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FRAGMENT OF A WARP-FACED TABBY WITH OVALS, SILK

NORTHERN CHINA; 5TH-6TH CENTURY

H: 11.7; L: 51 CM

The decoration on this fragment consists of a latticework that forms ovals. The ovals contain various motifs that are mirror images on the longitudinal axis: two camels with camel drivers, two pairs of lions (?), two elephants, and two pagodas with a person or an idol.

The camel driver is especially interesting in our context. Between him and the camel is the Chinese character *huu*, which means “foreigner” or “non-Chinese.” The caftan-clad man and his Bactrian camel bear witness to the importance attributed by the Chinese to the northern peoples who traveled the caravan routes – the Silk Road – between China and its western neighbors.

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