

because they repeat on silk the manner of the fresco paintings of Tun-huang. In all these pictures the Chinese element is present but not dominant ; and the system of modelling in two tones of colour comes, we cannot doubt, from the west. It is true that it was sometimes copied by the Chinese in their Buddhist paintings, as we know from early Japanese examples following Chinese prototypes : but the Chinese of T'ang times were intensely interested in the western countries ; they liked to introduce figures of people from those regions into their pictures ; and, as we know, a painter from Khotan settled in China in the eighth century and had great success there. But the desire to suggest mass and roundness by means of modelling in painting was against the instincts of the Chinese and Japanese ; it occurs only in certain Buddhist pictures, the survival of a borrowing from the west preserved by hieratic tradition.

One of the finest of all the Tun-huang pictures is not a painting but a piece of embroidery. Unfortunately it does not lend itself well to photography in colour ; and its quality and impressive character are merely suggested in the small Plate (Pl. xxxiv) and in the detail with a group of donors (Pl. xxxv). Though merely the reproduction by craftsmen of a master's work, it shows such skill and taste in execution, it is so fine in colour, and so well preserved, that it must be ranked with the very finest of the paintings as an indication of the grandeur of the Buddhist art of T'ang.