

of Mīrān. Exaggerated elongation of the ear lobes, rent with great slits or gaping holes, is now the rule. The worshipping figure (Har. B.), reproduced on the title-page, has these heavy-lidded eyes and elongated ears, and from behind the shoulders rise either very stylized wings, a belated and transformed survival from an earlier period, or it may be that they represent flames. While charming in many ways, it is full of faults in drawing. In some of these paintings haloes are composed of bands of plain colour, often with little flickering touches of white, like tiny flames, at their edges; and the number of colours used is greater than formerly, and of more sombre and complex hue.

Turning now to the Turfān region, 600 miles to the north-east of Khotan (north of the Taklamakān desert and at the foot of the Kuruk-tāgh), greater complexity of styles is found. The geographical position of Turfān has always rendered it especially subject to the varied political and ethnic fluctuations already referred to. Lying on the trade route, the 'New Route of the North', opened in the first century A.D., carrying traffic between China and the West, it could be, and was, invaded from the north of the T'ien-shan range by way of several relatively easy passes. It was here that repeated clashes occurred between Huns and Chinese from the time of the Han dynasties onwards. Western Turks, Uigurs, and Tibetans, invading from different directions, exercised, in turn, periods of supremacy. But the strongest influence seems to have been that of the Chinese, whose firm hold on the region in T'ang times had a lasting and civilizing effect. A significant fragment of painting from the wall of one of the Bezeklik cave shrines (Bez. xi. A-C, plate xx) depicts a crowd of mourners gathered round the bier of the Buddha, composed of representatives of the many kingdoms present on that mournful occasion, and affords an interesting opportunity of identifying the several types of communities usually at variance, but here united in expressing a common grief.

The Turfān region, rich in remains of Buddhist and Muhammadan shrines, has been explored and closely studied by several eminent scholars, Russian, German, British, and French. Dr. Klementz, acting under the auspices of the Russian Academy of Sciences in 1897, reported on the ruins. In 1902 and 1907 Professors Grünwedel and von Lecoq carried out most thorough investigations, and the results of their labours are recorded in several beautiful and impressive volumes. Large sections of the paintings were removed from the walls of the shrines and transferred to the Ethnographic Museum in Berlin, where, according to reports,