The Arts of Central Asia

The Pelliot Collection in the Musée Guimet

THE ARTS OF CENTRAL ASIA

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Serindia Publications
London

Published by

Serindia Publications
10 Parkfields
London SW15 6NH

ISBN 0 906026 39 3
ISBN 0 906026 40 7 (3-volume set)

First published as
Les arts de l'asie centrale:
La collection Paul Pelliot du musée national des arts asiatique-Guimet

Printed by Biddles Ltd., Guildford and Kings Lynn

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Foreword

The hopeful expectations of many people and their determination over a considerable length of time to publish in an edition such as this the works of the Paul Pelliot collection, are happily fulfilled in these two volumes. It is appropriate that we should recall the circumstances of this achievement.

The opportunity to produce such a historic publication in a field with a still growing audience, and to bring this to a wider public without giving way to a vulgar simplification of the contents, was offered to the Musée Guimet some years ago by the publishers. The project was initiated by my predecessor as Director of the Musée Guimet, Vadime Elisseeff. It has been an honour for me, as the faithful heir to a grand idea, to participate in bringing this endeavour to fruition.

Save for certain unforeseen difficulties, this publication might have appeared earlier, owing to the important research that has, for nearly two decades, unceasingly been focused on the Pelliot collection; in this regard, we draw attention to the impetus given this research by professors Nicole Vandier-Nicolas and Louis Hambis.

But this delay also enabled Jacques Giès, who, in collaboration with Professor Terukazu Akiyama in Tokyo, has been the true architect of the Japanese edition of the Pelliot collection and of the French edition, to make important discoveries, finding major paintings that had somehow been forgotten and conducting pictorial, stylistic and iconographical analyses that have contributed to new readings of many works. I must here salute the breadth and the scientific nature of the work which he has conducted at the Musée Guimet itself, always with the invaluable and knowledgeable collaboration of Madame Keiko Omoto. My especial thanks go also to Professor Michel Soymié and his team at the Centre national de la Recherche Scientifique, who wrote the captions for over two hundred paintings from Dunhuang, as well as to Madame Krishna Riboud for her important study of the Pelliot textiles, outstanding for its technical analysis. My gratitude goes particularly to the Réunion des Musées Nationaux, to its general administrator, Madame Irène Bizot, and, above all, to Madame Anne de Margerie, director of publications, who has supported this vast enterprise from beginning to end. I am also grateful for the efficient and friendly labours of Shinichi Marumoto of Kodansha, who worked to bring about the publication in Japan of these volumes that constitute the second milestone in the series *The Art of Central Asia*, begun with *The Stein Collection in the British Museum* by Roderick Whitfield.

These monumental publications show well that the devotion to the 'cause' of Central Asia has today become universal. They share in the new awareness that characterises the end of this century in the same way as the ever-multiplying international exhibitions on this theme, the last of which was held in Paris to coincide with the publication of these volumes. None of these exhibitions fail to request items from the Pelliot collection. This is a clear enough indication of the collection's importance, and we have here the opportunity of discovering, in magnificent colour reproductions, all of

the Dunhuang paintings, as well as the major pieces of the archaeological material. The collection has recently seen some marvellous 'additions' in the form of ten or so previously unpublished major works, including the only known illustration, apart from the wall paintings of the Mogao caves of Dunhuang, of the *Flower-ornament Sūtra*.

The Pelliot material stands apart from the other great archaeological collections from Central Asia in that it was the result of a single expedition which took place between 1906 and 1909. The grand aims of the expedition were "... to contribute to the research already undertaken by the Russians, English, Germans and Japanese on the Buddhism of these regions (Kashgaria) prior to the Islamic conquest ...", according to Dr. Louis Vaillant, one of the expedition members.

Today, when the importance of medieval Central Asia looms ever larger in the collective imagination – and this for complex reasons that have to do with the notion of a vanished world at the crossroads of influences from East Asia and South Asia – we recall the image of a "new Mediterranean", conjured up by René Grousset. However imprecise this comparison may seem, it has the advantage of leaving open and unspecified the essential difference between these two centres of history, which is the focus of our investigation today. Certainly, the image designates two major cultural poles, whose importance is measured, paradoxically, by the 'effects' that they exerted on the lands on their periphery. Such are the decisive encounters that the intermediary position of Central Asia favoured between the long-lasting civilisations of the Indian sub-continent and the Far-East. One dimension, however, escapes this formula: the extent to which Central Asia can be isolated from its 'models' by its rôle of purveyor, in its turn, of an original influence springing from the syntheses that emerged in the royal cities and religious establishments spread out within that vast region – something that was not possible in the empty maritime spaces of the Mediterranean.

This, then, is the object of our inquiry: the existence of a 'culture' of Central Asia, of which the dominant Buddhist element, well attested by the artefacts recovered from that region such as we find in the Pelliot collection, is however but one of several aspects. It seems to us that all the questions raised by the authors in their individual fields can thus be gathered under this single heading. One must, however, beware of the apparent simplicity of the proposition. Despite the intuition already shown by its discoverers, it is most difficult to prove, for the obstacle, it seems to us, is less real than epistemological. In fact, the culture of Central Asia can only be appreciated having first recognised the development, in this immense and still ill-defined territory, of iconographic themes, forms and technical skills – not to mention the migration of ideas by means of the texts and the intellectual paraphernalia necessary for the establishment of religious communities and schools of thought. These are all areas of invention, which the analytical studies developed in the subsequent pages duly note, as they reconstruct the links with the civilisations situated beyond the borders of Central Asia.

Each of the texts that follow has a bearing on this essential debate. The diversity of approaches offered by a collective work is the best guarantee of the breadth of this debate, even at the price of a slight delay in publication.

Jean-François Jarrige

Conservateur général
chargé du Musée national
des Arts asiatiques-Guimet

Part One

The Pelliot Expedition (1906-1909)

Jacques Giès

The archaeological adventure in Serindia, that territory presently forming the western Chinese provinces of Xinjiang (autonomous region) and northern Gansu, occurred only recently. It was to reveal the incomparable patrimony of those ancient Buddhist cultures, forgotten for eight centuries, of the oases on the periphery of the Taklamakan desert, linked one to another as staging-posts along the routes leading from the Pamirs to the Far East. It began in the last decade of the nineteenth century, but, with the arrival of the first discoveries, it rapidly developed into a rash of expeditions launched from Europe and Japan, these being the great powers of the time. This expeditionary fever only diminished with the First World War. Thereafter, the discoveries have been the fortunate lot of China and its archaeologists to continue; for the past half-century this has been effected according to the standards of a more systematic and scientific archaeology.

All disciplines were ideally needed for the campaign to uncover one of the last civilisations to remain unknown. Full awareness of the extent of this newly discovered field was reflected by the resolution, expressed by the congress of orientalists which met in Rome in 1899, to establish an International Association for the Historical, Archaeological, Linguistic and Ethnographic Exploration of Central Asia and the Far East. This association was to be based in St. Petersburg.

It all began, it seems, with the discovery in 1899 of a manuscript written in Indian characters on birch bark, acquired in the oasis of Kucha by an Englishman, Captain Bower. Then, just a few years later, in 1892, another and even more ancient birch bark manuscript bearing Kharoṣṭhī (Indo-Aramaic) script was brought to light near Khotan by the French mission of Dutreuil de Rhins. This was quickly followed by the establishment of a rough geographical framework consistent with these discoveries: the string of formerly-inhabited oases in the Taklamakan which were made known by the Swedish explorer, Sven Hedin, on returning from his first expedition (1893-1897). And, as Paul Pelliot was later to say in the conference of 1910, "the hope was born that in the sands of Turkestan might be found the monuments of Northern Buddhism which had disappeared from India".

Although the sacred literature, written in Buddhist Sanskrit (a hybrid dialect of Sanskrit), had in great part vanished from India, it had nonetheless been preserved in Chinese, Tibetan and Mongolian translation in the high and remote places of Asia. The question now arose regarding the nature of this intermediate 'Serindian' territory, this 'land between worlds' of Central Asia, which was not only a conduit for the movement of ideas and texts, but also a land where the religion was probably enriched by a native genius – a land about which there was yet everything to discover and evaluate. Finally, the Sinologists possessed first-hand accounts of pilgrimages towards the west – that is to say towards India – made by Chinese monks who had set out in search of the Law. These accounts form a body of historical literature composed between the fifth and tenth centuries AD. They differ greatly as to their literary merit and the detail they provide, but are always illuminating;

they emphasise the importance of the region, and at the same time trace the route followed by the modern archaeological expeditions.

The mission led by Paul Pelliot, begun in 1906, seems singularly late in comparison with the flurry of expeditions launched along the tracks of Serindia by his rivals. The first expedition of a purely archaeological character, which the Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg entrusted to D. Klementz in 1898, was to explore the area around Turfan. His results, when presented to the Congress in Rome, were decisive in the drawing-up of the International Association. Subsequent to this, and quickly from 1900 on, came A. Stein (first expedition 1900-1901), who, at the behest of the British Government in India, chose to explore the ancient oases south of the Taklamakan, and then two German expeditions: the first to the Turfan area led by A. Grünwedel in 1902-1903, followed by that of A. von le Coq in 1904-1905. A Japanese expedition, led by Count Otani, abbot of Nishi-hongan-ji temple (a Shinshū sect) in Kyoto, also took place in 1902-1903. It was only at the beginning of 1905, when Pelliot was preparing to return to the Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient in Hanoi, that he was nominated by the Comité Français, presided over by E. Senart, to lead a scientific expedition to Central Asia. Some have wondered over this slow realisation, which is all the more inexplicable when we think how long established and how widely recognised oriental studies were in France, in the field of Buddhism as much as in Sinology and Indology. Some, perhaps rightly, have interpreted it as the effect of the monopolising of all available energies and funds by the recent discovery of the site of Angkor Wat and the immense archaeological domain presented by Indo-China. What appeared as an abandonment merited this defence by Sylvain Lévi: "France was unable to efface herself and remain inactive without repudiating her glorious traditions". Once the enterprise had been decided upon, numerous authorities and bodies were united in declaring their support, and it received direct grants from the Ministère de l'Instruction Publique and the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, as well as backing from the Académie des Sciences, the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle, the Société de Géographie de Paris, *etc.*.

Leadership of the expedition was vested entirely in the person of Paul Pelliot (1878-1945), professor at the École Française d'Extrême-Orient since 1901 and author of numerous publications, including erudite researches into the Chinese transcriptions of Sanskrit words, into Bhaiṣajyaguru, the medicine Buddha, drawing upon Chinese sources, and into the old routes from China to India. Although he was merely in his twenty-eighth year, he was a confirmed orientalist. Following this expedition, he was to dedicate his life to the study of his discoveries, and would prove to be one of the masters not only of Sinology but also of Mongolian, Turkish and even Iranian studies. "He learned from his teachers, the Sinologist Edouard Chavannes and the Indologist Sylvain Lévi, that one can know nothing of India and China if one ignores the links between them wrought by Buddhism and neglects those literary sources which shed light on both civilisations" (J. Filliozat). In electing Pelliot, the committee evidently envisaged the pairing of archaeology and philology.

The leader himself provided the other members of the expedition. His two chosen companions were Louis Vaillant, a doctor from the colonial army responsible for mapping, astronomical observations and natural history, and Charles Nouette, in charge of the photographic record.

Preparations took a year, during which time Pelliot is said to have learned Russian – and this quite well, as he demonstrated in the course of the expedition. "An exceptionally well-armed philologist" (P. Demiéville), his presence in central Asia was to give a particular direction to Serindian archaeology. There is no doubt that his grasp of languages made all the difference to the conduct and success of the expedition compared with those of his predecessors. Late though is was, this expedition was led by a man of such calibre that it overcame many of those obstacles which had hampered others. These obstacles were largely due to the considerable difficulties presented by communication, whether with the authorities, both Russian and Chinese with whom the journey obliged them to deal, or with local inhabitants of different ethnic origins and linguistic backgrounds, in particular the native guides that the expeditions chanced upon. It was above all Pelliot's profound knowledge of the Chinese language and culture, even more than the very favourable impres-

sion his expedition made upon the regional officials, that was so very beneficial to the expedition, when it came to deciphering the inscriptions and dates encountered on the journey, and the appraisal of the contents of the cave filled with manuscripts in Dunhuang.

The expedition left Paris on the fifteenth of June 1906 and reached the railhead at Andijan via Moscow and Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan. It halted in Tashkent for more than a month, during which period Pelliot dedicated himself to becoming sufficiently familiar with eastern Turkic as to be able to communicate directly in this language. An impressive caravan was assembled in Och to pass to the north of the Pamirs. This had been joined by two Cossacks, Iliazov and Bokov, who would only leave it in Peking and who were placed by Tsar Nicholas II at Pelliot's disposal for the duration of the journey. The caravan crossed the Russo-Chinese frontier at Irkechtam and reached Kashgar at the beginning of September; here A. Stein had preceded them but one month before. The expedition was now ready to begin its work of archaeological exploration.

In both his journal and the lectures that he gave on his return, Pelliot is explicit that his first intention was to go to Koutcha(r) (Kucha), where Bower had found the manuscript on birch bark. This decision was impelled by a personal philological predisposition, which had initially opened his eyes to the archaeological field of Serindia, and which now took the form of a quest for written documents above all. Faithful to this end, and nearly two years later on the eve of their arrival at Dunhuang, Pelliot replied to his companions who were vaunting the magnificent results already obtained in their explorations in the Tarim Basin, at Toumchouq (Tumshuq) and Kucha, "We have found nothing, if we return without manuscripts" (Vaillant). It seems clear today that his tenacity in this respect contributed in no small measure to the success of the purely archaeological exploration he undertook in those places which had not been visited by the other expeditions.

At Kashgar, where they halted for a month while exploring nearby sites, which yielded a first though modest harvest of archaeological finds, more precise information reached Pelliot regarding the recent German activities at Kucha. This archaeological 'promised land' which he had thought yet untouched had, moreover, been visited by the Russians and the Japanese as well. He reconciled himself to this disappointment and even turned it to good account by shifting the investigation to as yet virgin sites. It was now no longer as necessary to hasten to Kucha. As it turned out, however, the first real area of archaeological interest was encountered quite soon, at Toumchouq (Tumshuq), not far from Maralbashi on the Northern Route half way between Kashgar and Kucha. This was an unexpected find made in circumstances that would seem most unlikely, but for the presence of witnesses: dismounting in a ruined site, hitherto identified as Moslem, and scratching the ground with the end of his whip, Pelliot discovered a Buddhist medallion. Thus was revealed the religious complex of Toqqouz-Saraï (Toqquz-Saraï), exposed after six weeks' work from the sand which had enveloped it (for further details on the excavations and the different sites visited by the expedition, the reader is referred to the article in Volume 2, "Central Asian Sites and Works of Art ... "). The archaeological material reaped here constitutes today one of the most beautiful groups of Serindian objects kept in the Musée Guimet.

Winter was advancing, and the bulk of the expedition's cold weather equipment had been sent directly from Kashgar to Kucha. The expedition hastened to reach the latter oasis, and did so on the second of January, 1907. Though not the first to discover the rock-cut sanctuaries of Ming-oï ("thousand houses"), as they were known in the local Turkic language, Pelliot embarked upon an unremitting labour on what initially appeared to be unproductive archaeological sites. He had hoped to bring to light free-standing temples constructed of pisé, and these he was indeed able to uncover from the sand. This monastic complex, Douldour-Āqour (Duldur- Āqur) constitutes one of his most spectacular successes. He proposed its identify as the "Temple of the Oriole" mentioned by the Chinese monk Xuanzang in the seventh century. "A pretty archaeological collection" was to emerge from this site and its neighbours, Soubashi (Subashi), the caves of Qoumtoura (Kumtura), Saldirang and Tadjik, of which the most important elements were a number of manuscripts in Sanskrit and in Tokharian, the ancient language of Kucha, later to be deciphered by Sylvain Lévi. During a break

between two of his excavations there, Pelliot crossed the Tianshan and rediscovered two passes that had previously served as a means of direct communication between Kucha and the Yulduz via the Kalmāq-davan, and that had been looked for in vain by those explorers who had approached the range from the north.

In October 1907, the expedition arrived in the capital of Xinjiang, Urumqi, where it was forced to remain for nearly three months. Pelliot's reputation with the Chinese authorities "reached its zenith" (Vaillant). He was welcomed by Duke Lan, the exiled first cousin of the deceased emperor Guangxu, banished there following the events of 1900; at that time the two men had been in opposing camps. It was in the form of a farewell gift from Duke Lan that Pelliot first held in his hands an eighth-century manuscript from Qianfodong, the Buddhist sanctuary of Dunhuang (Touen-houang). There, it was said, a cache of similar documents had been discovered in 1900, having been immured centuries earlier in a secret cave, and revealed only during restoration work. The date of this finding is at present a matter of debate as to its accuracy; it was confirmed to Pelliot by the guardian of the place, the Taoist priest Wang Yuanlu, who had made the discovery, but some scholars suggest that this event may, in fact, have taken place some years earlier. It is clear, on the other hand, that this treasure had already been drawn upon during the eight years prior to the visits of Stein and Pelliot. The entry in Pelliot's diary on March 31st, when he was already at Dunhuang, mentions the interest shown by a Mongol prince who, according to Wang, came to read "the great Tibetan manuscripts". This remark, however anecdotal, has a certain significance in relation to a problem now raised by scholars (see below).

From now on, the expedition forced the pace and, following the Shazhou route, arrived at Dunhuang in February 1908. The site was already known and Pelliot decided to make it one of his main bases. It had been reported by western travellers (Nicolaï Prjevalski, Kreitner, Charles-Eudes Bonin) that there survived an important complex of Buddhist caves at a distance of about twenty kilometres south-east of the Dunhuang oasis.

Emerging from a preliminary visit to the caves, Pelliot estimated that just these alone would require one month's work (see his report addressed to the Société de Géographie, dated the 15th February); the expedition was actually to remain there until May. It was not possible for him initially to estimate either the importance of the contents of the cache of manuscripts or the time he would need to complete his task, although he had from the outset intended to make an exhaustive archaeological examination of the caves – "the first ever undertaken". This examination, however, he conducted in the most thorough manner despite there being almost not enough time to do so. It is certain that the time allowed would have been insufficient for any person not as highly qualified as Pelliot, himself ideally suited to the project both by his temperament and by the great extent of his knowledge of history and languages.

The site was known by the generic name Qianfodong, "caves of the thousand buddhas" (which is a rough Chinese equivalent to the name Ming-oï in Eastern Turkic, but without the latter's elision of their Buddhist character), a term that describes these Serindian rock-cut sanctuaries. Pelliot was later to resurrect the site's old name, Mogao Ku ("caves of unequalled height") on the basis of the texts found in the caves. Another historical name, Chongjing si ("temple[s] of great reverence"), appears in a manuscript (Pelliot chinois 2551, Bibliothèque Nationale de France) containing a copy of the text on a stele erected in the year 698 AD; this may refer to the name of the site during the reign of the Tang Empress Wu Zetian. Pelliot succeeded in identifying the donor of this stele from its only partially legible text (see his diary, 26th February).

These complementary sources, as well as a few others from the cave which will be discussed below, have provided us with precious and unexpected information relating to the history of the sanctuary and even to its founding – something which we lack for all the other Serindian sites. It would appear to date back to the period of the Sixteen Kingdoms: in 366 AD, according to the reckoning of the Former Qin dynasty, which date appears on the stele mentioned above, a monk called Le Zun [also read "Yue Zun": Tr.] hollowed out a niche in the face of the Mingsha cliff in order to

meditate there. The sanctuary enjoyed a continuous development beginning in the late fourth to early fifth centuries under the Northern Liang dynasty, when the oldest known caves were made, and continuing up until the thirteenth century. During this period caves were created at an increasing rate, of which almost five hundred survive to this day.

As for the famous hiding-place "*aux manuscrits*", cave 17 (according to the numbering of the Dunhuang Research Institute), from which came the collection of liturgical and votive paintings presented in these volumes, it was – as shall later be established – originally a meditation cell or *chanku*, adjoining cave 16. This meditation cell was dedicated to and contained a cult image of the great monk Hong Bian, "inspector-general of Buddhism", *fojiao tongjiandu*, in the mid ninth century during the Guiyijun "Return to allegiance army", the period which saw the restoration of Chinese power in Dunhuang following the Tibetan occupation. It was later removed and placed in another cave in the sanctuary to make room for this reserve of precious documents which had probably been gathered from all parts of the monastic buildings at Dunhuang to be subsequently immured. The unusual and hasty arrangements (suggested by the disordered heaps of rolled-up bundles) seem to indicate protective measures adopted in the face of some great impending danger. Pelliot was to show that the most recent documents date from around 1030 AD (the dated manuscripts turn out to be no later than 1002 AD); this date corresponds with the invasion of the Xi Xia in 1035 AD. It is not unlikely that on the eve of this invasion the community of Dunhuang took these drastic measures, thereby consigning the documents relating to its history to immediate oblivion and a millennium-long survival. We may follow Pelliot's theory – widely accepted but lacking any documentary evidence in the Xi Xia language – that this action was undertaken owing to the irruption of the Xi Xia, or we can clear the name of this people, who were after all fellow Buddhists, by blaming local events. It is also possible that we are dealing here with a far more prosaic situation in which the paintings and texts were deposited in a safe place, having for some reason become obsolete but not suitable for destruction. The mystery of this sealed cave containing a treasure without parallel in Serindia and in the whole of Asia remains, however, unresolved.

Pelliot first undertook the study of the cave temples, "while waiting for the opening of cave [17]", and having spent three weeks in the latter examining the fabulous contents of the "library", returned once again to the other caves in order to accomplish a further and most significant archaeological task – the survey and numbering of the caves, the description of the paintings and the noting down of inscriptions and graffiti. Meanwhile, Nouette was entrusted with photographing the caves; the results of this work still constitute one of the most complete iconographic sources available today.

Scholars have been more willing to recognise that Pelliot possessed outstanding faculties and philological knowledge rather than great artistic sensitivity. That he hesitated to give his opinions as a linguist and historian on a field not his own is all to his credit, but there are in his notes (his unpublished travel diary) and in various communications pertinent and perspicacious remarks which reveal a fine and subtle appreciation – for instance, "What strikes me in particular in the study of the Ts'ien-fo-tong of Touen-houang is the grandeur and profound originality of the art of the Wei". Thus he identified both the style and the first era of artistic production of the Mogao caves. He had shown the same fine perception two years earlier, when naming the stylistic periods of the reliefs which he discovered in Toqquz-Saraï. It is all the more regrettable therefore that he left no explicit comments on the liturgical and votive paintings of cave 17. His choice of works however reveals his genius, be it in the iconographical field, or in terms of the styles and epochs represented – the selection is highly representative of all these categories, and contains more than two hundred and fifty paintings, six of which are unpublished having only recently been located; these latter works include subjects unique in Buddhist art relating to the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* (see plates I and II). It is true that this group of paintings, which was acquired from the Taoist priest, guardian of the caves, though being, after Stein's visit the previous year, but a portion of what the cave contained, reflects Pelliot's comments regarding the manuscripts: "I was only able to acquire a third of the whole, about five

thousand scrolls. At least in this third we have the essential". This may be appreciated by comparing the works collected by Pelliot with the Stein collections in London and New Delhi. Only a few subjects are missing from the Pelliot group: the large liturgical depictions of the Buddha lands, in particular those of Bhaiṣajyaguru, the medicine Buddha, and Śākyamuni, the historical Buddha, and the series of banners, in a curious style more 'Himalayan' than Chinese, portraying a series of bodhisattvas. On the other hand the Pelliot collection presents, as we have said, some unique works: the two previously mentioned illustrations of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*, the only depiction of the Assault of Māra (vol. 1, pl. 5), and, to put it briefly, an unrivalled group of paintings illustrating esoteric or Vajrayāna "Diamond Vehicle" Buddhist subjects, *maṇḍala* or pre-*maṇḍala*, which reflect both Tibetan art and a Far-Eastern esoteric iconography (Volume 1, plates 46, 47, 80, 99). Of course, over and above the consideration of these generic themes, each painting may also be held to be a unique work of art. The comparison made here with other collections is only intended to give an idea of the contents of the cave, their remarkable iconography and their possible recurrence. Though not insignificant, the collecting activities of the European expeditions far from 'emptied' the cave, as Pelliot also remarked, having himself arrived after Stein. We know little of the two-thirds of the manuscripts and even less of any paintings which remained *in situ*, although the manuscripts were transported a few years later to Peking. We now know of works kept in China itself, in the museums of Chengdu (Sichuan), Lanzhou (Gansu), Lüshun (formerly Port-Arthur, in Liaoning), which come from the third Japanese expedition, and then there are a fair number dispersed in several other countries – in Russia (St. Petersburg), Japan, Korea (also from the Japanese expedition) and in the United States.

As we stated earlier, the suggested date for the sealing of cave 17 is a matter of current debate, particularly in the light of late Uighur or Mongol inscriptions found on stylistically older liturgical paintings, and by the existence of certain paintings which, like a representation of Tārā in the British Museum, would appear on the basis of their workmanship and iconography to be of very much later manufacture than the most recent of the manuscripts. There are two distinct problems, both referring to works later than the *terminus ad quem* proposed for the bulk of the documents. The second, from our point of view, relates to what we understand by 'Tibetan' art contemporary with the supposed date of the objects found at Dunhuang; in this field uncertainty rules, since the Tibetan-style paintings from cave 17 are the earliest known examples of their kind. Regarding the first problem, it seems to us that Pelliot's brief mention in his diary (23rd May) of the Mongol prince who came to read the recently discovered manuscripts partly solves the mystery of these late inscriptions which, according to M. Moriyasu, are in Mongolian; these would be the work of devotees who visited Dunhuang in the same vein as the Mongol prince. It is unlikely that the paintings with late inscriptions were found in any of the other caves, since these, according to Pelliot, contained a few printed fragments and above all blocks for printing Uighur characters but no important documents. What finally corroborates *a posteriori* the remarks of the monk Wang is the fact that the Buddhist sanctuaries of Mogao, unlike so many of the deserted sites in Serindia, did not survive merely as an unfrequented archaeological site. Pelliot discovered a stele, dated 1802 AD, on the road near the Dunhuang oasis, which reports that the Caves of the Thousand Buddhas, Qianfodong, had been neglected after the country came under the dominion of the "plunderers of the north" (*beilu*), "but that since the present dynasty re-established its dominion over the area", pious people made frequent visits. The stele furnishes us with further evidence of this nature: "the throngs are particularly numerous on the eighth day of the fourth month, the day of the Buddha's birth". A century later, Pelliot himself in fact witnessed such crowds, who arrived for this same commemorative festival and obliged him to interrupt his work in the caves for three days (3rd May). It is thus hard to believe that some of the paintings, in as good a state of preservation as the manuscripts kept in the cave, could have escaped the knowledge of so many people, unlike those lesser fragments which would only attract the attention of an archaeologist.

As for that other field of this subterranean repository of a forgotten world, that of the manuscripts, which reveals an Asiatic Babel, Pelliot devoted himself entirely to this for the three weeks that he spent in the cave. He was the first to form a clear idea of the tremendous treasure that rested there. A detailed report compiled *in situ*, celebrated for its profound knowledge and erudition, is fortunately preserved in the form of a seventy-five page letter, addressed by Pelliot to E. Senart and immediately published under the title *Une bibliothèque médiévale retrouvée au Kan-sou*. This work, which P. Demiéville called "the best survey that we have of the Dun-huang manuscripts", is admirable for the quantity of research made in so short a time and under such difficult conditions. Pelliot examined each of fifteen thousand documents to extract their essential content. He classified the texts according in the following manner: according to their languages – most proved to be in Chinese, but Sanskrit (in Brāhmī script), Tibetan, and Uighur manuscripts were also found, as well as a fragment in Hebrew; according to their religious character – though Buddhism held sway, other beliefs were also found to be represented, notably Manichaeism and Nestorian Christianity; those of a philosophical nature dealing with that famous controversy, the struggle for influence between the Buddhists and the Taoists; historical texts such as the accounts of the Chinese pilgrims Xuanzang and Yijing (also preserved in China) and that of a previously unknown Korean monk, Hye-ch'o (Huichao), as well as documents relating to the history of the sanctuary and the region, "leases, accounts, portions of censuses, diary notes – in fact the necessary archival material for a reconstruction of life between 700 and 1000 AD in this distant part of China".

The expedition left Dunhuang at the end of May 1908 and, taking the route leading to Lanzhou, the capital of Gansu, reached Xi'an (formerly Chang'an) on the 28th of September. There Pelliot looked for new acquisitions, "books and antiquities", and thus came by nearly three thousand rubbings taken from the famous "forest of steles". At the beginning of October the expedition joined the railway at Zhengzhou and travelled to Peking. Pelliot's phlegmatic attitude is revealed by his concluding remark in a lecture given in the large hall at the Sorbonne on the 10th of December 1910: "[the journey] passed peacefully, without a single shot being fired; and we even had the almost embarrassing good fortune, as explorers, to return in perfect health".

On his return to France in October 1909 after a brief stay in Hanoi, Pelliot deposited the archaeological material and the paintings in the Louvre, in which a room dedicated to him was inaugurated on the 12th of March, 1910. The collection of manuscripts, rubbings and printed matter was given into the care of the Bibliothéque Nationale, and remains to this day "the richest addition ever to its Oriental collections" (Monique Cohen). The scientific materials gathered by Vaillant – geological samples, a catalogue of eight hundred plants, mammals, insects and nearly a hundred birds, skulls and measurements – were added to the collections of the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle.

Pelliot had created a new field of learning. In 1911 he was given the newly founded chair of the "languages, history and archaeology of Central Asia" at the Collège de France, where, for thirty-four years, he taught a discipline which expanded the usually narrow limits of specialisation. Together with Chavannes, he published the Manichean manuscripts from Dunhuang. He also produced article after article on a wide range of subjects – subjects upon which he was, indeed, the only person able to shed any light. Meticulously erudite, he was able to unravel the essentials, namely, the problems of transcription and of correlating the chronologies of Chinese, Tibetan, Indian, Uighur and Mongolian materials. He was joined in his researches by the masters of those disciplines which his collections illuminated: L. Finot made known the fragments of Sanskrit texts no longer extant in India; Lévi founded Kuchan studies with the assistance of the linguistic scholar E. Meillet; R. Gauthiot reconstructed the Sogdian language and its grammar; and it fell to Pelliot himself to decipher and elucidate the Khotanese texts.

The Pictorial Language of Dunhuang from the mid-Eighth to the Eleventh Centuries

Essay on the chronology of the liturgical and votive paintings kept in the Musée Guimet

Jacques Giès

No aspect of research that may deepen our understanding of the Buddhist paintings discovered at the beginning of this century in the cave temples called Mogao ku, "of height without equal", near the Dunhuang oasis, should be neglected, given the current state of our knowledge of these pious works. Contemporary in execution with our medieval era, these paintings were miraculously preserved as an ensemble in a repository for motives that were apparently religious. Much ground remains to be covered in order to bring about a full appreciation of these works through a proper grasp of the complex historical, religious and geographical factors involved. It therefore seemed to us opportune to risk setting out upon a yet untrodden path of research parallel with the already numerous iconographic studies, which themselves have enabled us now to embark on this present project. The two principal dialectical thrusts of this research are implicit in the title: "the pictorial language" and "essay on the chronology of the paintings". We elucidate briefly now the link between the first and second of these topics, a link which will be fully developed in the analysis that follows. The first thrust involves the consideration of the means and processes of pictorial expression as a meaningful source for the understanding of the paintings brought by Pelliot from their walled-up hiding-place in cave 17; and the second, contingent on the first, a sufficiently fine distinction between these works, the majority of which lack inscribed dates, to enable the sketching of a chronological framework for their execution, ranging between the eighth century and the beginning of the eleventh when cave 17 was sealed. These dates are confirmed by those of the majority of the manuscripts, found there in much greater number than the paintings.

The Pelliot collection, complemented by the Stein collection kept in London and New Delhi, furnishes this approach with a series of paintings representing an aspect of image-making quite distinct from the cycles of wall-paintings of the Mogao caves, and whose extent covers a period of somewhat more than three centuries, contemporary with the Tang and Song dynasties. The wall-paintings of the caves in fact date back to the early activities at the site, having been created under the Northern and Western Wei and the Sui dynasties between the fifth and seventh centuries. The "treasure", as Pelliot called the contents of the sealed chamber, contains no trace of liturgical and votive paintings prior to the Tang dynasty, which leads us on to the problem of the very existence of such 'portable' works (which as we shall see, in some instances, seem to duplicate the subjects of the wall-paintings), in these first stages of the drawing up of an iconographic repertory.

The choice of subject and the method employed here arise from an assumption that must be defined as it might otherwise seem to be self-evident: that these essentially iconic paintings, some of

which are liturgical, are nonetheless pictorial creations in their own right. The spiritual intentions of the painted images are articulated with the assistance of means of expression, which in theory are of marginal importance, such as the different types of painting surfaces, the quality of the pigments – to mention only these, in our ignorance of the mediums and binding agents. Such an approach towards the pictorial language will consider what were the painters' preferred solutions – always as regards the material qualities of their methods – for rendering convincingly in pictorial form and according to the aesthetic standards proper to different periods such problems as the supramundane essence of the buddhas and the compassionate nature of the bodhisattvas. It is this combination of factors which makes clear what is referred to when we speak of the 'pictorial language'.

The formal analysis of the different known modes of expression presented in the first part will permit a sketch – before we even begin to attempt in the second part the study of the 'laws of composition' – of the aesthetic tendencies to which we have referred, according to the three types of surface favoured in the Gansu oasis, which are silk, paper and hemp cloth. Our subsequent intention is to observe the actual pictorial processes revealing the stages by which the paintings were accomplished, where we find unchanging or standard techniques, as well as new methods which would in turn become 'acquired habits'. These were the techniques or skills employed at different periods to render, for instance, in a relatively more expressive manner in terms of plasticity, a given bodhisattva enthroned in the midst of an assembly, *etc.* ... The analysis allows us to realise the dynamic character of the pictorial language that emerges throughout the period of production of these works deposited in the sealed cave, brief though that period is compared with that of the wall-paintings. It is important to bear in mind the part played by the individual talents of the painters, some of whom are skilled enough to merit being called artists, and also to consider the variable workmanship of the guilds and workshops. The manuscripts show that such workshops were also a feature of secular life in Dunhuang. It is also necessary to take into account outside influences, particularly those from metropolitan China. In fact – and this is one of the contributions of the studies made over the last few years, as we shall show in the particularly representative case of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* – the influence of the great tradition of Chinese Buddhist painting became progressively more important in the art of eastern Serindia, and most especially in that of the chief sanctuary of Gansu province. By this influence we do not simply refer to the painting created at the apogee of the Tang dynasty in that empire's two capitals, Chang'an and Luoyang, but also to the art of provincial centres such as Chengdu in Sichuan province, which had developed from the mid-eighth century following the political and cultural decline of the two capitals under the impact of the An Lushan rebellion in 755 AD and the insurrection of Huang Chao in 880 AD (date of the capture of Chang'an). The rôle in the domain of both religious and lay painting of this fervently Buddhist province of the upper Yangzi was to increase steadily as of this period, and peaked during the Five Dynasties (907-960 AD). Evidence for this artistic growth is provided by one of the most important historical and critical compilations of painting, in the tradition of the works of the Tang era, the *Yizhou minghualu*, "The eminent painters of Sichuan" (preface by Li Tian, dated 1006 AD). Finally, we should consider how such subjects, being bound by the iconographic requirements demanded by the Buddhist canon, left little room for the painters' individual temperaments: the latter were effectively broken in by a long apprenticeship which taught them to excel in the anonymity of a pictorial expression whose object was to reveal the ultimate truths of the cult images.

The iconographic approach is, of course, prerequisite to gaining some insight into the meaning of the representations; when well conducted, it can be raised from the individual level of the depiction towards the more general level of the principle, *i.e.* the doctrine. Ideally this method examines the sources of the images, such as legends, apologues and, above all, historical events – a body of mythic wonder foreign to the world of Buddhist images – and gives a coherent framework to the Buddhist pantheon. Despite the reassuring appearance of this particularly appropriate art historical method, especially when combined with some observations on questions of style, the iconographical approach is unable to interpret other clues contained in the works that relate to their material

substance, and which the surface alone is capable of revealing. This materiality of the physical means continues to be just as relevant when modifications and variations appear in a chronology without unforeseen events; while the iconography remains pretty well unaltered, it is in the physical means that signs of change appear. These almost imperceptible modifications are difficult to identify, since they concern, for example, the techniques of pictorial representation and their constraints, rather than the subjects depicted: thus, as we will show in the course of this study, the substitution of certain colours and pigments in the traditional palette, or the ways of giving expression using different chromatic contrasts, are valid historical indicators, and have been chosen for that reason. These processes draw their characteristic effects from the nature of the support or ground used for a painting; by virtue of its character, which may be reactive or neutral, this nature determines the brightness of the pictorial layer and the choice of particular pigments. It is for these reasons that we turned to the study of the pictorial means and processes employed during that long period of activity illustrated by the works found in cave 17.

But it rapidly became clear that in so doing we would open Pandora's box: if it is reasonable to treat the art of Dunhuang as a form of pictorial expression, then this art can only be meaningfully interpreted if we assume the existence of an iconography strictly codified according to iconic norms. By 'pictorial language', therefore, we mean nothing less than the expressiveness of the drawing, the chromatic qualities of the pigments used at different periods, and finally the image as a whole and its meaning.

We are able to discern quite well those works which, despite being related through their subjects and compositions, may be distinguished one from another by, for example, the choice of different colour schemes; this is evident in the banners depicting the repetitive theme of bodhisattvas: EO.1399 P.92 (vol. 2, pl. 22), EO.1170 (vol. 2, pl. 18), and EO.1127 (vol. 1, pl. 53), which show three stages of this process. Conversely, the clear relationship that exists between different paintings representing the same subject cannot always be understood in this way and by such factors alone: this is true of the two compositions of the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (called *Guanyin* in Chinese) in the form known as *ekādaśa-mukha*, "with eleven faces", enthroned at the centre of an assembly, EO.3587 (vol. 1, pl. 91) and MG.17778 (vol. 1, pl. 92), both of the tenth century, but executed upon different surfaces, hemp cloth and silk respectively. The different characteristics of these variations of the support will emerge clearly in the following pages.

We believe that we are able to propose a much-needed reappraisal, relating to the material as much as to the aesthetic value, of the low opinion in which the images produced in the course of the tenth and eleventh centuries are too commonly held; these, and most particularly the works painted upon hemp cloth, have often been hastily disparaged for the reason that they are thought to show an art in decline. It is true that in the case of the liturgical and votive paintings from cave 17 (as opposed to the wall-paintings), the Tang 'classicism' of the Kaiyuan era (713-741 AD) acts as reference point, owing to the indisputable pictorial quality of that period and in the absence of any earlier works. This great art is represented in the Pelliot collection by, amongst others, two major works: "The bodhisattva Dizang or an eminent monk" (MG.17658; vol. 2, pl. 59), dated 729 AD, and "Amitābha'a Pure Land" (EO.1171; vol. 1, pl. 20). However, it would appear at least hasty if not incorrect in the case of these late works to deduce from the above the not very convincing schema of a slow and continuous decline of pictorial quality, beginning at the end of that era and continuing through to the final phase of the eleventh century, using as an explanation a supposed progressive want of materials as well as of the painters' ability. It has become customary to identify paintings on hemp cloth, which became relatively more abundant from the mid ninth century, as symptomatic of this decline. We fear that the modesty of the available materials and the use of a cloth of vegetable fibre compared with that greatly more noble material, silk, has influenced earlier judgement.

The 'classical style' of Dunhuang as a pictorial standard

Without doubt, one pictorial expression in particular emerges as the stylistic standard displaying the perfect balance of form and content (*i.e.* the limpidity of the one allows the other to manifest itself). Occurring only at a mature period in the history of art, this rare phenomenon changes the latter's course, in that it appears as a new departure and then acts as a long-term model for the art of following ages; this can aptly be described as 'classicism', although this term is borrowed from a particular cultural context. We agree with the prevailing opinion that these 'classical' works are those of the eighth century, and it is these that we take as a yardstick for the study of the pictorial language, and this for two reasons: firstly, because these are the oldest paintings preserved in the sealed chamber, which fact, of course, raises the question regarding what criteria applied to this 'preservation', since, as we have observed before, the pictorial art of the Mogao caves is three centuries older than these works; and secondly, owing to the mastery of expression characteristic of these works constituting a 'definitive form' in relation to the pictorial means and in the correct rendering of the iconic subjects.

The banner representing the bodhisattva Samantabhadra (Puxian-pusa in Chinese; EO.1210; vol. 2, pl. 1), one of the great tutelary figures of the *Lotus Sūtra* (*Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-sūtra*) who, if invoked, strengthens the will to practice, illustrates a highly expert law of chromatic composition, one without a single dominant colour despite the juxtaposition of contrasting tones, which expresses in a remarkable manner this evocation of the "Great being of enlightenment" (bodhisattva), effectively emancipated from material qualities by the use of colour. Our knowledge of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's theory of colour as a quality, "the character of the sense of colour through which the world speaks to our eyes" (P. A. Bideau), set out in his work *Zur Farbenlehre* (1810), enables us better to discern the chromatic conditions that affect the secondary reality of visual perception caused by the law of contrasting colours. This law he qualified as "simultaneous".[1] The particular characteristic of this contrast is to verge upon the harmony of complementary colours without actually attaining it: thus the contiguity of red and yellow-green (instead of the complementary red and green), and orange-yellow and violet (instead of yellow and violet) which are used to express the princely dress of the bodhisattva. If we now compare this work with the God of the North, Vaiśravaṇa (EO.1190; vol. 2, pl. 74), also depicted on a banner, we are presented with certain dominant clear and powerful tones, like red and yellow, which exemplify, according to the law cited above, a contrast called "of saturation"; this term expresses an intensity of chromatic contiguity, which is in fact most appropriate for the martial character of the sovereign god of the north.

These two examples, amongst others, show that it was not by chance that the intuitive skill of the painters of Dunhuang enabled them to correlate these mysterious laws of colour with the subjects of the representations. We therefore conclude that the different methods that articulate the pictorial language are not governed by a purely aesthetic discretion nor by iconographic rules (which are in any case fairly rare in Buddhist art, as we shall see), but rather correspond in an expressive way with the images, with the subjects themselves; furthermore, it seems that the painters were unconscious of this process, despite the fact that these religious images are, from a Buddhist perspective, in harmony with a certain degree of abstraction linked with an ever imperfect representation, and with a traditional symbolism inherited from the earliest figurations.

If the examples illustrating the use of a wide chromatic range, incorporating all the pigments then available in Serindia and, one imagines, in China, are relatively numerous, there is on the other hand no common rule for all the representations of that era. The depiction of Amitābha's Pure Land (vol. 1, pl. 20), for instance, even in its fragmentary state, does not reveal a real chromatic composition so much as a preference for a dominant red. This colour may be seen painted over the initial ink drawing, and expresses the radiant flesh tones of Amitābha and his two attendant bodhisattvas; it is moreover evident in the orange-red folds of the central figure's robe. A similar tonal preference

appears in the banner depicting the medicine buddha Bhaiṣyaguru (EO.1178; vol. 1, pl. 12).

The use of red, and most particularly a cinnabar of a fine intensity, so evident here, is indicative of the importance of this mineral pigment in the palette of the Dunhuang paintings. This colour has a special rôle in iconography and is therefore most commonly employed according to various rigid laws of symbolism, as in images of the Buddha. A canonical convention requires that the Buddha's robe, the *saṃghāṭi*, be made up of patches of different textiles which the saint would have received from the faithful during his wanderings; the garment was undoubtedly of motley appearance (thus the Chinese term *jianse yi*). This robe was supposed to be rendered by a colour in keeping with the original colour of the humble garment of the mendicant monk, *kāṣāya* ("dyed dark red", related to the word *kaṣāyati*, "coloured red", signifying impurity); it is an eloquent lesson that this robe is transmuted literally and figuratively by the wearer into this radiant cinnabar red, the robe of Enlightenment.

Of the range of rare mineral pigments used during certain periods of scarcity of resources (as we shall see below), cinnabar is also the most reliable pointer to economic conditions; it appears on examination to be the indicator of a qualitative reduction in the materials available to the painters, which was most evident after the mid-ninth century. This was, however, the period of the re-establishment of a local Chinese power in Dunhuang – as a military district, Guiyijun – under the authority of Zhang Yichao, who in 848AD brought to an end the seventy-year Tibetan occupation. According to the above indicators, this restoration of Chinese power did not prevent Dunhuang from remaining an enclave, cut off as it still was from the Chinese empire by the territory of Ganzhou, further east in the same province of Gansu, a Tibetan enclave which had meanwhile been annexed by the Uighurs.

From the point of view of the history of painting in Dunhuang, a not unimportant result of this research is our realisation that the Tibetan hiatus (787^2-848AD) did not bring about any very dramatic changes to the art of that period. The wide range of mineral pigments occurring in the paintings of that time in the Pelliot collection, like the high proportion of silk as a support, was for the most part imported. These factors make us appreciate more subtly than has hitherto been the case the consequences of the profound economic transformations which followed the isolation of the oasis. While these must be taken into account, it would seem that they did not, in fact, have a very marked effect on the movement of goods originating in western Serindia on the one side and in China on the other.

