

gods of India. Considering the close historical connection between Kashmir and Khotan which the local traditions recorded by Hiuen-Tsiang indicate, it needs no effort of imagination to believe that the lotuses that once adorned the gardens of settlements now buried by the desert sand were originally derived from the great Himalayan Valley, on the lakes of which I had so often admired them.

The appearance of a riderless horse in front of the tank and some other features of the fresco suggest that its subject may perhaps be identical with the curious legend which Hiuen-Tsiang relates of a Naga lady residing in a stream east of Khotan and of her strange wooing by a pious mortal. But the point is too uncertain to permit more than an allusion here.

Of the adjoining frescoes, however, it is impossible to mistake the significance. A well-drawn though now much effaced male figure of youthful appearance, seen seated in cross-legged fashion and dressed in a dark-blue cloak that leaves the right shoulder bare, is manifestly that of a Buddhist scholar. His right hand holds the oblong leaves of a 'Pothi,' or manuscript book arranged in the traditional Indian fashion, on which the eyes are fixed in intent study. By the side of this figure and likewise turned to the proper right, an old man is depicted in the act of teaching. His robe, which seems to be made up of patches of varying shades of brown, curiously suggests the orthodox garb of mendicant monks of all Indian sects, termed 'chiravastra' in Sanskrit. While the right hand, with the second and third fingers stretched out, is raised in the gesture of teaching, the palm of the left supports a closed 'Pothi.' The two boards of thin wood between which the leaves are placed after a fashion still commonly observed in the case of Sanskrit manuscripts, are quite distinctly marked. The cleverly drawn features of the old man's face seem to express complacent assurance in his teaching and full abstraction in its subject. In front of him, too, a tank is shown with open lotuses floating on the surface. Two birds, looking like wild geese, disport themselves in the water, and with necks marked dark-blue and green, raise their heads towards the old teacher.