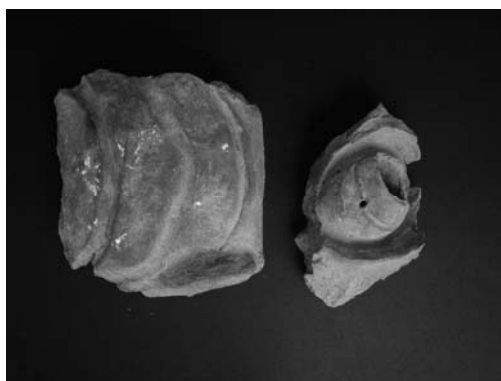
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FINDS OF PERIOD III, AKROTERIA

a) WW-16. Copyright IsIAO
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b) From left to right: WW-18
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c) WW-46. Copyright IsIAO
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a) WW-52. Copyright IsIAO (photo by E. Monti).

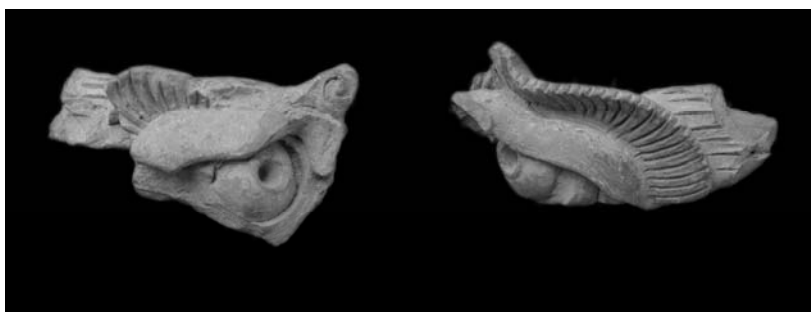


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b) WW-342.
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a-b-c) WW-482. Copyright IsIAO (photo by E. Monti).

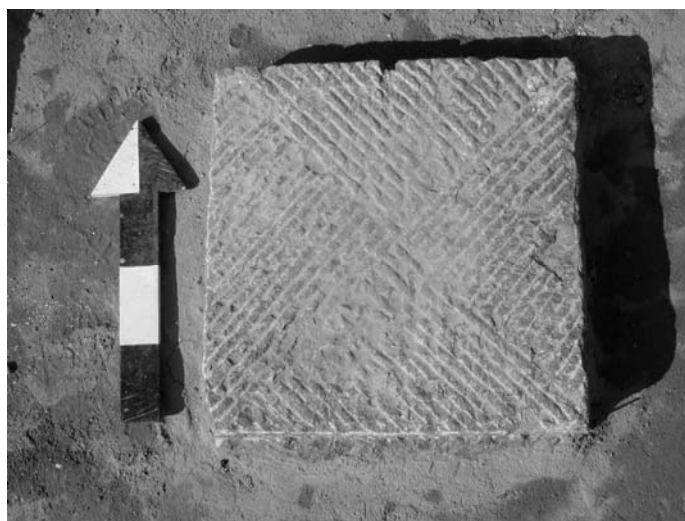


a-b) Proposed reconstruction of the roof of the west hall during Period III.
(3D renderings by E. Alongi).

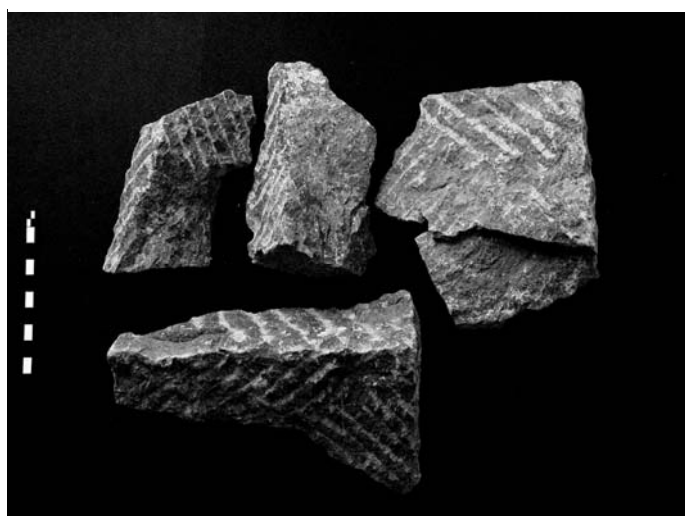


Proposed reconstruction of the roofs of the west and central hall during Period III.
(3D rendering by E. Alongi).