It has become commonplace to assert that in the realm of Chinese painting, drawing ("brush and ink", to use the classical term) is pre-eminent over colour, even if we recognise that the use of colour came to the fore under the Tang and even more so during the Five Dynasties period, especially in the central part of the province of Sichuan. The theoretical arguments underlying the pictorial aesthetic of brush and ink already begin to appear in the celebrated compilation by Zhang Yanyuan dating to the middle of the ninth century called the *Lidai minghua ji*. This work acted as model in terms of both form and content for numerous later and even more systematic works, which in turn corroborate this preference for a type of painting later allied with "ink play". This form of pictorial expression, almost always associated with a secular subject, became effectively synonymous with the aesthetics of *literati* painting from the Song dynasty onwards (eleventh to twelfth centuries); a type of painting, claiming the great master Wang Wei of the Tang as one of its founders, that should be seen as a reaction against what had become an out-of-date and wholly academic approach. It also puts beyond doubt that a debate began at the very period of the great pictorial creations of which we treat. A whole world divides the religious, and more specifically Buddhist, painting from such personal works inspired by aesthetic ideals. We should therefore guard ourselves, as in fact do the early writings on painting, against placing them into the same category for the sake of comparing or contrasting them. Although the paintings at Dunhuang are the most 'Chinese' in Serindia, as is revealed by the background landscapes sometimes treated *alla prima* (a feature more prominent in the murals than in the portable paintings), it is impossible to disguise the

fact that the Buddhist pantheon is of Indian origin. The latter should be understood, in a broad sense, to include the Gandharan north-west. In this connection we mention the technique of modelling figures using coloured 'shadows' which give an impression of volume similar to that of *trompe-l'oeil*; as Zhang Yanyuan remarked at the time, this is foreign to the Chinese manner. Apart from iconographic elements, this aesthetic trait is often the only one mentioned that reflects the persistence of the Indian treatment of plastic effects, in particular that of the Guptas. This is not only true of the pictorial art of Dunhuang, but also of the roughly contemporary painting of Afghanistan, of Bāmiyān, Kakrak and Fondukistan. We offer a remark made by J. E. Lohuizen-de-Leeuw regarding these sites, which also holds good for the artistic creations at Dunhuang in the Tang era: "... here the painting is strongly reminiscent of the later material at Ajaṇṭā, with which it is contemporary. Mention may here be made only of the shading of the bodies producing plastic effects ...".[3] Now, to continue with the relationship of the colours of the drawing and the effects they produce, a few examples from the Pelliot collection will show that these stylistic criteria are only applicable in general and not across the board. To illustrate this, we have selected three banners (also related by their formal character), which depict the protective deity Vajrapāṇi (EO.1189; vol.2, pl. 7) and the bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha or Dizang (EO.1186; vol. 2, pl. 51, and EO.3580; vol. 2, pl. 66). It is necessary to pay heed to such exceptions, which, though few, are sufficient in number to require attention. Thus, when dealing with the pictorial language, we cannot rely entirely upon pre-determined criteria, even when these are founded on aesthetic principles that have traditionally been acccepted.

General rules concerning the pictorial language

It is fair to say that from the liturgical perspective of Buddhist painting, nothing relating to the formal canon of the figures or to decorative or pictorial variations has been left to the inspiration of the individual artist. This has affected the representation of at least the upper ranks of the Buddhist pantheon, *i.e.* images of the Buddha, other Buddhas and the great bodhisattvas. We would indeed expect to find these subject to the most important pictorial processes, such as those relating to the rendering of skin tones, and a slightly greater freedom (still to be defined) in the representation of robes and costumes; we must also note the necessary difference between the representation of single figures depicted on the banners and larger liturgical compositions, such as the scenes of the Buddha preaching in the place of Enlightenment or, inspired by the *Lotus Sūtra*, on the Vulture Peak (*Gṛdhrakūṭa-parvata*) or in the Pure Lands (*buddha-kṣetra*), as well as in some votive paintings dedicated to the saviour bodhisattvas. These processes are often the major means of expression used in each painting. As is evident in the banners depicting a single figure, a narrow chromatic range approximating nature is used for skin tones, while draperies are represented with a greater freedom of contrasting colours. An exception to this rule are the flesh tints of the symbolically-coloured figures of esoteric Buddhism; for an example the reader is referred to the kings of knowledge, the *vidyā-rāja* (*mingwang*), who participate in the manifestation of the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (Guanyin) as Cintāmaṇi-cakra (Ruyilun), "with the Wheel and the flaming jewel", EO.1150; vol. 1, pl. 81). The bright colours are essential for the dynamism of the composition, the distinctions between them giving clarity to the image. Treated as a necessary consequence of the iconography, the subsidiary elements attached to major figures are usually characterised by the same colour range. Nevertheless, these elements have a dual function, situating the figures in pictorial space as well as indicating the most high-ranking beings of the pantheon. Such elements include haloes, whose effect is sometimes emphasised with mandorlas, lotus flower pedestals and, in a less systematic way, by moveable elements such as the flowery canopies.

We will now describe what effect these devices have on the chromatic compositions. With the exception of paintings inspired by tantric literature which respond to an iconic and codified colouration, the representation of complexions and flesh tones proceeds, no matter what the style, from a desire to suggest a formal likeness of those venerated. In the Mahāyānist context, in to which

most of the paintings fit, the most well-established method is the suggestion of plastic modelling derived from Indian pictorial tradition. This, with some variations, is the dominant method of the painting of high Asia, common from Tukhāristān (at Bāmiyān and Fondukistan, as mentioned above) to eastern Turkestan. The painting of Kucha, of the rock-cut temples of Kyzyl, Kyzyl-Qargha and Kumtura, and its chronology which may established from stylistic features, are interesting in this respect. It is evident that what von Le Coq and Waldschmidt called the "second style", owing to its departure from the earlier style which was more faithfully Indian, retains this particular type of colouring, despite its tendency to diminish the rendering of the figures' plasticity (they thought that this "second style" was characteristic of the first half of the seventh century, but today this date has been revised by the Chinese archaeologists who suggest that it should be pushed back by a century). We can in fact trace the precedence of Indian models even in Tantric representations in which colour has a symbolic function, such as the blue complexion of Mahākāla which denotes his supernatural status. The oldest painted image of this divine being in the sub-continent appears in the Bāgh caves in Gwālior state, which date to the fifth or sixth centuries.

Besides these extreme examples of an iconography which dictates even the choice of colour, it is useful to distinguish in the 'natural' skin tones the persistence of formulae which express the coloured modelling; these make the later stylisations of ninth-century works more readily understandable. The distribution of 'shadows' reflects the stylistic canon of Gupta India and includes a number of invariable features, the most remarkable being the "three folds of beauty" (*sandao*), drawn in a curve suggestive of volume, which appear on the necks of venerable figures. Such basically Gupta characteristics are widely encountered in the Dunhuang paintings, apparent in all three types of support used for portable works – see for instance "The pure land of the Buddha Amitābha" (EO.1171; vol. 1, pl. 20), "Figure of a bodhisattva" (EO.1214; vol. 2, pl. 15), and "The bodhisattva Guanyin with the willow branch" (EO.1230; vol. 1, pl. 68), painted on silk, paper and hemp cloth respectively. It is important to note that the three works are united by a common canon of plasticity, despite their being of different styles and periods; this is true even with highly stylised images and causes a sort of anatomical fragmentation. This rather singular effect can be seen in the depiction of Shuiyue Guanyin (Water-moon Guanyin; EO.1136; vol. 1, pl. 83), painted on paper (unlike others in this series), and, in a less surprising way, in the works on hemp cloth such as "The bodhisattva Dizang and the Ten Kings of Hell" (EO.3580) and "Eleven-headed Guanyin" (EO.3587; vol. 1, pl. 91).

As we have already stated, the pictorial expression of robes and ornamental elements which complement the figures is comparatively free. It appears that only a few iconographic constraints impinge upon these, such as the colour required for particular elements – for example, the colour of the Buddha's robe. It is curious that the concern shown for the naturalistic rendering of skin tones does not apply to the representation of robes and ornaments, whose freer treatment is apparently governed by the complexity of their arrangement on the one hand and the law of contrasting colours on the other. A depiction of the bodhisattva Dizang (MG.17768; vol. 2, pl. 52) shows us the ultimate result of this process in a stunning display of virtuosity that must surely be the work of a master painter. Flat areas of pure cinnabar red and light azurite blue, expressive only of their own tonal qualities, are juxtaposed directly with mixed tones of contrasting colours which bring out the relief by the tonal variation of one colour in natural light, which they suggest. This method, producing these secondary effects, may be observed in the fall of the folds of the robe, painted in yellow, brown and green tones quite different to the colour contrast we mentioned earlier. This way of painting, which combines a flat effect with one that achieves plasticity or volume by means of tonal values alone, exemplifies by its apparent simplicity the potential richness of the pictorial language used in many works. There are, however, few paintings that can match this depiction of Dizang, and in fact either one or other of these two methods dominates in the majority of works.

It might be objected that some works contain nothing like this plastic subtlety. The colour contrasts of the banners depicting the bodhisattva Samantabhadra on his elephant (EO.1210; vol. 2, pl. 1) and the Guardian King Vaiśravaṇa (EO.1190; vol. 2, pl. 74) are the essential part of their chromatic

composition, and, quite unlike the painting of Dizang, have to do with the laws of 'saturation' and 'simultaneity' mentioned earlier. This efficacious concision of pictorial processes appears in those rare works which are either dated or attributable to the eighth century, and only in them, so that it may be held to be characteristic of the high Tang style (*sheng Tang*, 705-790 AD). Elsewhere, and especially according to the support (the paintings referred to above were executed on silk), this form of chromatic expression varies greatly although it does not entirely disappear; it may be seen in the paintings on paper, some of which resemble drawings or sketches – religious images without aesthetic pretensions such as the representations of the buddha Prabhūtaratna (EO.1398; vol. 1, pl. 9) and the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī (EO.1215; vol. 2, fig. 8). It is very occasionally evident in the images painted on hemp cloth. There is but one such banner in the Pelliot collection, "The bodhisattva of offering" (MG.17682; vol. 2, pl. 43). It is thus obvious that we must appreciate it differently according to the nature of the support.

There are on the other hand numerous examples, no matter what their support or ground, which develop the two-fold chromatic effects discussed above while keeping them separate. The representation of the Five Bodhisattvas on lotus blossoms (EO.1179; vol. 1, pl. 26) is in this respect exemplary, in that the two methods are combined in order to bring clarity to the elaborate composition teeming with figures. In this work we can observe the alternation, from one figure to the next, of flat areas of red pigment and a contrasting two-tone orange-red in the representation of the draperies. An extreme example of this procedure is seen in a pair of banners painted on hemp cloth depicting bodhisattvas of offering (MG.22795/96; vol. 2, pl. 70 and 71). The vigorous two-tone colouring of the robes (*pari-dhāna*) contrasts with the rendering of the remainder, showing an iconographical distinction achieved by strictly pictorial means.

We should straightaway note that the pictorial language of Dunhuang, as is the case with all the Buddhist paintings, avoids allusion and descriptive ellipsis. This of course runs totally counter, from a purely formal point of view, to the aesthetic ideal of Chinese secular painting articulated, according to tradition, by Wang Wei. We will see below that a form of allusive expression is encountered in paintings with an esoteric content, and that this has little in common with the aesthetic ideals of the contemporary Tang painting. The consequence of this trait is that all the forms represented in these Buddhist paintings are as distinguished in their draughtsmanship as they are in colour. We notice therefore that both the figures themselves and all the details that are depicted, even if these be only decorative (for example, ornaments, flowered canopies, draperies, *etc.* associated with the holy images) are all accorded equal importance.

The historical distinction between the two types of palette and the art of substitution

As has been demonstrated by the paintings used as references above, a distinction must be made concerning the three types of support used in the different forms of portable paintings. What may be learnt from the three works already mentioned (the bodhisattvas Samantabhadra and Mañjuśrī, EO.1210 and EO.1215, and a bodhisattva, MG.17682; vol. 2, pl. 1, fig. 8 and pl. 43), painted on silk, paper and hemp cloth respectively, all of which are governed by the general law of contrasting colours applied in pure tones without shading? They may be distinguished through the use of distinct or actually different chromatic ranges, thus bearing witness to the existence of characteristic palettes. It is not by chance that the deciding factor here is subject to the respective qualities and value of the supports. An examination will make clear that this factor occurs, to a greater or lesser extent, in all the paintings we possess. This is exactly what we propose to show.

The palette used for the banner of Samantabhadra is representative of the pigments that painters of that era had at their disposal. Straightaway we are presented with excellent materials, shown by the high proportion of pure, bright mineral pigments (see the table of analysis) and fine silk supports. Together these are indicative of a lively commercial exchange with the countries who supplied them, for it is apparent that, apart from a few exceptions, most of these products were

imported, along with the painters' high degree of skill (comparable with that found in the two capital cities), either from the closest parts of the Empire or from Serindian or more eastern sources.[4] The term Tang 'modernity' can be applied to this more than to any other style developed at Dunhuang, owing to the vigour in the oasis of the contemporary aesthetic of, for example, the Tianbao era (742-756 AD) of the reign of the Emperor Xuanzong. It was during this period that the great artist Wu Daozi accomplished most of his works. We can only judge his particular genius through written testimonies, as almost all the temple wall-paintings which seem to have constituted the bulk of his work disappeared long ago, at the time of the banning of the religion ordered by the Emperor Wuzong (*r.* 840-846 AD). These testimonies, contained in historical accounts of painting, provide substantial information relating to his work, which was described as "divine", *shen*, and also to the immense influence that was exerted by his painting. Nearly three hundred paintings by this master, which formerly decorated the Buddhist and Taoist temples of the two capitals, are mentioned in the *Tangchao minghua lu* by Zhu Jingxuan (end of the ninth to the beginning of the tenth centuries); an earlier work, the *Lidai minghua ji* (chapter III, 4), contains an impressive list of some thirty temples; and, during the Northern Song dynasty, Mi Fu (eleventh century) wrote that "those who find a [painting] of the Buddha attribute this straightaway to Wu". Here we have something that the Serindian and Indian traditions have not bequeathed to us: the name of a creator of religious images, and not just a chance signature which necessarily leaves the works still, in effect, anonymous. This is because China had, as early as the fourth century, broken with the anonymity which used to surround its greatest pictorial creations. The composition representing the bodhisattva Samantabhadra from Dunhuang evokes the description by Mi Fu of two *lokapāla* (the Heavenly Kings) which, owing to their artistic features, he attributes to Wu as the great master of Tang dynasty painting: "The stroke is quick and free, the line has all the suppleness of a stem of *chuncai*. The shine of the circles is finely judged, [the opposition] of square and round creates an impression of relief. The colours appear as fresh as if they were new".

Do the similarities observed between these works indicate a particular historical and stylistic event? It would seem so, even if we admit that outside influences came in all likelihood a little later to these outlying parts of Gansu province. Thus, for example, in the purely religious domain, there was a period between 750 and 760 AD which saw considerable Taoist activity in Dunhuang, while a similar flourishing of the indigenous religion took place in the rest of China. From the mid eighth century, the combined crises of the Tang dynasty, following the defeat of their armies in Transoxiana (Battle of Talas, 751 AD), prepared the way for the eventual Tibetan occupation of the oasis thirty years later. We may expect to find that significant changes appear in contemporary art, albeit with a time-lag arising in part from the simple persistence of certain aspects of the earlier style. From the mid eighth-century, a slow erosion of imperial power took shape even in China proper, leading to an end of the cultural monopoly of the capital cities: the An Lushan rebellion dealt a heavy warning blow to the influence of Chang'an, entailing the flight of emperor Minghuang (Xuanzong) to Sichuan. The latter took many painters with him in his entourage, who established themselves in Chengdu and thus contributed to the future blossoming of this provincial city. Wu Daozi and Wang Wei, amongst others, were notable exceptions to this exodus, remaining in the capital. But, meanwhile, it is to be expected that the crises that afflicted the empire during its long decline must have had some repercussions in the Hexi oases, where they are preserved like fossil traces in the religious works. We may include the bodhisattva banners EO.1399 P.112, MG.17769 and EO.1414 (vol. 2, pl. 35, 36 & 32) amongst the paintings executed during this period of isolation from the metropolis, since the art of these banners harks back to earlier formulae without any innovation; they are examples of a recurrent pictorial expression, at a time, moreover, when the parallel and original creations of esoteric Buddhism were being introduced or developed as a result of the Tibetan presence.

Relevant because of the remarkable regularity of its appearance is the distinction which we propose to make between two types of palette in the case of certain series of paintings. Since we are dealing here with signal differences in basic materials, we must ask a number of questions regard-

ing how these materials were obtained, at certain times and under certain conditions, depending on particular geo-political circumstances as much as on aesthetic options. The first of these palettes, the earlier in date, is in some way referential for the moveable paintings (which it is useful to distinguish from the monumental art of the caves); it consists mainly of mineral pigments, as well as a few rare organic colours. We propose calling this the 'immediately expressive palette', by virtue of its naturally pure and radiant pigments, each of which corresponds to an expressive colour: thus cinnabar red and malachite green, which, as used here, do not need to be mixed. The second, in relation to the first, we call the 'palette of substitution'. As indicated by the name, this is characterised by an absence of one or more of the pigments appearing in the first palette, and their replacement either by a mixture or synthesis made from the remaining pigments or, as is more often the case, by mineral colours of more uncertain tone which approximate those of the 'expressive' palette, such as varying earth colours – ochres, red, green, *etc.*, and different shades of brown.

We should state straight away that this art of substitution, involving a 'science' of colour, is in no way exceptional in Central Asia. A similar system operates in Transoxiana, for instance, situated at the region's western edge and in a very different cultural and religious context. The noteworthy absence of a single green pigment in the paintings of Pendjikent is clearly indicated by the mixing of indigo blue and yellow, usually orpiment, although all available evidence seems to indicate that in fact malachite was accessible in eastern Sogdiana. As G. Azarpay has suggested, it would seem that in this particular instance, to the contrary of what we find at Dunhuang, we are dealing with a substitution which was simply determined by aesthetic reasons on the one hand and a desire to remain faithful to Indian tradition on the other.

The distinction between the two palettes appears consistently according to whether a painting is executed on a silk or hemp ground. It becomes, however, rather blurred in works painted on paper, owing, perhaps, to the earlier use of paper for manuscripts, but also because of its use for studies and preparatory sketches. Evidence for the latter is furnished by the stencils found at Dunhuang (now part of the Pelliot collection in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France), which allowed drawings to be transferred onto the walls, even before paper was considered an appropriate ground for painting. It is, moreover, not at all certain that paper should be considered one of the materials of substitution in the way that hemp cloth evidently can. The painting – admittedly unique – of "The head of a bodhisattva" (EO.1214; vol. 2, pl. 15) shows the use of a broad range of pigments belonging to the 'expressive' palette, as well as a pictorial workmanship which bears comparison with the skillful works on silk contemporary with this painting. Whitfield and Akiyama have correctly linked this fragment with another, kept in the British Museum (Stein painting 178; Whitfield, vol. 2, pl. 50), which depicts a naked infant and other details which suggest that these were part of an important illustration of a paradise painted on paper. But setting aside this very unusual case and a few other rare documents in Paris, most of the paper paintings from Dunhuang suggest that the 'palette of substitution' was the more widely used, even in elaborate works such as "Water-moon Guanyin", Shuiyue Guanyin (EO.1136; vol. 1, pl. 83).

In order to maintain this distinction between the two types of palette in relation to the different pictorial modes developed at Dunhuang, we must examine the regularity of their respective use. It is possible to show that a relationship does exist between certain supports and the pigments in use, a relationship in which we must take account of the aesthetic choices of different eras, and of those relevant to certain representations or subjects, but which is firmly established first of all – it seems – according to a scale of values: values in the primary sense of the word, measured in terms of commercial rarity and of quality. These considerations reveal the scale of commissions; in other words, the effect of lack of means of the patron, whether a religious or lay community or a private person, on the use of materials of low quality for pigments and ground, and, correspondingly, of subsequent changes in the pictorial language. The existence of contemporary works on grounds as different as silk and hemp cloth surely reflect the inequality of resources of the 'donors', as much as revealing periods of local scarcity. In this respect, the decipherment of the Dunhuang manuscripts,

amongst which are found account books, is essential, as has been shown by the study made by M. L. I. Cugueskiî, who has shed new light on the important rôle played by the lay communities in the field of Buddhist liturgy.

At this juncture, we need to clarify what is meant by the term 'palette of substitution' in relation to that which we have called 'expressive'. From a formal point of view, it shows not so much a reduction in the breadth of the chromatic range as a marked reduction in quantity (and sometimes in quality), being characterised by the absence of one or more pigments, and their corresponding substitution by other composite pigments. Judging by the available evidence, three rare mineral pigments – cinnabar, malachite and azurite – seem particularly prone to this expedient measure, by virtue of their importance. The composite pigments which replace each of these, though more numerous, conform to a few rules which we will now describe. Firstly, and contrary to all expectations, it seems that there was never a single substitute colour to compensate for the lack of a basic pigment; the painters in fact chose from amongst several possibilities. This lack of exact equivalents is a clue to a free interpretation, of which we need to take account. Secondly, the pigments are in no way related chemically: all known compounds are used, pure or mixed, whether their origin is mineral, organic (such as the 'lakes') or metallic (for instance, iron oxide as red ochre). It is at least possible to observe a few constants, up to and including the later works of the tenth and eleventh centuries; thus a red ochre frequently associated with red lead (minium) replaces cinnabar red and atacamite red (an oxychloride of copper); sometimes a green earth or a bistre colour hard to identify replaces luminous malachite green, as, for example, in the previously-mentioned depiction of the bodhisattva Guanyin (vol. 1, pl. 83).

The variations in quality among blue pigments pose other problems, not the least of which is the use of azurite, since it is frequently used as a substitute for lapis lazuli (*qingjinshi*), but is itself subject to replacement by yet another pigment. Strangely, in fact, the luminous and stable blue obtained from the gem – as sought after in the West as in the East – is extremely rare in the liturgical paintings of Dunhuang. The recent discovery in front of caves 53-55 of a fragment of lapis and gypsum supports the theory that this pigment was in fact more common than is apparent in the wall-paintings, though not enough to show that its use was as important in the Gansu oasis as it certainly was in the paintings at Kucha (the cave paintings at Kyzyl). The rarity of lapis observed in the Pelliot collection, in which it appears only in a depiction of scenes from the life of the Buddha dated to the mid eighth century (EO.1154; vol. 1, pl. 4), may therefore be taken as representative of the site of Dunhuang as a whole. Originating in the deposits of Badakshan, on the upper Oxus (Amu-darya) in Afghanistan, lapis lazuli is an important regional historical indicator, in the same way as other precious materials and more than any other pigment. This is true also for the history of Sogdiana itself, where the abundant use of the pigment in wall-painting from the sixth century onward indicates a direct access to the gem's sources and, therefore (as proposed by P. Bernard), of the re-establishment of the old Sogdian borders after the fall of the Hephthalites. The effect of geopolitical circumstances on the obtaining of lapis was even stronger in regions such as Gansu and eastern Serindia, far removed from the Afghan deposits. As already remarked by A. von Le Coq, this pigment almost totally disappeared in the wall-paintings of the Bezeklik caves near the Turfan oasis after the ninth century; this is also true of the Mogao caves. Even if the German scholar's theory, that the rise of Uighur power at this time was responsible for the interruption of communication with the west, is today subject to revision, it did take note of the multiple implications surrounding the use of the most precious pigments of distant origin in the pictorial art of Central Asia.

Returning to the composite colours used as substitutes for azurite, which seems at a certain period to have become rare, we take as examples two works on hemp cloth, both probably no earlier than the end of the ninth century in date: the large votive painting of the bodhisattva Ekadaśamukha-Avalokiteśvara (EO.3587; vol. 1, pl. 91), and the painting with the two-fold subject of the bodhisattva Dizang and the Western Pure Land of the buddha Amitābha (EO.3580; vol. 2, pl. 66). In

these works we find a grey-dominated tone substituting the previously usual azurite blue. On further analysis, however, we note the presence of very fine azurite crystals, of less lively colour, as well as other uses, including the mixing of this low-grade azurite with white lead. One should, therefore, draw attention to the exception which proves the rule: the chromatic substitution of the same pigment but of different quality, instead of the more common principle of substitution by tonal approximation. At the same time, the continued use of azurite, as seen in these examples, would seem to indicate its relative abundance throughout the period of pictorial activity at Dunhuang.

Apart from this particular case, the replacement of pigments in this type of palette refers to substitutions which, although due to necessity, derive their effects by a suggestion of those produced by the earlier range of colours which we have characterised as 'expressive'. This phenomenon is essential for the understanding of the pictorial language of Dunhuang.

We must nonetheless note that green is usually spared such loss of quality, whether based on malachite or atacamite. The former survives to a remarkable extent in the later works on hemp cloth. The difference which we observe here between the fate of a good quality malachite and that of the azurite described above, prompts the following question: what, apart from a better knowledge of the exchanges between the oases and the rest of the world, can explain the different availability of chemically-related pigments, which are moreover associated in their natural deposits? We set aside the fact that malachite is found in larger quantities, and that its cost was, therefore, lesser. We should, here, make a general statement about the frequency of use and of the supposed value of the green gem in the paintings of eastern Turkestan. The presence of malachite is surprisingly enduring on the Northern Route, as well as at Dunhuang, whether in the paintings at Kucha, in the rock-cut temples of Kyzyl or in the constructed ones of Duldur-Āqur, as witnessed by the fragment of a Buddha Land in the Pelliot collection (EO.1123b; vol. 2, pl. 166). It appears to have been in continuous use throughout the period of artistic activity and even at times to have been the dominant colour in the wall-paintings; this seems to have been the result of an aesthetic preference for this tone during the Sui dynasty and also, though in a different way, in paintings thought to be contemporary with the Song dynasty (tenth-beginning of the eleventh century). The preference shown for this pigment is all the more curious in Buddhist painting in the light of its Indian ancestry, which, though so important in other respects, cannot be invoked here as being in any way influential. Indian tradition does not, in fact, include green amongst the 'symbolic' colours enumerated in the Nātyaśāstra attributed to Bharata (*c.* fourth century AD) which, although a treatise on dramaturgy, is also the first summary of the genre which expounds the aesthetic and psychological conditions required to move the faculties of feeling, the principal sentiment (*rasa*) aroused in this case by a literary composition, and, in a more general way, by the perceived essence of any artistic creation. We have already observed that the painters of Ajaṇṭā rendered this colour by a mixture of blue and yellow, rather than by use of the mineral pigment, as if they had already made these principles their own.

Besides these cases,we must note the colours which occur without any changes in both the palettes described above and which continue to play an important although secondary part in the pictorial language. For these we can use neither criteria of values nor historical arguments of periods of scarcity. Keeping only those colours which are dominant in the paintings, we can enumerate the following: yellow of mineral origin (orpiment), more common than that of organic origin (gamboge); two forms of white, ceruse (white lead) and calcium carbonate, whose use remains remarkably constant over time; and, finally, violet, whose composition is difficult to identify using current methods and which, when not obtained by a mixture of cinnabar and indigo, may be a mauvish-red organic lake.

It seems, on the basis of an examination of the paintings in the Pelliot collection, that the use of an organic lake for mauve colours is fairly usual. One should note how it occurs in combination with other colours. The violet seen, for example, in the banner depicting a bodhisattva with a pink lotus (EO.1399; vol. 2, pl. 13), shows a knowledge of colour conscious of economy, being based on the natural transparency of lake that allows for coloured washes, which, in other circumstances, would

be water-colour technique. This is the nature of the tone achieved in the floral motifs which decorate the triangular head-piece of the banner; a chromatic synthesis made by the superimposition of colours (rather than the mixture cited above), giving the effect of a violet wash on an opaque blue azurite ground.

The coincidence of pictorial means and styles

It is evident that the distinctions just made, however slight, still lead to particular situations in the pictorial language, and, thereby, in the way the images and subjects themselves are rendered. This is what we will now attempt to demonstrate.

The different techniques, such as the two palettes, do not initially result in a significant stylistic break, but rather indicate a desire on the part of the painters to overcome the material contingencies produced by certain commissions. We should bear in mind that these new contingencies appear in relation to the 'classical' style of some of the silk paintings. It is remarkable that the earliest paintings on hemp cloth and, to a lesser extent, those on paper, while characterised by a loss of quality in the pigments, bear witness to an attempt to convey almost literally the colour effects found in the silk paintings. This may be seen in the painting on paper representing the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī (EO.1215), which uses a very limited range of colours that excludes all the most rare and precious pigments. The work resembles a depiction on silk of the "buddha" Maitreya (EO.1135; vol. 1, pl. 15) in its use of contrasts of different tonal values: coloured washes broken by pure colours, used to model or suggest volume. Among works on hemp cloth, the painting of a bodhisattva (MG.17682; vol. 2, pl. 43) is characterised by a very limited chromatic range consisting essentially of earth-derived ochres, which, by virtue of the clarity of the sketch, exemplifies this free transposition. This work nevertheless retains the conventional distinction of polychromy both in the concentric circles forming the halo and in the folds of the *pari-dhāna*, in the use of thrifty touches of ochre against the unpainted ground of the hemp cloth – a visual expression which in some ways duplicates the two-tone contrast of red and orange previously developed in the silk paintings.

What can be learnt from these examples is that, even when forced to use an extremely reduced range of colours, the painters did not abandon the attempt to give an appearance of plasticity approximating that produced on silk. While admitting the dominant rôle of the model, we must, however, also distinguish a particular and coherent pictorial language which developed from this second form of transposition, a language which produces a distinct style, discernible by the second half of the ninth century when works on hemp cloth and the palette of subsitution become proportionally more numerous.

Essential to painting – since in practice it must come first – is the nature of the ground or support and its preparation, if necessary. The reflective, white preparation, used more and more frequently on hemp cloth, has obvious effects upon the luminosity of pigments, the degree of contrast and, in a more general way, on the range of colours used. The quasi-autonomy that we indicated in relation to the chromatic nature of white, before becoming one of the typical techniques of the pictorial language of works characterised by the loss of quality in materials, may be appreciated in conjunction with the expedients used to render the ground more suitable for painting. It is our suggestion that at least some of the measures designed to remedy initial difficulties in turn created new aesthetic options and, since this period coincided with the rise of esoteric Buddhism with its own pantheon, came to influence the creation of different types of depiction.

In clarification of the above, we note that the application of a white preparation between the pictorial layer itself and its ground or support is analagous to processes that are standard in the wall-paintings of the caves. From a methodological point of view, we must make a remark concerning the analogies so often invoked between painting on a textile ground and mural painting. Setting aside the obvious relationship imposed by the iconographic repertoire, only those liturgical paintings which are executed on white preparations may be linked and compared in terms of technique

and aesthetic choices, even if these preparations happen sometimes to differ chemically. We must deal here only with examples with a pictorial solution in common.

Let us turn for a moment to the chemical typology of these white preparations, as it appears today in the painting of high Asia. We shall be convinced that there is no innovation in the art of the Mogao caves and that this is not an isolated case. All one needs do is to travel through space and time to its antecedents discovered in Transoxiana – the paintings of Kroi-Krylgan-Kala and Toprak-Kala, in the lower basin of the Oxus (Amu-Darya), which date back to the third century AD. The use of a gypsum-based preparation is evidence that this was required at an early date in a different stylistic context, in this case the 'Greco-Iranian' of Khorezm. In the Buddhist world, a similar technique is prominent in neighbouring Tukhāristān, at Ajina-tepe and at Bāmiyān for example, in the paintings of the seventh century; and also in the Tarim Basin, most especially in the rock-cut complexes of Kucha (including Kyzyl and Kumtura) and Bezeklik, the latter located at the eastern edge of the Turfan Depression. The identification of gypsum amongst the various constituents, with a few limited exceptions in sites here and there in the Tarim Basin, was able to lend brief support to the theory of a quite clear division between this and the more typically Far-Eastern preparations. According to this theory, Dunhuang would have been characterised by the use of kaolin (*baitu*, "white earth"), widely used in the wall-paintings of northern China. There was a tendency to draw from these results some conclusions regarding the distribution of zones of cultural influence: Central Asian or Serindian on the one hand, and Chinese on the other. The most recent analyses of the Dunhuang paintings have produced, however, results which are more complex and, in a way, more expected, owing to the identification of lime-based wall preparations at both Kyzyl and Bezeklik, and gypsum in the lapis-lazuli fragment discovered in caves 53-55 mentioned earlier.

We must also distinguish the nature of the white preparations (or priming coat) of the liturgical paintings from Dunhuang – a subject which, compared with the previous topic, still lies fallow. We make two remarks – firstly, that the "white earth", kaolin, predominates in the wall preparations but not in the textile paintings, and secondly, that a certain link can be demonstrated between the two techniques through the identification in both of a carbonated lime, thus a calcium carbonate. It is this compound which is found in those liturgical paintings in which a white preparation may be seen spread over the textile support.

As for the pictorial examples found in connection with the application of this preparation, the paper fragment showing the head of a bodhisattva (EO.1214; vol. 2, pl. 15), hitherto held to be an exception amongst the works realised on this ground, confirms the rule relating to the use of an applied priming layer. It represents one of the most sophisticated expressions of the science of contrasts and their suggestive qualities. The colours are those of the palette characteristic of the eighth century. Now, it would appear that this type of expression can only be realised on paper if this ground has been in some way prepared – in this case, with calcium carbonate. This preparatory layer contributes a light, reflective 'priming' tone, adding to the luminosity of the colours whose radiance is heightened here and there by the application of mica. We are thus able to establish that, in the case of this particular work, the palette and the care taken in the preparation of the paper are linked in terms of quality.

This reciprocal rule does not apply in the case of the depiction of the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī (EO.1215; vol. 2, fig. 8), in which, despite the absence of a white preparation, the pigments conform to the palette of substitution. It is possible, however, to confirm the rule by two paintings on hemp cloth, depicting the buddhas Śākyamuni and Prabhūtaratna (EO.1183 and EO.1184; vol. 1, pl. 8), in which cinnabar – without any of the other pigments of its usual palette, it is true – is applied onto the white preparation. This particular case shows that, in certain circumstances, rare mineral pigments were used on hemp cloth. The pictorial technique of these works thereby approaches that of silk painting, but does not attain the characteristic ease of expression of the latter.

The depiction of the bodhisattva Dizang (EO.3580) is representative of this relationship; the contrasts of tonal values are highly developed in this painting, and are especially effective by virtue of

the qualitative juxtaposition of pure, saturated colours and mixed or broken tones, which produce a great chromatic refinement in the whole. This is owing to the fact that the juxtaposition tempers the violence of the contrasts, while preserving chromatic intensity.

Used quite systematically in the paintings on hemp cloth, the white preparation acquires what can be called a functional importance in the pictorial language; it seems to have evolved into a dominant element of the colour scheme. We need only compare the painting of the bodhisattva Dizang with a depiction of Eleven-headed Guanyin (EO.3587; vol. 1, pl. 91) for this effect to become clearly visible (see *infra*).

The plastic possibilities provided by means other than the pigments alone designate the two levels of possible interpretation to which the painters were led, when substitute supports became proportionally more important towards the end of the Tang dynasty. The first of these has to do with coming to terms with the new physical constraints of the materials, which lead them to prepare the supports; the second reveals a shift towards expressive goals proper to these constraints, and arrived at through experimentation. In our opinion, it is this shift which characterises the originality of the pictorial language peculiar to the works executed on hemp cloth, since it provides them with an independent stylistic coherence. As regards its modelling, this style is also distinctive on account of the surface effect, which is that of wall-surface, and thus has an affinity with the paintings in the caves.

This particular coincidence, which we observed in the preceding part, between the pictorial means and the rendering of the image in painting on hemp cloth, should not be thought of as an accident simply caused by material circumstances – though this was exactly the hasty judgement formerly passed on these works, which saw these as examples of a rather inferior style, compared to that of the eighth and ninth centuries. It should rather be seen as an original pictorial language in its own right, reflecting the aesthetic of a particular era. In this way we can interpret the faithful copies found in the murals of some of the caves contemporary with the Five Dynasties period, especially the depiction of Mañjuśrī on the north wall of the corridor giving access to cave 220 (dated 925 AD, found beneath an over-painting of the Xi Xia era), and the image of Samantabhadra in the midst of an assembly on the north wall of cave 36. The fact that this type of expression, occurring in the banners, is transferred into the decoration of the cave-temples shows that we are dealing here with a definite style which, we are inclined to think, has something to do with the religious ideas of the time. That this style was first introduced in liturgical painting remains to be demonstrated later – for the moment we just mention this interesting problem.

* * *

In order to distinguish the different pictorial languages, with the implications we think they have for religious and secular tastes, we shall examine some representative works. The depiction of a bodhisattva of offering (EO.1399(P.92); vol. 2, pl. 22) is an example of the paintings which formerly belonged to the series of processional banners bearing images of the Great Beings. As this is probably one of the earliest works in the Pelliot collection to display the stylistic change, we suggest a date between the second half of the eighth and the beginning of the ninth century. In these works, the fluid strokes of the brush drawing take precedence over the colour scheme belonging to the 'expressive' palette. Nonetheless, the secondary rôle of colour here does not affect the original intention of the colour scheme, for all the rare mineral pigments may be seen to be used in this painting, according to a technique involving brief and precise accents of contrasting colours while leaving some parts of the ground unpainted; this use of colour effectively emphasises the line drawing outlining the figure. The minimal use of colour is allusive rather than descriptive – a characteristic of Buddhist painting, one which, moreover, as we have already shown, is closely associated with the tradition of the great Chinese masters, such as Wu Daozi and, before him, Zhang Sengyou (ac-

tive during the Liang dynasty, 502-557 AD), hailed in the *Lidaiminghuaji* as the creators of the "new aesthetics". This banner marks an advance from the classicism of the painting of Samantabhadra (EO.1210; vol. 2, pl. 1) attributed to the first half of the eighth century; it is possible, on the other hand, to trace its further development in the portrait of an itinerant monk, EO.1138 (vol. 2, pl. 87).

The sparing use of colour in the banner, subordinate to the clarity of the ink drawing, is nonetheless an effective means of modelling in some areas of the figure. The varying pictorial treatment of the *pari-dhāna* is a constant trait of the religious images of Dunhuang; in this example, its folds are accentuated with cinnabar red, almost giving a *chiaroscuro* effect. This contrasts with the larger areas of undifferentiated colour used to depict the scarves and ribbons. Another significant feature of this banner is the simplicity of decorative elements, such as the floral hem with its shaded colours. Everything about this style thus gives primary importance to the expressive qualitities of the lines of the drawing. We also draw attention to another, unusually prominent aspect of this painting: the monumental size of the figure within the limited frame of the banner, which seems barely large enough to accommodate it. Contrary to expectation, given the apparently different purposes of these religious works, a very similar pictorial expression is found in some of the wall-paintings. These are quite exceptional in terms of their similarities; we offer as an example a large image, dating to the mid Tang period (766-826 AD), of a bodhisattva offering lotus flowers, depicted on the wall of the central niche of cave 199. A figure symmetrically placed on the opposite side completes the monumental composition, which consists of two great bodhisattvas as protective or tutelary figures, flanking the principal group of cult statues in the niche. It is probable that the banner paintings, displayed from time to time in the temples, are linked to this type of depiction, which, in the caves, dates back to the ancient period of the Western Wei and Sui dynasties (sixth to the beginning of the seventh century). It is therefore no surprise to find that the pictorial aesthetic, with its distinct uses of the colours, is identical in the two techniques. The style of the banners seems to have been more or less unchanged through the ninth century, as is illustrated by a banner representing a standing bodhisattva (EO.1185; vol. 2, pl. 16), which, on the basis of the rendering of the modelling, can be attributed to the second half of that century.

We do not find, however, an aesthetic and an historical style in the painting of Dunhuang that can be said to be the one and only artistic current of each era. On the contrary, the rule seems to be that of nuances, sometimes even of contradictory expressions that are nevertheless founded on common principles. The antithesis of the pictorial expression of the banner EO.1399 (P.92) (vol 2, pl. 24) is illustrated by another, regrettably incomplete, also depicting a bodhisattva offering a pink lotus, EO.1399(P.149) (vol. 2, pl. 13). This is a transitional work, representative of a group of paintings of similar workmanship but more restrained than the latter in what remains of the composition. As with the preceding example, we encounter traces of this style in some of the wall-paintings, such as the two bodhisattva depictions framing the assembly of the preaching scene of cave 322, which forms the central composition of the south wall. This may be dated to the early Tang period (seventh to the beginning of the eighth centuries). We cannot, of course, attribute such an early date to the banner in the Pelliot collection, but this style – which we may describe as more a-temporal – seems to be a synthesis of various means of expression, which, being poles apart, will in many respects appear to contradict the observations we have already made regarding the pictorial language at Dunhuang. An instance of this would be the simultaneous use of contrasting pure colours such as cinnabar red and malachite green, applied, most unusually, in several layers (or impasted) alongside delicate and transparent washes of the same colours and others of that palette. Furthermore, and contrary to what we observed in the preceding banner, the expression of ornament seems to predominate in the general chromatic composition. The whole gives the impression that the rendering of the subject is more decorative than pictorial, the figure more graphic than plastic. And it is, without doubt, in terms of these characteristics that we should appreciate the peculiar part played by the quasi-systematic alternation of the colours (the dominant red, green and blue) and their intermediate tones, which extends even into the treatment of the bodhisattva's flesh tones. In a

remarkable burst of virtuousity, pure and opaque colours are combined with effects approaching those produced by coloured glazes, which in turn create new harmonies (as we have already remarked on the subject of the use of the mauve lake). This composition is characterised, furthermore, by the flat appearance – conveyed by the colour scheme alone – of the figure and of the ornamental elements which contribute to the embellishment of the banner and its decorative triangular headpiece; this flatness appears even where the drawing is suggestive of volume and distinct planes – although the canopy, for example, is drawn with a degree of perspective, the halo and the large lotus blossom held by the bodhisattva are all arranged in the same plane with it, and are visually convincing only from a decorative point of view.

The mid point between these two pictorial expressions, selected for their extreme character, is illustrated by a painting of Vajrapāṇi (EO.1172b; vol. 2, pl. 80). We distinguish this work as being representative of a particular mode of the pictorial language developed at Dunhuang for a reason completely opposite to the two examples used so far – that is, for the absence of any pictorial construction as such. This should not be understood as the absence of colours, but rather that, on the one hand, the colours, (contrasting with dominant red, green and yellow), are employed pure, and on the other, are used only for the colouring of the drawing, by which they are in some way subjugated. The accent delivered through the colouring of the image's dynamic elements (undulating scarves, ribbons floating upwards from the tiara) finds no equally powerful pictorial counterpart in the rendering of the figure; its effect is to give precedence to a design that differs from the image outlined in the preliminary sketch. This expression may be said with some justification to be a calligraphic work (understood in the literal sense of the term "beautiful writing"), in that the application of the colours imposes, paradoxically, an independent cursive rhythm of curves and countercurves upon the figure. The effect is clear and powerful, well in keeping with the manifestation of the guardian spirit.

These three forms of pictorial expression, which we have singled out on the basis of their extreme and well-differentiated characters, each have a destiny in the painting of Dunhuang, and even appear at the same time; nonetheless, it is not possible to identify a permanent archetypal form for each of them. For example, a figure – bodhisattva, deity, protective spirit, *etc.* – can be depicted according to particular pictorial and plastic devices while conforming to the iconographic programme expressed in the texts. Thus, the bodhisattva Guanyin may be depicted with a more or less convincing rendering of corporeality, with this or that type of modelling or, again, with a suggestion of spatial depth in the painting, as we have seen in the banner depicting the Bodhisattva with a pink lotus, EO.1399(P.149) (vol. 2, pl. 13). These devices take account of the particular attributions of the images and the religious beliefs and practices with which the latter are associated in different periods. Nor are they a response to iconography alone; the same figures and the signs of a grammar of previously-established forms are repeated in variants of the same figure, down the centuries.

Thus, amongst other examples, of the painting of the Buddha Bhaiṣajyaguru in monastic dress (EO.1223; vol. 1, pl. 11), probably dating to the end of the ninth century, whose pictorial originality, apart from his costume, might not appear from an examination of iconography alone. Among other Dunhuang paintings, this representation is distinguished not so much by its modelling and some features of the drawing: the buddha's eyes set close together, the sinous arch of the brows, the close proximity of the chin and the mouth – a trait common to contemporary and later works – as by the chromatic composition in which muted colours prevail and by the pictorial adjustments necessitated by an extremely reduced palette. Besides the coloured earth tones, such as red and yellow ochre, terracotta, *etc.*, only atacamite, orpiment and minium are found which belong to the contrasting range of mineral pigments. The principle of colour substitution and optical transposition, which was the initial focus of this study, is even more striking in this instance because it is a painting on silk. Just as unusual is the use of an organic violet lake applied, as it must be, as a glaze, but on top of the ochres to express a mauve-bistre tone which is most unusual; it is the only example of *chiaroscuro* in the work. Elsewhere, the technique of a broken coloured wash, which gets its effect from the use

of a reserved ground, is used extensively. The rendering of the draperies provides once again an occasion for pictorial interpretation – the only freedom allowed the painter in an image constrained by iconographic requirements – which has two aspects: the suggestion of volume or plasticity and lively and contrasting colouring. We have seen in the first section that this is a dominant feature of the painting of Dunhuang. Here, the free chromatic composition employs a green earth for the monastic robe, a red ochre for the cape, and a yellow-orange for modelling. The latter, related to bistre colours, produces a rather muted harmony; it is without precedent in the earlier styles, as is the importance given carbon black, no longer limited to the outline and drawing, but here intervening as a colour. A comparable play of light (we are, after all, dealing here with the effects of light in this representation of the medecine buddha) is encountered in a depiction of the bodhisattva Dizang (EO.17768; vol. 2, pl. 52). There are, however, few other examples of this freedom of expression in colour, and in the Pelliot collection we find only three: a representation of Guanyin (EO.1177c; vol.2, pl. 19), the bodhisattva in monastic dress (EO.1177a; vol. 2, fig. 15) and Yamarāja (EO.1177b; vol. 2, pl. 81). This type of expression is even rarer amongst the wall-paintings, so the fact that there are only three such works among the liturgical paintings is quite to be expected for the time. Only the wall-paintings of Vaiśravaṇa, God of the North, (on the west wall of cave 12) and the portrait of a monk (in cave 217) attest to the probably ephemeral existence of this pictorial 'style' at the end of the Tang dynasty and the beginning of the Five Dynasties period (tenth century). The chromatic range used for the modelling, rather than other features, link the portrait of the monk with the banners mentioned above.

