

thinner than those in M. III; and the curve of the lunette rather flatter. On the broad black-festooned band are roughly drawn scrolls effectively painted in red outlined with white.

These rough scrolls have special interest in being definitely Chinese in form although wanting in the quality of Chinese execution. Comparison with the 'cloud' scrolls, as I have called them, on the Chinese figured silks of the Han period discovered by Sir Aurel Stein at Lou-lan, shows significant resemblance to these, which may also be accepted as intended to typify clouds.<sup>1</sup> Mīrān being on the old Silk Route, it may be reasonably conjectured that pieces of old Chinese silks of the Han dynasty would occasionally find their way here; and would provide the painter with a motive so suitable for his purpose. There is nothing in any of the Mīrān paintings to suggest that the painters were themselves Chinese.

It is noticeable that among the remains of the elaborate painted decoration of these shrines or temples, there are almost no ornamental features as distinct from the figure work. There is an ornamental band round the upper edge of the chariot in the Vessantara picture, and that is composed of the same type of cloud-scroll already noticed. The rich cloth over the back of the elephant had a design of repeating circles enclosing rosettes—a motive very common with Chinese weavers in T'ang times and rather earlier. Beyond this one simple motive of the cloud-scroll, there is nothing in Mīrān Art that is referable to Chinese influence; for the rosette pattern might equally well be Western or Indian.

In the paintings of both M. III and M. V shrines, the heads are always drawn three-quarter face; with large eyes wide open but too close together, and always looking to the side—never to the front. The eyebrows are arched and usually well separated. The neck is frequently long and always has horizontal creases. The treatment of the hair presents some interesting features. The boys, or *amorini*, supporters of the festoon in M. V, plate III, when capless, have a thick leaf-shaped tuft on the top of the otherwise clean-shaven scalp. The winged figures, M. III. ii and viii, plate I, show the same arrangement, but have also a long rippling lock growing from the side of the head and falling down the cheek in front of the ear. The boy's head, M. V. vi, plate III, has normal, short, curly hair but with a more bushy mass in centre front and a short lock beside the ear. In M. V. 004, plate III, the hair, although rather short, is curly and thick with a thicker mass on top, rising above the general level, in two projections. In M. III. 003, plate I, the Buddha has

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Andrews: *Ancient Chinese Figured Silks*. Quaritch, 1920.