FINDS OF PERIOD III, COLUMN BASES



a) Site of the Fengxiansi. Column base (SU 558).
Copyright IsIAO (photo by E. Monti).



b) WW-415. Copyright IsIAO (photo by E. Monti).

FINDS OF PERIOD III, DECORATED BRICKS



a) WW-446. Copyright IsIAO (photo by E. Monti).

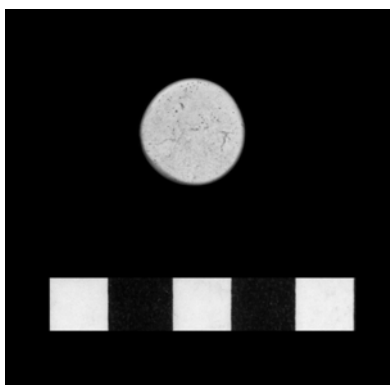


b) WW-484. Copyright IsIAO (photo by E. Monti).

FINDS OF PERIOD III



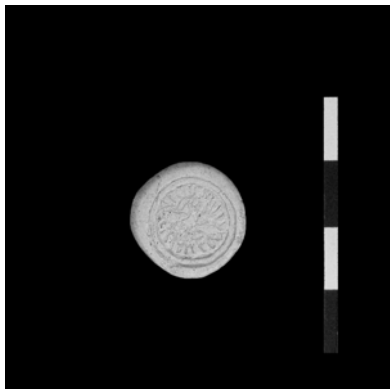
a) WW-58. Copyright IsIAO
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b) WW-79. Copyright IsIAO
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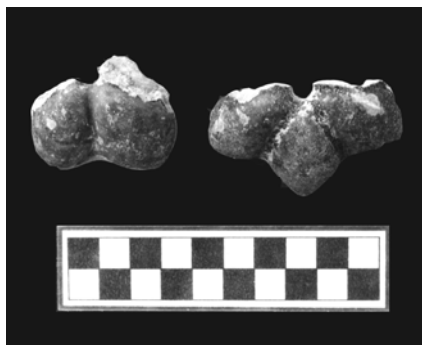


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FINDS OF PERIOD III



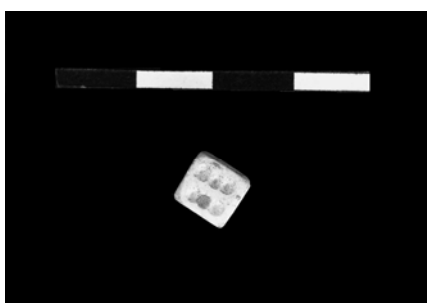
a) From left to right: WW-499 and 426.
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b) WW-483.
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c) *Wading*.
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d) WW-501.
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FINDS OF PERIOD III, METAL OBJECTS



a) WW-22. Copyright IsIAO
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b) WW-70. Copyright IsIAO
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c) WW-155. Copyright IsIAO
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d) WW-241. Copyright IsIAO
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e) WW-469.
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FINDS OF PERIOD III, COINS



a-b-c) From left to right: WW-20, 36 and 131.
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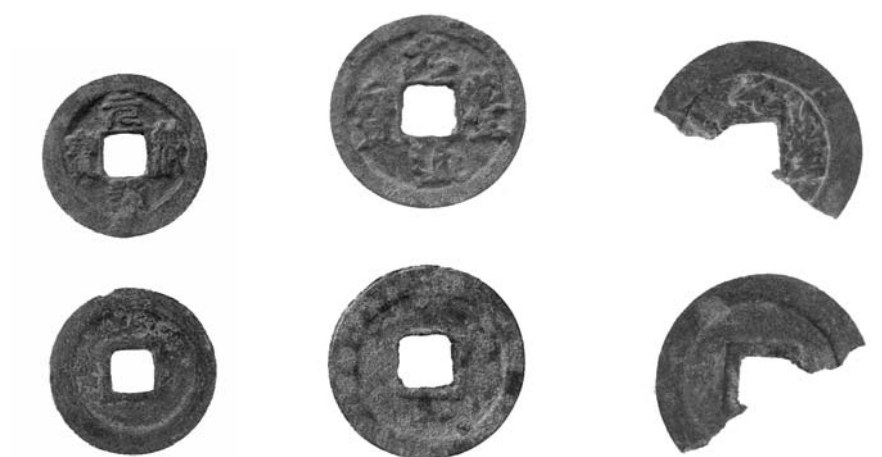


d-e-f) From left to right: WW-226, 227 and 272.
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FINDS OF PERIOD III, COINS