The practical tendency of Tantric Buddhism, together with its devotional and ritual concerns, incline towards new types of depiction which respond to a new pantheon. The fragment of a *maṇḍala* of Vajrasattva (?) (EO.1167; vol.1, pl. 49), the representation of the bodhisattva Cintāmaṇi-cakra (Ruyilun Guanyin) (EO.1150; vol. 1, pl. 81), for example, and the two seated bodhisattvas (EO.1211a and b; vol. 2, pl. 49; these have been selected on the grounds of the simplicity of their design) all share certain features, which, if not expressive, are at least formal. Both bodhisattva images are thus rendered by the simple law of contrasting colours. They may, nevertheless, be distinguished one from another in terms of expression: the clear and powerful effect of figure *a*, and the somewhat monochrome impression conveyed by figure *b*. Objectively, however, the palettes are similar. We must admit that in this case the expression of the image has more to do with the chromatic qualities of the contrasting colours than with the drawing: complementary colours – blue/orange and green/red – in the first, and closely-related tones – red/orange – in the second (we of course concern ourselves here with the dominant colours of these paintings). This example bears witness to the importance for plasticity and not merely for decorative effect, of the choice of colouring by which may be distinguished related works which may even resemble each other in terms of design. We can straight away see the effect of this in the larger compositions, such as the *maṇḍala*s: the Five Buddhas of the Vajra-dhātu (Diamond-world; MG.17780; vol. 1, pl. 46), Vajrasattva (EO.1167; vol.1, pl. 49), and the *maṇḍala* of the eight deities of the Padma-kula (EO.1131; vol. 1, pl. 80), in order to establish precedence amongst the numerous figures in conformity with their codified order. The *maṇḍala* of the forty-two peaceful deities (EO.1148; vol. 1, pl. 47) is an exception, being of a workmanship and manufacture unusual in Dunhuang.

These sketches of the two bodhisattvas reveal, moreover, the intrusion of a totally new pictorial language at Dunhuang, one intended to respond to the aims of the iconography of esoteric Buddhism, and signalled by a strong pictorial bias unknown in Mahāyāna works. The weight given to the opaque colouring of haloes and mandorlas, for example, lends these quasi-ornamental elements an importance equal to that of the figures themselves. This new relationship is completely opposite to the 'Chinese' manner. It seems as if the deities' expression and substance is determined by the contrasting colour scheme of the iconographic symbols, including those which fill the available space in a purely decorative way, against which the figures are drawn.

If compared with these paintings inspired by this formal style, which, in the absence of more

precise terminology, we call 'Himalayan', the fragment of an Amitābha triad in the Pure Land of the West (EO.1159; vol.1, pl. 21) shows the fate of the *pictorial* style, extended to the point of a revealed Chinese influence. We would suggest that the earliest date for this work falls somewhere in the last quarter of the ninth century. The clarity of the composition, full of ornamental detail, depends on colour distinctions, as is also true of the banner depicting the bodhisattva offering a pink lotus (EO.1399(P.92); vol. 2, pl. 22). The former painting should be appreciated as its direct descendant. The apparent complexity of the fragment of the Pure Land should not, in fact, distract us from the subtlety of the working of the colours, which appears here as a most accomplished synthesis, with regard to the technique of water-based painting: that is to say, we see monochrome washes applied simply, as in the the green of the tree's leaves, washes showing a tonal range for rendering *chiaroscuro* modelling, and pure and opaque colours deriving from rare pigments, such as cinnabar and malachite (used together with atacamite), which make up the dominant colours of the composition. We note the absence of blue as a curious feature of this otherwise rich work.

There is, however, something more, which will corroborate the upper limit we have proposed for the date. The importance of the contrasts of colours said to be "of quality" (relating to the degree of purety or saturation in the colours) on the one side, and the contrasts "of quantity" (relating to the relative proportions of the colours employed) on the other, is related to the pictorial techniques developed in order to make up for the constraints of a palette of substitution. In this respect, the example may be dated – although the noteworthy absence of azurite indicates a significant reduction of the pigments of the palette.

In this respect, the depiction of Guanyin with a willow branch (EO.1132; vol. 1, pl. 69), together with two related *ex voto* illustrations of the bodhisattva of compassion complete with portraits of their donors (one with the Boys of Good and Evil, EO.3581; vol. 1, pl. 52; the other seated in *lalitāsana* upon a lotus, MG.17695; vol. 1, pl. 51, dated 955 AD), illustrate the production of the tenth century corresponding with the Five Dynasties period and the Northern Song dynasty. The techniques of expression used in these silk paintings show similarities, which cannot be accidental, with the workmanship associated with works painted on hemp cloth and even with some works on paper. This unanimity of inspiration can be interpreted as a stylistic break, and thus constitutes a real departure from earlier models. The distinction which we made earlier between the two palettes needs, in the light of these works, an additional qualification. In the examples previously discussed, the use of one or other of these palettes certainly set the respective limits of works painted on different grounds or surfaces; from the end of the ninth century, however, this rule does not always seem to apply. It is remarkable that in the works just mentioned, the essential pictorial effects are in fact borrowed from the techniques of substitution, while here and there maintaining, with sparing use, the principal pigments of the expressive palette, particularly one of the most important, cinnabar, which is generously employed in the *ex voto* dedicated to Guanyin, MG.17695 (vol. 1, pl. 51).

We have already referred several times to the pictorial techniques of painting on hemp cloth, which, though initially necessitated by material constraints, seem to have acted as the model for painting at Dunhuang, even for painting on silk, from the time of the decline in influence of the Tang dynasty. We shall conclude with a comparison of two large compositions, one painted on hemp cloth and the other on silk. Iconographically, both illustrate a form of the all-powerful spiritual "means" (Sanskrit: *upāya*; Chinese: *shenli*), employed by the bodhisattva to succour and guide sentient beings: Eleven-headed Guanyin, *Ekādaśa-mukha Avalokiteśvara*, EO.3587 (vol. 1, pl. 91) and MG.17778 (vol. 1, pl. 92). This comparison raises the fundamental question underlying this study: does the transfer of compositions of very similar inspiration onto different surfaces lead necessarily to independent forms of pictorial expression? And, if so, does it therefore entail substantial changes in the images?

Both of these compositions manifest the fate of the formal canon pertaining to the representation of the bodhisattva, which from the ninth century onwards becomes extremely stylised: thus, from now on, both the iconographical attributes and the ornaments of purely pictorial value – for

example, the air-borne curves of the scarves – form an integral part of depictions of the bodhisattva. In their pictorial aspect, specifically, in the visual pre-eminence of the colours and the composition of their harmonies over the drawing, both works use techniques inherited from the painting of Cintāmaṇi-cakra, EO.1150 (vol. 1, pl. 81). In the light of this, the two paintings of Eleven-headed Guanyin appear to share a stylistic trait characteristic of the tenth century, which somehow demands this form of pictorial rendering. The latter relies on the arrangement of the draperies, which seem to take on an ornamental independence, no longer being governed simply by the need to represent either anatomy or movement. The influence of the ground and the techniques required by each of them lead, however, to a perceptible modification of the images, such that the painting on hemp cloth displays figures which appear more abstract, more emblematic and, consequently, more decorative, because of the visible breaking-up of forms caused by the *chiaroscuro* contrasts used for the modelling. This distinctive breaking-up is seen more often in the paintings on hemp cloth.

These remarks lead us to suggest that, beyond their apparent links, these two paintings show, in fact, the simultaneous existence of two different aesthetics formed under the influence of factors originally unrelated to the iconic subject. More remarkable is their adoption in the wall-paintings. For instance, the representations of the Buddha and bodhisattvas in the Pure Land of Bhaiṣjyaguru, the central composition on the north wall of cave 146, display manifest plastic similarities with the depiction of Guanyin on silk (MG.17778; vol.1, pl. 92). The best example, we think, of the remarkable and revealing borrowing of the aesthetic developed in the liturgical painting on hemp cloth is the image of Mañjuśrī, painted on the north wall of the corridor giving access to cave 220. Cave 61, dating from the same period, with its monumental depiction of Guanyin represented on the side of the central pillar, bears witness to the deliberate transposition of some liturgical painting. The pictorial expression is identical to that associated with the painting on hemp cloth used here as an example (vol. 1, pl. 91); it reproduces both a comparable effect of the breaking-up of the modelling of the figure and the dominant colouring of a reduced palette in which red ochres and brown irons are juxtaposed with a very bright green, probably mineral (malachite or atacamite ?), with a noteworthy absence of a blue pigment, such as azurite, substituted by grey tones.

From another point of view, these two compositions from the Pelliot collection show how the intrepretative field was surreptitiously liberated by the pictorial transposition of the esoteric images of Vajrayāna Buddhism. The depiction of the latter must accord with the visualisations (*guan*) of the meditator, and, being only allusive, are consequently more sensitive to the needs of the pictorial language than any other type of representation: the alternating *chiaroscuro* contrasts of the painting of Guanyin on hemp cloth produces a play of light which agrees with the degree of abstraction required by these images.

Finally, we should consider the painting of Guanyin with the willow branch, EO.1132 (vol. 1, pl. 69), mentioned above, in relation to the particular variations of this type of expression; although displaying no radical innovation, it uses this expression as a vehicle for meaning. This work is explicit in its depiction of the bond between the donors and the bodhisattva; it suggests a spatial and temporal relationship between the secular world of the donors, and the spiritual and mystical plane, proper to the bodhisattva. The mode of pictorial expression used for the latter shows a paradoxical tension between the archaism of the drawing (we may appreciate it as such after the apogee attained by the Tang classicism) and a science of colouration inherited from a tradition of almost three centuries.

This sketch of the last contrasting modes of the pictorial language of the liturgical paintings discovered at Dunhuang makes us aware of the importance, even in these artistic and religious creations, of historical events that took place in high Asia and which dominated the lives and activities of the various communities dwelling in the oases. Amongst the numerous agitations known in the history of Dunhuang, we will here mention only the impact of the Tibetan occupation (786 [or 787 as mentioned on page 21]-848 AD) on these creations. This period seems to have been decisive, even if it is only possible to infer the existence of a so-called 'Himalayan' style, which had not yet

arisen as such at this time, at the very least for the spread of tantric Buddhism from Khotan into other parts of Central Asia. We may, in fact, attribute a crucial importance to this late current, which went hand in hand with the advent of an iconography of its own pantheon and the confirmation of pictorial styles that seem to have been developed in the course of the ninth century. As for the expressivity of the images of the 'deities', it seems that here also we can discern a significant shift consistent with the devotional and ritual bent of the Diamond Vehicle. In other words, we become aware, through the study of the pictorial language, of a perceptible movement from the initially merely iconic representation, typical of Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna themes, towards one which, being more explicit concerning particular 'virtues' of of each of the divinities, can more easily be ritually harnessed to the more personal aspirations of the devotee. This is also true of the votive paintings, even those whose iconography is not esoteric, with the donors who commissioned them depicted as part of the sacred scene. Such votive paintings make up a greater proportion of the later works. Parallel with this, the symbols in these images become ever more dominant. The images, therefore, are given a new angle in relation to their meaning. Paradoxically, the corporeality of the figures becomes more tangible, while at the same time the rôle of the codified elements, *samaya* (Chinese: *sanmeiye*), or symbols, is more pervasive than ever before.

Analytical Table of Pigments

		EO.1299 (P. 149)	EO.1214	EO.1190	EO.1189	EO.1141	EO.1154	EO.3580	EO.1210	EO.1223	EO.17768
White	silicates talc or mica		x	x	x		x		x		
	lead			x		x			x		
Blue	azurite	x	x	x		x		x	x		x
	lapis lazuli						x				
Red	cinabar	x	x	x		x	x		x		
	ochre							x		x	x
Green	atacamite			x	x	x	x	x	x		
	malachite	x	x						x		
Yellow	orpiment		x	x					x	x	x
	organic pigment	x					x	x			
Orange	minium	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		
Purple	lac dye	x		x	x	x	x	x	x		
Brown	ochre		x	x		x					
Black	lamp black + iron-rich medium					x			x	x	

White The matt white is achieved by white lead (basic lead carbonate), except in a single case (EO.3580), in which calcium carbonate is used instead.
Powdered natural silicates are used for a more brilliant white. There are two instances (EO.1189 and EO.1190) of the use of a kind of mica (silicate of aluminium and potassium) known as muscovite. Talc (magnesium silicate) has also been discovered in two cases (EO.1217 and EO.1214). The fine specks of these pigments give a less pure white, but with a slightly iridescent appearance.
The pale pink flesh-tones contain either white lead or a silicate (talc or mica), mixed with a minute quantity of finely-ground cinnabar.

Blue This is almost always azurite (copper carbonate), frequently lightened with a variable quantity of white lead (or calcium carbonate in the case of EO.3580). The one exception occurs in EO.1154, in which we note the use of lapis lazuli.

Red The most common pigment is finely-ground cinnabar (mercuric sulphide). It is always used pure, never mixed with other pigments. In some paintings ochre is used instead.

Green This colour is obtained from two copper-based minerals. In the examples analysed, atacamite (copper hydrochloride) is more widely used than malachite (hydrous copper carbonate). Since atacamite is dark green, a small quantity of yellow orpiment is often added to it to produce a brighter colour

Yellow Orpiment (arsenic sulphide) or a less intense but more transparent organic pigment were used. We have been unable to identify the exact nature of the organic pigment, though it is most probably gamboge. The pale yellows were obtained by mixing the above with white lead.

Orange In every case this colour is produced by minium.

Brown This colour is achieved by ochres, sometimes lightened with a little orpiment.

Black This is finely-prepared carbon, like lamp-black, always associated with a material rich in iron. The latter is probably a finely-powdered ochre that serves as a medium for the fine black particles.

Mauve This colour contains an organic lake so far unidentified. It is freqently mixed with white lead to produce a pale mauve.

Violet Seen only in one painting (EO.1399), this colour is a mauve organic lake applied over azurite.

Various shades of blue-grey and bistre are obtained by mixing varying quantities of two or more of the following pigments: carbon black, azurite, a carmine organic lake, organic yellow and white lead.

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Two Previously Unpublished Paintings from Dunhuang in the Pelliot Collection

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Two large and quite exceptional Buddhist paintings kept in the Musée Guimet, hitherto unknown but quite obviously also acquired by Pelliot in Dunhuang, were by happy chance rediscovered when these volumes had already gone to press. The last-minute addition of these discoveries, desired as much by the publisher as by ourselves, has been undertaken at the risk of delaying somewhat the date of publication, in view of their significance in relation to the whole group of paintings and even to the manuscripts obtained from that site.

We became only recently aware of the existence of the two paintings reproduced at the beginning of *The Art of Central Asia, the Pelliot Collection of the Musée Guimet* – the last to be found, they are the first to be the subject of a detailed examination in this work. We wished to give them prominence, as a sort of prologue to the known works, in order to underline from the very start their outstanding importance. Such 'rediscoveries', made in museums, seem odd to the public. They present, in fact, an opportunity for those with even a limited experience of these enormous holdings to temper legitimate astonishment with a measure of thoughtful reflection. Such people will be delighted to participate in the excitement of new researches, aware that whatever these institutions may still preserve in obscurity will inevitably become famous in time.

It sometimes appears as if the order of events is guided by an unseen and kindly hand. In the present case, these last works to come to light must rank with the most important of such tardy discoveries – those masterpieces of a particular artist or anonymous, works which provide the key to understanding a given era, a current of thought, or, in a wider sense, to the comprehension of a religious and cultural fact in all its complexity. There are many examples where the a work of an artist has subsequently come to be re-evaluated. To illustrate this phenomenon, we take the most recent instance that comes to mind, which, because it is of a different type, emphasises the general character and the resemblance of such events. This was the discovery, which took place only a decade ago in the Biblioteca del Conservatorio di Santa Cecilia in Rome, of a hand-written score of *Il Viaggio a Reims* (*The Journey to Rheims*), an important opera by Rossini which had, up till then, been thought lost. The restored piece was played for the first time in 1984 in Pesaro, having totally disappeared from the repertory after its first performance in 1825. Contemporary music critics as well as those present at that first performance are in agreement that the work is one the composer's most inspired creations.

The two paintings presented here belong to the second category referred to above. They are anonymous works which contain important and wide-ranging religious and historical implications. In terms of size, they must be included amongst the largest liturgical paintings[1] executed at Dunhuang. They are extraordinary in two ways: firstly, they are the only surviving paintings of this type which illustrate one the most important texts of Chinese Buddhism, the *Huayanjing* or *Flower Ornament*

Sūtra; secondly, they show, for the first time, how two 'images', formally distinct despite the evident plastic similarities, are intimately connected in dialectic terms, in accordance with the requirements of a very carefully devised iconographic programme. Thus we find that the second work provides a specific illustration of only some of the elements contained in the first painting.

The two works are in a sense a revelation, one that at the very least forces us to reconsider the whole group of paintings originating from Dunhuang which often appear in isolation as real liturgical monuments in the grand perspective we shall develop here.

Illustration of the Flower Ornament Sūtra, Huayanjing (Avataṃsaka-sūtra): the Nine Assemblies of the Seven Places
Five Dynasties (beginning of the 10th century). Painting on silk. H. 194 cm; W. 179 cm. MG.26462. **JG & KO**

(The silk support is made up of three vertical strips, each approximately 60 cm wide, sewn together. The painting is in its original state, backed with paper and bordered with yellow silk 14 cm wide. It bears four identical seal impressions from the quality-control office of a silk "shop", called "of the left"(fig. 1). Eight loops of pink silk (6 cm x 4 cm) on the upper edge of the mount would have been used to attach the painting to a suspension rod.)

This previously unpublished painting, which we discovered quite recently in the storage area of the Musée Guimet, is one of the examples so rare in Buddhist art of a complete depiction of an important canonical text. The World of the Huayan of the Buddha Vairocana, appearing in the form of the "Nine Assemblies" arranged symmetrically about the centre, is intended to render the teaching of the *Huayan Sūtra* ("Flower Ornament", *Avataṃsaka-sūtra)*, which is expounded in thirty-nine chapters in the Tang dynasty translation known as the long version "in eighty scrolls".

The illustration of a sūtra in its entirety is by no means unusual in the context of painted representations of different philosophical doctrines and schools of Buddhism from the Tang period onwards. This painting can be seen as a development parallel to those compositions inspired, for example, by the *Lotus Sūtra*, one of the root texts of the Tiantai school, and to those works which reveal the populist and devotional trends of the Pure Land school (see, for example, the illustration of Guanjing, EO.1128; vol. 1, pl. 16). Pure Land depictions usually represent, however, only some individual chapters of the relevant texts.

The depiction of the world of the Huayan is the most all-encompassing representation of a lengthy sūtra. The form adopted could be suggestive of a pre-*maṇḍala* schema (*i.e.* the spatio-temporal arrangement characteristic of esoteric representations), insofar as it shows a precise order, which enables the work to be 'unfolded' visually, and which follows the exposition of the chapters of the text: thus the succession of assemblies in seven different 'places' (*sthāna*) and the vision of the Flower Bank Array World which concludes it.

a.) The number of the Nine Assemblies makes reference to the Tang version of the sūtra (mentioned above), the second complete translation of the *Avataṃsaka* from a Sanskrit text brought from Khotan. This erudite translation was made during the reign of Wuzetian under the personal patronage of the empress; it was completed in 699 AD by a Khotanese monk, Śikṣānanda, with the significant assistance of Fazang, who was eventually to become the third patriarch of the Huayan sect. These facts are helpful for the identification of the painting, for we know that the chief difference between this version and the first translation, which preceded it in the Eastern Jin period (it was produced by an Indian, Buddhabhadra, in about 420 AD), is in the number of their respective assemblies. The earlier translation contained only eight, although both versions are in agreement over the "places".

The painting's composition is densely-filled with haloed figures, grouped without any intervening spaces around nine buddhas who constitute the foci of their attention; these groups, turning towards their respective buddhas, form the various assemblies, which are arranged in a square pattern with three columns. Each group is clearly framed by ornamental borders decorated with geometric motifs. This arrangement allows the central assembly to be completely surrounded by the other eight.

A lower partition, in the form of a large arc representing the "Cloud of Five Colours" (*wuseyun*) covered with symbols, separates the assemblies from the Lotus World (*huazang shijie*). Also known as the Great Lotus of Purity ("Without Impurity"), the latter emerges, through the power of two *nāga* kings, from the waters of the ocean which fill this section. The Lotus World itself is depicted on the flower as walled enclosures with gates opening onto the cardinal points, a stylised form for the infinity of worlds it contains.

b.) A remarkable feature of the painting, common to all existing representations of this subject, is the absence of distinguishing iconographic characteristics for each of the assemblies. Their mutual resemblance is, in fact, a reflection of the philosophical system of Huayan. We note in passing, however, and without attempting to work out their iconographical significance, the various *mudrā* of the different buddhas, which are all probably variations of the gesture of discussion, *vitarka-mudrā*. This trait, also visible in a painting representing the same

subject in cave 55 (Pelliot 118f) is all the more surprising when we refer to the text and discover that these assemblies are not precisely those to which the Buddha preached in person.

Apart from the variety of *mudrā* and the location of the central assembly on the summit of a mountain, nothing allows us to distinguish one assembly from another. A further likeness is the depiction in each of a triad consisting of the Buddha and two attendant bodhisattvas, Mañjuśri (*Wenshu pusa*) and Samantabhadra (*Puxian pusa*). Similarly, the number and arrangement of the audience is the same in all the groups; moreover, in each of these we can see two important monks with their hands joined together in 'devotion' (*añjali*) depicted very close to the Buddha in the circle of worshipping bodhisattvas. They are the witnesses of the historical community, and probably represent Subhūti and Śāriputra. We seem to be dealing here with an allusion to the assemblies in which the historical Buddha Śākyamuni appeared (we will see that the Huayan tradition adds a universal 'dimension' to the historical Buddha, that encompassed by the name of Vairocana).

Furthermore, the assemblies are not accompanied by inscribed cartouches, unlike some representations of this subject in the wall-paintings of Dunhuang which thus constitute the sole and vital source at this period for the identification of the different parts of the composition. We have to assume that the arrangement of the assemblies and their respective locations in this silk painting accord with this model, taking cave 76 (Pelliot 102), documented by its cartouches, as its paradigm (fig. 2).

The third assembly is located at the centre, and is characterised iconographically by its rocky setting, Mount Sumeru, represented by two arcs of contrasting colours (reddish-orange on the right and grey-black on the left). This takes place in the Trāyastriṃśa, Indra's heaven, at the summit of the mountain forming the *axis mundi*.

The order of the remaining assemblies is shown in fig. 3. In the centre of the lower register is the first assembly, at the site of Śākyamuni's Enlightenment, the *bodhimaṇḍa*, at Bodh-Gayā in the kingdom of Magadha. Next, on the left, is the second assembly, in the "Palace of the Dharma of Universal Radiance", while on the right, opposite, is the ninth and last assembly, which took place in the Jetavana Wood in Kosala, the historical site of the first sermon.

In the middle register are the seventh assembly, to the left of the central panel, located in the same place as the second assembly, in the Palace of the Dharma, and the eighth assembly, located on the right side of the central group, which also took place in the Palace of the Dharma.

In the centre of the upper register is the fourth assembly, which took place in the Suyāma heaven. The fifth assembly, seen at the left of the fourth, is located in the Tuṣita heaven, while the sixth assembly, to the right of the fourth, is located in the Paranirmita-vaśavartin heaven.

The iconography of the Huayan world also includes the complementary, though here partial, depiction of the "eight classes of supernatural beings", represented in the spaces left at either side of the cloud. Here we see (still comparing the silk painting with the representations in wall-painting) the images of the two great gods, Brahmā and Indra, or perhaps two bodhisattvas being worshipped by cloud-borne devotees.

According to the legend first important to the Tiantai school and subsequently adopted by the Huayan tradition, the Buddha remained in a state of ecstatic beatitude for a period of four times seven days (the sources do not agree on the precise length of time) following the Enlightenment, "tasting the happiness of the concentration of deliverance". During this period, he stayed in the very place where he had undertaken the meditations which had set him free, firstly at the foot of the tree of "Good Omen", *aśvattha*, and then in its vicinity. The earliest historiography (*Mahāvagga, Vinayapitaka*) recounts in a series of dramatic stages how the Buddha was plunged into forgetfulness by this beatitude, a forgetfulness of or a hesitation regarding his duty as a buddha to preach the doctrine of deliverance to all sentient beings. Brahmā's intercession to plead the cause of living beings was necessary to convince the Buddha to give up his repose brought on by the fundamental realisation, intrinsic to Enlightenment, of the transience of all things. Regarding these events so eloquent of Śākyamuni's humanity, our sūtra comments on the timelessness of the beatitude in the place of Enlightenment, but does not mention his forgetfulness or initial reticence when faced with his duty as a perfectly awakened being. Above all, it tells us what the historical texts do not concerning the time between the Enlightenment at Bodh-Gayā and the first sermon at Benares. What follows readily makes clear why the biographies were silent on this point. According to the *Huayanjing*, the Buddha, still in the place of the Enlightenment, manifested himself to assemblies of those listening to his preaching in different mystical locations, without ever actually moving from his seat under the *bodhi*-tree. His manifestations are thus magical apparitions. The seven locations, on which the texts agree, are more significant than the actual number of these assemblies, eight or nine according to the two most important recensions of the text. It is significant that, according to the sūtra, the Buddha's preaching encompasses the whole world of living beings, the Triple World, *tri-loka*, of which, out of a need for brevity, only the lowest sphere is mentioned, the World of Desire, *kāma-dhātu*, culminating in the heavens, the abodes of the gods, and in the sixth heaven of the Paranirmita-vaśa-vartin gods. The Buddha also outlines, as a counter-balance to the *tri-loka*, the world of ultimate reality, the *dharma-dhātu* (*fajie*). The locations clearly indicate the ascending progression of the audiences from the terrestial world – the place of Enlightenment – right up to the upper sphere of the heavenly realms. But the beauty of this vertical movement is in its final resolution, where it describes an orbit of cosmic dimensions, as the last assembly takes place at the very site of the indicated by the ninth and final assembly, First Sermon, the "sermon of deliverance", which the Buddha preached in the Jetavana groves, the seventh location to be conjured up.

c.) The reading of the depiction is quite clear, and illuminates the complexity of subjects revealed by the iconography. We must turn to the sūtra in order to grasp the doctrinal meaning of the progression of successive assemblies in their respective locations, as well as to understand the link made in the picture between these and the Lotus World – in other words, to learn what nuances of conception are exemplified in this depiction of the Huayan.

The goal of the *Huayan Sūtra* is nothing less than the revelation of the inconceivable state and world of Buddhahood. In this, it would not depart so radically from the other important philosophical texts, such as the *Lotus Sūtra* and the various works belonging to the category of *prajñā-pāramitā*, the "perfection of wisdom" literature, if it did not articulate a new approach in Buddhist thought in its description of what cannot be formulated, by means of a dialectic based on two coexistent extremes, the whole and the particular, which leaves no room for the contradiction which is all too apparent to common sense. In order to overcome the latter obstacle, the theory puts forward a visionary scheme (since this state is achieved through visualisation) which is both that of ultimate truth – the spiritual perspective which corresponds with the state of Buddhahood – and the universe itself, in its ultimate reality, which are united through the notion of the *dharma-dhātu*. We will now attempt to describe the true state of this "sphere of essence": in regard to this, it is significant that the thirty-ninth and final chapter of the sūtra is entitled "The Entry into the World of Reality".

The description of the *dharma-dhātu* in the Huayan tradition can only be accomplished with reference to the thought of the absolute as he who is "Thus come", "Who is such", the Tathāgata (Ch. Rulai), another epithet of the Buddha. That being so, the world of reality is identified – and not just in a metaphysical sense – with the *tathāgata-garbha*, the "womb of he who is such", in other words, his mind of Great Compassion. The Huayan described the Buddha in terms of absolute Buddhahood, manifested in his truth-body (*dharma-kaya*)[2], and put forward the 'figure' of the supreme Buddha, Vairocana, who illuminates the cosmos. If we have previously referred to the 'historical' image of Śākyamuni, we should now place the Buddha of the Huayan in the context of his absolute form.

The consequences of such a revelation, however important and original it may appear, are nevertheless faithful to Mahāyāna theories. Here, as elsewhere, we must accept the unreal and illusory nature of phenomena which are without any abiding reality, as expounded in the fourteenth chapter of the sūtra, called the "Elegy [delivered] on the Summit of Sumeru", corresponding with the section of the painting depicting the third assembly. Nevertheless, the originality of the sūtra consists in its fidelity, at one and the same time, to the law of dependent origination (*yuanqi*) as a means for revealing reality. This accounts for the doctrinal and historical importance of the section representing the "Ten Stages [of the bodhisattva], *daśabhūmi* (represented in the painting by the sixth assembly), which deals with the stages of the career of a bodhisattva, and which, therefore, exemplifies the positive side of the law of dependent origination. In the Huayan tradition, this law becomes raised to the level of the quintessence of the *dharma-dhātu*, as indicated by the following phrase from the sūtra: "dependent origination, which is the Universe".

This being so, the original feature of this formula, compared with other explanations of the doctrine – though it is shared in many respects with the *Lotus Sūtra* – consists in the fact that the ultimate nature of the universe, the *dharma-dhātu*, is understood as the full expression of the Buddha's boundless Compassion, and, as such, universally related to and interdependent with the latter, without any independently existent beings. The terms "mutual penetration", "mutual identity", "non-obstruction" and "sudden and simultaneous appearance" *etc.*, (like the Buddha in his assembly, who can simultaneously appear in all places without leaving the seat of Enlightenment), are all linguistic approximations of what is in fact inconceivable. Similarly, the painting faithfully suggests to us both the interdependence and the spatio-temporal identity of the manifestations of the Buddha Śākyamuni/Vairocana in the midst of the assemblies.

d.) We should now return to the meaning of the images according to the doctrine. Huayan teaching aims at the revelation of the *dharma-dhātu* by means of *bodhicitta*, "the thought of enlightenment", as the latter was expounded by the first patriarch of the school, Du Shun (557-640 AD). The fact that the Lotus World is depicted in a position of apparently secondary importance is a standard convention in the illustrations of the Dunhuang caves, and is, moreover, respectful of the text. According to the sūtra, the visual realisation of the "womb of the Buddha" (the Buddhist universe) only occurs, when the preaching is finished, by virtue of the radiant manifestation of Vairocana in the midst of his assemblies.

On the other hand, it is significant that this description of the world-system borrows its distinctive elements from Buddhist cosmology, elevating the latter onto a visionary plane. The great lotus on the "Ocean of Fragrant Water", symbolising the seat of consciousness, is thus a substitute for Mount Sumeru rising out of the cosmic waters. Indeed, every single element, down to the cloud or the "Circle of Wind" fringed with jewelled flowers, is borrowed from the classical system.

Each of the assemblies follows the example of the symbolic gathering in the site of *saṃbodhi* (Enlightenment) at Bodh-Gayā, which is named in the text as the first assembly and first location. The historical reference, which applies also to the perception of metaphysical character of the other assemblies, has a double importance which the illustration takes into account. Firstly, it justifies the presence of the two monks in the midst of a transcendent gathering of bodhisattvas, while also indicating a point emphasised in the sūtra: that all beings may participate in the audience, no matter what their spiritual attainments may be. Secondly, the historical reference justifies the fact that the Buddha of the *Huayanjing*, Vairocana, proceeds (from one point of view) from the manifestation of the historical Buddha

Śākyamuni.

The great bodhisattvas who are the protagonists of the sūtra, Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra, here only depicted in the triads, enjoy, with the cosmic Buddha, extraordinary powers of oratory and proof. It is they who are, in fact, responsible for preaching (along with other bodhisattvas). The text recounts that the audience enters into *samādhi* on hearing the bodhisattvas' words; it is then that the members of the assemblies receive the light emanating from the body of Vairocana, and that they are enabled to see directly the "Womb of the *Tathāgata*", the great Buddhist World.

By providing from the outst the typical assembly, the model for all those that appear afterwards in the symbolic locations, the Huayan makes clear an important fact regarding the nature of these assemblies. The most common interpretation found in modern studies considers these "preaching" assemblies. This seems to be a simplification of the meaning they should be given: we believe that it is more appropriate to qualify them by reference to the text as assemblies of "illumination". In fact, they are only the apparitional form of the Buddha's preaching spoken by the great bodhisattvas; the Buddha himself keeps silent, absorbed in the concentration "of the Mirror of the Great Ocean", in the same way he did under the Tree of Enlightenment. Moreover, as regards Vairocana, the most common interpretation introduces a doctrinal impossibility by attributing to him a manifestation that is not silent. Even the ninth and last assembly, situated in the historical location of the Buddha's first sermon, in the Jetavana grove in Benares, in no way change this general character.

e) It is clear that the Seven Places are all located in the "World of Desire", the *kāma-dhātu*, the first and lowest realm of the "Triple World", the *tri-loka* of Buddhist cosmology. The locations are, furthermore, only partially representative of the various levels of this world. They may be classified as follows: three terrestrial (assemblies 1, 2, 7, 8 and 9), and four heavenly (assemblies 3, 4, 5 and 6). The place of Enlightenment in Magadha is named for the first assembly and a further three terrestrial assemblies, excepting only the ninth. This is because it is referred to as the "Palace of the Dharma of Universal Light" in assemblies 2, 7 and 8, and it is, in fact, an imagined or visualised architectural structure located in the very place of the Enlightenment, as is described in chapter seven of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*, "The Names of the *Tathāgata*". This repetition explains how the nine assemblies relate to their seven locations.

We are able to trace the cosmographical cycle described in the text in the heavens of the "world of desire" by following the progression of assemblies in their various places in the pictorial schema. Contrary to what we find in the earthly realm, the orator-bodhisattvas, Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra, are replaced in the heavens by four figures (not discernable in the painting), one for each of the four assemblies from the third up to and including the sixth. The names of these bodhisattvas are evocative: "Wisdom of the Dharma", "Forest of meritorious virtue", "Diamond banner" and "Diamond treasure".

The ascent through the heavens begins with the third assembly, in the Palace of Marvellous Excellence, Vaijayanta, on the summit of Sumeru, in the heaven of the god Indra (the sovereign of the World of Desire). This assembly is described in chapters 13 and 14 of the sūtra, which deal with the mental obstacles impeding the true perception of reality and their removal. The teaching given to this assembly is concerned with the practices and methods of the path of the bodhisattvas.

The fourth assembly takes place in the third heaven, the Palace of the god Yama, a place where the seasons are always pleasant (*shanshifen*). The doctrinal import of chapters 19 and 20, which deal with the ascent, consists in the idea that there can be no truth either in affirmation or negation, since all things are without inherent identity or abiding nature. This corresponds exactly with the doctrine of emptiness propounded by the Mādhyamika.

The vertical ascent is continued by the fifth assembly, described in chapters 23 and 24; located in the fourth heaven, belonging to Maitreya, the Buddha yet to come. The teaching continue that of the preceding assembly, discussing the ultimate emptiness of all conditioned things.

At the peak of the upward movement, the sixth assembly is situated in the sixth and final heaven (of the sphere of desire),which belongs to the gods who "enjoy objects metamorphosed by others". This is the realm of Vaśavartin, often assimilated with Māra. The only textual reference for this is found in chapter 26, the section devoted to the Ten Earths or Ten Stages, *Daśabhūmiśvara*; this is reckoned to be the oldest and most influential part of the sūtra, which has, moreover, been preserved in Sanskrit. This assembly and this chapter distinguish the Tang version of the sūtra from the earlier "eight assemblies" version. The text is from the outset concerned with the bodhisattva path, but here the bodhisattva reaches the zenith of his career (the tenth stage or "earth") and acquires all the powers of a buddha. To glorify this ascent, the light emitted by the Buddha during each of the previous sermons now shines from the tuft of hair growing in the middle of the bodhisattva's forehead, the *ūrṇa*. This detail is not depicted in the painting.

Once this upper level has been attained, the cycle turns back towards the terrestial planes, in which the last three assemblies are located: the seventh and eighth take place in the middle register, at either side of Mount Sumeru, while the ninth and last is situated in the lower register. Just as the bodhisattva does not keep the fruit of his ascent through the ten stages to himself, but rather dedicates it to the saving of all beings, the 'descent' of the earthly assemblies exemplifies the great compassion of the supreme Buddha and the radiance of his practice, both of which are at the heart of the Huayan teaching. This doctrine is preached by Samantabhadra, orator of the "Manifestation of the Buddha" in chapter 37, illustrated by the seventh assembly. Thereafter, the text deals with putting into practice the knowledge of Enlightenment (the seventh assembly) and of detachment from the world (the eighth assembly).

Finally, the ninth assembly is devoted to the "Entry into the World of Reality". The text, known as the

Gaṇḍavyūha, recounts the story of the pilgrimages of the youth Sudhana, sent by Mañjuśri to fifty-three different teachers in order to learn about the qualities of a bodhisattva. Subsequently guided by Mañjuśrī and Maitreya on the path of steadfastness in practice, incarnated by Samantabhadra, the youth obtained, by the power of a "thought as vast as space and without obstruction", freed from all attachment, a vision of the transcendent assembly, presided over by the bodhi-sattva Samantabhadra.

f.) As we mentioned earlier, the painting in the Pelliot collection is the only surviving example of this composition other than a wall-painting. In contrast to this, the subject appears in the Dunhuang caves at an early date, from the first half of the eighth century, during the Tang dynasty. No less than twenty-nine caves bear witness today to this representation, which moreover continued to be painted at the site over a long period until the Song dynasty.

The study of the wall-paintings brings to light a remarkable typology concerning the depiction of the Huayanjing on the walls of the caves, and also clarifies the arrangement and distribution of the assemblies in these depictions. It would seem that the orientation of the image and the surfaces in which it appears in the caves varies over time. Four possible dispositions occur, and are given here in order from the most frequent to the most rare: 1) on the walls of the caves, always on the north wall, with the sole exception of cave 23 [Pelliot 82b], in which it is represented on the south wall; 2) on the ceilings of the main chamber, depicted on the trapezoidal slopes; 3) in the antechambers; 4) in the central niches.

Seen in chronological order, however, the oldest arrangement would appear to be that found in cave 44, not mentioned by Pelliot, which dates from the High Tang period; here the image is represented on three walls and on the ceiling of the central niche. Since this is the only example of this genre, we may not assume that it reflects a disposition current at the time, but it does make clear, however, how the artists had to find individual solutions for the distribution of the assemblies, which are split up into panels: eight assemblies on the ceiling of the niche, with one more on its north wall, and depictions of the "World of the Huayan" on its west and south walls.

Other examples where the image is split up is revealed by the paintings on the ceilings of some of the caves, for instance cave 9 (Pelliot 167), from the end of the Tang period (fig. 4), and cave 25 (Pelliot 138), painted during the Song dynasty. In these caves the Nine Assemblies are distributed over three of the four slopes of the ceiling (three assemblies on each). These representations are not the only ones possible at a particular era, for another image, painted during the Song period on the ceiling of cave 55 (Pelliot 118f), depicts the nine assemblies on a single panel on the north slope of the ceiling (fig. 5).

As for the other examples of images of the world of the Huayan, whether located in the shrines themselves or in their antechambers – cave 431 (Pelliot 130) and cave 45 (not mentioned by Pelliot), from the Song and Five Dynasties periods respectively – all of these appear as single panels, conforming in their general appearance to the schema of the painting in the Pelliot collection.

There is much that could be said regarding the insertion of the image into the pictorial programme of those caves in which it appears. We must, however, confine ourselves to a few of its most interesting characteristics: for instance, its disposition on the north wall, and the fact that it is usually associated with the illustration of the *Lotus Sūtra* on the opposite wall. The most simple programme in which just the two representations occur is found on the side walls in cave 472 (not mentioned by Pelliot). This arrangement is preserved in those caves with a more elaborate iconographical programme – for instance, cave 6 (Pelliot 168), which has four sūtra illustrations; cave 76 (Pelliot 102), with six; cave 146 (Pelliot 8), with eight; and cave 61 (Pelliot 117) with ten. These programmes in which the *Huayanjing* is depicted also give prominence to the principal sūtras of the three most important schools of Chinese Buddhism: the Tiantai, with the illustration of the *Lotus Sūtra*; the Chan, with the depiction of the *Laṇkāvatāra-sūtra*; and the Pure Land schools, with, amongst other themes, the representation of the *Amitāyur-dhyāna-sūtra*.

In view of the typology of the paintings *in situ* illustrating the *Huayanjing*, we suggest that the full blossoming of such images occurred in the mid Tang period (781-847 AD), and that this came to be complemented by an ever-widening repertoire of Māhayāna sūtra illustrations, particularly in the tenth century, during the Five Dynasties period which preceded the final years of religious activity at Dunhuang. We should also consider the reasons for the appearance of illustrations of the *Lotus Sūtra* alongside images of the *Huayanjing*. This coexistence suggests that, at the time when the Huayan school was at its apogee (that is, as indicated by the pictorial programmes, which are very late compared with the prestigious period of that school in China), a close relationship still survived between these two philosophical systems, just as Zhiyi, (531-597 AD), one of the celebrated masters of the Tiantai school, had advocated earlier.

g.) Until this painting was discovered, the question remained as to whether such a composition could have existed at Dunhuang, leaving aside the wall-paintings. The publication of the photographs taken by the Pelliot expedition (1920-21) brought the first evidence to back up the historical references, such as the brief mention made in chapter 3 of the *Lidai minghua ji*. This work states that wall-paintings of the Huayan did exist in the mid ninth century in the temples of the two Tang capitals, Chang'an and Luoyang, though it is unclear on the number of assemblies. The silk painting in the Musée Guimet confirms and adds to the evidence relating to the illustration of the *Huayanjing* in other media. Examples of this evidence include the account by the Chinese monk Jianzhen (Japanese: Ganjin), who, in 750 AD, noticed a sandalwood image in the Kaiyuan temple in Guangzhou, and, of the utmost importance for our knowledge of the expansion of Huayan into Japan, the

mention of a work embroidered on the orders of monk Dōji of the Daian-ji in 742 AD, which was in all probability copied from a Chinese model.

The genesis of the depiction remains unclear: had it been determined on the basis of the earlier translation undertaken under the Jin, characterised by eight assemblies? The only evidence we have regarding the artistic realisation of such an image is purely literary and allusive; while such evidence justifies the identification of that translation as the source for the final composition, this cannot be proved.

There are various interpretations which mention an "inventor" of the image. The one that seems most likely today (in agreement with the painting of cave 44, which we have given above as the earliest known representation) would attribute the first realisation of the image to Fazang himself (643-712 AD), the highly erudite and tireless teacher of the Huayan tradition who was the third patriarch of the school. It is likely that the image of the "Seven Places" presented for the first time by Fazang in 708 AD, as reported in his biography, was that of the nine assemblies.

h.) The stylistic features of the painting in the Pelliot collection are sufficiently distinctive to allow us to date the work with a reasonable degree of certainty. The colour scheme of the painting uses a wide range of different pigments which belong to what we have termed the late expressive palette (see the preceding essay on the pictorial language of Dunhuang). The use of a silk support and the quality of the colours, evident through the use of rare pigments such as cinnabar red and violet lakes, indicate that this was an important commission. Since this is a liturgical rather than a votive painting (the latter were usually executed for lay patrons), we should envisage that the work was conceived in a monastery, whose resources would have been more substantial.

As regards style, we need only note the 'flat' appearance of the composition, with no impression of spatial depth. In this, the painting resembles wall-paintings of the subject, although here the colour scheme is quite different. The work is dominated by its iconography and fidelity to doctrinal content, which are rendered with the same careful attention paid to the important figures of the Buddha triads, the secondary figures in the audiences, the *apsarasas*, the architectural elements (palace roofs) and ritual objects (censers and vase).

The second of these features of a period style is made clear by the treatment and canon of the figures. These features, already mentioned in our analysis of the pictorial language in relation to the works produced in the late period of activity at Dunhuang, correspond with the Five Dynasties or with the beginning of the Song. We merely mention, as a reminder, the 'fragmented' modelling of the buddha's bodies which results from a pronounced use of shading. The style of these figures resembles that encountered in another painting of the tenth century now in the Pelliot collection, *Illustration of the Guanjing* (MG.17673; vol. 1, pl. 19). These two works have many other characteristics in common, and may therefore have been executed in the same workshop.

Illustration of the chapter on "The Ten Earths (Stages) of the bodhisattva", Shidiping (Daśabhūmika) of the Avataṃsaka-sūtra
Five Dynasties (beginning of the 10th century). Ink, gold and colours on silk. H. 286 cm; W. 189 cm.
MG.26465. **JG**

(The work is composed of three widths of silk, each approximately 60 cm wide. These strips have been sewn together along their length. The painting was obtained without the silk frame which originally would have surrounded it. Two identical 'decorative' seal impressions – perhaps the painters' seals – appear on the lower, unpainted part of the border.)

To the best of our knowledge, no other example of this iconography exists in the religious heritage of Dunhuang, nor does it seem to appear elsewhere in Serindia or China, or anywhere in the Buddhist world in general. So far we have found no trace of a parallel or related subject, not even in the cycles of wall paintings (longer-lasting than the silk paintings) which quite frequently in the ancient Buddhist archaeological sites in Serindia provide examples of other images, as we have seen with the preceding painting of the Nine Assemblies depicting the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*. Taking account of the religious importance of the subject, it is doubtful whether a comparable work preserved elsewhere could have escaped attention.

Far from posing an insoluble mystery, the quite exceptional character of this painting actually confirms our guess-work, shedding some light on what may be the origins of the painting. The lack of similar images seems to be due to important events in the history of Chinese Buddhism – more specifically, the persecution of Buddhism which took place in China itself during a period of the Tang dynasty up to about the mid-ninth century, and which resulted in the dissolution of the "first tradition". This was a scholastic and philosophical Buddhism embodied by, amongst others, the then influential current of thought embraced by the Huayanzong, the school of the Flower Ornament or *Avataṃsaka*. If there is a mystery at all, it is that this painting, which we identify as the illustration of two individual chapters of the said *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*, is unique in the art of the Dunhuang when it must, in fact, be considered as an adjunct or complement to the full illustration of that sūtra which we now know to exist. It might be expected that this iconography would have had some followers, but it seems that this was not the case.

