

Heaven is intended. This we find fully developed in Ch. xlvii. 001,⁹ a large and complete picture over five feet square. It shows us Amitābha and his two chief Bodhisattvas on lotus thrones rising from the Sukhāvātī lake, and in the foreground a large terrace occupied by representatives of the various celestial beings, including pure souls reborn as infants, sacred birds, etc., characteristic of the main class of Paradise pictures. Oval lotus buds enveloping infant souls, and accompanied by inscriptions which describe the state of rest enjoyed by the soul in its new life, rise at the back of the terrace. Above in the air appear small Buddhas descending on clouds, floating infant souls, graceful Apsaras figures by the side of the central canopy, musical instruments—all forming part of the familiar *tableau* presented by the typical Paradise paintings.

Yet striking differences of composition, such as the total absence of the celestial mansions in the background and the ample spacing of the principal figures, make it equally certain that we have here preserved a specimen of a Sukhāvātī scheme developed quite independently of the orthodox type which predominates among the Ch'ien-fo-tung paintings and frescoes, and which has become stereotyped in Japan. It is hence of special interest to observe that the costume of the donors in Ch. xlvii. 001; liii. 001 is markedly different from that seen in all dated tenth-century paintings and manifestly older also than that seen in the picture Ch. lv. 0023, of A.D. 864, already discussed.¹⁰ The characteristic features of the dress—the small tailed cap and long belted coat in the case of the men and the plain hair knot and narrow-sleeved bodice in that of the ladies—appear with still greater clearness in the donor figures of the large embroidery picture, Ch. 00260 (Plate CIV). This last shares some of the other peculiarities of our two paintings,¹¹ and may on the strength of this evidence be attributed to approximately the same period. A relatively early date seems to be indicated for all three pictures also by the previously discussed fact that the costume of their donors bears close resemblance to the quasi-archaic dress and coiffure in the scenes from Śākyamuni's life, as presented by the banners, and also to that in certain Yün-kang and Lung-mên reliefs.¹²

The type which as early as T'ang times must have become predominant for the representation of Amitābha's Paradise is illustrated in our collection by more than a dozen paintings.¹³ Owing to the large surface needed for such a host of figures, the majority of the pictures in this series have suffered much damage, while a few are reduced to mere fragments. But some are in fair preservation, and the abundance of materials permits all features common to the type to be determined with certainty. For a detailed account of these Miss Lorimer's careful notes in the Descriptive List may be consulted.¹⁴ Here it must suffice to draw attention to the essential points. The explanations kindly furnished by a competent Japanese expert, Mr. Yabuki, who in 1916 studied these and other large compositions in our collection, make it clear that the paintings of this series are intended

Independent Sukhāvātī scheme.

Donors' costume suggests earlier date.

Predominant type of Sukhāvātī paintings.

⁹ See *Thousand B.*, Pl. XI.

¹⁰ See above, pp. 880. For a list of the dated paintings that show figures of donors, see above, p. 850, note 23. Ch. lv. 0023 (*Desert Cathay*, ii. Pl. VIII) agrees closely with Ch. xx. 005, of A.D. 891, the head-dress of the men and the coiffure of the ladies showing in both a preliminary stage, as it were, towards the characteristic stiff, wide-flapped hats of the men and the highly ornate head-gear of the ladies displayed in all our tenth-century paintings.

¹¹ Such are, apart from the dress, etc., of the donors, the Apsaras figures with boldly looped scarves sweeping down by the side of the canopy; the brocaded edges of the lower robes of the principal Bodhisattvas (see Ch. liii. 001, *Thousand B.*, Pl. X); the sage-green seed-beds of the lotus pedestals; the naturalistic treatment of the disciples' heads (as in Ch. liii. 001). Cf. below, p. 896.

¹² See above, p. 851.

¹³ They are: *Ch. 0051, 00104, 00216 (portions reproduced in *Thousand B.*, Pl. XXX); v. 001; xxxiii. 003; liii. 003; lv. 0033, 0047 (see *J. of Indian Art*, N.S., No. 120, Pl. 4); lviii. 0011 (*Thousand B.*, Pl. VIII). To these must be added the fragments Ch. 00457; iv. 001; xxii. 009; and lvi. 0018, 0034, showing the Paradise of Amitāyus (see below, p. 888). For miscellaneous frs., probably from similar pictures, see Ch. 00473. a-e; xxii. 005-007, xxxviii. 006. Ch. lviii. 006 is a painting of this class, left in the shape of a rolled-up bundle as found in the walled-up chapel.

The best-preserved specimens are *Ch. 0051, which has also retained the side-scenes, and Ch. lviii. 0011. The reproduction of the last in *Thousand B.*, Pl. VIII, will serve best to illustrate the descriptive remarks made in the text below.

¹⁴ See particularly *Ch. 0051, *General Note*, and *Ch. lii. 003.