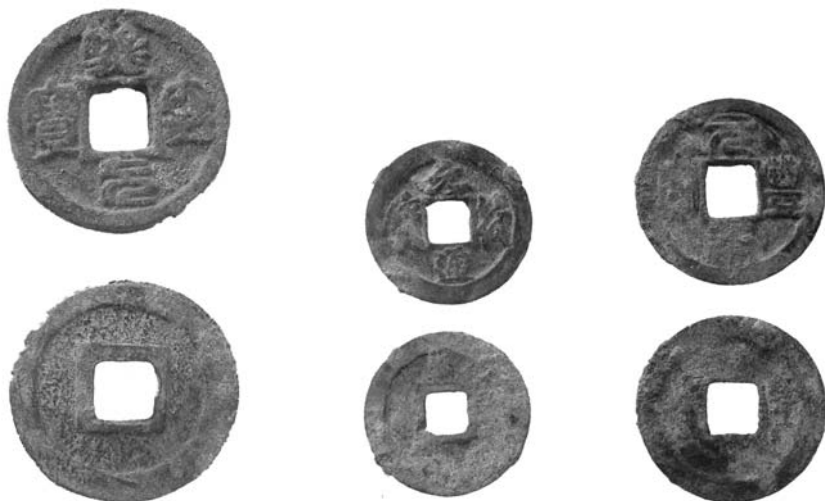


a-b-c) From left to right: WW-286, 315 and 316.
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d-e-f) From left to right: WW-319, 320 and 323.
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FINDS OF PERIOD III, COINS



a-b-c) From left to right: WW-344, 356 and 361.
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d-e-f) From left to right: WW-363, 398 and 400.
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FINDS OF PERIOD III, COINS



a-b-c) From left to right: WW-401, 402 and 407.
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d-e-f) From left to right: WW-532, 533 and 534.
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FINDS OF PERIOD IV, CERAMIC PILLOWS

a) WW-240.
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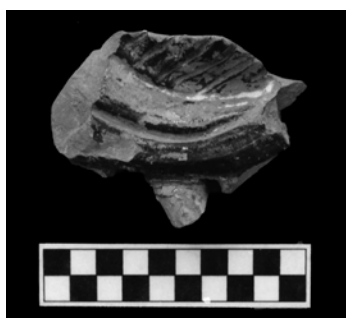
b) WW-313.
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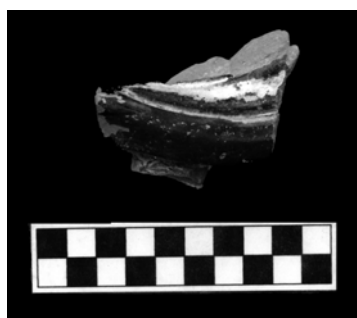
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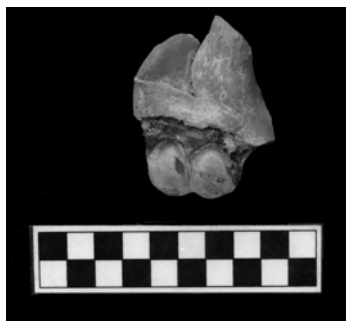
FINDS OF PERIOD IV, ARCHITECTURAL DECORATIONS



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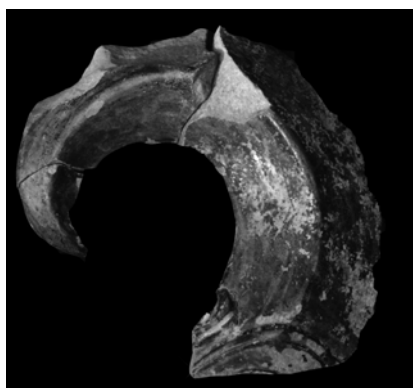
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FINDS OF PERIOD IV, COINS



a-b-c) From left to right: WW-122, 228 and 229.
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d-e-f) From left to right: WW-230, 321 and 345.
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