According to our reading of the composition, this painting may be interpreted firstly as the representation of the fundamental elements of the chapter known as "*Shidiping*" in Chinese, corresponding with the Sanskrit *Daśabhūmika*, the "Ten Earths" or "Stages" of the career of a bodhisattva. Secondly, the work may be identified with the chapter entitled "*Rufajie ping*", "Entry into the Spiritual World", which corresponds with the Indian title *Gaṇḍavyūha*. We will discuss the importance of the double discovery of these works, in that through

them we find, for the first time, two liturgical paintings from Dunhuang which are related to each other. We will show, moreover, that the dialectic link between the two sets up a visual hierarchy which, possibly reflecting a ritual presentation, may be compared with the scholastic exposition of the general theory and with the illustration of a particular commentary. These representations of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* thus prove the existence, hitherto unsuspected, of vast pictorial 'liturgical monument'.

a.) In terms of plasticity, the two paintings exhibit a close similarity both in the general arrangement of the scenes and in the detailed representation of iconographic elements. In the *Daśabhūmika* illustration, the iconographic elements are disposed in an even more systematic fashion: the work is dominated by an unbroken grid-pattern, characterised by ten transcendent assemblies presided over by the Buddha which, almost identical with those of the more complete representation of the sūtra, are composed of bodhisattvas and the two monks – surely the first great disciples Subhūti (or Maudgalyāyana) and Śāriputra. Other similarities follow: for instance, the offering table in the foreground; the tree of Enlightenment, *Bodhi-drūma*, behind the group, its foliage decorated with the jewelled net, *ratnajāla*; the assembly placed against an architectural background of heavenly palaces; even the downward swooping and convergence of the flying *apsaras* decorating the sky in each of the assemblies; even the decorative motifs of the borders separating the assemblies. The paintings may only be distinguished by the technique of their respective painters. The execution of the *Daśabhūmika* illustration is more refined, as is shown by the use of gold leaf in rendering the buddhas' skin. Nevertheless, the over-all colour scheme produces the same pictorial effect, and in the details, particularly the outlining of the figures in ink – so characteristic of the Dunhuang paintings of that era – we see a similar use of the reed-pen, rather than the brush. Such resemblances lead us to attribute these paintings to the same epoch, and even to the same 'workshop', though they were painted by different artists.

The *Daśabhūmika* illustration is divided into four registers, and consists of twelve scenes which may be broken down into two groups. The first and larger group comprises the ten assemblies of the Buddha's preaching, *dharma-deśanā*, referred to above. The second consists of the two scenes placed at either side of the central assembly in the lower register, each of which is devoted to the representation of a great bodhisattva and his entourage. On the left, and recognisable by his mount, the white elephant with six tusks, we find the bodhisattva Samantabhadra; his counterpart on the right is Mañjuśrī, seated upon his lion.

Extrapolating on the basis of these two 'iconographies', we suggest that we are here faced with images of the two chapters of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* already mentioned. We must turn to the text in order to back up such an attribution, and to understand the learned and dialectic combination employed here which brings these two chapters together selected from amongst many others of the sūtra. In fact, it is only by consideration of this link that both the nature of the subjects and the doctrinal content become clear. The presence of the two great bodhisattvas, Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra, is very telling. Being in some ways the tutelary divinities of the sūtra, owing to the powers and "grace" (*adhiṣṭhāna*) given them by the Buddha, these bodhisattvas are respectively the first and last orators of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*, who stand in for the Buddha whose teaching appears simply as emanating rays of light. The fact that the bodhisattvas 'enclose', so to speak, the representation of the ten assemblies, necessarily invites us to interpret them in this way.

It now becomes necessary to follow the sūtra – but which version should we choose? To answer this question very briefly, this must be the so-called "new translation" (*xinyi*) in eighty volumes, made during the Tang dynasty, which is also the source of the preceding illustration of the whole *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*. One of the principal innovations of this translation of the sūtra, made by Śikṣānanda, is that it consisted of a new arrangement of the work with the addition of one extra assembly, bringing the total to nine. The ninth assembly was distinguished as such, and took the place of the sixth assembly. Chapter 26, "*Shidiping*", or the "Ten Stages" (*Taishō*, 10, no. 279, pl. 178-211) is devoted entirely to its exposition; the text is none other than a version of the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra*, known also in various Chinese translations of which the oldest and also the most complete was that made by Dharmarakṣa (297 AD). More importantly from our point of view, the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra* is one of two texts (the other being the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, which will shortly be a focus for discussion) which seem to have formed part of the original *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*, and which, unlike the other chapters, existed as an independent work in Sanskrit as well as in various Far-Eastern languages (Tibetan and Mongolian as well as Chinese).

As regards the painting, what then should be made of the above-mentioned dialectic link between this chapter and the scenes depicting the bodhisattvas Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra, who, after all, do not figure in the *Daśa-bhūmika-sūtra*? Let us leave this question aside for the moment, for its answer may be found by an indirect route; we will return to this shortly. The assumption that the ten assemblies represented relate to the "*Shidiping*" chapter is borne out by the conspicuous presence in the central assembly of the third register from the bottom of the two great preaching bodhisattvas, Vajragarbha or "Diamond womb", whose sermons are inspired by the Buddha's *adhiṣṭhāna*, and Vimukticandra or "Moon of deliverance", speaker and spokesman for the assembly of bodhisattvas, whose questions are the vehicle for the explanation of the ten successive stages. Vajragarbha, seated in the posture of ease on a lotus blossom to the right of the Buddha, can be recognised by the thunderbolt or *vajra* which he holds in his right hand; Vimukticandra, on the left, bears his admittedly less distinctive attribute – a red lotus flower. These are the only clear depictions of the chief protagonists of the preaching, quite explicit compared with the other assemblies. Not only can they be identified by their attributes, but also by the pictorial conventions used to

render them, as well as by their rather Indian garments; they seem in fact to echo Pāla art. They display a particular appearance also encountered in a number of paintings inspired by tantric esotericism (*cf.* vol. 1, pl. 99; EO.3579, the *Maṇḍala* of Guanyin) which contrasts with the more Chinese technique of the Dunhuang 'school' of the ninth to tenth centuries evident in the figures of the other bodhisattvas of the painting, including the two bodhisattvas of the lower scenes, Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra.

Let us now return to Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra and to the significance of their inclusion in the painting. This matter is clarified – surreptitiously, as it were – by certain indications suggested by some members of their entourages. These two adjoining compositions may simply reflect an iconographic convention: a representation of the apotheosis of the Buddha assemblies; the leitmotif of this sūtra and of many others, whereby in each radiant manifestation of the Buddha and his teaching the bodhisattvas hasten from the "ten directions" of space to pay him homage. The painter has accurately suggested this animated movement as each of the groups quickly makes its way towards the Buddha by his rendering of the floating draperies of the canopies; yet this movement is not hasty, in keeping with the majestic presence of both the great bodhisattvas and their attendants, who include the bodhisattvas "of offering", the keepers who hold the mounts on leashes, and the *lokapāla* or celestial kings. Two of these kings appear in each scene, thus, in all likelihood, making up the series of the *cāturmahārājikā devāḥ* (the four great Heavenly Kings). In the midst of each group and in the foreground, we observe a conspicuously youthful figure who presents an offering of flowers and who, although with a halo around his head, is nevertheless uncrowned. We are inclined to identify this figure as the key character of these scenes, the young Sudhana, hero of the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, which constitutes chapter 39 in this recension of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* and concludes this text in both Chinese translations. In our attempt to unravel the meaning of all these figures, we suspected a link between the youth and his companion wearing the robe of a Chinese sovereign. Both of the accompanying figures appear to be representations of the "good friends" or *kalyāṇamitras*, who, having been visited by Sudhana one after another, guide the youth in his pilgrimage: that metaphorical journey through space in search of teachings, the spiritual aim of which is the progression through the various stages of the bodhisattva career. The bodhisattva Mañjuśrī begins this progression, for it was through him that the young man was able to strengthen his vow to be born into the "family" (*gotra*) of the Buddha. Sudhana is also welcomed into the bosom of Mañjuśrī at his journey's end, before receiving, in the presence of Samantabhadra, the *abhiṣeka* consecration of the buddhas, and hearing their prophecy that he will obtain the *ekajāti-pratibaddha* of having only one more rebirth in this world.

According to our reading of the painting, a learned dialectic underlies both illustrations of the principal texts of the sūtra. It involves the explanation of the theme of the bodhisattva career, the *adhimukti-caryā* or "path of spiritual progress", thereby following the teaching of the rest of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*. The exegesis of the masters of the Huayan sect – in particular the *Huayanjingshu*, a commentary on the sūtra made by the fourth patriarch, Chengguan (*Taishō*, 35, no. 1735, p. 503 *sq.*) as well as other glosses on the contents of the new translation – testify to their high regard for the prominence given to this additional assembly in the last re-working of the sūtra, that is to say, in the *Daśabhūmika* chapter.

We cannot exclude, however, the influence of the third patriarch, Fazang. Although we know only one work by the great master of the Huayan sect, the extremely influential *Tanxuan* (a commentary in sixty volumes on the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*), it is important to note a rather tenuous piece of evidence which indicates that, at the end of his life, the master undertook the compilation of a new treatise, and that he actively participated in its translation. As with the representation of the sūtra as a whole, we are here faced with the same questions regarding the authority of a master held to have determined the original pictorial schema. Several names are possible. As regards the drawing-up of this iconography, which combines both the *Daśabhūmika* and *Gaṇḍavyūha* chapters, we cannot simply exclude the influence of the great master himself, or that of the fourth patriarch or even that of the fifth, Zongmi, under all of whom the 'ecumenism' of the Huayan became more marked, opening it to the doctrines of the meditation-based Chan school. The '*Shidiping*' chapter and the commentaries to which it gave rise are all informative on this point.

b.) The preaching of the ten stages occurs when the Buddha Śākyamuni manifests his great assembly in the sixth of the heavens of the World of Desire (*kāma-dhātu*), that of the *paranirmita-vaśavartin* gods, during the second week after his Enlightenment. This assembly is made up of innumerable bodhisattvas so highly evolved in spiritual terms that they can no longer "fall back" and who are therefore qualified by the term *avaivartika*, having already obtained supreme and perfect Awakening, *anuttara-samyak-saṃbodhi*. Vajragarbha and Vimuktikandra are the first and last named bodhisattvas of the huge gathering which has assembled from all the Buddha-fields in the universe; these two play leading though unequal rôles in the preaching, for the former has responsibility for propounding the ten stages – the exposition of the different aspects (*chabiexing*) of the *bhūmi*, gates of "determination", *adhyavasāya*, along the spiritual path.

Even for such an orator this task is extremely difficult, owing to the fact that, strictly-speaking, the teaching is inexpressible. In order to remove any obstacle, the Buddha spreads over the bodhisattva his power of support, *adhiṣṭhāna*, and then an incalculable number of buddhas coming from all other buddha-fields do likewise. But Vajragarbha's preaching is very short, for he only utters the names of the ten stages before stopping dead and maintaining a deep silence. Then the voice of Vimukticandra is heard from the midst of the dumbfounded assembly requesting that he continue with the

explanation of the *bodhisattva-bhūmi*. In answer, Vajragarbha states the impossibility of articulating the inconceivable knowledge: "... It would be like wanting to describe or even to show the trace of a bird in the sky ...". After further arguments and responses, Vimukticandra finally calls upon the supreme and transcendent powers (*abhijñā*) of the Buddha.

The Buddha acquiesces, and then emits a ray of light shining with compassion from the *ūrṇa* between his eyebrows, illuminating the worlds of the ten directions; then he causes a great tower composed of a net of light to appear in the sky. All the buddhas act in this fashion, and then take their places in this tower with Vajragarbha, who appears seated on the "lion-throne" which is, of course, the preaching throne of the Buddha. Only then, when invested with all these powers, does the bodhisattva utter the following words: "... Although this world can only be thought, I will reveal it with the support of the supreme power of the Buddha ...".

The portrayal of the assemblies shows great fidelity to the text, justly evoking the grandiose preamble with its background of preliminary magical displays. The central composition (pl. II.2) is particularly explicit, with its representation of the two bodhisattvas whose respective gestures – *vitarka-mudrā* – contrast with the "seal" of meditation, *dhyāna-mudrā*, formed by the Buddha (significantly, the only one among the ten Buddhas to make this gesture).

The ten *bhūmi* are preached in the context of the practises necessary for the accomplishing the succession of highest virtues, the *pāramitā*; these "perfections" are listed as a series of ten. The bodhisattvas who have progressed through all the spiritual stages are compared with the gods who rule over the Triple World. According to the sūtra, this cosmogony is merely intended to aid understanding, and is to be abandoned.

Once established in the "family of the Buddha", the *Tathāgata-gotra* (or predestined, *niyata*), and having produced the "thought of obtaining Enlightenment" for the first time, *prathama-cittopādika*, the bodhisattva enters the first *bhūmi*.

First *bhūmi: Pramuditā* ("joyful")
This is called "joyful" because the bodhisattva experiences many joys: the joy of thinking of the buddhas, of the doctrine, of the bodhisattvas, of what he can do to come to the aid of living beings, the joy of being born into the world of the Buddha. Firmly engaged in the path of purification by stages, he formulates great vows, which he accomplishes. He ripens beings by giving (*dāna*) and by affable words because he honours the Buddha. He realises that attachment to the self is empty (*pudgala-nairātmya*). The bodhisattva in this *bhūmi* is likened to the sovereign of the continent of Jambudvīpa (synonymous with India). For such bodhisattvas, the perfection of giving, *dāna-pāramitā*, is the highest of the ten perfections.

Second *bhūmi: Vimalā* ("immaculate")
This stage is devoted to the accomplishment of the perfection of moral conduct, *śila-pāramitā*.

The bodhisattva who has successfully accomplished the elements of Enlightenment by focusing himself upon his vows and who desires to enter the second stage must develop ten *cittāsaya* or states of mind: these include honesty, benevolence, tranquillity, non-attachment, magnanimity and breadth of spirit. He embraces the ten paths of good action, *daśa-kuśalā-karmapatha*, which consist in transferring the roots of Good, *kuśalā-mūla*, in view of the supreme and perfect Awakening, *samyak-saṃbodhi*. Free of mental impurities (*lixingu*), he realises that he has accomplished the perfection of the moral precepts, which have effectively aroused the spirit of charity (*ci*) and of compassion (*bei*). While in this stage, the bodhisattva is like the Cakravartin, the universal monarch.

Third *bhūmi: Prabhākarī* ("clarifying")
This stage manifests the accomplishment of the perfection of patience, *kṣanti-pāramitā*, while the bodhisattva continues to fulfil the conditions necessary for the attainment of Enlightenment; he also makes another, even grander vow to obtain the light of the Law.

The bodhisattva devotes himself to the examination, *nidhyapti*, of the essences – that is, the analysis of the impermanence of all conditioned things – and thereby develops the ten thoughts of compassion. He ceaselessly carries on his work of ripening living beings in order to establish them in the joy of *nirvāṇa*. Having completed the four meditations, *dhyāna*, he immerses himself in the four *apramāna* or infinities of space, consciousness, emptiness and the world of neither perception nor non-perception, and acquires the five super-knowledges or *abhijñā*. The bodhisattva in this level may be compared with Indra, the ruler of Trāyastriṃśa, the heaven of the thirty-three gods.

Fourth *bhūmi: Arcismatī* ("radiant")
This stage is devoted to entry into the Path (*rudao*), and is characterised by the perfection of energy, *virya-pāramitā*. The bodhisattva draws further away from the paths of two lower vehicles, *i.e.* the selfish practices of the "hearers", the *śravaka* and those who achieve Enlightenment for themselves alone, the *Pratyekabuddha*. He is born into the "family of the buddhas" by possessing the ten grades of knowledge, *saṃvṛti-jñāna*, whose powers purify and ripen. Filled with altruistic faith, the bodhisattva is animated with the virtue of energy to destroy the evil states which have arisen in the world of living beings and to reveal the good states which have not yet come to pass. He who enters into the fourth stage contemplates the "world of space, of thought and the Triple World". The bodhisattva at this level resembles the god of the Suyama heaven; he is able to remove the existence of the body from the sight of living beings, and to establish them in right views.

Fifth *bhūmi: Sudurjayā* ("difficult-to-obtain")
In this stage, the bodhisattva fulfils the elements of Enlightenment by worldly occupations, especially by the perfection of meditation, *dhyāna-pāramitā*. He passes into this *bhūmi* by turning towards the ten equalities of the spirit, *citta-samatā*. Confirmed by the power of his vows,

praṇidhāna-bala, already perceiving the light of the higher levels, and supported by the strength of wisdom, *jñāna-bala*, he obtains a mind which cannot fall back, *avaivartika*.
He understands the four noble truths of suffering, *āryasatya* (*sizhendi*, but here *kushengdi*), and accepts the reality of worldly convention, *saṃvṛti* (*shisushi*, but here *sudi*), by satisfying living beings according to their temperament and their situation, and also ultimate reality, *paramārtha* (*zhenshi di*, but here *diyiyi di*), the truth of the characteristics of the knowledges of extinction and non-birth, *etc.*. The bodhisattvas of the fifth stage are called "those who have developed wisdom", and they appear as gods of the Tuṣita heaven, the heaven of the Satisfied.

Sixth *bhūmi: Abhimukhī* ("straight ahead")
During this stage, the bodhisattva attains the perfection of wisdom, *prajñā-pāramitā*, and the elements of Enlightenment are complemented by entry into what is called the "profound teaching".

The illusory distinction between *dharmas* (elements, things), both pure and impure, is destroyed by the realisation of their sameness, *samatā* (*pingdeng*), for all the *dharmas* are illusory phenomena like "the reflection of the light of the moon in water". Although the bodhisattva has already developed the necessary docility (*shunren*) to bring his mind round to this idea, he has not yet attained complete acceptance, *dharma-kṣanti*, or non-birth. He therefore analyses the links of dependent origination, *pratītya-samutpāda*, and conceives that the triple world is "mind only", *citta-mātra* (Ch. *weiyixin*); thus he achieves the concentration, *samādhi*, called "entry into emptiness (*śūnyatā*)". Having thus reached the stage of wisdom, the bodhisattva abandons the path of the two lesser vehicles; he is completely focused upon the Buddha-knowledge, *Buddha-jñāna*. The bodhisattvas of this level are said to be like the gods of the sixth and last heaven of the World of Desire, the heaven of the *Paranirmita-vaśavartin*.

Seventh *bhūmi: Dūraṃgamā* ("far-going")
This vital stage of the bodhisattva career (*bodhisattva-bhūmi*) sees the maturing of the realisations of the preceding levels through the constant addition to the elements of Enlightenment by the establishment of all the qualities of Buddhahood. The perfection associated with this stage in particular is that of skilful means, *upāya-pāramitā*.

The most important acquisition is the "power of means", *upāya-bala*; it is this that makes this stage a turning-point in the spiritual path. The bodhisattva has removed all obstructions: "... the series of paradoxes – the mundane thesis and the supramundane antithesis are reconciled in the Mahāyāna synthesis of the bodhisattva ..." (J. Radher, *Daśabhūmika-sūtram*, Louvain, 1926, p. xiv). Tranquillity, *śamatha*, and knowledge, *jñāna*, are in balance. Every moment is an opportunity for the bodhisattva to practise the ten perfections – that is to say, all the aspects (*fenfa*) of Enlightenment are constantly fulfilled. With his mind already steadied in the sixth *bhūmi*, he realises the "union of wisdom and means", *upāya-jñāna*.

The difference between this stage and the next one consists that in the seventh, all the practices and realisations are in the process of being perfected by the bodhisattva, whereas in the eighth they are fully accomplished. The bodhisattva of the seventh stage is likened to the god Īśvara (Zizaitian).

Eighth *bhūmi: Acalā* ("unwavering")
The bodhisattva now enjoys the ripe fruit of merits, *phalapratipanna*, accumulated during the preceding seven stages. This stage is characterised by the perfection of the vow, *praṇidhāna-pāramitā*.

Established in this unwavering stage, the bodhisattva renounces mental constructs, *anabhisaṃskarā*, and merits the epithet "*anabhisaṃskāracāri bodhisattva*". He has no more conscious thought, *mano-vijñāna*; thus he does not think about the bodhisattvas, the buddhas, nor about the nature of *bodhi* and Supreme Extinction, *nirvāṇa*. He acquires magical powers, *vikurvā*, by means of which the actions of a world-saviour take place through the concerted development (*jiji*) of every aspect of the teaching and attributes of a buddha, *buddha-dharma*.

This level is qualified as *acalā* because the bodhisattva can no longer be turned aside from his path; his development of wisdom is "without regression", *avivartya*. Here the bodhisattvas are compared with the great Brahmā, who abides in the Mahābrahmāṇaḥ heaven located in the World of Form, *rūpa-avacara*.

Ninth *bhūmi: Sādhumatī* ("good intellect")
In this stage, the "benefactors of the world" accomplish the perfection of transcendent powers, *bala-pāramitā*.
The bodhisattva who has considered in his mind the infinite possibilities of wisdom enters the secret doctrine of the Buddha, *guhya-darmatā*, and acts as the Preacher of the Law (*zuodafashi*), using the four knowledges of discernment, the *pratisamvid*. These are: principles (*dharma*), meanings (*artha*), expression (*nirukti*) and good speech (*pratibhanā*). Having moreover obtained mastery of magical formulae, *dhāraṇi-mukha*, the bodhisattva takes his place on the throne of the Law, *dharma-āsana*. There, and without leaving his meditative absorption, he performs the activities of a saviour by means of his mental abilities, *abhijñā*, employing different means of expression (*yinsheng*). This results in emanating rays of light – the emission of the teaching from the pores of his body, *etc.*. He is deep in the concentration called "the profound liberation of the bodhisattvas", *bodhisattva-prātimokṣa-samādhi*, and is, on account of his powers, compared with the great god Mahā-Brahmā.

Tenth *bhūmi: Dharma-meghā* ("cloud of Dharma")
This stage is also known as the "consecration level", *abhiṣeka-bhūmi*, and the perfection achieved in it is the perfection of knowledge, *jñāna-pāramitā*, itself also the tenth of the perfections.

Following his practise of countless concentrations, the bodhisattva enters *samādhi* known as "receiving all the highest consecrations [procured by] wisdom"

(*shouyijie-zhishengshiwei*). There now appears a huge lotus blossom, as vast as millions of worlds, in which all the roots of supramundane or *lokottara* Good are manifested. This is the flower-world of the Buddha Vairocana. The bodhisattva seats himself upon this lotus, and, like a buddha, miraculously emits light from different parts of his body in front of an assembly of other bodhisattvas come from all the directions of space. This miracle shows that he has completed the path of spiritual development, *bhāvanā-mārga*, which is completed through consecration.

Having reached this highest stage, the bodhisattva performs for the sake of living beings all the actions of a buddha in this world, from his descent from the Tuṣita heaven to his final extinction, *parinirvāṇa*. As saviour of the world and of beings, he uses an infinite quantity of magical powers suitable for their different needs; as suggested by the image of the cloud by which this stage is known, the bodhisattva literally rains down the Law onto living beings. Owing to his powers, he is likened to Maheśvara (Śiva), god of the Akaniṣṭha heaven, the highest in the World of Form, the *rūpa-dhātu*.

The preaching of the ten stages is followed by a grand finale. In order to show the assembly the immeasurable powers of the buddhas, infinitely greater than the already extraordinary powers of the bodhisattva, and in response to the questions of the assembly regarding the difference between a tenth-stage bodhisattva and the Buddha, Vimukticandra asks Vajragarbha to show something of the miracles of the buddhas. Vajragarbha then enters the concentration known as the "revelation of the essence of all the buddha-fields (*buddha-kṣetra*)", enabling all the assembled bodhisattvas to see themselves in his body before contemplating the formation of a buddha-field.

c.) So much for the text and its contents. As for the painting, it seems impossible to identify the various stages in a progression comparable to that achieved for the representation of the Nine Assemblies. With the exception of the central "assembly-*bhūmi*", in which the physical appearance of the two bodhisattvas sets them apart, we suggest, to borrow the terminology of the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra*, that the lack of any distinguishing (*animitta*) features in the other assemblies causes them to be more or less the same, *samatā*. There is, however, one slight reservation regarding some details of the painting, in particular the "earth-touching" (*chudiyin*) or "subjugation of Māra" (*jiangmoyin*) *mudrā* performed by the Buddha of the central assembly in the second register from the bottom. Since each assembly is presided over by Śākyamuni-Vairocana (in this linkage we propose to use, Śākyamuni is seen in transcendent form as Vairocana), we might interpret this gesture as a clear reminder of the historical attainment of *saṃbodhi* in the place of Awakening, the *bodhimaṇḍa*. However, nothing in the preaching of the ten *bhūmi* would allow such a conclusion in the case of the first, "joyful", stage. On the contrary, since the preaching takes place in the palace of the ruler of the Paranirmita-vaśavartin heaven, the allusion would seem to be symbolic of what is a leitmotif of the teaching and which comes to the fore in the tenth stage – that is, the bodhisattva manifests the actions of the Buddha in this phenomenal world. How better to show this than by the pivotal event of the Enlightenment?

That the depictions of the stages are undifferentiated invites consideration. Far from reflecting the limits of representation – for instance, the difficulty of representing the acquisition of the merits of the different levels – the painting would seem to articulate visually the fact that "... each and every [stage] contains the totality of the ten, since all the meritorious virtues of the ten stages are present in each level ...". This gloss is the work of the patriarch Chengguan himself, taken from one of his commentaries on the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*, the *Huayan-shu*; it therefore has doctrinal value as regards the interpretation of the chapter. Here we should mention a parallel statement appearing in the "*Abhisamaya*" chapter of the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*: "... The tenth stage can be the first; the first can be the eighth... For what grading can there be in the absence of distinguishing marks? ..." (*Taishō*, 16, no. 672, p. 619a). This statement accords with the doctrine that a bodhisattva can become a Buddha immediately, without having passed through the ten stages. Nevertheless, the similarity of these points of view needs to be considered when we know that the fourth patriarch was also one of the first architects of a re-orientation of the Huayan school towards a more direct and intuitive approach to spirituality, such as that followed by the Chan school. These points would give a more precise origin to this image and also the preceding depiction of the Nine Assemblies.

It is clear that we need to consider these paintings together and as forming a whole. Their discovery is of unprecedented importance for the collection of works from Dunhuang, since they demonstrate the existence of a great liturgical monument consisting of several inter-related paintings. To counter the suggestion that the two-fold illustration of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* is the exception that proves a more general rule in the iconography of Chinese Buddhism of that time, we draw attention to the images of the *Lotus Sūtra* (*Fahuajing*) in the Pelliot collection (pl. 72 and 73), devoted to the twenty-fifth chapter of that work, the "*Sūtra of Guanyin*" (*Guanyin jing*). These images can be linked with the illustrations of the *Lotus Sūtra* as a whole which are, however, only known from the wall-paintings of the Mogao caves – for instance, in caves 6 (Pelliot 168) and 61 (Pelliot 117). In the light of these portrayals of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*, it seems reasonable to propose the existence of comparable liturgical paintings illustrating the most important doctrinal texts.

Finally, we must mention another possible interpretation of the painting which takes into account later developments in the iconography of the sūtra. The popularity of images of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* as illustrations of the *Huayanjing* in China, from the Song dynasty onwards, and subsequently in Korea and Japan, demonstrates that with time there came about an inversion of the relative importance of the subjects, at the expense of the loss of the representation of the *Daśabhūmika*, this being the effect, on a spiritual plane, of Sudhana's pilgrimage.

Such, at any rate, is the originally non-orthodox interpretation, to which however the Chinese scholars agreed, including the first patriarchs of the Huayan school. This painting may therefore be considered from this perspective as the image of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* in its first (and in a sense 'archaeological') formulation.

The image would be 'archaeological' in the sense that it is a representation at once extremely didactic and metaphorical, in a unique state with no more recent forms in Far-Eastern Buddhism. We need only turn to those well-known images of the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, held to have been inspired by Chinese models, which most closely resemble this painting – the paintings of the "Good friends of the Sea of Assemblies of the Flower Ornament" (*kegon kai-e zenchishiki-zu*), which figure amongst other iconographies based on this text preserved in the Tōdai-ji in Japan. It is clear that the image changed and that the pilgrimage became the sole theme represented. This was, of course, fertile ground for picturesque anecdotes which to some extent overshadowed the doctrinal content. The *Daśa-bhūmika-sūtra* illustration under discussion here is thus of the greatest significance in the genesis, hitherto unknown, of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* depictions.

Captions to Colour Plates: Volume One

The contributors have initialled their entries thus: DE (Danielle Eliasberg), JPD (Jean-Pierre Drège), PM (Paul Magnin), RS (Richard Schneider),MS (Michel Soymié).

Plate 1
Gentleman followed by his groom (fragment from a scene from the Life of the Buddha)
Tang dynasty (second half of the 8th century). Painting on paper. H. 13.4 cm; W. 18.8 cm. EO.1153. **MS**

In this painting, thought to be one of the most beautiful executed at Dunhuang at the height of the Tang dynasty, the eye is drawn first of all to the leading horseman. He is mounted on a stationary horse and gestures with his right hand in a way that suggests that he is not only addressing someone but also making a command. He wears an unusual cap of black gauze held in place with a hat pin. A similar type of head-dress may be seen in a wall-painting in cave 45, dating to the eighth century (*Bakkō*, 3, pl. 139). A comparable if slightly later cap is found in cave 154, dated to the period of Tibetan occupation (*Bakkō*, 4, pl. 96). The clothes and headgear of the groom are also of a style well-represented in the paintings of cave 45 mentioned above (*Bakkō*, 3, pl. 138). The long pole held by the groom must be the shaft of a parasol. Judging by costume and demeanour, the first rider is probably a dignitary of high rank.

The scene calls to mind certain episodes in the life of the Buddha represented on banners, notably Stein paintings 35, 97 and 98 (Whitfield, 1, pl. 35, 36 and 38). The scene might refer in this case to the visit to the prince Siddhārtha made in the king's name by messengers intent on persuading him to return to the palace. This scene is depicted on a banner in London, Stein painting 85 (Whitfield, 1, pl. 37-1). This hypothesis is however rather unlikely, since the five messengers are begging rather than ordering the prince to return. The scene may illustrate something quite different, such as Ajātaśatru in front of the prison in which he has just shut up his father (see the entry to painting 16).

Plate 2
Scenes from the life of the Buddha: the contest to obtain the hand of Yaśodharā and *the tests of knowledge, of archery and of the felling of trees*
Tang dynasty (second half of the 9th century). Painting on silk. H. 62.2 cm; W. 19 cm. EO.1216. See also fig. 1.
PM. MS

According to tradition, the future Buddha, Prince Siddhārtha, determined to marry at the age of sixteen. He had noticed a beautiful young girl, but the father of his chosen one, doubting the worth of the youth, refused to permit their union. The prince persuaded his own father, Śuddhodana, to organise a great contest, in the course of which he would prove his superiority over the five hundred contestants who gathered for the occasion.[1] This banner illustrates the three principal phases of the contest which enabled Siddhārtha to win the hand of Yaśodharā. The three episodes are arranged in order from the bottom to the top of the painting. The contestants had to display in succession their mastery of writing and mathematics, their skill in archery, and their strength either through tree-felling or wrestling. In the first scene, the artist has reduced the test of knowledge to four protagonists. The master in charge of the examination is seated in a pavilion. The figure in a yellow robe sitting to the left may be the prince Siddhārtha; he gestures with his right hand while apparently referring with his left to a passage on the scroll unrolled in front of him.

The archery contest which forms the second episode appears at the centre of the painting and takes place in front of two officials. The targets are drums. Every bow that has been brought to the prince has broken in his hands, so finally he is presented with the bow of his grandfather, Siṃhahanu, which none could either lift or draw. Siddhārtha then not only shows himself to be

the equal of his ancestor, but his arrow pierces more drums than those of all his rivals put together. This explains why he faces a line of five iron drums.

The third scene, the tree-felling contest, shows the prince uprooting a tree. Here too the painter has simplified the story. The legend recounts how Siddhārtha was able – like other contestants – to cut through a tree with a single blow of his sword, but the tree remained standing. The future Buddha was the butt of his companions' laughter until the moment when a gust blew from the sky and brought down the tree, thus adding to the feat. This third episode is not well-known; most works either fail to include it or accord it little importance. It is often replaced with a bout of bare-hand wrestling. Here the painter has drawn his inspiration from the *Compendium of the Acts of the Buddha*, dating to the end of the seventh century, which is the only text to place this contest third.[2]

The episodes are separated from each other by hill motifs. The cartouches are empty. The paving of the frieze at the bottom and the hangings barely visible at the top show that this painting was intended as a banner. It probably formed part of a series. Another banner kept in Delhi illustrates the same subject but with different contests (Ch.0030, Stein painting 293, *Serindia*, pl. 76).

Plate 3
Scenes from the life of the Buddha: the four encounters of Prince Siddhārtha
Five Dynasties (first half of the 10th century). H. 57 cm; W. 14.4 cm. EO.1217. See also fig. 2. **PM**

This banner illustrates one of the best known episodes in the legendary life of the Buddha. Prince Siddhārtha, the future Buddha, leaves the royal city by each of its four gates, and has four encounters which reveal to him the existence of old age, illness, death and the monastic life. This subject, ever popular, was depicted early, notably in one of the first wall-paintings at Dunhuang, in cave 275, which was decorated between 421 and 439 AD. It was also the object of a work of popular literature, the *Transformed text of the realisation of the Path by the crown prince*.[3]

The four scenes are set out from top to bottom of the banner, with the city gates alternately placed on the right and left hand sides of the painting in order, no doubt, to break up the monotony of the composition. The representations closely follow the textual sources: the old man bent over his cane, the ill man supported by a woman, the corpse concealed under a sheet surrounded by female mourners, the monk holding a *khakkhara* and an alms bowl, and finally the prince on his white horse with a russet mane. There are no borders to separate the scenes. The grasses resemble those in the previous plate, with the addition of flowers in the background of the painting. The cartouches contain no inscriptions. As with the preceding banner, this one probably formed part of a series.

Plate 4
Fragments of scenes from the life of the Buddha: the anxiety of King Śuddhodana, the dance before the Prince and the "Great Departure"
Tang dynasty (middle of the 8th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 66 x 44 threads per cm. H. 32.7 cm; W. 20.1 cm. EO.1154. See also fig. 43, 44, 45. **PM. MS**

In their present condition, these two fragments mounted on conservation material represent only two episodes from the legendary life of the Buddha. The upper scene portrays the visit of Prince Siddhārtha to his father, King Śud-dhodana, to inform the latter of his intention to leave him and to enter the ascetic life. The seated king is accompanied by two pages (or serving women, judging by their clothes) and by two other persons, a general and a minister. The king wipes his face with his right sleeve, as if weeping at his son's declaration. The latter may tentatively be identified as the figure, of which only traces remain, kneeling on the left in front of the throne. The gate and the mountainous landscape at the top did not originally belong to this part of the composition, but we will return to this matter below. The lower scene refers to an episode that follows that illustrated in the one above: the court ladies are delighted to see the prince after the painful interview with his father and joyfully lavish entertainments upon him. Only the lower part of the scene survives, in which we see a dancer on a circular rug and a band of three musicians in front of the same dais as in the preceding fragment. Their instruments are, from right to left: a *pipa*, or similar stringed instrument of which only the neck and tuning pegs may be seen, a mouth organ and clappers. These two successive episodes are told in the *Compendium of the Acts of the Buddha* cited above in the note to plate 2 (*Taishō*, 190, p. 724c-725a). A cloud and the roof of the palace wall may be seen in the upper part of the second illustration, which seems to be another instance of a fragment wrongly placed when the pieces were mounted. Akiyama speculates that this fragment came from an illustration of the episode of the dream of the future Buddha's mother, Māyā, in which she receives him into her womb in the form of an elephant that descended from the sky on a cloud, as in, for example, the third scene of Stein painting 96 (Whitfield, 1, pl. 30-2).

One can easily make out the summit of a mountain at the bottom of the second fragment – in fact part of another illustration. Mme Nicolas-Vandier had already noted that the upper part of the first fragment seems to be there as the result of incorrect positioning during the mounting; this is in fact readily visible. Akiyama adds (correctly, it seems to us) that the rocky summit at the base of the second fragment joins onto the mountain seen in the upper part of the first fragment, which part should therefore be detached and joined to the base of the second fragment (see the perfectly convincing fig. 44).

Akiyama states moreover that two other fragments of this painting exist, one in London (fig. 45) and one in Delhi.[4] Figure 43 shows the finished reconstruction, which illustrates the episode known as the "crossing of

the palace walls", the prince's nocturnal and secret departure. This logically follows the two other scenes represented.

Comparing these fragments with other banners, and basing his judgement on style, colouring and pictorial technique, Akiyama unhesitatingly dates these illustrations to the middle of the eighth century. This dating places them amongst the oldest works of both the Pelliot and the Stein collections.

Plate 5
The Assault of Māra
Five Dynasties (first half of the 10th century). Painting on silk. H. 144 cm, W. 113 cm. MG.17655. **PM. MS**

Three pieces of silk make up this large painting. The central portion is 62.8 cm wide and the two side pieces to the left and right measure 24 cm and 26.2 cm respectively. The seams are barely visible. The collection contains many large silk paintings which are more beautiful than this one, but none of these are as truly extraordinary. As is also the case in paradise paintings, we are presented here with a main subject which occupies almost the entire area of the picture, accompanied by secondary scenes relating to the central motif depicted on the sides and below.

The main subject illustrates one of the most well-known episodes of the legendary life of the Buddha: seated beneath the *bodhi* tree, on the point of attaining enlightenment, he endures the assault of the hordes of Māra, the Destroyer. Described in varying detail in several texts of the Buddhist canon, this episode even became the subject of a *bianwen* or "transformation text". It has been represented in the wall-paintings of the Dunhuang caves since the Northern Wei period (439-534 AD), but always in a simpler fashion.

Śākyamuni is enthroned at the centre, impassive, and all the more majestic for the contrast he strikes with the frenzied movements of the demonic beings and Māra's other henchmen who swarm about him. In accordance with standard iconography, he makes the earth-witnessing gesture, also known as the demon-subduing: his right hand touches the ground, his left lies on his knees with the open palm facing upwards. He is seated on a swathe of greenery spread out on a tiered throne of many colours. Above the leafy, dome-shaped canopy of the tree appears a wrathful deity with blue complexion and eight arms dancing against a flaming background like a king of knowledge. Although it is difficult to identify him, it seems clear that his rôle is that of a divine protector. He is moreover accompanied by several apparently benevolent figures, each with a halo, who probably include the four Guardian Kings. In a niche beneath the throne, another wrathful figure, smaller and with white complexion and four arms, may be seen holding two victims by the hair. The identification of this figure is as uncertain as that of the possible king of knowledge, but it is hard to see that he could be a divine protector. On the right just below the steps leading up to the throne a man with a halo may be seen in an attitude of prayer, with a flower offering in his hands. To the left is a woman, also praying, with her hands pressed together. They are not part of the demon horde, and may represent the god of the earth and his consort. This god, after Māra's defeat, bore witness to the truth of the Buddha's revelations concerning the past.

In the vertical planes to the left and right of the central figure the artist has represented the cohorts of deities and demons led by Māra. The latter may be identified at the left, near Śākyamuni's hand, brandishing a wheel in his right hand. Depicted with a halo – since he is, after all, a celestial being – he is surrounded by three figures, two civilian and one military, as well as by two women who seem to be holding him back. It is not clear whether these are his wives or his daughters, since the latter are usually three in number. The same Māra also appears on the right side, brandishing his sword, here held back by two soldiers who are probably his sons. The young women who stand in pairs at either side of the throne could well be interpreted as Māra's daughters attempting to seduce Śākyamuni. It is perhaps Māra once again, seen more to the right mounted on a white elephant with two young girls clinging on to him in the same way as in the left side of the painting. The soldier bending his bow and mounted on a white elephant, who appears on the left side opposite Māra, is perhaps his eldest son. The devils that make up the army are depicted in grotesque or horrible forms that probably were conjured from the imagination of the artist.

In the same way that Māra and his daughters appear several times as if in a sort of cartoon strip (if our hypothesis is correct), the same army that is unleashed for the assault on the right side is encountered again on the lower left, vanquished by the power of the Buddha. The team of four horses harnessed to a wagon that may be seen on the right side appears again on the left, but is overturned. Some of the archers who have fallen from the cart continue to loose their arrows while others lie head downwards. The demons in this section are all depicted in the same attitudes of defeat.

Twelve aspects of the Buddha Śākyamuni appear in the marginal panels, six on each side. The first of these, in which he attains enlightenment under the *bodhi* tree, is located at the bottom left; the six little buddhas arranged in the tree's foliage are probably those who preceded him. The last scene, in which he enters *nirvāṇa*, may be seen at the top right. The ten other forms remain mysterious, as does the series as a whole. We have found no trace of it. The twelve scenes evoke the groups of famous or miraculous images that occur in certain wall-paintings or in Stein paintings 51 and 58 (Whitfield, 2, pl. 11 and p. 303 *sq.*). These serene and simple figures act as a foil to the tumult and disorder of Māra's assault.

In the panel beneath the principal scene, the seven treasures of the universal monarch Cakravartin, express the glory and power of Śākyamuni having achieved Buddhahood. At the centre, the golden wheel symbolises the Law of the Buddha. The jade girl on the left is matched by the general standing on the right. In second position, the white elephant on the left faces the white horse with russet mane and tail on the right. In

third position on the left, a chest symbolises either the sage, renunciate and king's counsel, or the treasurer. Finally, on the right, is the precious pearl. The multi-coloured clouds and the flames issuing from the jewels are inclined towards the outer edge of the painting, and serve to heighten the symmetry of the group while at the same time adding a three-dimensional quality. Note the little reborn soul on a cloud above the horse. Another representation of the seven jewels is found in plate 91.

The dark blue ground of the central painting, scattered with flowers and stars of different colours, counters the olive-green and yellow ochre backgrounds of the side and lower panels. A few details of costume deserve mention. The warriors' coats of mail, blue and yellow, all of the same type, their helmets, some with large ear flaps, and their quivers are characteristic of the tenth century and are worthy of close examination. It is also worth remarking upon the coiffures of Māra's daughters. These are similar to those that may be seen in plate 46 of this volume and in plates 5 and 84 of volume 2, dating, we feel, to the second half of the tenth century. The same observation can be made regarding the official's hat worn by the figures found beneath the depiction of Māra on the left hand side, and also worn by the two assistant standard-bearers kneeling in front of the first Buddha of the side scenes, on the lower left.

Five (or six) short inscriptions may be seen in the lower panel, written in a fine Uighur script of a peculiar style. These may be linked with the treasures beside which they are found. Moriyasu Takao suggests, without offering proof, that these inscriptions are written in Mongolian. He recalls the well-known fact that the adoption of Uighur script by the Mongols only took place during the thirteenth century. This leads him to bring forward considerably the date of all the paintings, including this one, which bear graffiti of this type. He adds that it may be seen at a glance that these paintings post-date, on stylistic grounds, the sealing of cave 17. He believes that although the paintings were found in cave 17, Wang Yuanlu must have deposited them there himself, having discovered them in another cave.[5] It is difficult however to admit that this painting does not date from the end of the tenth century at the very latest. If the graffiti are in Mongolian, it could also reasonably be supposed that these were added to the painting by some Mongol visitor after the opening of cave 17 but before the arrival of Pelliot. There are in fact reports that Mongol princes came as pilgrims to the site at that time.[6] Our colleague, J. Hamilton, who intended to provide us with a literal translation, was unable to identify a single word in any known language. This notwithstanding, he considers that the Uighur script itself seems of late date. The problem remains unresolved.

Plate 6
Śākyamuni preaching the law
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on hemp cloth. Warp and weft: 10 x 6 threads per cm. H. 174 cm; W. 114.5 cm. MG.17798. See also fig. 3. **DE**

Enthroned on a lotus, Śākyamuni makes the gesture of the preaching of the Law with his right hand, while the other rests upon his knee. He is flanked by Mañjuśrī on the right and by Avalokiteśvara on the left – an unusual combination for in theory it is Samantabhadra who should appear in place of the latter. In fact, in this particular case it is only the existence of the cartouches which make possible the positive identification of the figures, who are without attributes or any other distinguishing mark. Evidently this is a non-specific work, whose cartouches were inscribed subsequently for reasons of personal devotion.

The canopy sheltering the Buddha resembles very closely those in the paintings of eleven-headed Guanyin (pl. 91), of Dizang and a paradise (volume 2, pl. 66), and of the illustration of the *Fumu enzhong jing* in Stein paintings 67 and 68 (Whitfield, 2, pl. 28). The same can be said for his striped monastic robe, his aureole and those of his two companions three-quarters turned towards him, with their palms together.

In front of the Buddha, two flasks (which are also similar to those occurring in the paintings mentioned above) are placed on the offering table beside a disproportionately large incense burner surmounted by a flaming jewel – perhaps the flame of the burner? The table is covered with a rug and a cloth decorated with flowers, very like those of plate 52, and bears the following inscription: "Praise to the assembly of Śākyamuni". At each side a small bodhisattva kneels on a lotus, one called "Who offers flowers"and the other "Flower of the precious altar". Four ribbon loops enable the painting to be hung, suggesting that it was an object of devotion.

The names of the two bodhisattva seem to be ornamental creations. The name "Flower of the precious altar" does however figure in a list of the eight great bodhisattvas who welcome the dead according to the *Sūtra of the vow of Bhaiṣajyaguru* (*Taishō*, 1331, p. 553c). Nonetheless, the name appears to be so common that any conclusion on the matter is unlikely.[7] Let us merely add that the bodhisattva "Who offers flowers" reappears in plate 87, but there the name of his counterpart has unfortunately disappeared.

