

Division  
of scenes ;  
cartouches.

The divisions between the successive scenes or groups of objects are indicated either by transverse borders—we have examples of both decorative and plain ones—or else by suitably introduced features of landscapes which mark the shifting scene.<sup>6</sup> Cartouches, usually in yellow, light buff, or similar colour, are always to be found accompanying the scenes, being placed mostly along one or another of the vertical borders.<sup>7</sup> But unfortunately only in very few cases have the pious donors incurred the trouble and expense of having them filled in with the intended explanatory legends.<sup>8</sup> No doubt, most of the scenes would explain themselves to contemporary pious eyes quite as well as they do to ours ; but for others we greatly miss the help of inscriptions. In almost all banners the vertical edges were provided with painted borders, showing often elaborate floral ornament or else plain.<sup>9</sup>

Chinese  
style of  
scenes.

The same clear definition of type which this group of paintings displays as regards range of subjects and external arrangement is reflected also by their style. 'The most important point to note', as M. Foucher has justly put it, 'is the frankly Chinese fashion in which these traditional subjects have been treated. Under the hand of the local artists they have undergone the same disguising transformation which Christian legend has under those of the Italian or Flemish painters.' The same observation applies, as we shall have occasion fully to explain further on, to those scenes from Śākyamuni's life or his previous births, the Jātaka stories, which are represented so often on marginal bands of the big paintings showing Amitābha's Paradise and so on.<sup>10</sup> Everything connected with the physical types of the actors, their costumes and movements, the setting of the scenes, whether architecture or landscape, appears here 'translated bodily into Chinese', to use Mr. Binyon's graphic expression.<sup>11</sup> All this contrasts strikingly with the fact that the figures of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, as presented to us in banners and large paintings alike, conform more or less closely in physical appearance and dress to the types as originally evolved by Indian tradition and transmitted through Central-Asian Buddhist art.<sup>11a</sup>

Explanations  
of  
Chinese  
style.

The problem thus raised is very interesting from various points of view and was bound to attract attention from the first. But the explanations proposed differ. M. Petrucci has assumed that 'while the foreign tradition easily maintained and imposed itself in respect of the extra-mundane, as soon as it was a question of representing the real life of the saviour, the Chinese *milieu* demanded images evoking this reality. Upon the legend which came from the West, China imposed its own conception.'<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, in Mr. Binyon's view 'a solution may be suggested in the probability that the prototypes of these scenes were painted in China at a time when only an oral

In Ch. xxvi. a. 004 (Pl. LXXV) the 'Seven Ratnas' are arranged in five successive panels, seven cartouches being duly allotted.

<sup>6</sup> For decorative borders with floral patterns, see Ch. xlix. 006, lv. 0016 (*Thousand B.*, Pl. XII); also xxv. 001; xlv. 004, 005; lv. 0021, 0022. Plain coloured borders are used in Ch. lv. 009, 0010. Low undulating hill ranges are introduced to divide scenes in Ch. 0039; xx. 008 (*Thousand B.*, Pl. XIII); xxii. 008 (Pl. LXXVI); xxvi. a. 003, 004 (Pl. LXXV); xxvii. 001 (Pl. LXXVII); other landscape features in Ch. lv. 0012 (Pl. LXXV). Architectural lines are cleverly turned to the same purpose in Ch. 0030 (Pl. LXXVI); xlv. 007 (Pl. LXXV); xlix. 005.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. for specimens Pl. LXXIV-LXXVII; *Thousand B.*, Pl. XII, XIII.

<sup>8</sup> See Ch. xlv. 004, 005; xlix. 006 (*Thousand B.*, Pl. XII); lv. 0010 (Pl. LXXIV), 0016 (*Thousand B.*, Pl. XII).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. for decorated vertical borders Ch. xlix. 006; lv. 0016

in *Thousand B.*, Pl. XII; lv. 0012 in Pl. LXXV; for examples of plain borders see Pl. LXXIV-LXXVII. The border in Ch. lv. 0021, 0022 is curious as it appears intended to reproduce elaborately turned wooden balusters of the type found at shrines of Khādalik, Lou-lan, Mirān; see above, pp. 165, 396, 404, 539. Does this supply a hint as to a position in which such banners may originally have often been displayed?

<sup>10</sup> Cf. below, p. 886.

<sup>11</sup> See *Exhibition of Stein Collection*, p. 9.

<sup>11a</sup> Here attention may also be called to the fact that the very interesting representation of a painting on silk or some other fabric with a series of scenes illustrating Śākyamuni's life story, which one of the figures in a fine fresco of Kizil (Grünwedel, *Allbuddh. Kultstätten*, p. 187, Fig. 384) exhibits, shows a style distinctly older and closer to the Indian prototype than the rest of the wall-paintings in that cave.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Petrucci, *Conférences au Musée Guimet*, xli. p. 124; also *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, septembre 1911, pp. 207 sqq.