

(Plate CXVI. A), which has formed part of a banner. Its design shares with the one just discussed the double pair of confronting animal figures, here ponies, placed one above the other. But the characteristically 'Sassanian' medallion arrangement is absent. The most striking feature of the design is the spirited life-like rendering of the ponies' figures and the free trotting movement with which they are represented. This plain mark of Chinese workmanship is not obscured either by a certain roughness in the execution of the block or by the 'running' of the colours due to the thinness and poor texture of the silk. In the lower pair of ponies, with their short thick-set bodies, heavy heads, and short ears, the type peculiar to the Mongol horse, as I know it, is quite unmistakable. The pair above, with their spotted coats and heavy bellies, are meant evidently for a different type, which, however, owing to the missing heads, cannot be determined. The feet of a third pair appearing upside down at the lower edge of the piece show that the design was repeated in a reverse direction. What with Tibetan nomads immediately in the south and Turkish tribes to the north and east, such a 'horsy' design, if produced at Tun-huang, would have been specially suited to the taste of many customers supplied from the local market. Even now Tun-huang serves as the main distributing centre of industrial products for the Mongol and Tangut nomads that graze the high valleys and plateaus of Tsaidam.

We have a very instructive example of the adaptation of a Western textile motif by Chinese hands in the printed silk Ch. 00304. a, b (Plates CXIII, CXIV), which has been used in two head-pieces for banners. Its design consists of repeating circular medallions of large size enclosed by lozenge-shaped masses of elaborate foliage, which almost completely fill the interspaces. The double circular border, with its stiff decoration of elliptical discs outside and quatrefoils inside, is of distinctly 'Sassanian' type. But within the medallion we find elements which are as unmistakably Chinese: the four pairs of geese, quite naturalistic in treatment, around a central flower of somewhat more stylized character.^{16a} Quite Chinese, too, is the treatment of the luxuriant foliage and flowers in the spandrels. The superior quality of the material and the carefully executed decoration suggest production in China proper. The same holds good certainly of the minutely worked figured silk piece Ch. 00182 (Plates CXI, CXVIII), which had served as a suspension loop. Its very small pattern shows circular medallions containing a pair of confronting ducks, with rosettes filling the interspaces and others covering the points where the circles touch. In its general outset the design is plainly of Persian type. But the extreme fineness of the work and some minor details of style leave no doubt that this fabric was woven in China. From the 'Sassanian' textiles of our first group it stands apart, not merely in the style of weaving, but also in the absence of stepped outlines and in the linking of the medallions. The latter, however, is otherwise a very common feature in Western specimens of 'Sassanian' textile design and its derivations.¹⁷

There still remains for our consideration a figured silk of very peculiar design, the character and relation of which might well appear puzzling at first sight. I mean the triangular piece Ch. 00118 (Plate CXI), made up of two fragments joined into what probably once served for the head-piece of a banner. The design, as seen in a drawing from Mr. Andrews' hand (p. 963),^{17a} shows flat arches arranged in continuous rows and supported by shafts, which in turn rise from the summits of the arches in the row below. Within the panels thus produced we see standing one above the other two pairs of animals, either wyverns and griffins or wyverns and lions. The animals in each pair face each other across a central stem, which divides the panel vertically and,

'Sassanian' motifs adapted in Chinese silk fabrics.

Figured silk, Ch. 00118, with griffins, wyverns, etc.

¹⁶ We find the same motif of a confronting pair of ducks treated in Chinese style in the stencilled design of the silk banner Ch. 00303 (Pl. CXIII) and in the painted frontispiece of the big Brāhmī manuscript roll, Ch. c. 001 (Pl. CXLVI); cf. also the reproduction of a Shōsōin painting, Fenollosa,

loc. cit., i. p. 110.

¹⁷ See, e.g., Migeon, *Les arts du tissu*, pp. 8, 13, 17, etc.

^{17a} [For Mr. Andrews' analysis of this design, see now his paper referred to in note 19 below.]