Plate 7
Śākyamuni and Prabhūtaratna
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on paper. H. 27 cm; W. 30.7 cm. MG.17684. **JPD**

These two buddhas resemble each other in their general appearance, differing only in the gestures of their right hands: the figure on the right makes the *mudrā* of fearlessness, while the buddha on the left, that of preaching.

The representation of two buddhas side by side is the well-known illustration of one of the core chapters of the *Lotus Sūtra*, "Apparition of the jewelled *stūpa*" (*Taishō*, 262, p. 32 *sq.*). This tells how the Buddha Prabhūtaratna, who had entered nirvana in the distant past, had been waiting to hear Śākyamuni preach the *Lotus*

Sūtra. On that day, his *stūpa* appeared in the sky. Śākyamuni opened the great *stūpa* and revealed the buddha Prabhūtaratna seated cross-legged within it as if in meditation. The latter immediately declared: "Excellent, excellent, O Śākyamuni Buddha! Gloriously have you preached the Law. It is to listen to this sermon that I have come here". Thereupon he invited Śākyamuni to enter the *stūpa* to share his throne.

The two buddhas are found seated next to each other in fifty-odd illustrations of the *Lotus Sūtra* in the wall-paintings of the Dunhuang caves, especially in those dating from the beginning and end of the Tang dynasty. They can be considered as the archetypal symbolic image of the *Lotus Sūtra*. This image is also an oblique reference to a passage of the chapter dealing with Avalokiteśvara from the same sūtra in which the bodhisattva accepts a necklace but promptly divides it into two, offering one half to Śākya-muni and the other to Prabhūtaratna.

A damaged painting preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (P.4014) depicts three nearly identical buddhas, perhaps from a larger group, above a donor. Both paintings were probably produced in the same workshop. There is nothing remarkable about these two buddhas other than their pairing. The lower part of the painting no longer exists; it is not known what other elements formed part of the complete work. All we can say is that the two buddhas do not seem to have been placed next to any others.

In the execution of this painting, the artist has not used a brush but rather a hard, pointed instrument, perhaps a reed pen. The drawing of the eyes, eyebrows and nose, the shape of the mouth, ears and hands, and the design of the lotuses do not follow Chinese traditions. The colours are applied without shading. The right arm and shoulder as well as the face of the buddha on the right show reworking, as does the right hand of the buddha seated on the left. Some holes along the upper edge indicate that the painting was hung.

Plate 8
Pair of banners portraying the Tathāgata
Five Dynasties - Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Painting on hemp cloth (*recto verso*). Left: (*verso* of banner A). H. 65.5 cm; W. 13.5 cm. EO.1183. Right: (*verso* of banner B): H. 65 cm; W. 13.5 cm. EO.1184. See also fig. 4. **JPD**

Each banner is made of a single piece of material with the upper section cut away into a triangle and bordered with a narrow strip of hemp cloth. Both must have originally borne a buddha standing on a lotus on each side of the cloth, but now only the *verso* representations can be clearly made out. These differ slightly: apart from the position of the hands, the buddha on the left (A) wears his hair in the usual rounded bun, whereas in the banner on the right (B) the buddha's hair is strangely tousled with two little tufts above the *uṣṇīṣa*.

Mme Nicolas-Vandier's interpretation of these paintings, according to which the buddhas are Śākyamuni and Prabhūtaratna, is not convincing. The latter are an inseparable pair, and are generally seated in the jewelled *stūpa*; they never stand. The floral decoration, with pendant triangles and pleated valance, as well as the lower border with a simple paving design, recall those of the banner reproduced in volume 2, plate 33.

Plate 9
The Buddha Duobao (Prabhūtaratna)
Five Dynasties (first half of the 10th century). Painting on paper. H. 39.9 cm; W. 32.7 cm. EO.1398 (P.172). **JPD**

The buddha Prabhūtaratna is here identified by the legend in the left-hand cartouche: "Praise to the buddha Tathāgata Prabhūtaratna". The gestures of the hands are in accordance with several traditions and show no special features. The upper and lower edges of the painting are dyed brown to improve the presentation. Holes for hanging the painting are visible in the upper corners.

A cartouche on the right bears the following inscription: "Whole-heartedly offered by the donor, disciple with a pure faith, worker of hides, cobbler of shoes and boots, the clerk Suo Zhangsan". Cartouches with the same name and written by the same hand appear on two other paintings on paper, kept in the British Museum and in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. These portray Avalokiteśvara (Stein painting 30*, Whitfield, 2, pl. 72) and Kśitigarbha (P.4518[35]). In this painting Suo Zhangsan – or Zhang the Third – bears the title of "clerk" of an association, but this does not appear in the other inscriptions. A person named Suo Zhangqi, or Zhang the Seventh, is mentioned in a financial document from Dunhuang dated 925 AD (P.2049V°); it is not impossible that he was the donor's brother.

This painting forms part of a series of images that were dedicated as required (*cf.* pl. 39-40, 42-43): one cartouche was inscribed giving the identity of the buddha or bodhisattva, but the second cartouche was only filled in afterwards at the donor's behest. This explains the uninscribed cartouche in a similar painting in London, Stein painting 186 (Whitfield, 2, pl. 73).

Plate 10
The buddha Duobao (Prabhūtaratna)
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on paper. H. 25.1 cm; W. 20.1 cm. EO.1398 (P.188). **JPD**

The subject of this painting is identified like the preceding one by the inscription in the right-hand cartouche, which reads: "Homage to the buddha Prabhūtaratna". Seated on a lotus, the buddha turns towards the right, and makes the gesture of preaching or explanation with his right hand. The palm is marked with a cross. As well as aureole and nimbus, the buddha's head is surrounded by fourteen undulating flames: this is the only painting of this type amongst the portable paintings from Dunhuang in the Musée Guimet and British Museum collections.

It is possible to make out the beginnings of another cartouche and a figure on the left edge, which indicates

that these paintings were created as a series and perhaps cut out later. There are touches of colour and ink on the upper part, and a small piece of paper has been stuck to the top left of the painting for reinforcement or concealment. This painting is stylistically similar to the one of a bodhisattva pasted below the two buddhas of plate 40.

Plate 11
The buddha Yaoshi (Bhaiṣajyaguru) in monastic robes
Five Dynasties (first half of the 10th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 48 x 25 threads per cm. H. 57.5 cm; W. 18.5 cm. EO.1223. See also fig. 5. **RS. MS**

The origin of the buddha "Medicine Master" is obscure. The cult of this saviour who rules over his Eastern Paradise grew up alongside that of Amitābha, whose seat is in the equally paradisial Pure Land of the West. It was the latter who, buoyed up by enormous popular devotion, finally eclipsed his rival. The Dunhuang murals and paintings on cloth show however that the cult of Bhaiṣajyaguru was flourishing during the ninth-tenth centuries.

The buddha represented in this painting may be identified with almost total certainty by the flaming pearl which he holds in his right hand. His left hand makes the gesture of appeasement. Note that the more usual pot of medicine is here replaced by the pearl, also a legitimate attribute.

The sombre monastic robe, in red and yellow tones, is set off by the predominant olive green. The strongly arched brows are remarkable, and not found in other paintings. Decorative elements above and below indicate that this painting is a banner with some damage to its upper part.

Plate 12
The buddha Yaoshi holding the khakkhara and the bowl of remedies
Tang dynasty (second half of the 9th century). Painting on dyed silk. Warp and weft: 46 x 31 threads per cm. H. 65.5 cm; W. 29.0 cm. EO.1178. See also fig. 6 and 7. **MS**

This exceptional banner, representing the medicine buddha on both *recto* and *verso*, is painted on plain silk taffeta, quite worn, decorated all over with floral motifs and rosettes in a light blue-green. It seems that these were obtained by a process of reserve dyeing or press stencilling, called *jiaxie* in Chinese.[8] There are numerous examples of this technique in the Stein collection (Whitfield, 3, pl. 13 *sq.*).

Bhaiṣajyaguru holds a *khakkhara* in his right hand, as he does in the banners illustrated in plates 13 and 14. It appears in his left hand on the reverse of the banner in order to avoid the effects of transparency. Similarly the bowl of medicine, hardly visible in his left hand on the *recto*, may be seen – better preserved – in his right hand on the *verso*. This very damaged painting has lost some decorative elements which might have made it easier to date. The date proposed is a very tentative one.

Plate 13
The buddha Yaoshi holding the khakkhara and the bowl of remedies
Tang dynasty (second half of the 9th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 56 x 40 threads per cm. H. 30.5 cm; W. 15 cm. EO.1187a. **MS**

This figure is comparable with the previous painting in terms of stance and costume. The *khakkhara* which he holds in his right hand is also analogous, albeit more elaborate. It is rather different to that of the Bhaiṣajyaguru of plate 14, and is even further removed from the one wielded by Kṣitigarbha in plates 98 of this volume and 114 *sq.* of volume 2. Another feature worthy of attention is his light blue hair. This characteristic is not included in the list of the thirty-two *lakṣaṇa* of the Buddha, but does occur in the list of the eighty qualities or secondary marks, as found in the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā* translated by Kumārajīva. The blue hair is relatively rare in the paintings on silk or hemp cloth, but there are many examples to be seen in the murals of the Dunhuang caves. This very damaged painting has undergone a certain amount of repainting.

Plate 14
The buddha Yaoshi (Bhaiṣajyaguru) followed by two monks
Tang dynasty (second half of the 9th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 40 x 39 threads per cm. H. 84 cm; W. 49.1 cm. MG.23078. See also fig. 8. **MS**

This is a painting of great quality, as can be observed from the precision and fine judgement of the lines, the expressions of the faces and the freshness and brightness of the colours. The originality of the work lies in the fact that the buddha and his acolytes are walking. This action is evident not only from the buddha's three-quarter pose but also from his standing on two lotus flowers rather than one, thus giving him the necessary mobility. Incidentally, one of the two flowers is outlined in red, the other in white. The act of walking is further emphasised by the raised left foot of the second acolyte. The sumptuous monastic robes with gilded motifs, the gilded *khakkhara* and the elegant floral motif above are also worthy of attention.

The identity of the two companion monks, one of whom holds a scroll, is unknown. They have haloes as do the two disciples who flank Śākyamuni in scenes of the preaching of the Law, often represented as one older – Mahākāśyapa – and one younger – Ānanda. The latter is also one of the buddha's interlocutors in the sūtra of the first vow of Bhaiṣajyaguru (*Taishō*, 450 and 451). It would be risky however to draw any conclusion from this.

The painting includes two cartouches. The right-hand one bears the following inscription in two columns from right to left: "An image of the Buddha Master of medecines executed in behalf of my deceased daughter

Li, a eulogy offered in perpetuity".

The painting has been mounted: a greyish-green band has been sewn onto the upper and lower edges. Inside the upper strip is a rod, now broken in three. A hole in the upper edge of the painting is probably a fixing point.

Plate 15

The Pure Land of the Buddha Mile (Maitreya)

Five Dynasties, 5th year of the Tianfu era (940 AD)

Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 35 x 34 threads per cm. H. 76.5 cm; W. 53 cm. EO.1135. See also fig. 9. **MS**

Properly speaking, Maitreya is a bodhisattva. He is the most advanced of all beings on the path to Enlightenment, and he presently resides in the Tuṣita heaven waiting for the moment to become the Buddha called to regenerate the Law. As the cult developed however, mainly during the tenth century, he came to be venerated as the equal of a buddha and is commonly depicted as such. The paradises in which he is seen sitting enthroned differ from those of Amitābha and Bhaiṣajyaguru only in regard to the scenes represented in the lower registers.

This painting represents an assembly, rather than a paradise, and resembles that depicted in plate 6, in which the term appears in the inscription. Notwithstanding this we have entitled it a pure land, because the donors designate it thus in the prayer of dedication. It would have been impossible to identify the subject without the reference to Maitreya in the prayer and the inscription on the altar cloth, "Praise to the revered buddha Maitreya". Although the names of the accompanying figures are given, this would not be any help in identifying the scene: two monks, Ānanda and Mahāmaudgalyāyana, then the bodhisattva Dajixiang "Great Splendour" and Huayan "Flower Ornament", Zishi "the Benevolent" and Kenchizai.

The two monks, who appear in the list of the ten great disciples of the Buddha Śākyamuni, have no particular links with Maitreya. It is common in paradise depictions to find the central buddha flanked by two monks, as for example in the portrayal of Amitābha's paradise reproduced in plate 17, or in Stein painting 11, a depiction of the paradise of Maitreya (Whitfield, 2, pl. 12). These figures, however, are never accompanied by cartouches giving their names. A more justifiable disciple would have been Mahākāśyapa, whose body must remain intact until Maitreya's arrival, in order to give him Śākyamuni's tunic of gold thread of which he has been the custodian.

"The Benevolent" is none other than Maitreya himself, whose presence amongst the attendants is surprising. We will encounter him again in plate 98, in which he appears paired with Mahāsthāmaprāpta in the entourage of one thousand-armed Avalokiteśvara. The bodhisattva Huayan is also found in plate 98. Though not mentioned in the texts, this bodhisattva seems to have enjoyed a degree of popularity. He appears on Stein painting 196, a long banner with a cartouche bearing his name probably dating to 956 AD and which was offered by a layman (Whitfield, 2, pl. 33 and fig. 44). "Great Splendour" is the abbreviated name of a secondary bodhisattva, without personality, who appears in the quarter dedicated to Avalokiteśvara in the Diamond-world *maṇḍala*. The last bodhisattva's name, Kenchizai, is unknown and seems to be incorrect. The name should perhaps be corrected to Nengchuzai, "Capable of removing disaster" regarding whom there is no further information. The two long-leafed trees at either side of the canopy each bear the inscription "Banana tree of offering". Banana trees are sometimes mentioned with other trees in some paradises, but have no particular link with Maitreya. They are perhaps substitutes for the dragon-flower tree under which Maitreya will attain *bodhi* when he comes down to this world, although this has never been a banana tree. The preceding remarks lead to the conclusion that this painting is probably a stereotype of multi-purpose design made in advance, able to represent the assembly of any buddha by the simple addition of his name in the place set aside for this purpose. The attendants are without any distinguishing characteristics, and were thus able to receive Chinese names chosen as convenient according to criteria of which we are ignorant.

In the lower register, the man on the right is accompanied by the following cartouche: "The whole-hearted offering [for] our revered deceased father Wen Zaide". The inscription in front of the woman, his wife, reads thus: "Whole-heartedly offered [for] our mother, *née* Ma".

The central text, consisting of seven columns reading from left to right, presents some difficulties. The date is written outside the cartouche, under the name of Wen Zaide. After a conventional prologue, the dedication begins in the middle of the third column and can be translated thus: "Wen Dayan and his four younger brothers, faithful disciples dwelling in the Dingnan quarter of Dunhuang prefecture, thought of their honoured father [and asked themselves] into what way had he fallen. Fearing the return of misfortune, they took counsel together and cheered each other. In order to repay the kindness of their honoured father and of their mother, they gathered a modest sum and respectfully [had] painted an image of the Pure Land of the West with the attendants. Together they worshipped it in behalf of their revered father, wishing that he find refuge with Maitreya and that his feet rest on a red lotus flower; and also wishing that their tender mother and all the family may for a long time know only happy events, and that they all reach the path that leads to Awakening. Dated the fourteenth [day] of the seventh month of the fifth year, *gengzi* (940 AD), of the great Jin". The date is probably not accidental since it is the eve of *avalambana*, the Buddhist festival of the dead.

Of fairly rough workmanship, this painting is painted on a cloth composed of three pieces sewn together (above: 35.5 cm x 53 cm; below right: 41 cm x 24 cm; below left: 42 cm x 28 cm).

Plate 16
Illustration of the Sūtra of the contemplation of the Buddha Amitāyus
Tang dynasty (first half of the 9th century). Painting on silk. H. 171 cm; W. 118.2 cm. EO.1128. See also fig. 10, 11, 12, and 13. **PM. MS**

Surrounded by a textile border 6.5 cm wide, this painting is considered the most complete example of representations of Amitābha's paradise and of the visions with which he is commonly associated. This depiction of the paradise of Amitābha follows the iconographic tradition based on the *Sūtra of the contemplation of the Buddha Amitāyus* (*Taishō*, 365), translated into Chinese in the fifth century (with an important commentary by Shandao, *Taishō*, 1753). Shandao, who died in 662 AD, is supposed to have executed two hundred paintings of Amitābha's paradise. One of these paintings is held to have been transmitted to Japan, where it served as model for the paradise known as the 'Taima *maṇḍala*'. In Dunhuang, the oldest paintings of this paradise date to the Sui period (581-618 AD) and are found in cave 393 (*Bakkō*, 2, pl. 178). Depictions evolved thereafter and became more complex, attaining the conventional characteristics exemplified by this painting in the first half of the ninth century. Other interesting examples are the silk paintings Stein 35* and 70 (Whitfield, 1, pl. 9 and 10) and the wall-painting of cave 25 at Yulin.[9] The usual structure is as follows: 1.) the paradise itself in the centre; 2.) side scenes always depicting the story of Bimbisāra and his son Ajātaśatru on one side and the visualisations of queen Vaidehī on the other; 3.) a lower register, the contents of which are variable.

1.) From the top downwards, the paradise consists of the following essential elements: palaces and pavilions, the Amitābha triad, a terrace occupied by musicians, a pond and a buddha terrace intended for the contemplation of the water.

At the top of this painting, above the palace, are four small buddhas seated in meditation upon clouds which rise from the side pavilions. Also encountered in the large paradise of Yulin cave 25, this motif may evoke the pure lands in which beings are reborn according to their progress along the Path. They are also found however on a painting of the paradise of Bhaiṣajyaguru (cave 112, *Bakkō*, 4, pl. 59). The palace and pavilions are disposed according to a standard schema. A buddha – probably Amitābha – accompanied by two attendants is seated under a central building in the upper part of the painting. It should be noted that the same buddha appears in the paradise of Bhaiṣajyaguru in cave 112; it is also possible for this pavilion to be empty, as in the paradise of Yulin cave 25. The two octagonal pavilions situated at either side of the building are those of the bell and the drum, as found in monasteries. A bridge which spans a part of the water running all through the paradise gives access to other architectural structures conceived as palace buildings. These extend into the foreground towards the lower part of the painting in the form of two wings, framing the Amitābha triad and the attendant figures.[10] A singular element of the painting consists in the two tall conical banners surmounted by fringed canopies which rise behind the roof of the palace. Decorated with lozenges, they are very different from the tiered banners which are generally seen at either side of the dais of the principal deity.

With both his hands, Amitābha seems to make the gesture of preaching with both hands, or more precisely, the gesture of setting in motion the wheel of the Law. He is accompanied by his usual acolytes, the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara at his left and Mahāsthāmaprāpta at his right, but they are indistinguishable apart from the bell held by Avalokiteśvara in his left hand. This tantric attribute is, however, non-standard. Twenty-two other bodhisattvas are assembled around the triad.

As in even the most sober of paradise depictions, the musicians' terrace is located in front of the offering table. Here we see a female dancer and six female musicians, who play a zither, mouth organ and clappers on the right and a stringed instrument (probably a *pipa*), a transverse flute and Pan-pipes on the left.

The pond in the foreground is the most visible part of the body of water in which the terraces and pavilions of the paradise are constructed on piles. It is generally considered the place wherein the nine categories of rebirth take place, as expressed in the sūtra by the last three visions of Vaidehī. The pond is usually covered with lotus blossoms bearing naked children – four in this case – representing the reborn souls. One unexplained detail is the kneeling figure who appears to be worshipping the principal Amitābha, seen from the back on the sloping central ramp giving access to the water. There is a similar person in the painting in cave 25 at Yulin.

Two buddhas, each escorted by two bodhisattva, are seated on the two side terraces, which, it is said, are used for the contemplation of the water. They are considered as simple metamorphoses of Amitābha. Some doctrines however allude to three forms of Amitābha, who welcome the deceased according to their merits (*Taishō*, 360-362). Other interpretations involve more abstract metaphysical ideas.

2.) The side scenes illustrate the *Sūtra of the contemplation of the Buddha Amitāyus* mentioned above. Those on the right correspond to the first part of the sūtra, which in fact serves as an introduction. This relates the tragic story of queen Vaidehī, wife of king Bimbisāra, and of their rebel son, Ajātaśatru. The narrative of the sūtra is however complemented in the illustrations by the inclusion of an apocryphal episode explaining the genesis of the story. This is found in several versions only in commentaries and late compilations. According to the version of the legend followed here, the king and queen were childless. A seer foretold a birth, but on the condition that the soul of certain hermit entered the queen's womb. The king therefore had the hermit deprived of food in order to hasten his death, but the latter turned himself into a hare, escaped and took refuge in the palace grounds where he was captured and put to death.[11] The narrative of the sūtra begins by relating how Ajātaśatru, advised by bad friends, had his

father imprisoned and moreover forbade him any visits or food. Braving this interdict, the queen smeared herself with flour and honey and went thus to nourish her husband. Bimbisāra turned towards the Vulture Peak to worship Śākyamuni Buddha, who sent him his two great disciples, Maudgalyāyana and Pūrṇa, to instruct him in the Law. Three weeks having passed and believing his father to be near death, Ajātaśatru questioned the guard who had to admit the truth. In a fury Ajātaśatru rushed to find and kill his mother, but two ministers interposed themselves brandishing their swords. Ajātaśatru then had his mother shut up within his palace.

Let us now consider the side scenes of the painting, which are unfortunately without inscriptions, and number these from 1 to 7 from the bottom up. (1) Two soldiers stand watch in front of what is probably Bimbisāra 's prison. Beyond, Ajātaśatru can be seen mounted on a horse in front of a person to whom he makes known the sentence. In Stein paintings 35* and 70 (Whitfield, 1, pl. 15 and 10), as well as in Stein painting 295 preserved in Delhi, it is Bimbisāra and not the queen who finds himself in the presence of Ajātaśatru. (2) In front of two guards, Vaidehi visits Bimbisāra in his prison. (3) Ajātaśatru questions the guard. The figure in the background seated on a throne is in all likelihood the king, judging by the inscription accompanying a similar scene in Stein painting 37 (Whitfield, 1, pl. 19-4). (4) Sword raised, Ajātaśatru pursues his mother while the two ministers prepare to intervene with their weapons drawn. (5) The king and queen before Amitābha and two assistant bodhisattva. It is difficult to identify the small figure kneeling in the foreground. (6) and (7) The upper scene portrays an emissary of Bimbisāra preparing to put the hermit to death in front of his hut. In the lower scene, the hermit has metamorphosed at the last moment into a white hare who runs away.[12] He is pursued by a horseman with a falcon on his wrist. According to Stein painting 35, this rider is Bimbisāra himself (Whitfield, 1, pl. 10). Running top to bottom, contrary to the other scenes, these two illustrate the apocryphal episode mentioned above. Logically they should be placed at the beginning of the series, that is to say at the bottom of the painting. The correct sequence, with scenes moving from top to bottom, appears in Stein painting 35.

Śākyamuni Buddha appeared to the queen and taught her the sixteen visualisations or contemplations while she was confined in the palace on her son's order. These are the subject of the left-hand side scenes, disposed from top to bottom unlike those on the right. Three-quarters of the *Sūtra of contemplation* is devoted to them, but only thirteen are illustrated here. The last three visions, relating to the nine categories of rebirth according to spiritual progress, are generally not illustrated; when they are, they are found at the bottom of the painting. Certain visualisations give rise to multiple illustrations. The artist has moreover added elements to the visions described in the sūtra which appear to be linked in some way to the story depicted on the right – for example, in scene 2 representing the Buddha on Vulture Peak, also encountered in other paintings of this subject, and in scene 3, in which the Buddha appears to Vaidehi in order to teach her the sixteen contemplations. Inspired by the need for clarity and also to reduce monotony, empty cartouches are placed alternately to the left and right. This holds true also for the kneeling queen herself, who is seen in some instances wearing red and in others yellow.

3.) The painting's lower register has darkened and is moreover damaged. A large central space intended for a cartouche has regrettably been left uninscribed. Traces of donors can just be made out on the right, where two figures (of whom only the lower part is visible) kneel on a rug. A servant stood behind them, while a wheel and a vase stand on tripods in front of the donor. An offering dish on another tripod, a chest and a pearl or gem on a pedestal may be seen to the left of the cartouche. This lower part of the painting perhaps contained a series of the 'seven treasures' of the universal monarch.

Plate 17
Fragment of an illustration of the Sūtra of the contemplation of the Buddha Amitāyus
Tang dynasty (end of the 8th century – beginning of the 9th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 54 x 24 threads per cm. H. 122 cm; W. 91.5 cm. MG.17669. See also fig. 14. **PM**

The painted surface is made up of four pieces sewn together. The left-hand piece measures 122 cm x 53.5 cm; to it on the right are added a piece 88 cm x 38 cm at the bottom, and two smaller pieces (33 cm x 16.5 cm and 34 cm x 17 cm) at the top. In poor condition and badly damaged, the painting has been given a backing. The texture of the silk, the lines, the colours and certain details suggest that this painting was produced during the period of Tibetan occupation.

The work resembles plate 16 in terms of its general structure, but differs all the same in a few details – for example, only two buddhas may be seen in the sky. The buildings are less ornate, but their bases are more substantial. Seated at the centre of the painting, Amitābha makes the gesture of the turning the Wheel of the Law with both hands. As with most paintings of this type, his two attendant bodhisattvas Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta are indistinguishable. The two acolytes nearest Amitābha, at his shoulder, are both haloed monks, as in plate 19 in which they are four in number. Curiously, their faces are turned towards the audience and not towards the buddha. A two-headed bird-musician, a *kalaviṇka*, is seen in the pool in the lower part. A *kalaviṇka* with the same feature appears in the upper storey of the paradise of the Yulin cave 25, also dating to the period of Tibetan occupation.[13]

The story of Bimbisāra on the right edge of the painting seems to follow the order occurring in plate 16. The first scene at the top of the painting, which shows a great rocky pinnacle, seems to follow the model of the wall-painting of the cave referred to above. On the left side,

only eleven illustrations of the visions of queen Vaidehi survive; these correspond to eight visualisations, of which the second and fourth have been split in two. The visualisations of water and ice are represented by pools with jagged banks. As in the previous painting and in Yulin cave 25, the queen is sometimes depicted wearing red and sometimes yellow, and she faces left and right alternately.

According to Whitfield, the treatment of the bodhisattva's coiffures finds a parallel in Stein painting 57, an illustration of the *Sūtra of Vimalakirti*, dated to the period of Tibetan occupation (Whitfield, 1, pl. 20 and p. 318).

Plate 18
Fragment of an illustration of the Sūtra of the contemplation of Amitāyus
Tang dynasty (second half of the 8th century)
Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 50 x 45 threads per cm. H. 145 cm; W. 133 cm. MG.17672. See also fig. 16. **PM**

This very badly damaged painting consists of three pieces of silk sewn together, measuring approximately 26, 54 and 53 cm from left to right. It is mounted on canvas and a conservation sheet.

Amitābha's paradise differs from the preceding paintings only in minor details which are moreover difficult to pick out. We may note the finely-drawn trees that appear over the side pavilions, the shape of the canopy, the ornamentation of the haloes and nimbi.

The side scenes are separated from the paradise by a border made up of alternating triangles, rather less elaborate than those of paintings 16 and 17. The scenes on the right illustrating the sūtra's introduction are disposed thus, from bottom to top: (1) the arrest of the king in front of Ajātaśatru on his horse; (2) the queen visits the king in prison (above this, a disciple of the Buddha approaching on a cloud can just be made out); (3) Ajātaśatru, again mounted, visits his father the king in order to ascertain his condition; (4) Ajātaśatru pursues his mother with sword drawn; the two ministers are seen below, on the right; (5) the king worships the Buddha; it is not clear why a flying figure with a feminine coiffure appears in the air; (6) the queen kneels before the Buddha in a similar fashion to the king in (5). These are indeed two different scenes, indicated by the presence of two cartouches (which, like all the rest, are blank): in some representations, however, the king and queen are shown together in front of the Buddha, as in paintings 16 and 19; (7) damage to this scene is so great that it is impossible to decipher; it probably represents the episode of the hermit and the hare, although some suggest that it shows the half-length apparition of Śākyamuni behind the Vulture Peak, as in Stein painting 70 (Whitfield, 1, pl. 10). On the right, the series of scenes illustrating the visualisations of queen Vaidehi is read from top to bottom; only eleven survive, and not all of them seem to correspond with the list given in the sūtra.

In several side scenes both on the left and the right the queen may be seen with a looped coiffure, which resembles painting 19, and which sometimes occurs in works of later date.

The painting seems to be of fine workmanship and quite old, in spite of its damaged condition and the degradation arising from the flaking off of the pigments.

Plate 19
The Pure Land of the West of the Buddha Amituo (Amitābha)
Five Dynasties (beginning of the 10th century). Painting on silk. H. 141 cm; W. 84.2 cm. MG.17673. **PM. MS**

This painting departs from the schema established the preceding works as the illustrations of the *Sūtra of the contemplation of Amitāyus* are placed in the lower section rather than in side panels.

The careful execution of this painting is demonstrated by the particularly sensitive representation of the architecture, drawn in great detail and more visually intelligible than in most works of this genre. We may observe that the octagonal pavilions of the drum and bell, on the right and left respectively, are supported by the roof of a gallery which runs behind the central hall. The pavilion overhanging this hall, in fact situated behind it, is generally wide open, whether or not it shelters an Amitābha triad. In this case however the studded door is shut. Many details of construction, arrangement and decoration (such as the rolled-up blinds) are very clear and would be of interest to specialists. The celestial music is represented by two instruments, a flute (?) and clappers, to right and left.

Amitābha is attended not only by his two usual bodhisattvas, but also by four monks or important disciples (they number only two in plate 17). The orchestra has been reduced to only four musicians: *pipa* and transverse flute on the right, clappers and end-blown flute on the left. On the other hand, the dancer beats a two-ended drum tied around his chest.

The upper predella (pl. 19-3, top) beneath the paradise proper bears simultaneous representations of the preamble to the *Sūtra of contemplation* on the right and of the visualisations of queen Vaidehi on the left. The order of the first series on the right is surprising. The arrangement from upper right to left is: (1) a standing buddha who never usually figures in illustrations of this genre; (2) a guard on the point of killing the hermit in the presence of king Bimbisāra mounted on a horse; (3) the white hare pursued by a rider carrying a falcon. The next episode is found in the lower part, moving from left to right from the middle of the predella: (4) the arrest of the king by a guard in the presence of Ajātaśatru, mounted on a horse; (5) visit of the queen to her husband, seated in a pavilion, while Maudgalyāyana (or Pūrṇa, the artist has only included one of them) appears in a cloud having been sent by the Buddha; two distinct episodes are conflated here; (6) Ajātaśatru chases his mother, intending to kill her. The final episode is found in the upper row, in the centre: (7) man and wife look on together as the Buddha appears. The queen has a rather rare looped coiffure, found in works dating from the tenth century such as the painting reproduced in

plate 91. The left side of this predella shows the visualisations, reduced to eleven judging by the number of cartouches. These seem to arranged in two rows, both running from right to left first in the upper row and then in the lower; they do not keep strictly to the order given in the sūtra.

The second predella, lower down, displays eight monks. Three of these carry various objects: a vase, a long-handled censer and a sūtra. Other objects are placed on the ground beside them: flasks of water and a large dish with offerings of flowers. Some other objects are not easy to make out. It is impossible to know who these monks are, as there are no inscriptions. It is probable that they commissioned the painting. Their faces, some marked with age, demonstrate the artist's skill. Their robes are painstakingly drawn and coloured, and display some interesting variations.

Plate 20

Fragment of a painting of the Pure Land of the Buddha Amitābha

Tang dynasty (first half of the 8th century). Painting on silk. H. 59.6 cm; w. 54.5 cm. EO.1171. **PM. MS**

The lower part of this painting has suffered very serious loss, and the work in fact appears to have been slashed in places because of some exactly rectangular cuts. It is probable that the width of the fragment is the same as the painting in its original state, in which case nothing is missing to the left and right of the group represented. The few figures suggest that the painting represents an assembly or preaching scene rather than a paradise or pure land, in which there are numerous figures and elaborate decoration.

Seated under the a tree of Enlightenment with two trunks, whose foliage frames a circular canopy, the buddha makes the gesture of preaching with his right hand. His left hand is lost, but was probably lowered. The attendant bodhisattvas to his right and left each carry a small image of a transformation buddha seated in meditation in their head-dresses. These are both Avalokiteśvara, hence the buddha must be Amitābha. The latter may only be distinguished from Śākyamuni by his acolytes, Avalokiteśvara (generally on his left) and Mahāsthāmaprāpta (on the right). Here at least there is an anomaly. Akiyama, who has been very interested in this painting, believes he can obviate the problem by saying that the secondary bodhisattva on the left-hand side, beneath the assistant, is Mahāsthāmaprāpta. Contrary to what he supposes, however, it is impossible to find in the diadem his distinctive emblem, the vase, no matter how simplified or stylised. It is moreover unlikely that Mahāsthāmaprāpta would be thus relegated to second place when the essence of his rôle is to balance Avalokiteśvara on the other side of Amitābha. We may also note that the vase is only occasionally shown in his head-dress, since his position to the right of Amitābha is sufficient to identify him. That said, it seems fairly indisputable that the buddha is Amitābha, even if the presence of two Avalokiteśvaras is inexplicable.

We cannot assume an artist's error for this anomaly. A painting in the British Museum, Stein painting 6 (Whitfield, 1, pl. 7 and p. 297-300), manifestly dating to the same time and very similar to the work in question, representing a buddha preaching the Law surrounded by acolytes amongst which are two bodhisattvas. Both bear a transformation buddha in their head-dress, and are therefore Avalokiteśvara. R. Whitfield prefers to identify the buddha as Śākyamuni, in view of the monks in his entourage (Whitfield, 1, p. 297). We do not share his opinion, though it is true that there is nothing to distinguish Amitābha from Śākyamuni, apart from their attendants.

Taking up the argument of a previously published article,[14] Akiyama studies in minute detail the style of the painting in his note on it in the Japanese edition of this publication. The fine preliminary lines in black ink, the features drawn in red, the modelling in a thicker red, the yellow flesh tints and other elements all seem to him to be characteristic of the Buddhist art of the Tang in the seventh and eighth centuries. The date he proposes (early eighth century) is based on the comparison of this work with the wall-paintings of certain Tang caves – 322 (*Bakkō*, 3, pl. 18), 220 (*id.*, pl. 21 to 34), 329 (*id.*, pl. 43 to 50), 332 (*id.*, pl. 87 to 94). Akiyama also thinks that the crown decorated with fern frond motifs worn by the left-hand bodhisattva seems to be similar to that of a painting in cave 45 (*id.*, pl. 127) dating to the *Kaiyuan* era (713-741). Furthermore, the painting strikes him as earlier than Stein painting 6.

Plate 21

Fragment of a triad: the buddha Amituo (Amitābha) and the bodhisattva Guanyin (Avalokiteśvara)

Tang dynasty (first half of the 9th century). Painting on silk. H. 69.5 cm; w. 41 cm. EO.1159. See also fig. 15. **MS**

Nothing survives of this painting but these two figures, though it is fair to assume that another bodhisattva was found on the right side, in the same position as the figure on the left. The figure on the left is Avalokiteśvara, as proved by the image of Amitābha in his head-dress as well as by the willow branch and flask that he holds in his hands. We propose that the buddha is Amitābha. The bodhisattva missing on the right side would be Mahāsthāmaprāpta. Together, these constitute what is usually known as the 'Amitābha triad'. It should however be noted that the classic iconography and the texts normally place Avalokiteśvara on Amitābha's left and not on the right, as here. There are exceptions, however. Plate 20 depicts a similar triad, though in this latter case an image of Amitābha may be seen in the coiffures of both attendant bodhisattvas, which fact suggests that both figures may be interpreted as Avalokiteśvara.

Avalokiteśvara's canopy is less sumptuous and lower situated than Amitābha's, as is common in this type of composition. His halo includes a border of lotus flowers painted in very delicate and carefully shaded colours without parallel in the other paintings of the collection. The upper frieze (fig. 15) is composed of

swags of draperies characteristic of banners, while the red bird flying above Amitābha's canopy makes an original decorative element.

The balanced composition, the skilful lines (particularly remarkable are Avalokiteśvara's hands) and the richness and delicacy of the palette indicate that we are dealing here with a work of great quality.

Plate 22
Fragment of a painting of Amitābha's Pure Land of the West
Tang dynasty (9th cent). Painting on silk. 40x36 threads per cm. H. 165cm; W. 42cm. EO.1130. See also fig.18. **PM. MS**

The very large size of this paradise, when complete, may be guessed at by the dimensions of this fragment. In the middle of the fragment a vertical seam is visible, suggesting that the painting was originally constructed of three pieces of silk, one in the middle and two at the sides as in the painting in plate 5. The right-hand bodhisattva seated beneath a canopy is Avalokiteśvara, with a transformation buddha in his crown, which in turn allows us to identify as Amitābha the buddha depicted at the centre of whom only the left part survives. The lower part of his canopy, decorated with a net motif, is placed higher than Avalokiteśvara's. We can also see one of the trunks of the *bodhi* tree, which frames the canopy and serves as a background for the central image. The plinth of multi-coloured tiles supporting his lotus seat is unusual. Beneath the four secondary bodhisattvas vertically arranged between Amitābha and Avalokiteśvara appears the ridge of a roof. It is difficult to know quite what this corresponds with, since the buildings characteristic of this kind of paradise are situated higher and behind. A few traces of the orchestra can just be made out on the tongue of silk extending from the bottom of the fragment (fig. 18).

A bird with a human head or *kalaviṅka*, its hands joined, may be seen to the right of the offering table beneath the throne. These birds are sometimes encountered in paradise scenes, as for example in figure 14, but they play musical instruments, such being their rôle. Barely visible above the bird is a small naked child, who appears to be walking. Naked infants are depicted in Amitābha's paradise, seated on lotus blossoms in the pool; they are interpreted as the reborn souls. The location and action of this particular child are quite surprising. Just as remarkable and in the same area of the painting is the double stem, which bears a type of censer at the end of one stem and a bud at the end of the other. Although incomplete, there are many interesting aspects to this painting. It remains, however, difficult to classify.

Plate 23
Fragment of the Pure Land of a Buddha
Tang dynasty (second half of the 8th century)
Painting on silk. H. 71.6 cm; W. 34.8 cm. EO.1169. **PM**

The bodhisattva's nimbus, the size of his lotus throne and above all the canopy beneath which he sits all indicate that this figure is one of the principal attendants of an unidentified buddha. The latter is missing from the painting but would have been depicted seated on the right, in the middle of the work. The paradise or similar painting from which this fragment comes must have been of a simplified design, because the lattice border on the left in fact encloses the composition, whereas large paradise depictions include many other figures alongside the great attendant bodhisattvas. Architectural details above the canopy indicate that the composition continued vertically. There are no clues to help with the identification of the bodhisattva, who differs from the attendants represented in paradise scenes in having a moustache and a tuft of hair growing under his lower lip. His lower garment is also rather unusual, decorated with small red and white flowers.

The painting has undergone a certain amount of restoration and repainting, which has altered its original appearance. Its poor state of preservation has the advantage however of making visible the preparatory sketch, upon which the artist applied colours (now faded), white, and red lines to model the figures and highlight the contours. The painting has a certain interest despite a rather careless clumsiness. The flames around the halo, the green of the lotus and the inner line of the nimbus all betray a hasty execution. Judging by the vertical border, the balustrade, the haloes and the general style of the painting, it probably dates to the period of Tibetan occupation, between 781 and 848 AD. It may be compared with the wall-paintings of cave 154 (*Bakkō*, 4, pl. 97-98).

Plate 24
Scenes of bad conduct
Tang dynasty (8th-9th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 56 x 51 threads per cm. H. 24.2 cm; W. 38.2 cm. EO.1188. **PM**

The most striking detail of this fragment is the border of arabesques running along the lower edge. One painting in London, Stein painting 37, representing a paradise of Amitābha with marginal illustrations of the *Sūtra of Contemplation on Amitāyus* (*Taishō*, 365), shares this feature exactly (Whitfield, 1, pl. 19-4, fig. 55 and p. 314-316). This border enabled Whitfield to recognise that the fragment in the Pelliot collection in fact belongs to Stein painting 37, partly filling a gap in the lower left half. The arabesque at the base of our fragment matches that of the Stein painting. The vignettes painted at the foot of Stein 37 show actions and their karmic retribution, at least judging by what can be seen in the painting and read in the accompanying inscriptions in cartouches - for example, "At the moment of his death, the person who has committed the ten unwholesome actions is welcomed in the hells". It should be noted that these ten actions are not represented in any paradise painting. They are however justified, since they are mentioned at the end of the sūtra on Amitāyus, as well as the retribution they entail – particularly the guilty being reborn in the evil destinies.

On this fragment, the left-hand illustration has almost entirely disappeared but its corresponding cartouche reads: "Slaughtering pigs and sheep". This of course is an action strongly condemned by Buddhist morality. The cartouche for the right-hand illustration is missing, but the latter is in good condition. It depicts three figures (probably four when complete) seated around a table on which are laid out dishes or plates and what appear to be pairs of chopsticks. The guest in the foreground appears to hold something in his hand. There is hardly any space left under the banquet scene in which to depict the punishment.

Like the large painting from which it has become detached, this fragment is in exceptional condition, so much so that Whitfield goes so far as to suggest that the work was deliberately destroyed after its completion. According to his detailed study, the style of this painting is very particular and does not fit in with the rest of the body of Dunhuang paintings.

Plate 25
Liu Sahe and the miraculous statue of Liangzhou
Tang dynasty (first half of the 9th century). Painting on silk. H. 73 cm; W. 27.5 cm. MG.17677. **JPD**

The subject of this painting was originally identified as a bodhisattva offering white flowers in front of an incense-burner, although the subsidiary scenes make it clear that this is a fragment of a much larger work.

A few years ago, R. Whitfield aided by R. Jéra-Bezard linked this piece with two other fragments in London (Stein paintings 20 and 87; Whitfield, 1, pl. 22, fig. 62-67 and 112) by the presence in all three of the same basic colours. A supplementary element in establishing this link was the disposition of various scenes accompanying an illustration of Śākyamuni preaching on Vulture Peak. An orchestra of six musicians, all wearing ribbon hats and some dressed in white tunics, may be seen in the background at the top right of the Pelliot fragment. Beneath them, a green buddha head on a blue rectangle emerges from a marsh or a bed of weeds. Lower still, there is an expanse of water with two red barriers at its edge, and a group of five horsemen of whom only three are complete. The first of these carries a standard, the four others lances decorated with pennons. Two diagonal parallel lines represent a river or a track. Then, to the right of an uninscribed cartouche, is a group of five monks followed by a figure wearing a black hat. At the bottom of the painting, six riders with standard and lances advance towards the right behind some hills.

Of all these scenes, the buddha head is the most intriguing. It recalls the two buddha statues found on the principal London fragment, one of which is surrounded by scaffolding, and thus evokes the legend of the miraculous statue and the monk Liu Sahe, whose religious name was Huida (c. 343-435 AD). The biography of Liu Sahe is known to us through several texts, such as the Dunhuang manuscripts P.2680 V°, 3570 V° and 3727 which are themselves clarified by other texts incorporated into the Buddhist canon, in particular the *Mingxiang ji* (*Taishō*, 2122, p. 919-920), the *Gaoseng zhuan* (*Taishō*, 2059, p. 409-410) and the *Xu gaoseng zhuan* (*Taishō*, 2060, p. 644-645[15]).

The legend of Liu Sahe is above all associated with the discovery of the miraculous image of Mount Yugu. Shortly before his death, Liu Sahe is said to have predicted the unearthing of a miraculous statue on Mount Yugu, north of Panhe, a commandery of the prefecture of Liangzhou presently in Gansu province. A century later, a headless stone statue was revealed on Mount Yugu during a storm. The following extraordinary occurrence took place: no matter what was done, the substitute head fell to the ground, thus announcing the end of the Northern Zhou dynasty whose emperor Wu was to outlaw Buddhism in 574 AD. Several years after this, and at a distance of more than one hundred *li* to the east, the real head was found, and subsequently placed on the statue. Liu Sahe knew of the statue because in a previous life he had been the bodhisattva Libin, who was supposed to have had this statue carved in order to convert the people of Yugu. He is also said to have made a prediction about the Dunhuang caves, which perhaps explains his fame in this place.

This identification is confirmed by the wall-painting on the south wall of cave 72 and its inscribed cartouches (Bakkō, 5, pl. 83-84 and p. 220-221). The texts of the cartouches were brought to light by Pelliot[16], and then by Sun Xiushen.[17] These correspond to some extent with the portable painting in the Pelliot collection. The comment for the orchestra is thus: "when the crowd of gods [or goddesses], holding flowers, welcome the original head". Regarding the head: "when [the original head of the miraculous] image appears in the torrent of seven *li*". For the first group of riders: "when the imperial emissary comes to pay homage". The inscription relating to the monks reads thus: "when the *bhiksus*, arriving at the gathering, go down to make a pilgrimage". Finally, for the second group of horsemen: "when the imperial emissary and his retinue come to worship the buddha's miraculous image".[18]

Plate 26
Five bodhisattva on lotus blossoms
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on silk *(recto verso)*. Warp and weft: 46 x 34 threads per cm. H. 64 cm; W. 17.3 cm. EO.1179. **MS**

The five bodhisattvas are seated on lotus blossoms arranged in staggered rows and attached to a long stem with large leaves. This very decorative composition recalls the infants on lotus flowers shown in plate 28.

