

A Study of Three Dunhuang Color Paintings on Silk in the US Collection

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This study examines the 10th-century silk paintings discovered in the Mogao Caves in Dunhuang currently located in the United States. The research focuses on the following pieces: *Guanyin (Avalokiteshvara) of the Water Moon* (968) held by the Freer Gallery of Art (the National Museum of Asian Art); *Avalokiteshvara (Six-armed Avalokiteshvara)* (975) held by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and *Eleven (Twelve) -headed Avalokiteshvara (Guanyin)* (985) in the collection of the Harvard Art Museums. Among these, the figure of the Water-Moon Avalokiteshvara in the Freer's collection and the Harvard's painting of a Twelve-headed Avalokiteshvara were commissioned by the royal family of the time, while the Boston's Six-armed Avalokiteshvara painting was made by a nun at the Lingxiu Monastery.

If we classify all of the Dunhuang paintings of the 10th century into three categories based on the correlation between the dimensions of the Buddhist deity depicted and the quality of the finish, the Freer's works are classified as category 2, and the others are placed in category 3. All of them use widely circulated designs, and the decorations are roughly sketched, but the works in the Freer and Harvard were commissioned by the royal family and exhibit a meticulous and careful finish to the main figures and their devotees.

Additionally, there are three types of base materials: plain-woven silk, twilled silk, and antique silk. Therefore, it is assumed that in 10th century Dunhuang, there was a semi-customized Buddhist painting production system aimed at a wide range of classes, from the nobility to the common people, and it was possible to select the finish and materials according to the status and needs of the person who placed the order.

The Osaka City Museum of Fine Art's *Kasuga Deer Mandala* Viewed from the Style of the Equestrian Equipment

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In this paper, we will examine the background to the overall production of Kasuga Deer Mandalas and the decorations worn by the sacred deer depicted in the *Kasuga Deer Mandala* (hereinafter referred to as the Osaka City Art Museum Version), which is housed in our museum.

Kasuga Taisha Shrine and Kohfukuji Temple were both revered as the ancestral Shinto shrine and temple of the Fujiwara clan, respectively. The main hall of Kasuga Taisha Shrine is dedicated to Takemikazuchi-no-Mikoto, who descended to Mount Mikasa riding a sacred deer, and the Nanendo Hall of Kohfukuji Temple enshrines the Fukūkensaku Kannon statue that is also known as the Deer Skin Kannon because it is draped in deer skin. From this, it is believed that the worship of the Fukūkensaku Kannon and Takemikazuchi-no-Mikoto as the same entity originated from this connection

This paper focuses on the round stirrups worn by the decorated deer in the Osaka City Art Museum Version. Round stirrups are an ancient type of stirrup that disappeared around the end of the 5th century. The Osaka City Art Museum Version is believed to have been painted during the Muromachi period (15th century). The reason why this ancient style of round stirrups was depicted during the Muromachi period is a point for contemplation. It is assumed that the ornamental saddle known as *karakura*, which uses round stirrups, became a sacred treasure used in rituals, such as the sacred treasure of Ise Jingu Shrine and the national treasure *karakura* of Tamukeyama Hachimangu Shrine. From this, it can be inferred that the *karakura* depicted in the Osaka City Art Museum Version is based on sacred treasures.

On the other hand, Buddhist elements can also be observed in the Osaka City Art Museum Version. The lotus pedestal is depicted at the base of the *sakaki* tree. The most straightforward interpretation of this would be from the perspective of the syncretism of Shintoism and Buddhism. The depiction of the divinity as a *sakaki* tree, and the placement of a lotus pedestal as a seat implies that the *karakura* itself was a sacred treasure, reflecting one of the values of that time.

It has become clearly apparent that the Osaka City Art Museum Version is drawn in a highly distinctive way. As a future topic, it is necessary to further examine the various aspects of the faith in the Kasuga Taisha Shrine from the Kamakura period to the Muromachi period, in order to consider the context in which the *karakura* was depicted in Kasuga Deer Mandalas.