A number of details are unusual and merit particular attention. Firstly, the coiffures of the figures, which involve a curious ball-shaped chignon, sometimes topped with a flower. The triangular hat of the third figure also appears to be extremely uncommon. The bodhisattvas' postures are interesting, in particular how they sit either in what Mme Nicolas-Vandier calls the "Indian mode" or on one knee in a posture the Chinese call "kneeling in the Barbarian fashion". Another sin-

gularity of this painting is the voluptuous swaying of all five bodhisattvas. These idiosyncrasies seem to betray a foreign influence, either from India or Serindia, in a painting whose manufacture is otherwise totally Chinese.

The top of a balustrade like those seen in paradise depictions appears in the lower part. If this painting does represent a paradisial scene, its size suggests that it is surely not part of a larger work. Furthermore, both *recto* and *verso* are painted in so perfectly symmetrical a fashion that it seems as if the artist had repeated on the *verso* the design and colours of the *recto* observed through the silk itself. There is also a frame consisting of a narrow black band at the sides. We are evidently dealing here with a banner that was supposed to be viewed from both sides.

This painting may be linked with another in Delhi (described in Waley, p. 295, no. 512), in the upper left-hand corner of which there is a naked child standing in a lotus. Waley interprets this as souls being reborn in a paradise.[19]

Plate 27
Standing buddha
Tang dynasty (first half of the 9th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 34 x 30 threads per cm. H. 48 cm; W. 16.2 cm. EO.1398 (P.201). **MS**

The figure has a halo and is dressed in a monastic robe. His proper right hand makes the gesture of discussion, while the left palm faces upwards, with the fingers bent as if he were holding an object. These elements constitute the preaching gesture, and are frequently used in representations of the Buddha (see plates 39, 40 and 41, *etc.*). The upper part of the head and halo are torn and show signs of crude restitching; a thick white thread is visible on the figure's forehead. Owing to this damage it is impossible to see if the figure has hair or is shaven-headed. His face and body are painted a strong yellow, which colour may have been intended as a substitute for gold and would thus have been a suitable vehicle for expressing the glory of the Buddha. A damaged cartouche at the top left of the painting is uninscribed.

The polychrome frieze of tiles and the two black bands at the sides, decorated with alternating triangles, indicate that this was a banner.

Plate 28
Infants on lotus blossoms (reborn souls). Evocation of the Pure Land of the West
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on silk. H. 41.3 cm; W. 18.4 cm. EO.1152. **DE**

The six little boys represented here bring to mind the souls of the just who are reborn in heaven; they resemble those who appear in the lower part of the paradisiacal scene depicted in Stein painting 12 (Whitfield, 1, pl. 8-8), except that the latter are entirely naked and hold flowers.

Arranged in triads one above the other, they stand on lotus blossoms growing out from a single stem which appears at the base of the painting and which divides as it moves upwards. Half of a seventh child may be seen at the top of the painting. Apart from one who is completely naked, the children wear short camisoles and little boots. The lower group of children hold each other by the hand, while the upper group play musical instruments, including a mouth organ and Pan-pipes.

Naked children are sometimes encountered in the paintings as offering-bearers in place of *apsarasas*. Akiyama associates them with the children appearing on a decorated relic box from Kizil (vol. II, pl. 181). The great continuity of this motif in Chinese art should be remembered – indeed, it appears even nowadays on popular New Year images to bring good luck and to obtain male descendants.

Plates 29 and 30
Fragments of a long banner of seated buddhas
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Ink on silk. Warp and weft: 47 x 20 threads per cm. Plate 29: H. 37.6 cm; W. 19.5 cm. MG.17675. Plate 30: H. 66 cm; W. 19 cm. MG.17791. **DE**

These two rather clumsy and hasty compositions are clearly by the same hand. They each represent a buddha seated in meditation, one with hands joined in front of his chest, and the other making the gesture of appeasement. They seem to have been cut from the long banner reproduced in plate 41, which is of approximately the same width, and in which may be seen six buddhas seated on lotus blossoms.

Plate 31
Seated buddha (fragment from a banner's triangular headpiece)
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 36 x 33 threads per cm. H. 18.2 cm; W. 18 cm. EO.1187b. **DE**

A buddha is represented in the triangle, with halo and nimbus, seated on a lotus flower, with both feet visible. His right hand, with crossed lines on the palm, makes the gesture of preaching. The left hand hangs down and touches his knee. This is a common posture and is also found, for example, in plates 6 or 10. The monastic robe leaves his left shoulder uncovered. The lotus flower is surrounded by foliage or volutes. Below appears the top of the banner, of which nothing remains but the upper frieze decorated with five flowers and hangings.

Akiyama has undertaken a scrupulous analysis of the colours of the composition, and stresses the interest of the chromatic range involving four colours, vermilion red and blue on the one hand and violet-purple and green on the other. This resulting chromatic harmony first appeared at the beginning of the Tang, and became standard as the dynasty reached its apogee. The painting seems interesting to him from this point of view.

Plate 32
Seated buddha (triangular headpiece and lower frieze)
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 35 x 31 threads per cm. H. 32 cm; W. 19.5 cm. MG.17676. **DE**

The distinctive feature of this banner (which at first appears to be complete) lies in the absence of a principal painting under the rectangular band. It consists of three pieces of imperfectly-dyed salmon pink silk quite unlike the usual plain silk taffeta. There is a selvedge along the left edge of the central rectangle, which shows a pleated pattern between two horizontal bands. The lower part is bordered with a fringed frieze with a tiled effect.[20] The possibility remains however that this lower fringed section was fixed to the upper part in order to give the banner, when it had lost its main section, a more presentable appearance.

The triangular headpiece contains a buddha seated in meditation upon a lotus between two palmettes of three-lobed leaves. The wide face with a broad nose is characteristic of the tenth century.

Plates 33 and 34
Seated buddha (triangular headpiece of a banner)
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on hemp cloth. Warp and weft: 11 x 10 threads per cm. Plate 33: H. 15.5 cm; W. 32.5 cm. EO.3630. Plate 34: H. 16 cm; W. 36.2 cm. EO.1222a. **DE**

Perhaps drawn with a reed pen, the buddha has a child-like face and is seated in meditation. His hands and feet are hidden by a red robe. Two flower buds extends into the lower corners of the triangle from the lotus seat.

Plates 35 and 36
Two buddhas in a square, intended as triangular headpieces
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on hemp cloth. Warp and weft: 11 x 11 threads per cm. Plate 35: H. 23.2 cm; W. 24.2 cm. EO.1222b. Plate 36: H. 53.7 cm; W. 54 cm. MG.17790. **DE**

It is beyond doubt that these almost square pieces of hemp cloth were to be folded in half along the diagonal in order to create double-sided triangular banner headpieces, painted on both *recto* and *verso*. In plate 35, the original selvedge is present on the right side, and along the other three cut edges some yet visible stitching was intended to prevent fraying. Similar stitching may be seen in plate 36. The use of over-diluted pigments has led to wash effects in the areas between the motifs.

Both works show two buddhas, seated in meditation, disposed in opposite corners; in plate 35 the hands and feet are hidden (Amitābha?), while in plate 36 the left foot is visible and the hands make the gesture of appeasement. Floral motifs frame the lotus seat.

A related work, painted on silk damask, is kept in the British Museum (MAS 888, Whitfield, 3, pl. 35). Another, discovered at Turfan and formerly in the Otani collection, is now preserved in the museum of Lüshun (Port-Arthur). The following inscription or graffito appears on the latter, which resembles plate 35: "bodhisattva who prolongs life". This, of course, does not describe the buddha represented in the painting, but most probably refers instead to the bodhisattva Guanyin painted on the banner to which the headpiece was attached.[21]

Plate 37
Two seated buddhas (banner headpieces)
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century).Painting on hemp cloth. Warp and weft: 11 to 12 x 8 threads per cm. 37-1: *recto*:Above: H. 49 cm; W. 78.5 cm. EO.3636. 37-2: *verso:* Below: H. 53.5 cm; W. 65 cm. EO.3634. **JPD**

These two triangular headpieces are similar, and are each composed of a single square of hemp cloth folded along the diagonal. They still retain their original brown borders, which are folded over both sides of the painting to a give a width of 4 and 7 cm respectively. These are stitched onto the edges of the triangles. A pink suspension loop is attached to the top of each headpiece. Some stitching remains at the bottom of the upper triangle. The lower headpiece is badly stained by damp.

Each face of the triangles shows a buddha with halo and nimbus seated on a lotus. Bud-laden stems grow out sideways from the base of each lotus. The hands of the upper buddha make the gesture of discussion, while those of the lower buddha are hidden from view. Both figures wear monastic robes. The garment of the upper buddha is red on the *verso* and green on the *recto*; it covers his shoulders but leaves his forearms bare. The robe of the lower figure, on the other hand, is red on both *recto* and *verso*, and covers the buddha completely. Both figures have similar proportions.

Plate 38
Two seated buddhas (banner headpieces)
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on hemp cloth. Warp and weft: 11 to 13 x 10 threads per cm. 38-1: recto: H. 45.5 cm; W. 71 cm. EO.3637. 38-2: verso: H. 43 cm; W. 71 cm. EO.3635. **JPD**

These two triangular banner headpieces resemble the preceding pair, and both retain their original borders. A green suspension loop is still attached to the upper example. The borders – pink and salmon-coloured respectively – are folded over and sewn onto both faces of the triangles; they measure 6.5 to 7 cm each side. A fragment of a border, 2 cm wide, survives at the base of the upper triangle, along with the beginning of a streamer and traces of thread. Two small pieces of a splint are found at the base of the lower example. Both triangles have been torn in several places and are stained by humidity.

Represented on each side of the triangles is a buddha with aureole and nimbus, wrapped in a red monastic robe and seated on a lotus. A decorative motif of leaves and buds emerges from each side of the central lotus. The hands and feet of three of the buddhas are hidden from view. On the recto of the upper example however, the feet of the buddha are visible, soles turned upwards, and his hands make the gesture of fearlessness.

Plate 39
Three seated buddhas
Five Dynasties (first half of the 10th century). Painting on paper. Chain-lines: 4 per cm. H. 63 cm; W. 19.4 cm. MG.17789. **JPD**

This painting was executed on two leaves of paper 31.5 cm long, probably a whole sheet cut in two, then pasted together to make a longer piece.

The three buddhas are seated on lotus flowers, one above the other. The position of the feet is different in each case: whereas in the uppermost example the sole of one foot may be seen turned upwards, the middle buddha is seated in the full diamond position, with both soles facing up. The feet of the third buddha are unseen, hidden beneath the monastic robe. The positions of the hands differ similarly. The right hand of each of the three buddhas makes the gesture of discussion, with crossed lines on the palm. The left hand of the upper buddha on the other hand hangs down, evoking the gesture of calling the earth to witness. The hands of the middle buddha together make a widely-known gesture of preaching. The figure at the bottom of the painting makes the gesture of setting in motion the wheel of the Law, though his left hand is turned in the wrong direction. Each with aureole and nimbus, these buddhas are shown with an *ūrṇā* on the forehead and a pearl at the base of the *uṣṇiṣa*, with a stylised flower at either side. There are three empty cartouches on the left. Despite being created in series, it was, perhaps, not intended that these images be separated.

Plate 40
Two buddhas and a bodhisattva
Five Dynasties (first half of the 10th century). Painting on paper. Chain-lines: 4 per cm. H. 70.5 cm; W. 18.3 cm. EO.3642. **JPD**

Now mounted on a special backing, this painting is composed of three leaves which measure from top to bottom 16, 29 and 25 cm respectively. The two upper pieces were cut from the same sheet, while the paper of the lower part – rather damaged on the left – is a much lighter colour. The two upper leaves are greyish and fly-spotted, resulting from prolonged exposure to air, whereas the lower piece has been less subject to the depredations of time.

If this painting is compared with plates 39 and 42, it becomes clear that the two upper figures formerly constituted the lower part of a triple representation of the buddha, which was damaged and then restored by the addition of a third, different figure at the bottom.

On the two upper sheets, two buddhas are seated on lotus blossoms, making with both hands a well-known gesture of preaching, as does the middle buddha in plate 39. They resemble the figures of plate 39, with aureoles and nimbi composed of concentric circles, and framed by empty cartouches and floral motifs. The buddhas resemble the one represented in plate 42.

A bodhisattva in princely dress, seated cross-legged on a lotus (with feet visible) is the subject of the lower sheet, added later. Turning towards the right, his hands are joined together in the offering gesture which is theoretically never made by a buddha. Scrolling clouds may be seen above his halo. An uninscribed cartouche is on the right. This painting differs appreciably from the those of the upper part by its clear lines and more fluid strokes.

Plate 41
Six buddhas seated on lotus blossoms
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Ink on silk. Warp and weft: 47 x 18 threads per cm. H. 303 cm; W. 19.2 cm. EO.1165. See also fig. 17. **DE**

Arranged one above the other, each buddha is seated – with his feet hidden – on a lotus throne whose plinth is joined to the buddha below by a leafy stem.

The hands make different *mudrā*: palms together (drawings 1, 2 and 5), the gesture of appeasement (drawings 3 and 6), and the gesture of concentration (drawing 5).

This work was made as a continuous series, from which, it seems, plates 29 and 30 were cut. Longer banners of the same genre are kept in the British Museum. One of these, Stein painting 195 (Whitfield, 2, pl. 37 and fig. 51), also represents buddhas arranged vertically and is 538 cm long; Stein painting 205 (Whitfield, 2, pl. 36 and fig. 52) measures 835 cm, and is covered with bodhisattva motifs. Long banners from Dunhuang of a similar style and representing bodhisattvas are now kept in the National Museum in Seoul, having formerly been part of the Otani collection.[22]

Plate 42
Three seated buddhas
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting in paper. Chain-lines: 4 per cm. H. 62 cm; W. 20.5 cm. EO.3641. **JPD**

As with the painting in plate 39, this painting was executed on two leaves of paper, each 30 cm high, which come from a single sheet cut in half.

The three buddhas placed one above the other are seated on lotus blossoms, and resemble closely those of plates 39 and 40 (upper part only), as do other elements of this painting – in particular, the aureoles, nimbi, lotus flowers and empty cartouches at the left. The positions of feet and hands are, however, different.

The alternating pattern of red and green monastic robes in the two paintings mentioned above is here reversed. The top and bottom buddhas are identical, feet hidden, hands resting in the lap, palms upward, and with a shawl over the shoulder. The middle buddha makes the gesture of argument, and his robe hangs open over his chest. The petals of the central lotus blossom are highlighted in red as in the two other paintings.

We have found it necessary, as did Whitfield, to compare this painting with a group of works kept in London (Whitfield, 2, pl. 73 and figs. 122-133), but those belonging to the Stein collection are only single figures. Whitfield suggests that these were probably arranged in strips like those in the Pelliot collection. This hypothesis remains unconfirmed. The great difference between the paintings of the two collections lies in the fact that most of the London examples are accompanied by inscribed cartouches. The names of various buddhas appearing in these is the only way to distinguish one from another.

Plate 43
Four seated buddhas
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on paper. Vertical chain-lines: 5 per cm. H. 43.6 cm; W. 31.3 cm. MG.17694. **JPD**

The four buddhas are arranged in two registers, and sit cross-legged with the soles of both feet visible. They all make the preaching gesture with their right hands, while the left palm faces upward; both hands together form the *mudrā* of appeasement. The buddha at the lower right is an exception in that the palm of his left hand is turned downward. Each figure has a halo and nimbus, and wears a reddish-brown, patched monastic robe. The pedestals which support the lotus seats of the two buddhas of the upper register are absent in the lower row, probably because the sheet of paper has been cut.

The lines which bisect each other at the middle of the sheet allow us to suppose that it was intended that these vignettes – executed as a set – be cut out. Indeed, there exist a number of similar buddhas, alone and painted on squares of paper which seem to have been cut out. Examples of these are Stein paintings 193, 180, 181, 183, 184 *etc.* (Whitfield, 2, figs. 124, 122, 123, 125, 132). Holes may be seen at the four corners of the work, indicating that it was fixed to another surface either when it was painted or when it served as a religious ornament.

Plate 44
Twenty-one buddhas seated in meditation
Tang dynasty (second half of the 9th century). Painting on paper. Vertical chain-lines: 4 per cm. H. 54.5 cm; W. 30 cm. EO.1229. See also fig. 19. **MS**

These buddhas are disposed in four rows of five, with one solitary figure seated underneath; in terms of dress and posture, the twenty-one resemble the figures depicted on the illustrated rolls of the Sūtra of the Names of the Buddha, and also those which appear in great number on the walls of some of the Dunhuang caves. Their arrangement in this painting is nonetheless quite unique.

An inscription in Khotanese may be seen at the bottom of the painting at either side of the lowest figure, in which the person who commissioned the painting is named as Ca Ttäyä-khi. This would seem to be the transcription into Khotanese of the name Zhang Daqing, which occurs in a manuscript from Dunhuang dating to 886 AD, now kept in London (S. 367).[23] The painting may be dated on the basis of this fact to the end of the ninth century.

A scroll in the British Museum is illustrated with small representations of the Buddha Bhaiṣajyaguru, Lord of Medicines, printed one after the other in columns of seven (Stein painting 256; Whitfield, 2, fig. 156). A date appears after every twenty-first figure: the 8th, 14th, 15th, 23rd, 29th and 30th days of the month. These are the 'six days of fasting' of each month. It seems therefore that it was necessary to print twenty-one images of the buddha on each of these six days. The painting illustrated here seems to bear witness to a similar act of devotion.

Plate 45
Fragment of an embroidered and painted work illustrating a Pure Land
Tang dynasty-Five Dynasties (second half of the 9th century to the first half of the 10th century). Painting and embroidery on silk. H. 28.1 cm; W. 44.2 cm. EO.1163. See also fig. 20. **JPD**

Only two pieces of silk, 16.2 and 10.8 cm high respectively, belonging to this very damaged painting survive, placed one above the other and sewn together. They correspond roughly with two rows of small, painted buddhas above and an embroidered canopy below. Both fragments are made of the same taffeta,[24] though the warp threads run vertically in the upper piece and horizontally in the lower.

The nine buddhas, each with a mandorla and a nimbus, are seated on lotus blossoms. Formerly part of a larger group, they bring to mind the repetitive 'thousand buddha' motif. In this painting, they are arranged above a principal figure of whom nothing remains save the top of a blue-edged halo and the canopy which surmounted it. These are worked with both paint and thread. The canopy comprises a net ornamented with pendants and flaming gems. The ornaments are entirely covered with embroidery, but the stitching does not quite conceal the brush strokes that outline the net.

If we compare this work with the embroidery kept in London showing Śākyamuni Buddha preaching the Law (Whitfield 3, pl. 1), we might suppose that the principal figure of the Pelliot painting is similarly the Buddha preaching, either sitting or standing. Akiyama nevertheless suggests that this painting illustrates a paradise. In point of fact, there is no other extant example of

such a representation which includes 'thousand buddha' figures amongst all the portable paintings from Dunhuang, and the subject of this work thus remains moot. The careful working of the embroidery contrasts with the rather summary execution of the painted buddhas.

Plate 46

The five buddhas of the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala (Diamond-world)
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 37 x 25 threads per cm. H. 101.5 cm; W. 61 cm. MG. 17780. **MS**

In graphic representations of the *maṇḍala*, the four secondary buddhas are generally placed at the cardinal points around the central buddha, Vairocana. The arrangement here resembles however the upper part of plate 99, and is the result of a clockwise shift, with the western position (at the top) moving to the north-west (at the upper right) and so on. This lay-out is probably inherited from three-dimensional representations. The symbolic signification is in no way altered by this purely formal modification.

The figures may be identified not only by their positions in the *maṇḍala* but also by the attributes held in their joined hands which rest in their laps, by the colour of their various complexions, and by the animals or birds which serve as their vehicles and which may be found in the pedestals of their thrones. These elements are the following:

1) at the centre, Mahāvairocana, with golden (yellow) skin, wheel, and white lions;
2) to the east (at the lower left), Akṣobhya, with white skin, vertically placed *vajra*, and white elephants;
3) to the south (at the upper left), Ratnasambhava, with blue skin, jewel, and blue horses;
4) to the west (at the upper right), Amitābha, with pink (red) skin, lotus blossom, and blue peacocks;
5) to the north (at the lower right), Amoghasiddhi, with green skin, *vajra* like that of Akṣobhya, and golden garudas.

It should be noted that the attributes are not commonly included in descriptions of the *maṇḍala*. They are nevertheless well attested to in the tradition of tantric Buddhism, and illustrate the classes or lineages headed by the four secondary buddhas. Amoghasiddhi's attribute is in this case anomalous: it is normally not a simple *vajra* but either a crossed *vajra* (*viśvavajra*), as seen for example in plate 99 or in painting P.4518(17) in the Bibliothèque Nationale, or a sword as in plate 47. Vairocana's wheel – in no way anomalous – is accounted for differently. The manuscript P.2012, which apparently dates to the tenth century, is a witness to the diffusion of these symbolic representations. In it, the four directional buddhas (not including Vairocana) are listed in the usual order given above, and are the subject of diagrams in which their characteristic attributes are clearly represented and the colours of their complexions are noted: white, blue, red and green.

These colours do not draw in fact upon the ancient tantric sources known in China, but instead follow apparently later traditions transmitted to Tibet during the eighth-ninth centuries. Probably part of a larger body of evidence that is no longer available to us, a fragment of a Tibetan tantric ritual (Pelliot tibétain 255) enumerates the five buddhas and assigns to each the same position and colour – including the golden colour of Vairocana – as are found in this painting. These recur in plate 99, in which Vairocana is however yellow. The colours of the vehicles are not mentioned in the texts which we have consulted. Even if the horses and elephants are here the same colour as the buddha with which they are associated, the same cannot be said for the lions, peacocks and garudas. We will note how these colours differ in some respects in plate 99.[25]

The eight figures placed in front of the four secondary buddhas are the inner and outer bodhisattvas of offering who, in a normal form of the *maṇḍala*, are found at the intermediate points of the wide, central circle and at the angles of the first enclosure respectively. They may be seen arranged according to this schema in plate 99. In plate 46, however, they are disposed in pairs – one inner and one outer – in front of the buddha with whom they are associated and from whom they derive their colour. In front of Akṣobhya (white) we see Vajralāsī (inner) with both fists resting on his thighs and Vajradhūpa (outer) holding a gilded censer. The figure in front of Ratnasambhava (blue) bearing a dish filled with a many-coloured substance is Vajrapuṣpā (outer); his neighbour, Vajramālā, holds up a garland with both arms. The dependants of Amitābha are Vajralokā (outer), who carries a flaming torch, and Vajragītā (inner), who plays a stringed musical instrument. Vajranṛtyā (inner), who dances with much movement of his elbows, and Vajragandhā (outer), whose anointing perfume is unfortunately impossible to make out, are both found in front of Amoghasiddhi (green). Except for the two attendants of Ratnasambhava (probably as the result of a painting error), the remaining six bodhisattvas are arranged in the correct inner-outer order moving from left to right. We may add that the eight bodhisattvas are thought of as feminine, as shown in the painting by the little tufts of black hair which appear at the top of their gilded head-dresses.[26]

It appears to us that the musicians and bearers of offerings represented at the top of the painting only fulfil a decorative rôle, like *apsarasas* and other *feitian* who are frequently found in the upper sections of certain paintings.

The painting displays a variety of objects. We suggest that these served to furnish the painting as well as having their own meaning and importance. Some of these are the gilded attributes of the five buddhas: the wheel, the jewel, the flower and the *viśvavajra*. The jewel depicted above Akṣobhya is surely an error, and is replaced by the *vajra* located lower down, below Vajralāsī. Other objects, such as the fish, the conch and cylindrical banners are scattered over the painting; these form part of the group known as the 'eight auspicious signs'

which we will encounter in their entirety in the description of plate 99.

In front of Vairocana and under the blue lotus forming the base of his throne is found an offering table in diagrammatic form. This consists essentially of a white table-cloth decorated with a sort of *maṇḍala*, the compartments of which are drawn in red. It is just possible to make out an eight-petalled lotus flower that fills the central square, while four wrathful deities guard the four gates with right foot raised in the dancing posture of the kings of knowledge. The remaining elements of this enigmatic *maṇḍala* are barely visible.

Donors are depicted in the lower part of the painting at either side of an offering table. The first figure on the right has a shaven head and holds a flower in his joined hands; he is probably a monk, and the donor of this painting. A pale blue horizontal cartouche above him bears no inscription, and is unique in its orientation. Behind him, a man carrying a smoking censer is accompanied by the following inscription: "Deng Yichang, deceased father of the donor". A youth dressed in grey carries a round fan on the far right, and is surely the servant of the dead man. On the left-hand side we see first of all a woman holding a censer and a flower, with an inscription beside her which reads: "Lady Li, deceased mother of the donor". Behind her there is a young woman, and another inscription: "Yuantai, their deceased daughter". Two female servants bring up the rear, one carrying a rolled-up garment (?), the other a fan which resembles the one held by the servant boy on the right. The men's clothes are extremely plain, and need no comment; the women's outfits on the other hand do attract attention. Their robes seem to lack the richly worked fronts which appear in the scooped neckline of the dresses as well as the long scarf or shawl, which elements may be admired, for instance, in plates 96 and 99 of this volume and plate 63 of volume 2. Their coiffures in particular are most striking. The hair is drawn up onto the top of the head, where it is first enclosed by a crown, and then held in place by three clips attached to the crown as it hangs down, ornamented with green gems, before ending in a loop. The same coiffure may also be seen in plates 5 and 84 of volume 2, in which paintings the women hold single flowers in their joined hands as they do in this instance. We cannot be sure that these clothes and head-dresses were the product of a new fashion dating to the end of the tenth century, nor that they were the result of foreign influence; on the other hand we do at least know that the women bore Chinese names.

A person called Deng Yichang is mentioned in the manuscript P.2985 V° 2, along with the date 972 AD. Moreover, in another manuscript (P.3489), dating, it seems, to 968 AD, we learn of a certain Yuantai, a member of a women's association. If, as seems likely, these works do indeed refer to the figures known from the inscriptions in the painting, then – since it was executed after their deaths – it must date after 972 AD.

This painting is remarkable in several respects. Firstly, with paintings of such careful workmanship, the group of donors at the bottom is usually separated from the main body of the work by a line or some other type of frame (except when the donors kneel at the feet of the bodhisattva to whom they address their prayers, as in plates 73, 75 or 78). Moreover, certain details of iconography demand attention. In particular, the diadems of the five buddhas, the three-branched candelabra and the ribbons wound about the 'auspicious objects' seem to betray a foreign, probably Tibetan influence. We will return to this subject when discussing plate 47. Let us now consider Vairocana's throne: its plinth incorporates lions, not just in the double niche which, in the case of the other buddhas, also houses the animals associated with them, but again beside the uprights of the pedestal. This is in fact a *siṃhāsana* or lion-throne. The back of the throne is decorated with fantastical animals derived from an ancient Indian motif whose origins go back to the second century of the Christian era; its most famous example is the statue of Śākyamuni "setting in motion the Wheel of the Law" from the Gupta period (fifth-sixth centuries) kept in the Sarnath Museum. This motif of the throne-back with animal decoration, also known amongst the Pāla, was introduced into Nepal and Tibet where it is widespread.

The artist drew the initial sketch in pale ink, then applied the colours, and finally went over the lines in various colours. The pigments used also distinguish this painting from the others: vermilion, scarlet, gold, lilac, bright green – a very unusual chromatic range. The freshness of the tints and the fine, regular strokes on the almost new silk render this painting not only most unusual but also of the highest quality.

Plate 47

Maṇḍala of the Forty-Two Peaceful Deities

Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 42 x 22 threads per cm. H. 66 cm; W. 68.5 cm. EO.1148. **MS**

The numerous figures in this *maṇḍala* are arranged two by two, in pairs or couples. This arrangement, of which there is no other example in the paintings from Dunhuang, may only be explained by referring to the tantric Buddhist tradition sometimes known as the 'Vajrayāna', which originated in India in the seventh century and was transmitted to Tibet from the eighth century onwards, especially through the translation of the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*. Symbolic couples are well-known in Tibetan Buddhism, with the male partner representing *upāya* ("means", *ie.* compassion) and the female *prajñā* ("wisdom"). Their union produces "great bliss" and leads them to the "thought of enlightenment". This form of tantrism was, however, not accepted by the Chinese. The couples represented in this painting are peaceful and perfectly decent, but they are, nevertheless, necessarily alien to Chinese Buddhist thought. In order to understand this *maṇḍala*, we must first examine its structure.

The five principal couples are located at the centre and at the four directions, and are easily distinguished from the other figures by their larger size and their gold

complexions. In each pair, the *upāya* may be seen on the left, in front of and partially shielding his partner. Each *upāya* holds a distinctive attribute in his right hand, and wears a tiara surmounted with a half-*vajra* which resembles the head-dresses of the Five Buddhas of the preceding painting. The *prajñā* each wear a head-dress with a tuft of hair emerging at the top similar to those worn by the offering bodhisattvas in plate 46, and hold a bell in their left hand. The attributes of the *upāya* are those of the five buddhas of the Diamond-world *maṇḍala*. They do not display the correct bodily colours, since they are all gilded, but the colours of the doors opening in the red border which forms the *maṇḍala* enclosure do correspond with the colours associated with the buddhas of the cardinal directions. The identities of the buddhas can be established on the basis of these signs thus: 1) at the centre Akṣobhya, with a *vajra* in his right hand, and in the other a bell pressed downwards on his thigh. The latter attribute relates him iconographically with Vajrasattva, with whom, moreover, he is sometimes confused in the Indo-Tibetan sphere of tantric Buddhism with which we are dealing here. 2) at the left, to the east, Vairocana, white, holding the wheel upright; 3) at the top, in the south, Ratnasambhava, yellow, holding the jewel; 4) on the right, in the west, Amitābha, red, holding a lotus blossom; 5) at the bottom, in the north, Amoghasiddhi, green, holding the sword – his usual attribute according to Indo-Tibetan tantrism, though a secondary attribute (the *viśvavajra*) is most commonly encountered in paintings. This colour scheme still prevails in present-day Indo-Tibetan tantrism, along with the blue of Akṣobhya that does not appear here. These colours are moreover those of the Diamond-world *maṇḍala*, even if in this latter case Vairocana (white) is found at the centre with Akṣobhya (blue) in the east: the colour is attached to the buddha and not to his location.[27]

The distinctive feature of this *maṇḍala* is the disposition of Akṣobhya at its centre and Vairocana in the east. Such a *maṇḍala* of Akṣobhya is found in Indian tantrism, with the Five Buddhas arranged in the order and colours that we find in this painting, but with fewer secondary figures.[28] The central position of Akṣobhya is widespread in Indo-Tibetan tantrism, although *maṇḍalas* using the Diamond-world arrangement can still be found there.

Initially we called this painting a *maṇḍala* of Akṣobhya, which, while not incorrect, is not satisfactory. The solution has been provided by Tanaka Kimiaki in the Japanese edition of this work,[29] who suggests that we are dealing here with an old version of the *maṇḍala* of the forty-two peaceful deities still used in Tibet. This *maṇḍala* consists of the Five Buddhas, arranged as in the Diamond *maṇḍala*, accompanied by their female partners. To these are added the eight great bodhisattvas (Kṣitigarbha, Maitreya, Ākaśagarbha, Samantabhadra, *etc.*) and the usual eight bodhisattavas of offering, female figures with their hair arranged in black curls hanging down at either side. These sixteen figures are disposed in pairs, with a great bodhisattva coloured blue or black as the *upaya*, and a white or pink bodhisattva of offering playing the rôle of the *prajñā*. The buddhas of the six spheres of existence (the six ways of rebirth) are also depicted. These are the strange figures that can be seen in pairs near the upper and lower edges of the painting nearest the doors: Indra holding a *pipa* (at the upper left), the Sage of the Śākyas carrying an alms bowl and a *khakkhara* (at the lower right), the King with the burning mouth, bearing a casket of jewels (at the upper right?) and others of the same genre who are more difficult to identify in the painting. Finally, four wrathful protectors accompanied by their consorts guard the four directions, seen here in the corners surrounded by flames. All these make a total of forty figures. The descriptions add a sixth, supreme buddha, who is none other than Samantabhadra, accompanied by his *prajñā*: they probably correspond with the last couple, located at the top left, even thought it is difficult to see in this pair the characteristics of a supreme buddha.[30]

The painting is composed of two widths of silk joined together by a vertical median seam. Selvedges run the down the sides of the painting and the upper and lower edges are hemmed. Traces of vermilion thread and needle holes on all four edges suggest that it was originally mounted on a cloth or framed with a fabric of that colour.

The work is exceptional in terms of iconography, and also owing to its style and type of manufacture; it is in some ways difficult to appreciate because of a lack of points of comparison. Although the painting appears so different, we can however compare it with plate 46 in order to reveal some striking parallels. We have already remarked upon the resemblance between the head-dresses of the Five Buddhas (without the decorative points of plate 46) and of their consorts. Though they do not have a blue edging, the haloes do have a similar green ground. More importantly, the haloes of plate 46 contain pale red and greyish blue stripes on a white ground. The same decoration, which is very rare or even unique, is found in this painting. Let us also consider the objects scattered over the ground of the painting: although not exactly the same, they are comparable. The flaming jewel with three dots held by Ratnasambhava and also placed next to him in plate 46 is strangely like the one seen under the same buddha in this painting. We also draw attention to the offering tables with elbowed legs and the ribbons – green and red in this work, green and red or blue and red in plate 46. The colour scheme of pale red and blue-grey on a white background seen in the haloes of plate 46 as well as in this painting, and again in the offerings in the hands of some of the bodhisattvas and at the bottom of plate 46, also occurs on the offering dish placed to the right of Akṣobhya and at the lower right. This painting undoubtedly betrays a marked Tibetan influence, at least from the standpoint of Buddhist doctrine. This, however, is not sufficient to establish a date for the painting. If the work shown in plate 46 does indeed date to the second half of the tenth century, then this one is unlikely to be of very different date, despite the problems of determining this and certain differences that remain.

At all events, as the only witness that has come down to us of the new Tantrism which failed to implant itself

in China, the painting is an important manifestation of the cultural and religious flowering that held sway at Dunhuang in the tenth century.

Plate 48
Upper part of a maṇḍala
Tang dynasty (second half of the 8th century). Painting on silk. H. 24.7 cm; W. 178.6 cm. EO.1146. **MS**

The enclosure with its redented doorway, guardian placed in the doorway and *vajra* placed diagonally at each of the two corners, clearly shows that the painting forms the upper part of a *maṇḍala*. It is on the other hand well-nigh impossible to identify it.

In the Diamond-world *maṇḍala* (*vajradhātu*), each door is guarded by a figure armed with a distinctive weapon and accompanied by an animal. The door of the upper part, oriented towards the west, is usually protected by a guardian carrying a chain. The king of knowledge that we can see here bears a lasso rather than a chain, and has his hands crossed on his breast. He reminds one of Kuṇḍali. The seven buddhas seated on thrones are in all likelihood the 'seven buddhas of the past'. The last one, on the left, is Śākyamuni, under the *pipala* tree, and making the demon-subduing gesture. A *khakkhara* is stuck vertically into the ground to his right and a bag is suspended from the branches to his left. He has no mandorla, unlike the other six buddhas, but his throne is furnished with a back.

The drawing is finely and meticulously executed. The *mudrās* of the hands are very carefully represented. We note, for instance, that the guardian's fingers form the gesture called *karaṇamudrā*, with the little and index fingers stretched out and the middle and fourth bent back under the thumb. Details of the elaborate ornamentation include the bunches of different kinds of fruit hung between the buddhas, and the eight bulbous *stūpas*. The latter are surmounted by a mast upon which are piled ten successive discs and a *vajra* placed vertically on a crescent moon, bringing to mind those that later were to become typical of Tibetan Lamaism. A further detail worth noting is the tree under which Śākyamuni is seated, whose foliage, extending beyond the frame, seems to have been added later. It would be hard, though, to see this as a *pentimento*. Stranger still is the inexplicable presence of a vertical *vajra*, partly worn away, located in front of Śākyamuni's throne.

The painting contrasts strongly with all other works on account of its fine workmanship. In order to hazard a date for the painting we would obviously need comparative materials which we do not have. Stylistic considerations have however led Akiyama to place it in the second half of the eighth century.

Plate 49
Maṇḍala of Vajrasattva
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 47 x 27 threads per cm. H. 64 cm; W. 62.3 cm. EO.1167. **MS**

We follow here Mme Nicolas-Vandier's theory, according to which the central figure can be identified as Vajrasattva. Unlike the buddhas and bodhisattvas represented in the majority of paintings, who enjoyed enormous prestige or who were the focus of very widespread devotion, this figure is part of the Tantric (or secret) pantheon in which, however, he plays an important rôle. As a result of confusions, he is also known by several other names such as Vajrapāṇi, "*Vajra*-hand", or Vajradhara, "*Vajra*-bearer". He appears in the *maṇḍala* of the Womb-world as the ruler of the field bearing his name situated to the south of the central section. He also figures in the Diamond-world *maṇḍala* as one of the four bodhisattvas who surround Akṣobhya in the eastern circle, and is named first among the thirty-two bodhisattvas that compose the *maṇḍala*. (*Taishō*, 866, p. 240c). Though he is found elsewhere as well, it should be remembered above all that he is the central figure and ruler of the seventh *maṇḍala* of the Diamond-world cycle, the *naya-maṇḍala*, in which he takes the place of Vairocana.

As we observe him in this painting, Vajrasattva is white, seated with both feet visible, with a mandorla and a horseshoe-shaped halo. The pronounced leaning of his body to the right is counter-balanced by the inclination of his head to the left. His left hand is turned upwards, with the back of the hand touching his thigh; in it he holds the handle of an up-turned bell. His right hand holds a *vajra* at chest height. Setting aside the movement of the body, all the remaining elements noted here – in particular the bell in the left hand resting on the thigh – more or less accord with the iconographic stipulations of the texts and manuals. The bell is, however, usually shown pointing downwards, although in one Nepalo-Tibetan tradition Vajrasattva is white, with a *vajra* held vertically in his right hand in front of his chest and a bell – horizontal or upside-down – in his left hand against his thigh.[31]

The four secondary figures who surround Vajrasattva are the four inner bodhisattvas of offering, also found in the Diamond-world *maṇḍala*. They are, moving clockwise from the lower left: Vajramālā holding garlands, Vajragītā singing while accompanying himself on a harp, Vajralāsī with his hands crossed, and Vajranṛtyā imitating a dance, with his hands placed on his thighs.

These elements do not suffice for this to be a *maṇḍala* – at least, not the *maṇḍala* of Vajrasattva of the Diamond-world schema which includes seventeen figures. We have no written evidence describing a group formed by Vajrasattva and the four bodhisattvas. Nevertheless, Tanaka Kimiaki has produced a very interesting and relevant piece of information in the Japanese edition of this book: a statue of Vajrasattva from the Pāla period, recently discovered in Bihar province in India, displays the figures of the four inner bodhisattvas in the halo and on the pedestal. There is also an image of Vajrasattva surrounded by these same bodhisattvas depicted in a wall-painting in a monastery in Ladakh. We should not, however, be too quick to draw any conclusions from

these examples. The painting under discussion here is, after all, badly damaged. In the lower part of the work we can observe the face, turned towards the left, of a figure holding a *vajra*. Strangely enough, the scale of this figure appears to be considerably larger than that of the four bodhisattvas. It is very likely that formerly the painting included other figures. It is, therefore, impossible for us to know to what composition this damaged and partially restored fragment originally belonged.

Parts of the work are quite clumsy, especially the lop-sided mandorla of the central figure, though these may perhaps be explained by poor-quality retouching. The painting is nonetheless of considerable interest, since it seems to be related to a style of Indian origin, of which pl. 80 is a far superior example. We should note the horseshoe-shaped halo, the appearance of the tiara, the green and orange-red colouring of the aureole, the drawing of the lotus in the throne, the long faces (very rare indeed in Chinese art), and the scrolling patterns and flames just visible in the mandorlas of Vajrasattva and Vajragītā.

Plate 50
Maṇḍala
Tang dynasty-Five Dynasties (second half of the 9th century-first half of the 10th century). Drawing on silk highlighted with colours. H. 40 cm; W. 37.6 cm. EO.1182. **MS**

A kneeling woman wearing a bonnet, with her hands joined together and accompanied by a child, can be seen in the central circle of the drawing. The cloud emanating from her head indicates that she is either praying or meditating. The figure with dishevelled hair brandishing a *vajra* (?), depicted in the posture of a *vidyārāja* a little above the woman and to the right, is probably the object of her contemplation. This central image allows us to orient the *maṇḍala* as follows: east at the bottom, south on the left, west at the top and north on the right.

A *dhāraṇi* is inscribed around the circle, inside the square enclosure which surrounds it. Beginning in the north-east corner, it runs along the east wall and continues thus until it ends at the edge of the eastern side of the circle. The character *oṃ*, which appears opposite each of the four corners of the enclosure, does not belong to the spell. In spite of the difficulties of reading the text, it is possible to recognise the *dhāraṇi* entitled *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni*. This is firstly known through a translation made by Buddhapāli at the end of the seventh century (*Taishō*, 967), and subsequently through several other versions of the text (*Taishō*, 968, 971, 973, 974, *etc.*). Further versions appear in numerous manuscripts from Dunhuang. The version in this *maṇḍala* is faulty and incomplete; moreover, it differs from all the other variants that occur in both the manuscripts and the published works.

The *maṇḍala* consists of four enclosures filled with numerous figures and a variety of different objects. The most interesting detail is found in the four sections located in the middle of each side. Each of these contain seven buddha heads, surmounted by a pair of joined hands. The seven Buddhas of the past are invoked in a version of the *dhāraṇi* whose transmission is attributed to Kobodaishi (*Taishō*, 974B, p. 385ab). Some of the other figures are also recognisable: for instance, in the third enclosure from the middle on the western side, the third figure from the right, accompanied by many children, must be Hāriti; on the north side in the third enclosure, the second figure on the right side is surely Gaṇeśa with two bodies; and in the same enclosure but on the left side, we can see the boar-headed god.

Nevertheless, we must admit that the purpose and meaning of this *maṇḍala* are quite beyond us. It seems, furthermore, quite different in terms of its style and manufacture from what we observe in the other works from Dunhuang.

Plate 51
The bodhisattva Guanyin (Avalokiteśvara)
Five Dynasties: second year of the Xiande era (955 AD)
Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 28 x 23 threads per cm.
H. 77 cm; W. 50.7 cm. MG.17695. See also fig. 21. **RS. MS**

The posture of ease, with right foot visible and left foot hanging down, is quite rare in representations of Avalokiteśvara. His throne, consisting of a white lotus blossom placed on an open-work platform or low table, is also out of the ordinary. Most remarkable however are the two kneeling attendants carrying lotus buds in their joined hands. They descend from the sky on trailing clouds which touch the floral canopy. This motif appears in a less accentuated form in a painting in London, Stein painting 54 (Whitfield, 2, pl. 27), in some respects comparable with this work, in which similar clouds support the two little Boys of Good and Evil and also two children who fly naked like *apsarasas* in the upper corners.

The following dedicatory inscription, consisting of five columns read from left to right, appears in the centre of the lower section, which is proportionally higher than in most of the paintings:

"Deng Yuan [-], disciple of unblemished faith, respectfully [had made] an image of the bodhisattva Guanshiyin and his attendants in fulfilment of a vow. He worshipped it in the first place in order that the dragons, *devas* and eight other kinds of beings protect Dunhuang [so that] the country be peaceful and its inhabitants safe [the usual expression is "that the land be secure and its inhabitants peaceful"], that the gods of the soil flourish, that the sovereign [*fuzhu*, Cao Yuanzhong] enjoy great longevity, that he exercise always his civilising influence upon the regions of [to the west of the] (yellow) River and the Huang river [the barbarian lands to the West, roughly corresponding with the modern province of Gansu], that he receive for a long time happiness and blessings; in second place that I myself [...], that my father finds rebirth in the palaces of the Western Paradise [...] to see the true face of Maitreya, to do so that [...] the flowers suddenly spring up [...] sky[...] [and that at the present] [...] the quarrels and calamities [cease]. The work thus

completed I offer in perpetuity. Executed under [the dynasty of the] great Zhou, in the second year of the Xiande era, the year [...] [955]."

To the left of the stele appears a man standing accompanied by a cartouche: "Offered whole-heartedly [for] my deceased father Deng Zhangding, disciple of pure faith, honorary commander of a squad of ten soldiers attached to the administrative office". His wife may be seen at the other side: "Offered whole-heartedly [in behalf of] my mother, disciple with a sincere heart, *née* Zhang, who married into the Deng family". It would seem that this woman was still alive when the painting was executed, but the donor is nonetheless her son, mentioned in the inscription. It is impossible to identify the small boy standing behind Deng Zhangding owing to the absence of any inscription. It is most unlikely that his son, the donor, would have had himself represented as a child; it is probably his own son, the grandson of Zhangding.

Plate 52
The bodhisattva Guanyin (Avalokiteśvara) between the boys of Good and Evil
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 47 x 46 threads per cm. H. 89.7 cm; W. 62.8 cm. EO.3581. **DE**

The two youths depicted on either side of the offering table in front of the bodhisattva, their hair dressed in double chignons, are the 'Boys of Good and Evil', also known as the 'boys born at the same moment'. From the time that a person comes into the world, he is attended by two such characters. One is responsible for recording a person's good deeds, the other his bad – thus the presence in the painting of the scrolls held by each boy and the brush in the hand of the right-hand figure. These accounts are used after his death to weigh up the balance of the deceased's actions, which operation determines his future rebirth. The boys are clearly represented here as girls: their coiffures, comprising two knobs, are not very characteristic, but their robes and their shoes with turned-up toes are certainly feminine.

The bodhisattva is portrayed without any attributes. This notwithstanding, it is possible to identify him owing to the presence of the two boys and their association with Guanyin, the saviour-bodhisattva *par excellence*, in other votive paintings (see below, pl. 91; also Stein paintings 28 and 54; Whitfield, 2, pl. 21 and 27). The boys are also encountered beside Dizang, who enjoys similar powers (see especially vol 2, pl. 60 and 61).

Two donors, dressed in black and kneeling on a rug, my be seen to the left of the central inscription in the lower register. The principal donor carries a dish filled with offerings, his importance relative to the other donor figures indicated by his larger size. The beardless youth behind him is probably his son, and the nun kneeling opposite him is likely to be his daughter. The empty space remaining behind her suggests that the painter intended to represent at least one other figure there, probably the mother. The work, with its uninscribed cartouches, appears to be unfinished.

The composition, as well as some iconographic elements such as the halo, the offering table and the face of the bodhisattva, link this painting with a representation of "Water-moon Guanyin", executed in 968 AD by order of the governor of Dunhuang and now kept in the Freer Gallery in Washington. The two works must date from the same period.

The colours of this representation have retained their freshness. Judging by the lighter-coloured area surrounding the main composition, this work may formerly have had a border.

Plate 53
The bodhisattva Guanyin (Avalokiteśvara)
Five Dynasties (first half of the 10th century). Painting on hemp cloth. Warp and weft: 10 x 9 threads per cm. H. 188 cm; W. 67.3 cm. EO.1127. See also fig. 24. **MS**

The bodhisattva, turning to his right, stands in three-quarter pose upon a pink lotus flower. He makes the gesture of appeasement with his left hand, and balances a goblet on the tips of the fingers of his right hand. A stem with one bud and two leaves is placed in the goblet. If the latter was made out of clear glass (*cf.* below, pl. 65), as seems very likely, then the zig-zag stripes on its surface could be interpreted as reflections suggestive of that material.

The bodhisattva's hair appears to be drawn back towards the right and gathered in a horn-shaped chignon. This is a conventional representation widely used in paintings of this period in portrayals of figures in the three-quarter posture. The hair is, in fact, knotted on the top of the head in a flat chignon from which two parts stick out like horns. Amongst many other paintings in which this convention appears, see a work dated 925 AD painted on the north wall of the corridor of cave 220, which represents a number of figures seen head-on and also from a three-quarter angle (*Bakkō*, 5, pl. 20). The painting under discussion here shows a certain clumsiness, for the image of Amitābha is seen head-on rather than from the appropriate angle.

The cartouche in the upper left reads as follows: "Homage to the bodhisattva Guanyin". A mistake in the order of the first two characters has been corrected with the conventional sign for an inversion. There are also two inscriptions found above the large flowers (peonies?) painted at the height of the bodhisattva's shoulders; these are written in tiny characters and are partly erased. The left-hand one reads "Praise be to Guanyin", as did, no doubt, the one on the right; of the latter, however, only the character *wu* remains. We will refer again to this painting in the note to plate 76. A band of the same cloth, dyed brown, has been sewn all round the painting as a kind of mount.

Plate 54
The bodhisattva Guanyin
Northern Song dynasty: 9th year of the Taipingxingguo era (984 AD). Painting on hemp cloth. Warp and weft: 9 x 7 threads per cm. H. 181.9 cm; W. 60 cm. MG.22799. See also fig. 22. **JPD**

Amongst the many images of the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara in the Musée Guimet collection, only a few have inscriptions which refer to the circumstances of the donation. The bodhisattva stands under a canopy, his feet resting on a lotus blossom; he carries an image of Amitābha in his head-dress. He holds the flask in one hand and a lotus stem in the other. The cartouche at the upper left reads: "An image in honour of the bodhisattva Guanshiyin".

Four figures can be seen kneeling on carpets in the lower register. Their clothes and head-dresses are in a style widely encountered in the paintings of the tenth century (see fig. 22), though the white cloth covering the head of one of the women on the left is unusual. As is common with such paintings, the figures depicted in the lower register are deceased, and thus cannot strictly-speaking be the donors. Rather, they are the beneficiaries of the merit generated by the patronage of the painting. Nevertheless, the cartouches never state that a painting is offered "for" the person represented, articulating instead by a standard religious formula the pious fiction that the deceased offered it himself, "with all his heart".

The cartouches read as follows: on the right of the central inscription, "[for] the deceased father, the carpenter Wang Chounu, offered whole-heartedly"; on the far right, "[for] our dear deceased father, Wang Youzi, offered whole-heartedly". It would thus seem that Wang Chounu was the donors' grandfather; moreover, the qualifier *ci*, usually used only for parents and in particular a mother, does not appear in his inscription. On the left, "[for] the deceased daughter [...]. offered wholeheartedly"; and on far left, "[for] our tender mother, deceased, *née* Zhao, offered wholeheartedly".

The central inscription, consisting of six columns from left to right, reads: "The donors Wang [?], elder brother, and Wang Fuzi, younger brother [occupying the post of] military commander, commissioned a painting of the bodhisattva Guanyin with respect and devotion. They present it in order that their deceased ancestors find rebirth in the Pure Land, that their nearest living relations and all their family may receive blessings and may soon enter the path of *bodhi*. The fifteenth day of the first month of the year [*jia*] *shen*". The first character of the cyclic combination indicating the date is illegible, but Akiyama, in the Japanese version of this work, adds to the translation of this entry a note that a reading from an infra-red photograph has revealed that the character in question is *jia*. The date is therefore 984 AD. The same photograph enabled the reading of the elder brother's name: Wang Gebo.

A border of plain hemp cloth has been sewn around the painting; four suspension loops are attached to its upper part.

Plate 55
The compassionate bodhisattva (Guanyin) holding flowers
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on hemp cloth. Warp and weft: 11 x 10 threads per cm. H. 128.5 cm; W. 58 cm. MG.17768. **DE**

The presence of an image of Amitābha in the figure's head-dress identifies him beyond any doubt as Avalokiteśvara. The inscription in the cartouche at the upper left reads however "Praise be to the very compassionate bodhisattva who holds flowers", thus making only an oblique reference to his name. The first part only, "the great compassionate" is a term often attributed to him and is unequivocal. The second part, "who holds flowers", *chihua*, is simply descriptive. It is the appellation of a minor bodhisattva without personality who waits upon important divinities such as Śākyamuni in plate 6, or upon Avalokiteśvara himself in plate 87. The name given in the cartouche is not a well-known variant such as Avalokiteśvara with the willow branch. It seems rather to be a one-off name, chosen by the painter or by the scribe of the devotional inscription.

The right hand is disproportionately large; it is raised with a flowering stem between the fingers. The left hand is lowered, and also grasps a long lotus stalk. The background in ornamented with floral motifs placed one above the other, while lozenges run along the vertical edges. Holes on the perimeter of the painting indicate that it was formerly hung. Here and there the painting has torn from being over-stretched, particularly along the right and left edges of the upper portion. Moreover, all the lower part of the face as well as the lower section of the composition have unfortunately been worn away.

Plate 56
The bodhisattva Guanyin (Avalokiteśvara)
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Drawing on paper, with colours. Chain-lines: 5 per cm. H. 48.5 cm; W. 32.8 cm. MG.17671. **DE**

Drawn with stiff and unskilled strokes, the bodhisattva stands with a lotus beneath each foot. Mme Nicolas-Vandier believes it to have been drawn with a reed pen. An image of Amitābha appears in the diadem which encircles a chignon with two oval projections. His pitch black hair falls onto his shoulders and frames a face with large black eyes of a rather western type. Particularly clumsy additions are the long lotus stem which he seems to hold in his left hand without actually grasping it, and the glass goblet resting on the thumb of his right hand. The latter is empty, whereas in most other paintings in which this detail appears it contains a stem with a flower and two leaves.

Plate 57
The bodhisattva Guanyin (Avalokiteśvara) "Saviour from perils"
Tang dynasty (first half of the 10th cent.). Silver pigment on vermilion silk. H. 196 cm; W. 57 cm. EO.1418. **DE. MS**

After their great vow, all the bodhisattvas gave themselves over to the task of saving beings and leading them to salvation. Avalokiteśvara is the saviour *par excellence*, and is held to bring relief more than any of the others. The title "Saviour from perils" does not appear explicitly in the texts, but originates in the *Sūtra of Guanyin*, the twenty-fifth chapter of the *Lotus Sūtra*, in which are enumerated all the dangers and forms of suffering that may be avoided by the mere invocation of his name. As is summarised in a *gāthā*: "By the power of his marvellous wisdom, Guanyin is able to save [beings] from the evils of this world" (*Taishō*, 1062, p. 58a). We note also that one of the names of the *dhāraṇī* of thousand-armed Guanyin is again "he who saves from sufferings" (*Taishō*, 1060, p. 110a). There is no ambiguity about this painting, since the cartouche at the upper right provides the complete form of the name: "the bodhisattva Guanshiyin saviour from perils". It is not uncommon for this name to be shortened to "bodhisattva saviour from perils".

Here the bodhisattva has a rounded figure with a rather feminine breast. The line is drawn in silver paint or *yinni*, which has now oxidised in places; this technique seems to have been popular at Dunhuang during this period. An inventory of goods belonging to the Longxing monastery dated 873 AD in fact includes three hundred and eighty banners of which eighty-three were worked with silver pigment on a single-colour ground, though the type of fabric is not mentioned. According to this inventory twenty "great" banners, five "small", thirty-six "the height of a man" and finally twenty-two "nine feet long"(about 210 cm) were decorated in this way.[32]

Unlike other works of this type, such as the following plate 58 and the representations of bodhisattvas (volume 2, plates 46 and 47) in which the same motif figures habitually on both sides of the banner, the *verso* here is covered with sheets of paper stuck end to end indicating restoration roughly contemporary with the painting's execution. A lotus pedestal with the ends of another bodhisattva's feet may be seen above the halo, which shows that the painting was produced in a series on a long roll, or was at the very least one of a pair. According to our definitions the painting is executed on silk of vermilion colour, warp: 45 to 48 threads per cm; weft: 27 to 36 per cm.[33]

Plate 58
The bodhisattva Guanyin (Avalokiteśvara) "Saviour from perils"
Tang dynasty (second half of the 9th century). Silver pigment on vermilion silk (*recto verso*). H. 183.2 cm; W. 58 cm. EO.1137. See also fig. 23. **DE**

Here is another very similar representation of "Guanyin Saviour from perils". The technique is the same, but this time the bodhisattva is sheltered by a canopy; his left hand – of more skilful line – makes the gesture of appeasement whilst the other rests beside his body. The banner is moreover painted on both *recto* and *verso*. Prolonged exposure to direct light has made the original vermilion fade to a yellowy-orange.

Considering its great resemblance to other works of the same series, this painting seems to us to come from the same workshop and to be merely a variant of the same model. Contrary to Akiyama's opinion who considers that this composition is older than others of this genre owing to its finer line and better finish, we believe that it dates more or less to the same era.

Plate 59
The bodhisattva Guanyin (Avalokiteśvara) "who prolongs life"
Tang dynasty-Five Dynasties (second half of the 9th century-first half of the 10th century). Silver pigment on vermilion silk (*recto verso*). Warp and weft: 46 x 27 threads per cm. H. 185 cm; W. 54.4 cm. EO.3657/1. See also fig. 25. **DE**

The name of this bodhisattva is known only from the cartouches of paintings and is not found in canonical sources. It seems however to have been in vogue in the ninth to tenth centuries. Its origin might be found in one of the names given in the *dhāraṇī* of thousand-armed, thousand-eyed Guanyin: "who prolongs the lot of life" or Yanshou, being another name from the same *dhāraṇī* which provided "saviour from perils" as in plate 57 (*Taishō*, 1060, p. 110a). Other names have also been used, as is witnessed by a silk painting comparable to this one though drawn in red ink, kept in the Lüshun Museum, which bears the following name in a cartouche: "bodhisattva king who prolongs life and increases longevity".[34]

The drawing has been made with silver pigment as in plates 57 and 58. Only the cartouche on the recto bears an inscription: " Praise be to the bodhisattva Guanyin who prolongs life". The figure has one hand raised in *vitarka-mudrā* and the other hanging by his side: at ankle level the silk is decayed and torn.

Plate 60
The bodhisattva Guanyin (Avalokiteśvara) "Saviour from perils"
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 47 x 35 threads per cm. H. 60 cm; W. 17.5 cm. EO.1398 (P.147). **JPD**

Without doubt, this painting used to be mounted as a banner. A reddish border decorated with flowers frames the painting. Guanyin stands on a lotus and turns to the left; a lotus stem is in his right hand, while the other makes the preaching gesture. His halo partially conceals a canopy ornamented with tassels and balls. The following inscrip-

tion appears in a cartouche in the upper left: "Praise be to the bodhisattva Guanyin Saviour from perils".

This work closely resembles two paintings without cartouches kept in the British Museum, Stein painting 117 in particular, and Stein 117* (Whitfield, 1, fig. 91 and 92). The similitude is striking if we consider the rather distinctive head-dress surmounted by a flowering twig, the necklace and numerous other details, particularly in the clothing. It is certain that these works were produced by the brush of one and the same painter.

Plate 61
Worship of the bodhisattva Guanyin "Saviour from perils"
Five Dynasties (first half of the 10th century). Painting on silk. Overall dimensions: H. 109 cm ; W. 78 cm. Dimensions of the painting: H. 96.8 cm; W. 65 cm. EO.1175. **JPD**

This composition is bordered by a violet band. The painting's central figure is Guanyin, seated cross-legged with his feet invisible upon a violet lotus blossom. A finely worked quadrangular pedestal with gilded ironwork may be seen beneath this seat, and is itself placed on top of another lotus flower.

The face of the bodhisattva, his ornaments and the borders of this robe are gilded. His hands are joined together in the gesture of concentration. The canopy is very curious, decorated with gilded, arrow-shaped leaves, and at either side may be seen two *apsarasas* in different postures holding a censer (on the right) and other more indistinct objects. A small cartouche at the upper left is inscribed: "celestial spirits". A larger inscription at the right-hand edge of the painting reads: "Praise be to Guanyin, the very compassionate, saviour from perils."

At either side of the lotus throne are two monks, one youthful and the other old, who kneel on fringed and checkered rugs similar to those of the donors in plate 46. Each appears to hold the pole of a banner in his joined hands. The most extraordinary detail, quite without parallel, are the many-coloured flames which spring from their shoulders and heads, like those that blaze around the halo of the central figure. These may perhaps represent their ardent faith. Lower down at either side of the pedestal are two children who sit cross-legged on rugs like those of the monks. Their posture is surprising, with one hand resting on the leg and the other lifting an offering. Also unusual are their coiffures, from which rise two short plaits, their clothes and their sandals. We are tempted to see a trace of foreign influence in this rather anomalous painting.

Plate 62
Bodhisattva who prolongs life
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 45 x 22 threads per cm. H. 72 cm; W. 59 cm. EO.1143. **PM**

As for this bodhisattva, the first detail to attract attention is the black rod topped with a golden ornament in the shape of a flower or budding leaves, which is held in the right hand with the base resting on the left palm. This is a *ruyi* sceptre, "which grants wishes", which is generally characteristic of Mañjuśri.[35] It is however never said of the latter that he prolongs life (as stated here in the cartouche), which is why it seems as if the sceptre here is merely decorative, without any iconographic meaning. The presence of the two offering bodhisattvas who have descended from the sky on clouds, the two naked infants flying through the air in an attitude of worship and the donors at the base of the painting all indicate that the central figure is an important bodhisattva. The wording of the left-hand cartouche makes it clear that the subject of the composition is Avalokiteśvara: "Praise be to the bodhisattva who prolongs life. Offered whole-heartedly."

The six donors of the lower register are members of the same family, as is customary. Those on the right read, from left to right:

1) "Offered [for my] deceased father Yan Liuzhou, *yaya* in the Governor's administration, second music officer (?)".[36]
2) "The donor [...]"; the remainder is illegible.
3) "Offered by the donor, son [of Yan Liuzhou], Yan Zonger, commander of a troop of soldiers."

The wives of the figures on the right are found on the left:

1) "Whole-heartedly offered [for my] defunct mother, *née* Wang."
2) "Whole-heartedly offered by the daughter-in-law, wife of the donor, *née* Liu."
3) "Whole-heartedly offered by the daughter-in-law, wife of the donor, *née* Wang."
The latter is surely the wife of Yan Zonger. The costumes are of tenth century style, but it is impossible to be more exact.

Plate 63
Fragment of a painting of a bodhisattva "who prolongs life"
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on paper. Chain-lines: 4 per cm. H. 84.5 cm; W. 49 cm. EO.3643. **PM**

The surface consists of two whole sheets of paper pasted end to end vertically, on the right of which two half-sheets have been added.

The standing bodhisattva holds a flask between the thumb (which is hidden) and forefinger of his left hand, with the stopper visible, while his other hand rests on the wrist. The fingers are badly drawn, being stiff and heavy. The inscription in the cartouche at the upper left reads: "Praise be to the bodhisattva who prolongs life." This must refer to Avalokiteśvara. The head of a man holding a branch in blossom can be seen at the bottom right, with a small part of the coiffure of his female companion behind him.

This painting should be compared with another work, also on paper, representing Candragarbha, plate

41 of volume 2. The facial expressions, certain details of their coiffures, the leaf patterns decorating the background, and the great curling loops made by the ends of the long scarves are features which though not identical in the two works, resemble each other enough to make us believe that they had a common origin.

Plate 64
Banner bearing an illustration of the bodhisattva "who prolongs life"
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on hemp cloth
Warp and weft: 8 x 7 threads per cm. H. 89 cm; W. 18.3 cm. MG.17787. **DE**

Identified by the inscription located to the left of the halo, this standing bodhisattva occupies the entire surface of the principal part of the banner. This is slightly frayed along the right edge, and has been hemmed along the bottom. The bodhisattva is represented in a very clumsy fashion, full-face with his hands joined together. The top of his halo is just hidden by the triangular headpiece which has been attached to the banner, on which is depicted a transformed buddha with halo and mandorla. The bodhisattva is none other than Avalokiteśvara.

Plate 65
Two Guanyins, "who prolongs life" and "with the willow branch"
Tang dynasty-Five Dynasties (second half of the 9th century-first half of the 10th century). Painting on hemp cloth. Warp and weft: 12 x 8 threads per cm. H. 47 cm; W. 51 cm. EO.1139. See also fig. 26. **RS. MS**

The two figures are in three-quarter pose, turning towards each other. Deliberately painted on the same cloth by the same artist, their canopies and haloes are however completely different. Faces, coiffures and ornaments are also different.

The left-hand bodhisattva makes the gesture of preaching with his right hand, and rather clumsily holds a small transformation buddha seated in meditation in the palm of his left hand whose fingers are bent upwards. Another buddha of the same type is found in his head-dress. The inscription in the cartouche reads: "Praise be to the bodhisattva who prolongs life."

The figure on the right holds a willow frond pinched between the thumb and forefinger of his left hand, a gesture which mirrors exactly that of the bodhisattva opposite. A stemmed lotus blossom rises out of a translucent vase balanced on the bent fingers of his right hand. There are other examples of this distinctive gesture. The cartouche is empty and there is no image of Amitâbha in his head-dress. It is reasonable to wonder whether the artist did not intend to represent Avalokiteśvara and Mahâsthâmaprâpta: the distinguishing emblem of the latter is in fact the vase of water, which is usually depicted in his coiffure.

The irregular hemp cloth is covered with a thick, crude, white sizing. The lower part of the painting is missing, and the two figures are cut off at thigh-level.

Plate 66
Guanyin (Avalokiteśvara) with the willow branch
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on hemp cloth
Warp and weft: 10 x 7 threads per cm. H. 184 cm; W. 60 cm. EO.1140. See also fig. 27. **DE. MS**

Unlike other types of Guanyin, the name of this manifestation never appears in the cartouches of the paintings, so that his correct appellation during the ninth and tenth centuries is unknown. We refer to this form thus only because of the distinctive branch, and because there is in fact a form bearing this name given in a list (of uncertain origin) of the thirty-three Guanyins. The name can only be justified with reference to thousand-armed, thousand-eyed Guanyin, one of whose hands does in fact hold a willow spray. Confusion is impossible since the texts name this "the hand with a willow branch". We know moreover that this branch, sometimes mistaken for the fly-whisk, is one of the usual attributes of many other forms of Guanyin. The function of the willow branch is the healing of disease and other types of physical suffering (*Taishō*, 1064, p. 117b), hence another epithet, "Guanyin king of medicines" (*Taishō*, 1065, p. 122b). The latter should not be confounded with the bodhisattva "king of medicines" (inseparable from his brother the bodhisattva "prince of medicines") whose iconographic attribute is a stem of a medicinal plant.

The bodhisattva, with downcast eyes, stands with a lotus beneath each foot against a background of small flowers. He has an elongated chest and drooping shoulders, a thin waist, a rather full breast and wide hips. The face is emphasised, with the pale ochre complexion being highlighted in a slightly pinkish white around the mouth, eyebrows, eyelids and along the nose. His right arm is bent, and he holds a willow stem between his fingers. The left arm is very stiff, stretched out along the body, and he has a flask in his left hand.

The lower part of the painting has been a little stained by humidity, and also shows signs of mending which indicate some contemporary restoration work.

Plate 67
Guanyin (Avalokiteśvara) "with the willow branch"
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on paper
Chain-lines: 4 per cm. H. 52 cm; W. 35.4 cm. EO.1230. **DE**

This bodhisattva, with his moustache and imperial, much resembles the one in the preceding painting in his general appearance. There are some minor differences, particularly between accessories, haloes and foliage of the willow branches, which here overlaps the cartouche. The round face with a uniform hue does not

have the same finesse. Similarly, the line and the fall of the material seems less assured. This work is closest to another representation of Avalokiteśvara, Stein painting 198 (Whitfield, 2, fig. 63).

We observe furthermore the presence of a small naked child holding a flower above the figure's left shoulder. Kneeling on a cloud, he seems to be descending from the sky. Mme Nicolas-Vandier interprets this as a "little soul", that is to say the soul of a righteous person destined to be reborn in the paradise of the Pure Land. Such children are more often encountered either at the bottom of paintings of Amitābha's paradise, or at the top of certain representations in place of the *apsarasas*. It is also possible that this detail alludes to a well-known passage of the *Sūtra of Avalokiteśvara*: "...if a woman wishes to bear a male child, let her make her devotions and offerings to the bodhisattva Guanyin; then she will bear a son who is pious, virtuous and filled with wisdom; is she desires a daughter, she will bear one who is honest and beautiful..." (*Taishō*, 262, p. 57a).

Threads which appear along the edges of the painting make it appear likely that the work was formerly framed by a border sewn onto the sides of the painting. The upper and lower parts have both deteriorated owing to damp.

Plate 68
The bodhisattva Guanyin (Avalokiteśvara) "with the willow branch"
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on paper. Chain-lines: 4 per cm. H. 52 cm; W. 35.4 cm. EO.1230. **JPD**

The bodhisattva in princely dress is seated on a lotus. His identity cannot be doubted despite there being no image of Amitābha in his three-pronged diadem, since he carries attributes proper to him. As is usual, he carries the willow spray in his right hand and the flask in his left. He is unremarkable, apart perhaps for his undulating pattern of his halo. The canopy decorated with flaming jewels, tassels and pendants is quite common. Two donors kneel at either side of an offering table: on the left, a nun or monk holding a censer, and opposite a woman with rouged cheeks with her hands clasped under her robe. Two empty cartouches of equal size, one green and the other white, are situated to the left and right. One of these would have been intended for the dedicatory inscription, the other perhaps for the donor's name.

The fly-spotted, greyish background of the paper indicates that this painting was displayed.

Plate 69
The bodhisattva Guanyin "with the willow branch"
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 44 x 24 threads per cm. H. 63 cm; W. 45 cm. EO.1132. **RS. MS**

The bodhisattva is seated on a lotus blossom in the posture of ease, his left foot resting on another, smaller lotus. He wears a crown topped with a large image of Amitābha, and carries the willow branch in his left hand, and in his right the flask which here has a plain neck. The flaming mandorla is encircled by a white disc, which is closely framed by two stems with large leaves.

The sun and moon appear borne on clouds in the upper corners of the painting. On the left is the moon, with the cinnamon tree between the hare and the toad, and on the right is the sun with the three-legged bird. Guanyin's lotus seat is placed on a rocky islet emerging from a pool.

In front of the bodhisattva, in the lower part, the offering table is in fact a rock over which is thrown a piece of red cloth with a white patterned border. The usual altar furnishings are replaced with a bowl containing flowers. On the left a woman made up, coifed and dressed in tenth-century style offers a dish of flowers, while on the right a man in black robes holds a long-handled censer – the latter is lit but is not depicted with the usual curling smoke. At either side of the altar are two long uninscribed cartouches.

This painting uses two drawing techniques: a reed pen for the figures and a brush for the lotus and the decorative elements. Contrary to the drawing of the donors, which is simple and natural, the lines of the central figure are stiff and lack subtlety. For a width of 1.5 to 2.5 cm, the edges of the work are of lighter colour; this is perhaps indicative of the stretcher to which the painting was first attached.

Plate 70
Banner of the bodhisattva Guanyin (Avalokiteśvara) "with the willow branch"
Five Dynasties (first half of the 10th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 56 x 45 thread per cm. H. 80.2 cm; W. 13.5 cm. EO.1212. **DE**

Beneath the triangular headpiece representing a transformation buddha of youthful aspect, a rather thickset Guanyin makes the preaching gesture with his right hand whilst holding a willow frond in his left. The unusual blue-grey colour of his eyes does not indicate that the artist intended to depict an occidental, but rather refers to the twenty-ninth of the Buddha's distinguishing marks (*lakṣaṇa*) which also extend to the bodhisattvas. The fly-spotting visible on the painting allows us to conclude that the work was displayed.

Plate 71
The bodhisattva Guanyin "with the willow branch"
Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Painting on hemp cloth. Warp and weft: 11 x 7 threads per cm. Total dimensions: H. 191 cm; W. 71 cm (with border attached). Principal composition: H. 172 cm; W. 57 cm. EO.1129. See also fig. 30. **DE**

Crowned with gems and pearls, this bodhisattva is turned towards the left under a canopy with six tassels

and a central bell. His posture and head-dress recall the standing Guanyin of plate 53. A small image of Amitābha may be seen in his diadem. His left hand holds the willow branch whilst at the same time making the gesture of appeasement; the right, with palm raised, grasps the plain-necked flask as in Stein painting 8 (Whitfield, 1, pl. 13). An uninscribed cartouche appears at the upper left.

Plate 72
Illustration of the "Sūtra of Guanyin"
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on silk. H. 84.1 cm; W. 61.2 cm. MG.17665. **PM**

Avalokiteśvara stands on a lotus blossom supported by a cloud emerging from a pool with sharply indented banks. He wears a very unusual tiara upon his head, decorated with points, multi-coloured balls and flaming jewels. His red eyes and the third eye (placed vertically in the forehead) are also out of the ordinary. Clasping a lotus stem with a flat leaf in his right hand, he holds a curiously-shaped flask in his left.

The interest of the painting lies in its side scenes, which illustrate four of the numerous perils described in chapter 25 of the *Lotus Sūtra*, from which one may be saved by worshipping Avalokiteśvara. Many copies of this very popular chapter exist independently amongst the Dunhuang manuscripts under the name *"Sūtra of Guanyin"*. Some of these are illustrated, for instance S.6542 and S.6983 in London, and P.4513 and P.2010 in Paris (the latter two are fragments of the same manuscript). The scenes are separated from each other by landscapes of wooded mountains or sheer cliffs. They are accompanied by cartouches in which the corresponding *gāthā* from the sūtra is written out word for word. The translations are the following:

1) At the upper right: "If you are pushed from the summit of Mount Sumeru, invoke the power of Avalokiteśvara and you will be supported in space like the sun" (*Taishō*, 262, p. 57c21). In front of an overhanging rock a man is seated on a cloud, whose wavy trail shows that he has descended from the sky. The ribbons of his hat are turned up, another device used by the painter to show his fall. It is probably the same person who can be seen, before his fall, leaning out over the abyss at the summit of the rock. The episode is depicted in a more satisfactory manner than in Stein painting 2 (Whitfield, 2, pl. 18), which dates from roughly the same period. The latter shows at its upper left the man supported by the cloud, the same figure with hands joined in prayer leaning from the rock and, behind him, the man who pushed him. A very similar representation (though lacking the figure pushing the faithful man into the abyss) is found in the same location in a comparable work dated 961 AD kept in Chengdu.[37]
2) At the upper left: "If, being pursued by wicked people, you should fall to the bottom of the Diamond Mountain, invoke the power of Avalokiteśvara, and no harm will come to you, not even to a single hair of your head"(*id.*, p. 57c23). This peril follows the preceding one in the text, and is depicted in a similar fashion: the faithful man is seen tumbling head first from the top of the mountain whilst another figure stands in the same way as the corresponding figure in the peril opposite. This representation may also be compared with the Chengdu painting.
3) At the mid right: "Should you be burnt by the flames of the poisonous breath of vipers, of venomous serpents and of scorpions, invoke the power of Avalokiteśvara and [these beasts] will instantly depart of their own will" (*id.*, p. 58a8). A standing man with hands joined in prayer is assailed by a snake and an animal (perhaps a lion) which both breathe fire. A little to the left is an insect thought to represent a scorpion. The serpent, the scorpion and a large cat can be seen in the corresponding scene of Stein painting 2 mentioned above, but none of these spit fire.
4) At the mid left: "If [people] intent on evil push him into a great pit of fire, let him think of the power of Avalokiteśvara and the furnace will be transformed into a pool" (*id.*, p. 57c17). We see the good man taken by the throat and propelled into the flames. The pool is represented as an extension of the water surrounding the central figure.

At either side of Guanyin in the lower third of the painting kneel two donors. On the right, a man in black holds a censer with an angled handle. The cartouche reads: "Fervently offered by the disciple and donor Yin Yuanchang, who bears the title *yinqing guanglu dafu*, and is simultaneously tutor to the crown prince". On the left his daughter, the *bhikṣuṇī* Xinqing, offers a flask on a tray. The name of the donor, Yin Yuanchang, appears in Stein manuscript 6008, an undated but probably tenth century society's circular, in which the members are invited to gather in his dwelling before going on to the monastery of Longxing.

Numerous details of this painting are comparable with the Chengdu example mentioned above, which is dated 961 AD. Two other paintings of the same subject preserved in London, Stein painting 24, dated 963 AD (Whitfield, 2, pl. 25) and Stein painting 28 (*id.*, pl. 21), as well as the following painting (plate 73) all date to the same epoch. There is moreover another, dated 985 AD, in the Winthrop Collection of the Arthur Sackler Museum (formerly the Fogg Art Museum) in Cambridge, Mass..[38] It is worth remarking that in all these works the selection of perils illustrated and their disposition are variable and it seems, left to the initiative of the artist.

The contrasting colours, the rather heavy and awkward drawing and the treatment of nature are interesting aspects of a late hand, and are quite different from that seen in the majority of paintings in the collection.

Plate 73
Illustration of the "Sūtra of Guanyin"
Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Painting on silk. H. 88.6 cm; W. 52.3 cm. EO.1142. **PM. MS**

Conceived along the same model as the preceding work, this painting differs from it however in the appearance of the principal figure, Avalokiteśvara, and in the side scenes. Avalokiteśvara stands with his feet on a double lotus, and holds the water pot in a perfectly orthodox manner in his left hand, and a willow frond in his right. His transformation buddha appears in his tiara. Gently swaying, he wears a robe decorated with gilded flowers (in the Japanese edition of this work, Akiyama adds that a similar textile is encountered in the painting shown in Volume 2, plate 88).

Eight scenes illustrate the perils which may be avoided by the righteous man who invokes the power of Avalokiteśvara, chosen from among the twelve described in the *gāthā* of the *Sūtra of Guanyin*, the twenty-fifth chapter of the *Lotus Sūtra* (*Taishō*, 262). The cartouches are uninscribed but this hardly hinders the identification of the illustrations.

1) At the top right, the man falls from the rock whilst another watches him from above. It is difficult to know whether this illustrates the third peril, the fall from the summit of Mount Sumeru, or the fourth, in which the person falls from the Diamond Mountain, both of which are represented in the previous painting (pl. 72). Despite the absence of the cloud, the kneeling posture of the faithful man agrees better with the former danger.
2) Below this, a man dressed in white is held up by a bearded brigand who threatens him with his sword. The traveller has laid down his bundle, wrappd in a piece of decorated cloth, with the carrying stick still slid through the knot at the neck of the bundle. This is the fifth peril. The text of the *gāthā* mentions several bandits, which is doubtless why the illustrated manuscript S.6983 shows the poor fellow halted by two soldiers in armour. This manuscript shows his bundle at his feet as well as a string of Chinese coins and a group of objects which are probably bolts of cloth.
3) Lower down, two figures watch two snakes which seem to flee to left and right. This is the eleventh peril, that of the vipers and other venomous beasts, also represented in plate 72. The presence of the two figures can be explained by a technique of narrative painting which is worth emphasising. Despite their differently coloured clothes, it is likely that these two men represent the same pious individual twice. At the left he leans forward with his hands joined, and fearfully observes the serpents while invoking the power of Avalokiteśvara. Standing straight on the right, he sees how the vipers flee.
4) At the bottom right, a half-naked figure without a head-dress is depicted in front of a fortified tower. An open cangue may be seen at his feet. This is the seventh peril, that of the condemned man being liberated from his prison and shackles.
5) At the top left, the thunder god beats his five drums with his mallets atop a black cloud, causing a stormy cloudburst to drench a man seen running away with his arm over his head to protect himself from the hail and rain. This is the twelfth and last peril.
6) Below this, we see a table covered with dishes with three figures sitting around it, one of whom appears to be ill. This is the eighth danger, that of being poisoned or undergoing the effects of malevolent spells. We note in passing the precision with which the table, dishes and the stool are represented. If it is easy to depict the poison by means of the device of the food, it is much less so to show the nefarious incantations. On the manuscript S.6983 however, the formulae uttered by the weaver of evil destinies seated in front of the pious man are indicated by lines which come out of his mouth. On another illustrated manuscript, P.2010, we witness the poison being made in a mortar.
7) Below this, the illustration of the tenth peril shows two figures and a tiger. Here we encounter again the process described earlier *à propos* the danger of venomous beasts. The right-hand figure leans forward and looks at the animal, while above, the left-hand one watches it flee. In all other illustrations, the beast is depicted rearing up about to devour the man, as in Stein painting 28 (Whitfield, 2, pl. 21), P.2010 or S.6983.
8) Finally, at the bottom left, comes the first peril, with the fiery furnace also seen in plate 72.

It should be emphasised that this painting is not without a certain aesthetic value, which can be observed in the treatment of the bodhisattva as well as in the side scenes. The figures are very well portrayed in various postures, and above all the faces are extremely expressive. We may note for instance the terrified look of the man on the left in the snake episode (3), and the face of suffering of one of the guests at the table, the victim no less, and the questioning or puzzled expression of his neighbour. The artistic quality of the drawing is rounded off by the meticulous painting of certain details, such as the beams of the prison or the structure of the cangue, as well as the motifs decorating the robes and other objects. The figures' head-dresses are varied and contribute a certain liveliness to this engaging and anecdotal painting. As in other works of this type, the scenes are separated one from another by motifs of hills or other devices. Added to this are various different kinds of trees and plants. Flowers and leaves ornament the background. The composition of the scene seems to be the result of the artist's inspiration, which was apparently greater here than in other paintings of the same subject – these being more conventional even if following the same models. The colours are very bright and occasionally clash.

Plate 74
The bodhisattva Guanyin (Avalokiteśvara)
"Saviour from perils"
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on paper. Chain-lines: 4 per cm. H. 41.8 cm; W. 29.8 cm. MG.17685. **JPD**

The extensive fly-spotting and the holes at the corners indicate that this painting was displayed.

The bodhisattva wears princely dress and is seated full-face. His cheeks are enhanced with red, following a cosmetic technique characteristic of the paintings of the tenth century. Amitābha is not included in his triple diadem. His right hand seems to sketch the gesture of preaching while simultaneously holding a willow branch; the other hand holds a lotus bud. The mandorla has a flaming border and is encircled by a white aureole which also circumscribes a halo formed of concentric rings. A cartouche on the left reads: "[Praise be to the] bodhisattva Guanshiyin, saviour from perils".

The drawing appears to have been executed with a reed pen. The hesitant lines of the halo and the mandorla are no doubt produced by a raised-hand technique. The strokes are rapid and rather clumsy, above all in the treatment of the hands. The calligraphy on the other hand is vigorous.

Plate 75,
The bodhisattva Guanyin "with the unfailing lasso"
(Amoghapāśa)
Five Dynasties, third year of the Xiande era (956 AD). Painting on hemp cloth. Warp and weft: 18 x 8 threads per cm. H. 161.5 cm; W. 53 cm. EO.1176. See also fig. 31. **MS**

The unfailing lasso which characterises this form of Avalokiteśvara is the lasso of compassion, by virtue of which he gathers in all beings, as the fisherman's net catches fishes, and leads them to salvation. The figure bears Amitābha in his head-dress, as is usual, and also wears a black-and-white patterned shawl over his left shoulder. This is the "buckskin robe", held to be evocative of a hermit's costume, and constituting the only constant iconographic element of this form of Avalokiteśvara. The number of his hands are no more firmly established than the attributes they carry. There are in fact numerous variations. Always eight-armed when the principal figure in the Dunhuang paintings, he also appears paired with Cintāmaṇicakra as an attendant of thousand-armed, thousand-eyed Avalokiteśvara. In this latter form he has three faces and six or four arms, as for instance in plate 98 and Stein painting 35 (Whitfield, 2, pl. 18). His attributes are also irregular. However tempting to regard the lasso as his distinctive and indispensable attribute, this is sometimes absent – as in this case. The name of the bodhisattva is given in an incomplete inscription in the top left of the painting. This inscription is discussed further in the note to plate 79.

Donor figures are placed at either side of a stele located at the centre of the lower register. The four columns of text read from left to right are barely legible, though it does mention the *fuzhu*, one of the titles of the local rulers. This refers to Cao Yuanzhong, as in the inscription of plate 51. A date appears in the last column, the *bingchen* year which must correspond to 956 AD.

On the right side of the inscription may be seen a man, whose cartouche has been completely erased; a woman, in front of whom we may read "the daughter-in-law, *née* An, married"; a little girl, of whose name nothing survives apart from the word "daughter". On the left are the silhouette of a woman, a man referred to as "the son, Hanzi" whose wife is represented in second place on the right, and finally a youth, whose name is illegible, the son of Hanzi and brother of the little girl on the right.

Plate 76
The bodhisattva Guanyin (Avalokiteśvara)
Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Painting on hemp cloth. Warp and weft: 12 x 9 threads per cm. H. 158 cm; W. 53 cm. EO.3638. **MS**

Despite the damage caused by damp and although this painting is much faded, this banner is still legible enough for it to be worthwhile comparing it with plate 53. Both represent the bodhisattva standing in three-quarter pose, turned towards the right (to the left for the viewer). In this case the face is almost indiscernible, but at the side of the head-dress a similar pendant ornament can be seen, cone-shaped with horizontal white and red stripes. Though not a rare ornament, the stripes are usually vertical. As in plate 53, the right hand here holds a glass bowl from which emerges a three-petalled flower with two leaves. The left hand of this example is partially erased, but seems similarly to make the gesture of appeasement with nothing clasped between the fingers. Other similarities may be observed in the costumes, for instance the red girdle decorated with small white plaques with a dot at the centre of each, the same lines visible on the under-garment beneath the central medallion, and the same movement of the white scarf which passes over the red belt and falls down to the feet. These similarities do not however prevent many quite different details. The two paintings have certainly not been copied from each other, but it is possible that they have a common origin and were perhaps executed by pupils of one master in the same workshop.

An apparently uninscribed cartouche is found at the upper left of the painting. A small figure of Amitābha can only just be made out in the tiara. The remains of three hanging loops can still be seen at the top of the painting.

Plate 77
The bodhisattva Guanyin (Avalokiteśvara)
Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Painting on hemp cloth. Warp and weft: 12 x 8 threads per cm. H. 144 cm; W. 52 cm. MG.17783. See also fig. 29. **MS**

This banner is a classic portrayal of Guanyin which calls for no particular comment. Nevertheless, despite the numerous stains from damp and mould and the fading of the colours, it is apparent that the work has been finely realised. Here and there the lines are pale and difficult to see. The hands are especially unclear. The left hand seems to hold a lotus bud in front of the girdle, while as far as we can see the right, raised in the gesture of appeasement, holds nothing. A cartouche on the left is uninscribed. Floral motifs like those in plate 75 adorn the background.

Plate 78
The bodhisattva Guanyin "with the unfailing lasso" (Amoghapāśa)
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 49 x 36 threads per cm. H. 84 cm; W. 64.6 cm. MG.23076. See also fig. 33, 34. **MS**

The attributes held by Guanyin's eight arms differ from those he carries in plate 75, and are no more attested to in the texts than these. Let us observe the 'lasso' in his external middle right hand. His lower right hand resting on his knee is empty, but it is possible that the artist omitted to add the rosary to it, counter-balance to the flask carried in his left hand.

It is most unfortunate that the figures surrounding Guanyin in this impressive painting are not named. In principle only the two generals or Guardian Kings located at the top may be identified. These military figures frequently appear in paintings in which a divinity is accompanied by a number of attendants. Their rôle is to guard the cardinal directions in representations of this type, similar in some respects to their function in *maṇḍalas*. At Dunhuang their iconography varies a good deal. It is common for them all to bear swords. If we refer to the paintings in the corners of the ceiling of Mogao cave 100 (Five Dynasties; Bakkō, 5, pl. 26-29), then in this case the figure on the left, bending his bow, should be the King of the South, Virūḍakha, and the one on the right, carrying a sword, should be the King of the West, Virūpakṣa. On the other hand, according to a painting on paper preserved in Delhi (Stein painting 431; *Serindia*, pl. XC), the bow is carried by Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the King of the East. This second suggestion seems more sound for this painting at any rate, since the kings are usually represented in pairs of opposite directions, north and south or east and west.

If we compare this with another painting of Guanyin, similar in its general aspect as well as in some details, then the two monks that may be seen below the kings could be Subhūti and Śāriputra on the left and right respectively (Stein painting 63; Whitfield, 2, pl. 29). None of the remaining figures are sufficiently characterised to allow for even the vaguest of identifications.

It is worth remarking upon the greenish background consisting of lozenges delineated by three lines with yellow dots at their centres, which is visible at the base of the painting and above, next to the monks. At the level of the canopy and the Guardian Kings (*lokapāla*) the ground is different, being covered with floral motifs. This type of ground is quite rare; we encounter another example of it in plate 98. Furthermore, certain details of the decor can be related to those of plate 96, dated 943 AD – principally the purplish-tinted curling smoke which supports Guanyin's throne, and the treatment of the rims of the basin. In other respects these two paintings do not resemble each other.

The painted surface is composed of two pieces of silk: the larger consists of a width of the material, about 60 cm wide, to which was added a 5 cm band. The vertical seam is clearly visible in the photograph near the right-hand edge of the painting.

Plate 79
The bodhisattva Guanyin "with the unfailing lasso" (Amoghapāśa)
Five Dynasties; third year of the Qianyou era (950 AD). Painting on hemp cloth. Warp and weft: 12 x 11 threads per cm. H. 87.8 cm; W. 50 cm. MG.23079. See also fig. 32. **MS**

The originality and harmony of this composition derive from the large oval halo which surrounds the central figure and which is emphasised by the leafy twigs that curve around it. The face with its downcast eyes also lends interest to this painting.

The figure is the same as in plate 75, but the attributes which he carries here in his four pairs of hands are partly different. The tridents in the upper hands as well as the rosary and water-pot in the lower are the same. The differences occur in the two sets of median hands, which in this case hold lotus buds or flower stems and a willow frond.

The transparent glass vessel carried rather awkwardly by the bodhisattva in his outer right hand is of interest. The same gesture is found far better drawn on the right in the painting shown in plate 65, in which the bowl is nimbly balanced on the tips of the finger of his right hand, while the left, as here, carries the willow branch. Amongst other examples of such a glass vessel, it is worth noting plate 53 as well as Stein painting 28* (Whitfield, 1, pl. 26).

The inscription in the cartouche at the upper left reads: "Praise be to the bodhisattva with the unfailing lasso". It contains three character substitutions – *bo* for *bu*, *juan*, and *ku* for *pu*; the last of these is a fairly ordinary slip of the pen, but the same cannot be said for the other two faults. Now the first two substitutions also appear in the inscription of plate 75 (the first two characters have been worn away, *bo* is bearly legible, but *pu* is written correctly). The two inscriptions are by the same hand, although in terms of style the paintings are totally different.

Several figures are arranged in the lower part on either side of a central inscription, which consists of six columns which read from left to right. This is a votive prayer which runs as follows: "Deng Xingquan, loyal

to the pure faith, has respectfully [had] made / an image of the bodhisattva with the unfailing lasso [written with the same characters as in the cartouche]. / He worshipped it first of all in order that the inhabitants of this country enjoy peace and prosperity; in order that / his deceased parents find rebirth in the Pure Land; and so that / all his family be without [...] obstacles [...]. / In the *gengxu* [950 AD] year, [one] day in the fourth month".

Three male figures are depicted on the right side. The first two who kneel with their hands joined are, from left to right: 1) the deceased father of the donor, Deng Wenzheng. The last two characters of the inscription, *gongyang*, could not be fitted into the cartouche and appear at the top of the sixth column of the central inscription; 2) the donor himself, Deng Xingquan, son of the aforementioned; 3) a young lad standing, without an inscription, dressed in a costume which finds a counterpart in, for example, Stein painting 54 (Whitfield, 2, l. 27), dated 983 AD. On the left side are three women who are, from right to left: 1) the mother of the donor, *née* Zhang; 2) her daughter-in-law, *née* Du, doubtless the donor's wife; 3) an adolescent, daughter of the aforementioned and the donor, named Zhusheng.

Three suspension loops attached to the dark brown hemp cloth border indicate that the work was once displayed or, at the very least, was intended for display.

Plate 80

Maṇḍala of the eight deities of the Lotus section (Padmakula)
Tang dynasty (second half of the 8th century). Painting on silk. H. 89.6 cm; W. 60 cm. EO.1131. **MS**

The central figure in this *maṇḍala* is clearly Avalokiteśvara, since he wears the image of a transformation buddha in his head-dress. It remains to establish which precise form of the bodhisattva is depicted here, as well as to identify the seven figures that surround him. Matsumoto provided a lead already some time ago (Matsumoto, p. 643 *sq.*), for he interpreted this painting as an abbreviation or fragment of the area or court of Avalokiteśvara (also known as the court of the Lotus) belonging to the Womb World *maṇḍala*. We should refer first of all to the *Sūtra of Mahāvairocana*, or better still to its more understandable commentary (*Taishō*, 848, 1796), rather than to the 'geometrically realised' *maṇḍala* which includes more than twenty-one figures in the section of Avalokiteśvara alone. We find Avalokiteśvara, facing south, on the left of Vairocana – that is to say, on the north side. Tārā and Bhṛkuṭi are placed to the right and left of the bodhisattva. Moving further to the left of the latter, we encounter Mahāsthāmaprāpta and then Yaśodharā. Pāṇḍaravāsinī is located to the right of Tārā, and Hayagrīva appears below (or possibly in front of) Avalokiteśvara. If, for reasons of symmetry, Hayagrīva was moved over beside Pāṇḍaravāsinī, then we would have three figures on the left of Avalokiteśvara and three on his right. This arrangement appears to correspond fairly closely with what we can observe in this painting – thus, on the right side (on the proper left side of the central figure), from top to bottom: (1) Mahāsthāmaprāpta, a male figure, judging by his diadem, who holds a flower in bud just as is indicated in the commentary; (2) Bhṛkuṭi, with a feminine head-dress and four arms, holds various attributes of which three – the rosary, the flask and the flower – are given in the commentary; (3) Yaśodharā, also with a feminine coiffure, carries a branch with three coloured leaves attached to it which possibly corresponds to the white lotus blossom attributed to her in the commentary. On the left side, to the right of Avalokiteśvara and from top to bottom are: (1) [Pāṇḍaravāsinī], a female four-armed deity with a greyish-green complexion; owing to the deterioration of the painting, only two of her attributes can be made out, a lasso and a rod surmounted with a *vajra*. None of these characteristics, however, are proper to Pāṇḍaravāsinī; (2) white-skinned Tārā, holding a lotus flower in her joined hands; this representation is in harmony with the commentary: the white garment that she usually wears is so transparent that she appears almost naked; (3) Hayagrīva, four-armed and recognisable by the horse's head appearing above his red hair.

It thus seems certain that the *maṇḍala* in question here is based on a variation of the Womb World *maṇḍala* of which the court of Avalokiteśvara forms a part. Nevertheless, we must mention two anomalies that it shows in relation to the latter. Firstly, the deity at the top left is apparently not Pāṇḍaravāsinī, and secondly, we are confronted here with eight, rather than seven figures. The eighth, a male figure, is located under the central image; he is four-armed, wears a three-pointed crown and carries in his hands a *vajra*, a lasso, a trident and a flower. In his note on the painting in the Japanese version of this work, and basing himself on an Indian tradition for which he believes there is ample evidence, Tanaka Kimiaki suggests that the upper figure is Ekajatā, the "demon with a single chignon", and that the other is Amoghapāśa, Avalokiteśvara with the unfailing lasso.[39] It has so far proved impossible to determine which manifestation of Avalokiteśvara, black or dark blue-skinned, is shown at the centre of the *maṇḍala*. The lasso he holds in one of his left hands does not suffice to identify him with Amoghapāśa, as Matsumoto proposed.

The style of painting is worthy of close scrutiny. Many aspects of this work are interesting, but we restrict ourselves to noting a few points. Avalokiteśvara's three-pointed crown, his necklaces and bracelets are all superbly-worked items of jewellery. The head-dresses of the female divinities, and in particular those of Bhṛkuṭi and Tārā, resemble finely-crafted nets, and are unique in the Dunhuang material. They are also very different from the crowns of Mahāsthāmaprāpta and the figure below Avalokiteśvara. The figures' clothes are remarkable, being reduced to a simple loincloth or transparent skirt. Their horseshoe-shaped mandorlas, coloured red and green, are also note-worthy. We find the same style in another *maṇḍala* of Avalokiteśvara, Stein painting 55, kept in the British Museum (Whitfield, 2, pl. 38, fig. 53, 54 and p. 326, where the author indicates the similarity). Various hypotheses have been put forward on the subject of the artistic influences at work in this painting; these are all vague, and quite without any

concrete foundations whether they invoke Indian, Tibeto-Nepalese, Himalayan or Silk Road art. For our part, we suggest an historical connection (rather than an artistic comparison) with the Indian art of the Pāla dynasty that was established in Bengal from the mid eighth century and under which Tantric Buddhism flourished. The one certain characteristic of this painting is a marked foreign flavour, whose origin must be looked for in India, whatever route it then took to reach Dunhuang.

The canopy above Avalokiteśvara is hardly visible. Various offerings, such as conches, vases, lamps, *etc.*, mostly placed upon tripods, can be made out at the base of the composition. The olive-green ground of the painting is scattered with delicately-painted flowers, white and red.

The painting is partially damaged, and shows traces of restoration and retouching. It is nonetheless of exceptional workmanship and artistic quality.

Plate 81
The bodhisattva Ruyilun Guanyin (Cintāmaṇicakra)
Tang dynasty-Five Dynasties (9th century-10th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 50 x 24 threads per cm. H. 71.5 cm; W. 60.7 cm. EO.1150. **MS**

The name of this particular form of Guanyin is symbolic, inextricably linked with his iconography. The literal meaning of *ruyi* is "according to the desires"; this refers to the precious jewel or pearl (*cintāmaṇi*) that enables Guanyin to fulfil the wishes of beings. The wheel (*cakra*) is the Wheel of the Law, turned by the bodhisattva in order to teach the doctrine to living beings and thus to bring about their salvation. It is commonly depicted in profile, resting on its axis like a top above his upper left hand, the index finger of which is often shown pointing up towards the hub.

We should note that some texts precisely describe the appearance of the figure while explaining the meaning of his attributes.[40] According to these, he is six-armed in order to save living beings in each of the six "ways". There are however exceptions to this general rule, as we see, for example, in the painting P.4518(16), kept in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, in which he has only four arms.

His upper left hand is closed in the painting under discussion here. At some distance from this hand, the wheel is represented, rather curiously, as a sort of umbrella. His middle left hand is held in front of this chest, above the jewel carried in his right hand, and forms the gesture of argument. According to the written sources, this hand should hold a lotus blossom. The gesture is, in fact, commonly used by bodhisattvas when holding a stem between index finger and thumb. His lower left hand rests on a flat stone which floats level with his knee. This is held to refer to the Guangming shan, one of the names of the Potalaka, the rocky island abode of Guanyin set in the Southern Seas. The symbolic interpretation of this is made in terms of the bodhisattva's realisations, which are said to be unshakeable, like the rock.

The ellbow of his upper right arm leans on his knee, which is raised in the posture knows as "royal ease"; his hand is held close to his tilted head. Generally typical of Maitreya, this is called the posture "of contemplation"or "of meditation", *siwei*. It shows that the bodhisattva is meditating, extending his compassion to all living beings. The jewel is placed in his middle right hand, which is brought round in front of his body. Finally, his lower right hand carries the rope or lasso. This detail is something of an anomaly, since the attribute here should be the rosary, with which he saves beings from suffering. We know, however, that the lasso, borrowed from other forms of Guanyin, serves the same purpose.

Unlike the attributes, Guanyin's attendants are not mentioned in the texts referred to above, and deserve a few remarks. Above, on either side of the mandorla, appear the gods of the sun and moon, Sūrya and Candra. The former can be seen on the right, surrounded by a red mandorla and seated on five white horses – his standard iconography. The moon god has a white mandorla, and is seated upon geese. These figures appear in exactly the same arrangement in a wall-painting in cave 14, representing Ruyilun Guanyin surrounded by numerous attendants (*Bakkō*, 4, pl. 168). This detail is, in fact, adopted from images of thousand-armed, thousand-eyed Guanyin, such as Stein paintings 35 and 426 (Whitfield, 1, pl. 18; *Serindia*, pl. 64). It seems to us that the two celestial gods add a spatial, if not actually cosmic, dimmension to these paintings which relates them to *maṇḍala*s. It is well-known, at any rate, that the sun and moon are part of Guanyin's iconography. We will return to this subject in the note to plate 98.

Two naked children can be seen lower down the composition. These may perhaps represent souls taking rebirth, but in so saying, we enter the realm of speculation. They may be compared with the two infants found, according to Waley (p. 97), at the foot of another image of this bodhisattva, Stein painting 66 (Whitfield, 1, fig. 68). Lower still, we encounter the acolytes of Guanyin well-known in representations of the latter in his thousand-armed, thousand-eyed form – the hermit Vasu on the right, the goddess Śridevi on the left, to whom we shall return in the notes to plates 91 and 96.

The lower corners of the painting are occupied by two wrathful deities, the figure on the left with a blue complexion, that on the right with a green one. Similar figures are found not only in the painting in cave 14 mentioned above, in which they are un-named, but also in representations of thousand-armed, thousand-eyed Guanyin. If we compare this painting with the one kept in Delhi, the right-hand figure may be identified as "Fire-headed *Vajra*" (the cartouche of the left-hand figure in the Delhi painting is uninscribed). If, on the other hand, we compare it with plate 96, then we have Fire-headed *Vajra* again, this time on the left, and *Vajra* Poison on the right. Fire-headed *Vajra* is again found on the left in Stein painting 35, with Blue-faced *Vajra* on the opposite side (Whitfield, 1, pl. 18-6). In order to increase their power, these figures have been given the appearance of *vidyārāja*, or kings of knowledge, to whom they are clearly related. They derive from the eight great *vajra-*

bearers invoked when the *Diamond Sūtra* is read out, so that they may always protect those who follow the teaching. In this case they protect the bodhisattva's assembly as well as those who put their faith in him.

In the middle of the painting, we see the two dragon-kings Nanda and Upananda, whose feet are submerged in the pool beneath the throne. Like the other attendants, these two are not normally associated with this form of Guanyin. We will discuss this further in the context of plate 96.

Perhaps the most striking feature of this composition is the dominance of red. This is the colour of the bodhisattva's body and face, contrary to what is indicated in canonical texts, which speak rather of a golden complexion (incidentally, this gold colour is what is probably represented by yellow in another image of this bodhisattva, Stein painting 10; Whitfield, 2, pl. 5). The same red is used for his robe, for the sun god's mandorla, for the flames of the wrathful deities and in robes of all the other figures. The structure of the bodhisattva's mandorla also demands attention. Consisting of a circle formed by arrow-head shaped points – quite a widespread model – it is ringed by a whitish halo surrounded by a garland of flowers of alternating colours. The same arrangement and, above all, exact replicas of this garland, occur in the two paintings of Ruyilun Guanyin mentioned above (Stein paintings 10 and 61), and also in the representation of Amoghapāśa shown in plate 78. All these paintings appear fairly close in terms of their dates.

Plate 82
Hayagriva, horse-headed Guanyin
Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Painting on paper. Vertical chain-lines: 4 per cm. H. 72 cm; W. 30.6 cm. MG.17678. **JPD**

This form of Guanyin, also called "Horse-headed Knowledge King", is an aspect of an ancient Hindu deity of ambivalent character (as is so often the case with fierce divinities) brought into the Buddhist pantheon.[41]

Three-headed and eight-armed, and in the same posture as a king of knowledge, the figure surrounded by red flames is firstly recognisable by the horse's head placed above his halo, and also by the characteristic "horse's mouth" gesture of his principal set of hands, the image of Amitābha on the middle head, and by the upper teeth which bite into the lower lip. His other attributes hardly accord with textual descriptions. One of the work's most interesting details can be seen at the torn edge at the bottom of the painting, a tiny white head with trunk and tusks which belong to what must be a fleeing *vināyaka* elephant, with a hand raised above its head.

This painting can be linked to another work in the British Museum, Stein painting 40 (Whitfield, 2, pl. 57 and p. 334-335). Also on paper and of roughly the same size as the Guimet example taking account of the damage, Stein 40 probably represents the king of knowledge Ucchuṣma. There is much to suggest that they are by the hand of the same artist, though it remains unclear whether they were painted as part of a series or as a pair. The second hypothesis is supported by the fact the deities' faces are in three-quarter view, turning towards each other as is common-place with pairs. We also observe that each figure is accompanied by only one *vināyaka*, the elephant for Hayagrīva and the boar for Ucchuṣma. Such an arrangement occurs with the pairs of wrathful deities that guard the lower corners of representations of Guanyin. It should also be remembered that these two deities have a trait of character in common – the vanquishing of the *vināyaka* and preventing the latter from doing harm. Nevertheless, it does not appear that Hayagrīva and Ucchuṣma were ever associated with one another. Yet another matter for some surprise is the *vināyaka* of Hayagrīva, which seems smaller than Ucchuṣma's, is fleeing towards the right. If we are indeed dealing a pair here, symmetry demands that he go in the opposite direction. The reader is directed to the note to plate 96 for further discussion of *vināyaka*.

Two sheets of paper have been used in this painting. The lower is damaged and incomplete. The upper part of the work, which is of lighter colour, seems to have been covered up. At the centre of the top of the painting is a hole, once a fixing point.

Plate 83
Guanyin "with reflections of the moon in the water"
End of the Tang dynasty-Five Dynasties (end of the 9th century- first half of the 10th century). Painting on paper. H. 53.3 cm; W. 37.2 cm. EO.1136. **JPD**

The expression "reflection of the moon in water" is a metaphor widely used in Buddhist works for the illusory and unreal nature of all things. It is sometimes said that this form of Guanyin is a manifestation of the bodhisattva Shuijixiang who appears in the field of Avalokiteśvara in the first enclosure of the Womb-world *maṇḍala*. This is however a baseless theory intended to legitimate this particular representation, which is in fact, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, a purely Chinese creation. In his *Lidai minghua ji*, completed in 847 AD, the celebrated historian of calligraphy and painting Zhang Yanyuan attributes the creation of this form to the court painter Zhou Fang (about 730-800 AD). In the same work, Zhang Yanyuan talks of another portable painting by the same artist called "Guanyin of water and moon", in which the colour of the halo and the decoration of the bamboo were completed by Liu Zheng. This composition used to be found in the Shengguang monasteryin Chang'an. From the ninth century onwards this subject was painted by famous painters in other regions. According to the *Yizhou minghualu*, Fan Qiong made it the subject of a wall-painting at the Shengshou monastery in Chengdu, Sichuan province. Another painter, Zuo Quan, decorated one of the pavilions of the Dashengci monastery with it, to accompany thousand-armed, thousand-eyed Guanyin. The great poet Bai Juyi, faithful to this bodhisattva, sung his praises in a famous poem of the same era: "On the pure green

water, in the clear white light, I perceived the reflection of his image and my ten thousand cares evaporated". This theme was introduced into Japan by a monk of the Shingon sect, Jōgyō (died in 865 AD). More than twenty depictions of this subject survive at Dunhuang, of which seventeen are wall-paintings. Six of these date to the Five Dynasties period. There are six portable paintings executed on silk or paper, two of which are in the British Museum (Stein paintings 15 and 293; Whitfield, 2, pl. 19 and 52), and another two in the Musée Guimet (this one and plate 96). One dated 961 AD and offered by Fan Zaisheng, is kept in the Provincial Museum of Sichuan (reproduced in *Yiyuan duoying*, July 1980, no. 9, p. 4). The sixth was offered in fear of a difficult delivery by the crown prince in behalf of his new wife, who was reaching the end of her pregnancy. This is preserved in the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, and is the only one in which Guanyin is not bathed in a luminous halo.

Guanyin is depicted in profile, seated on a rock emerging from a great expanse of water in a posture of ease. He holds his left knee in his two clasped hands while his right foot hangs down and rests on a lotus. He is surrounded by luxuriant and rather tropical vegetation, with a bamboo and a red-blossomed tree on the left and exotic flowers on the right. The red of his princely dress contrasts strongly with the green of the vegetation. Amitābha appears in his elaborately-worked crown. The white halo surrounding the nimbus represents the moon. We observe in this connection that in this painting as in all the others there is no sign of any "reflection of the moon in the water". A realistic note is struck by the ducks on the water and the lotus leaves and flowers in different stages of development. The painting has a very distinctive style as may be seen in the figure's facial features, his ornaments and his garb, as well as the treatment of the rock, the vegetation and the ducks.

Finally, we note that the colophon of the manuscript P.2055R°3, (dating to the first half of the tenth century and which contains copies of three sūtras for funerary ceremonies following a death), intimates that at that time there was a "*Sūtra of Guanyin* of moon and water", *Shuiyue Guanyin jing*, in a single chapter. Unfortunately this text has not been found amongst the Dunhuang manuscripts.

Plate 84
Guanyin with three heads and six arms, with the Boys of Good and Evil
Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Painting on paper. Chain-lines: 4 per cm. H. 31.3 cm; W. 43.4 cm. EO.1398 (P.179). **RS. MS**

The title given above is not a name so much as a description. Besides the more or less codified and named representations of Avalokiteśvara are other forms for which the justification is either unknown or lost, unless these be simplifications or innovations which in no way diminish the power or value of the representation of the bodhisattva. It is easy to convince oneself of this by comparing this image with three heads and six arms with the following two plates, 85 and 86, in which Guanyin has nine heads and six arms, or even with plate 52, in which he has but one head and two arms. The important feature of all these images is the inclusion of the two Boys of Good and Evil. It is they who provide the key to these paintings, by indicating the importance attributed to Guanyin as well as the significance of the prayers addressed to him. Emphasis has already been given in the note to plate 52 to the important rôle played by the 'boys' in the recording of an individual's actions, which will determine his future realm of existence after death. We note that here the boys do not carry scrolls as is more usual, but this does not hinder their identification which is certain beyond any shadow of doubt.

This work is rather crudely executed, as are the majority of paintings on paper of this type (it might be more exact to refer to them as drawings heightened with colours). The palette is limited: brick red, pink, grey and bistre or ochre. The holes at the four corners of the painting show that it was displayed, probably as an object of devotion.

Plate 85
Guanyin with nine heads and six arms, with the Boys of Good and Evil
Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Painting on paper. Vertical chain-lines: 4 per cm. Total dimensions: H. 79.8 cm; W. 38.5 cm. Main composition: H. 56 cm; W. 37 cm. MG.17674. **JPD**

The painting is executed on a single sheet of paper of very uncommon size. Two bands of paper are pasted to the top and bottom of this sheet, which are coloured blue-grey and decorated with darker floral motifs. The painting is, moreover, framed with a narrow painted border of orange with white flowers and is an imitation of a painting on cloth.

The dominant figure is Guanyin, who stands on a lotus blossom, and wears a moustache and an imperial on his principal face. The secondary faces are arranged above the diadem in two rows of five heads and two, surmounted by a head of a transformation buddha, Amitābha. The principal pair of hands make the gesture of appeasement, and simultaneously hold a willow spray (in the right hand) and the stem of a lotus flower (in his left). The upper pair of secondary hands display the sun and moon, while the lower pair hold a pink lotus blossom and the water pot. The cartouche at the upper left reads: "Praise be to the bodhisattva Guanshiyin, saviour from perils".

Two impassive figures stand at either side of the bodhisattva, who are named in their accompanying cartouches. On the left is the figure of Good, carrying a rolled-up scroll in his hands. Evil stands on the right, holding a bundle of scrolls wrapped in a cloth tightly against his chest. As we already remarked *à propos* plate 52, the two boys are in fact two young women.

The canopy consists of a gilded frame decorated with five flaming jewels, hung with draperies, tassels, medallions and garlands; it seems to be supported by a

tree whose branches appear behind the bodhisattva. As in a painting of Kṣitigarbha (plate 98), reeds ending in stellate flowers may be seen in the background. In the lower part of the painting, the basin from which emerges the lotus appears as a pool dotted with leaves and flowers. On the right, a waterfowl with a tufted tail stands on the water.

Plate 86
Nine-headed Guanyin with the boys of Good and Evil
Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Painting on hemp. H. 118.5 cm; W. 51 cm. EO.1147. **DE**

Guanyin occupies most of this composition, standing against a background of floral motifs with four uninscribed cartouches. His principal face has somewhat disproportionate features – the nose for instance is too long – and is surmounted by eight secondary heads, the highest being the face of the transformation buddha, Amitābha. His principal hands are brought forward in front of his chest, and each delicately holds the stem of a lotus blossom in a gesture similar to the preaching *mudrā*. His secondary right hands carry the sun and a rosary, the left hands the moon and the flask. In each of the upper corners is a small buddha seated on a lotus, with a halo, a mandorla and an aureole formed of rays, who floats on a cloud which seems to emanate from Guanyin himself.

His floral canopy with jewelled pendants is reminiscent of those seen in Stein painting 23 (Whitfield, 2, pl. 24), and also of the painting in Chengdu mentioned in the note to plate 72. The two Boys of Good and Evil already encountered in plate 52 are depicted at his feet. The right-hand figure, of cheerful expression and carrying a rolled-up scroll and a brush, is the boy charged with logging virtuous actions, while the left-hand boy, who records evil actions, has a more severe face and holds an unrolled scroll.

Plate 87
Eleven-headed Guanyin (Ekādaśamukha-Avalokiteśvara)
Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Painting on hemp cloth. Warp and weft: 9 x 10 threads per cm. H. 167.2 cm; W. 57 cm. MG.23080
See also fig. 35. **MS. DE**

The flaws in this painting on hemp cloth make it difficult to distinguish the secondary faces stacked in the head-dress. It is possible to count up to twelve of these, or perhaps only eleven if the arrangement is asymmetrical. Both totals are plausible. The upper hands hold the sun and moon, while the two middle hands each hold a black rosary between thumb and forefinger. A lasso hangs from the lower left hand, but it is impossible to make out the movement of the lower right hand.

Five buddhas seated in a row, with their hands hidden beneath their robes, are depicted at the top of the painting above a frieze of lozenges. Although the cartouches are almost illegible, it is possible to make out "Buddha of the South", *etc.*. These are the buddhas of the five directions, equivalent to the buddhas of the ten directions that are found represented at the top of some images of Guanyin, for instance in plate 98.

Fourteen attendants, whose names often appear in cartouches, are painted beside the bodhisattva. These are, from top to bottom and from right to left:

1) Below the canopy, two Guardian Kings called "God of the North" and "God of the South";
2) At the level of the canopy, two offering bodhisattvas named "the buddha who makes many offerings" and, in two columns read from left to right, "the bodhisattva who offers whole-heartedly". The first inscription, which is wrong, demonstrates the lack of care in the execution of this painting;
3) Above the halo, four monks. The two nearest Guanyin only are accompanied by inscriptions: "Ānanda" and "Mahākāśyapa". One of the ten great disciples of Śākyamuni Buddha, Ānanda appears in the *Sūtra of the dhāraṇī of thousand-armed Guanyin* as a secondary interlocutor, but this probably has nothing to do with his representation here, since he is given the rôle of interlocutor in a great number of other sūtras. Mahākāśyapa on the other hand has no relationship with Avalokiteśvara. Two monks also attend Guanyin in plate 78 without any cartouche, and again in Stein painting 63, in which they are named as Śāriputra and Sūbhuti, themselves also belonging to the list of the ten great disciples;
4) At a level with Guanyin's principal face, two other bearers of offerings – on the right, "the bodhisattva who carries flowers", but the left-hand cartouche is no longer legible;
5) At Guanyin's knee height on the right, the hermit Vasu whose cartouche is difficult to decipher but still legible, and on the left Śridevī, carrying flowers and with a worn cartouche;
6) Level with the table, two more bearers of offerings, each accompanied with a cartouche of two columns; the right-hand one reads from left to right, the left-hand one from right to left: "Praise be to the bodhisattva who is whole-hearted in his offering". The same name is used above, in 2).

Donors are depicted kneeling in the lower register, at either side of the uninscribed central cartouche. On the left we see a man followed by two children, one of whom is named as his son, Nan, and on the right are two women, described in their all but illegible cartouches as "loyal to the pure faith".

The work is quite mediocre, with the composition particularly slapdash in the area beneath Guanyin's lotus: the tiled edge at the left side of the basin is clumsily placed askew as it passes underneath the cartouche of the bodhisattva of offering. The right-hand edge seems to have been entirely forgotten. Finally, on the right, we draw attention to the young woman's cartouche which extends considerably into the frieze. Two suspension loops survive at the upper edge of the painting, but a third, on the left, is missing. Five holes on each side are

also vestiges of such loops, now disappeared, which have slightly stretched the cloth. There is some brown staining at the bottom of the painting, and Guanyin's lotus throne and the offering table are both damaged.

Plate 88
Two Guanyins (detail: the upper part of the right-hand eleven-headed bodhisattva)
Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Painting on hemp cloth. Warp and weft: 11 x 10 threads per cm. H. 159 cm; W. 50.2 cm (left) + 52 cm (right) EO.3658. See also fig. 36. **DE**

These two compositions have been sewn together despite being of apparently quite different workmanship. Eleven-headed and six-armed Guanyin is depicted on the right (see plate), with the flask and rosary included amongst his attributes. On the left (fig. 36), the image of Guanyin (identifiable by the little transformation buddha above his diadem and by the flask carried in his left hand) presents many similarities to Stein painting 197 (Whitfield, 2, pl. 58). He has in fact the same "cat's eyes" as Waley described them, identical robes, and makes an analogous *mudrā*.

Suspension loops are still attached to the upper edge of the painting. The lower part, on the other hand, is holed and even in shreds. Both works have furthermore suffered extensively from damp.

Plate 89
Eleven-headed Guanyin (Ekādaśamukha-Avalokiteśvara)
Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Painting on hemp cloth. Warp and weft: 13 x 9 threads per cm. H. 139.5 cm; W. 51 cm. EO.3582. **RS. MS**

Of all the Buddhist deities, Avalokiteśvara is the one to have been given the greatest number of forms, and of these, the eleven-headed manifestation seen here (and its variations) is one of the most widespread. This form is of obscure origin, but may perhaps be based on the term *pumen*, which serves as a title for *pin* 25 of the *Lotus Sūtra* (often known as the *Sūtra of Guanyin*). The Chinese term scarcely makes sense, but the original Sanskrit *Samantamukha* means "He who turns his face to everything". In other words this new form of Avalokiteśvara was born in India, even though there it never became as popular as it did in China. Certain rituals describe the arrangement of the faces in three groups of three, and the various expressions symbolic of the bodhisattva's feelings, serenity, wrath and effort. Added to these are two more faces, one "with the wide smile" located at the back and the other, belonging to a buddha, at the very top. The latter is not Amitābha, who appears instead in the coiffure of every head.[42] What we encounter in the paintings is quite different and moreover seems to follow various models. When occasionally there is an Amitābha in the head-dress of the largest, central head, he is absent from the smaller heads. The smiling face at the rear must needs be brought round to the front amongst the eleven visible heads. The buddha head at the top is always present. Multiplication of the arms generally accompanies that of the heads for the same symbolical reasons. Representations with two arms do exist but usually the arms number four, six, eight or up to a thousand. This last form is so typical that it becomes yet another form of Avalo-kiteśvara, all the more so since thousand-armed Guanyin is not necessarily eleven-headed.[43]

The eleven heads are arranged here in three tiers made up of three (principal head and two side faces), five and three. The head at the middle of the upper tier is the buddha head mentioned earlier. It is worth remarking that the bodhisattva simultaneously holds a water-sprinkler and a flask in his left and right hands respectively.

This is an inexpensive work made of coarsely woven hemp cloth, with fibres of irregular thickness; it was then covered with a white sizing. It is in relatively good condition in spite of a few damp stains in the upper left.

Plate 90
Eleven-headed Guanyin
Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (10th cent.). Painting on hemp cloth. Warp and weft: 10 x 9 threads per cm. H. 162 cm; W. 57.5 cm. EO.3583. See also fig. 38. **RS. MS**

The principal head has a 'peaceful' expression, and is flanked by two others, very slightly smaller and seen in profile, which are 'threatening'. Other heads are arranged in tiers above these, firstly four smaller heads, then three, and finally a single face which is that of a buddha. We note that the central head of the second row is a little larger than the adjacent ones and seems to smile, reminiscent of the beaming face referred to in the caption for plate 89. The six hands bear the sun and moon, the water pot and rosary, and flowering stems – all common attributes of Avalokiteśvara.

Donors can be seen kneeling at Guanyin's feet. The cartouche accompanying the first woman on the right contains the following inscription: "Offered wholeheartedly by [my] mother-in-law". Lower down is a second woman, followed by a child. The cartouche reads: "Offered whole-heartedly by [my] wife". On the left but almost worn away are two men and two children. The cartouche located higher up, near the bodhisattva's robe, seems to belong to the principal donor: "Offered whole-heartedly by Xu Nuzi, group chief and commander of the right [an unknown title] of the canton of Dunhuang".

Stylistically this painting resembles plate 89, in particular the facial features emphasised in black ink. The whitened eyelids give a heaviness to the expression of the eyes, while the wide shoulders and convex torso contrast with the slim waist and rounded, amphora-like hips. The pigments have been applied in a single layer, notably for the complexion.

A strip of hemp cloth 9.5 x 29.5 cm, of the same weave, situated by the right foot, is the product of restoration work roughly contemporary with the painting's execution.

Plate 91
Eleven-headed Guanyin
Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Warp and weft: 12 x 13 threads per cm. H. 142.5 cm; W. 98.8 cm. EO.3587. **MS**

Guanyin, seated with his right foot visible, has his heads arranged in three rows as in plate 89. The buddha head at the top is gilded. The figure of Amitābha is placed on his two middle hands which are joined together in the gesture of meditation.

His ten hands bear the following, viewed from top to bottom: the sun and moon, a water-sprinkler and a sūtra in the Indian manner or *pothi*, two flowering stems, the aforementioned figure of Amitābha, a flask and a rosary.

Fourteen secondary figures are arranged symmetrically at either side of the central image; their accompanying cartouches are however uninscribed. Eight of these are acolytes without any discernible individuality. Two Guardian Kings are found in the upper corners of the painting, as is commonplace, one wearing a helmet and the other with a bodhisattva's top-knot. Lower down on the right is an old, bald, bearded man who holds a staff in his left hand and raises the other to his face; this is the hermit Vasu, one of Guanyin's usual attendants. On occasion he is even considered an incarnation of the latter.[44] Opposite Vasu, and thus forming a pair with him, is a half-kneeling woman with her hands joined – the goddess Śrīdevī, who appears in the list of Guanyin's twenty-eight attendants. One tradition claims that Vasu and Śrīdevī are brother and sister.[45] She wears a rather unusual head-dress composed essentially of two hooped plaits. The same coiffure may be seen in two paintings of thousand-armed Guanyin surrounded by numerous attendants, our plate 98-5 and Stein painting 35 (Whitfield, 1, pl. 18), and again in Stein painting 167, which portrays a thousand-armed Guanyin accompanied solely by Vasu and Śrīdevī (Whitfield, 2, pl. 71). Moreover, as the wife of Vaiśravaṇa, Śrīdevī is also encountered dressed and coifed in this same fashion as part of her husband's retinue passing over the Ocean in a beautiful painting kept in London, Stein painting 45 (Whitfield, 2, pl. 16).

Two wrathful deities may be seen against a fiery background at either side of the offering table. The right-hand figure is six-armed, and brandishes a wand tipped with a death's head, a flower, a bow and an arrow. His middle hands are crossed in a gesture most commonly attributed to Kuṇḍalī. The deity to the left has only four arms, and carries a trident and a chopper. The gesture of his middle hands is less specific. Whatever name be given them, these are those same deities so often encountered in the same positions in a variety of depictions of Guanyin (see also the note to plate 81).

The seven treasures of *cakravartin*, the universal monarch, appear in the lower section of the painting, separated from the upper part by a band of lozenges which resembles the border: from left to right these are the jewel, the white elephant, the jade girl, the wheel, the general, the horse and the coffer. These have been analysed above in the note to plate 5. The presence of this motif at the base of a depiction of Guanyin might seem extraordinary, but it has been observed in Indian iconography. Furthermore, it has been remarked that since Avalokiteśvara is in some respects a cakravartin, we should not be surprised that these symbolic images are linked with him.[46]

Let us return once more to Śrīdevī's coiffure, even though this is merely a detail. We encounter both this and her dress in the portrayal of the jade girl in the frieze of the seven treasures. She is clothed and coifed thus in other illustrations of the same subject – for instance in the large painting on the north wall of Yulin cave 25, dating to the period of Tibetan occupation,[47] and in Stein paintings 99 and 93 (Whitfield, 1, pl. 34 and 40). This head-dress and costume appear to be the prerogative of both Śrīdevī and the jade girl. It is not easy to find other examples; plate 19-3 above, or Stein paintings 11 and 85 (Whitfield, 1, pl. 12-6 and 37-1) are all rather later in date, and may reflect a fashion which would seem to date back to the eighth century.

This painting may be compared with those reproduced in plates 7 and 120 in matters relating to style; the outline is fine, the strokes are free and fluid, and there is a profusion of fine detail worthy of the skill of a miniaturist. These characteristics, as well as the intense and contrasting range of pigments, make this work a fine example of the pictorial art of the tenth century.

Plate 92
Eleven-headed Guanyin (Ekādaśamukha-Avalokiteśvara)
Five Dynasties (*circa* 920-936 AD). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 25 x 31 threads per cm. H. 101.5 cm; W. 60.7 cm. MG.17778. See also fig. 37. **JPD**

Two of Guanyin's eleven heads may be seen in profile behind the ears of the principal head. The others are arranged above the diadem in two rows of five and three heads. The principal hands are brought forward in front of his chest, while his others grasp the sun and moon or hold a flask and a pink lotus blossom. The lower pair holds nothing.

Six secondary figures are disposed at either side of the bodhisattva: two moustached Guardian Kings wielding swords, two *apsarasas*, and below them, two bodhisattvas of no particular individuality. Lower still are two wrathful four-armed deities, who dance against a flaming background in the posture of *vidyārājas*, and resemble those usually found in images of thousand-armed Avalokiteśvara (see plate 96). The two figures standing beneath the lotus, their feet in the pool, are the dragon kings Nanda and Upananda, members of Avalokiteśvara's retinue (see plate 96).

The lotus blossom rests on a cloud which hangs over the basin, which seems to be supported in turn by another, twisting cloud which whirls up out of the pool. A similar motif may be seen in painting 81.

In the lower register, two figures holding censers kneel on low platforms at either side of the two adjoin-

ing cartouches. The left-hand figure is the donor, an elderly man wearing a hat with stiff ribbons, with a small child behind him. The inscriptions runs: "The faithful disciple[48] Cheng Enxin, who occupies the post of *yaya* in the governor's administration, bears the title *yinqing guanglu dafu*, and acts as tutor to the crown prince while simultaneously president of the tribunal of censors, great pillar of the State, has [acquired] merit by respectfully [having had] painted [this painting] in behalf of his deceased elder sister, which he worships devotedly". The donor is in fact only a petty official notwithstanding his titles since these had become devalued at that time. The beneficiary (the donor's elder sister) may be seen on the right, accompanied by a small nun who stands with her hands joined. The inscription reads: "Portrait of the deceased elder sister, the *acaryā* Miaoda, altar mistress[49] of Dacheng monastery. Offered whole-heartedly".

It is possible to ascribe a fairly precise date to this painting owing to an interesting coincidence: a man named Cheng Enxin and bearing the same titles figures amongst the donors mentioned on the west wall of cave 98, decorated during the reign of Cao Yijin around 925 AD.[50]

Plate 93
Twelve-headed Guanyin
Five Dynasties; 6th year of the Xiande era (959 AD). Painting on hemp cloth. Warp and weft: 11 x 9 threads per cm. H. 127 cm; W. 51.3 cm. MG.25486. **JPD**

This twelve-headed form of Guanyin is rare and mentioned only occasionally in the texts. Nevertheless, in the *Fozu tongji*, a chronicle compiled by Zhipan between 1258 and 1269 AD, it is told how an imperial decree ordered the welcoming of the monk Baozhi into the capital in the fourth year of the Jianyuan era (482 AD). Having lacerated his face, the latter transformed himself into twelve-headed Guanyin, and went on to attract the hatred of the emperor by fomenting trouble amongst the people (*Taishō*, 2035, p. 346c). The same chronicle moreover recounts another version of the legend in the following way. Twenty-one years after the original decree, in the second year of the Tianjian era (503 AD),the Liang emperor Wu commanded Zheng Sengyou to paint Baozhi's portrait. The latter lacerated his face with his fingers and Guanyin appeared with twelve heads, now compassionate and now menacing, so that Zhang Sengyou was never able to capture his likeness (*Taishō*, 2035, p. 348c; *cf.* also *Taishō*, 2036, p. 544b). This legend does not appear in the biography of Baozhi written by Huijiao (497-554 AD) in his *Biographies of Eminent Monks, Gaoseng zhuan* (*Taishō*, 2059, p. 394a-395a). According to the *Tuhua jianwen zhi*, composed by Guo Ruoxu in the eleventh century during the reign of Taizong (967-997 AD), a painting of the metamorphosis of Baozhi into twelve-headed Guanyin was executed in the great hall of Daxiang-guo monastery in the capital by a famous artist of the Song court, Wang Daozhen, native of Sichuan. Dated 959 AD, our painting pre-dates the latter by a few decades.

Guanyin has only eleven heads visible, but the cartouche at the upper right reads unequivocally: "Praise be to the twelve-headed bodhisattva Guanyin". The commemorative text of the central inscription situated in the lower register repeats this appellation. We know that even in the case of eleven-headed Guanyin, one of his heads is in theory located at the back. Here we see two wrathful faces at the sides and the principal head surmounted by two tiers of five and three peaceful heads. The head in the middle of the upper row belongs to the buddha mentioned in the description of eleven-headed Guanyin. His gestures and attributes are those we might expect to find in representations of Guanyin of various types – sun and moon, rosary, principal pair of hands in front of his chest, extended lower left hand.

Several donors are seen in the lower part of the painting, but there is an anomaly here. A monk holding a censer is found to the right of Guanyin's feet, beyond the limit of the donors' register, with a cartouche containing a two-column inscription which reads from left to right as follows: "Offered whole-heartedly by the uncle, the *śramaṇa* Fayuan, *bhadanta* of service at the altar, disciple of the Buddhist community". His titles given here are very common amongst the monks of Dunhuang. Another cartouche opposite, without an image, gives the name of a daughter, Changzhi.

Separated from the main composition by a thick red line, the donors are lined up at either side of the dated central cartouche, which consists of four columns read from left to right: "Zhang Baozhi, disciple with a pure faith, respectfully [had] painted an image of the twelve-headed bodhisattva Guanyin, alone makes his vow. He uses it to worship firstly the *nāgas*, *devas* and other beings of the eight classes, in order that the land be secure, the inhabitants peaceful, and that the local gods may always flourish. He swears the vow that he may find himself in the Buddha's presence for a long time, and that he may live in riches and joy for a hundred years. In the sixth year of the Xiande era, *ji[wei]* year, the twenty-fifth day of the tenth month".

Three male figures holding flowers in their joined hands are found to the right of the central cartouche. These are, from left to right: 1) "The deceased father Zhang Xinzi, offered whole-heartedly"; 2) The son, loyal to the pure faith, Zhang Quanzi, offered whole-heartedly"; 3) a figure slightly larger than the others, partially worn away, whose cartouche is inscribed above the line bordering the register, "The donor, the son, loyal to the pure faith, Zhang Baozhi". The latter is none other than the signatory of the central inscription, the son (as is also Quanzi in all probability) of Zhang Xinzi, his deceased father.

On the left we can read as follows from right to left: 1) "The deceased mother, *née* Song, offered whole-heartedly", wife of Zhang Xinzi and mother of Zhang Baozhi; 2) "The elder sister, Erniangzi [the second], offered whole-heartedly"; 3) "The bride, wife of the donor, *née* So", offered whole-heartedly". The latter is the wife of Zhang Baozhi; 4) a little girl, standing behind the daughter-in-law, is probably Changzhi whose cartouche – owing to lack of space – was placed higher

up in the one place in the painting where there was room for it, opposite the monk Fayuan's cartouche. It is more problematic to identify Fayuan's position in the family. The arrangement of the figures and their cartouches is odd and indicates that there was some form of addition to the work.

Another painting of twelve-headed Guanyin from Dunhuang is kept in the Arthur Sackler Museum in Cambridge, Mass.. This was executed in 985 AD, and was offered for the well-being of Grand Master Yuanman, whose lay name was Zhang. Cao Zongshou, the future king of Dunhuang, commissioned this painting and is seen as a donor at the base of the composition. It differs appreciably from the Musée Guimet work: Guanyin is surrounded by scenes illustrating the perils from which he allows us to escape as they are described in the *Lotus Sūtra* (see plate 72). The principal head is surmounted by two rows of five heads topped by a single head. The heads in profile are not depicted.[51]

Plate 94
A pair of thousand-armed, thousand-eyed Guanyins
Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Painting on paper. Chain-lines: 5 per cm. H. 38.7 cm; W. 31 cm. MG.17686. **DE. MS**

It is likely that this form of Guanyin originated in India in a tantric context, but it does not appear to have left any trace in that country. It is found the great *maṇḍala* of the Womb-world, in the field of Ākāśagarbha, but this is no proof of authenticity. The earliest evidence for the introduction of this cult into China dates to the Wude era (618-626 AD), during the reign of the Tang emperor Gaozu. At that time, an Indian monk presented to the court an image of the bodhisattva painted on cotton as well as the *Sūtra of the dhāraṇi of thousand-armed, thousand-eyed Guanyin*, with instructions regarding the setting up of an suitable altar and appropriate *mudrās* – novelties which did not meet with imperial approval. A little later, during the reign of the next emperor, Taizong, in the Zhenguan era (627-649 AD), another Indian monk presented the *Sūtra* once again. This time the emperor accepted it and ordered Zhitong to arrange for a translation (preface of the *Taishō*, 1057).

The Dunhuang caves harbour forty-odd wall-paintings of thousand-armed, thousand-eyed Guanyin; the oldest date from the zenith of the Tang and the most recent from the Yuan. According to the *Tangchao minghua lu* (the *Compendium of famous painters at the Tang Court*), the diffusion of these pictorial representations was swift, largely due to a celebrated Khotanese artist. Most of the religious texts which relate to this form of Guanyin (*Taishō*, 1057 to 1060) are present amongst the Dunhuang manuscripts.

We will return later to this form of Guanyin when examining the paintings shown in plates 96 and 98. We have in this case a schematic or simplified representation. The two figures stand on lotus blossoms and are each equipped with five pairs of arms and an identical third eye placed vertically in the forehead. The hands, with an eye in each palm, bear symbolical attributes. The upper hands display the sun (on the left) with the three-legged bird and the moon (on the right) with the cinnamon tree; the outer middle hands of the left-hand bodhisattva hold a lotus bud and the lasso, and those of the right-hand figure the willow frond and a flaming jewel; the four inner middle hands are joined or make the gesture of appeasement (in the case of the latter, the left bodhisattva shows the back of the right hand, and the right bodhisattva shows the back of the left hand); the lower hands carry a leafy twig and the rosary. The nimbus of each is composed of multiple stylised hands, each set with a central eye, forming concentric circles.

Apart from painting 95, almost identical with this one, there are three others from Dunhuang which are similar, kept in the Bibliothèque nationale de France – P.4030, P.4518(9) and P.4518(13). The last two were once hung, one by blue silk ties, the other by three small loops of paper through which a rod was passed; as in this painting, their upper and lower edges were dyed blue. Though at first sight similar, all these bodhisattvas are in fact different, not only because of the attributes they carry, but also owing to the drawing of the body, the clothes, the decoration and the colours. They are serial productions, but made by hand and one by one. Other very similar paintings which contain but one figure form another series of the same type and are found in the Biblio-thèque Nationale de France, P.4067, P.4518(4) and P.4518(4 bis), and in the British Museum (Stein painting 159; Whitfield, 2, pl. 70).

Plate 95
A pair of thousand-armed, thousand-eyed Guanyins
Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Painting on paper. Chain-lines: 5 per cm. H. 40 cm; W. 30.8 cm. EO.3640. **DE**

Bearing a close resemblance to the preceding one, this painting has been torn and is stained by damp. The upper and lower edges have been dyed an indefinable colour which was once probably blue, along a strip 4.2 cm and 3.8 cm wide. The remains of holes in the upper corners indicate that the work was formerly displayed.

The principal hands of the two bodhisattva present the same symbolic attributes as painting 94, with one or two variants: the solar and lunar disks are reversed here for each of the two figures, and the inner middle hands make the gesture of fearlessness. There are also a few small differences in their dress. This is a serial production of quite coarse workmanship, identical with P.4030 in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France and similar to P.4518(9) and P.4518(13).

Plate 96
Thousand-armed, thousand-eyed Guanyin
Five Dynasties; eighth year of the Tianfu era (943 AD). Painting on silk. H. 123.5 cm; W. 84.2 cm. MG.17775. See also fig. 39. **MS**

The two preceding paintings (plates 94 and 95) show simplified forms of thousand-armed, thousand-eyed Guanyin. This painting is a spectacular example of this type in all its fullness of detail. The fundamental idea is that "his thousand hands represent the infinite number of means of salvation that are at the disposal of his great compassion for the benefit of living beings, and the thousand eyes that appear in his hands represent the boundless wisdom which perceives beings in order to bring them to salvation".[52] In practice however only forty-two hands are depicted, as is in this case. The attributes and gestures shown in the painting just about conform to canonical specifications (see for instance *Taishō*, 1064). All the other hands merge into a sort of aureole in which the eyes are disposed at regular intervals. The most interesting facet of this painting are the six groups or pairs of secondary figures, whose names are given in the varicoloured cartouches.

1) At the very top are four Guardian Kings, arranged two by two at either side of the canopy. From right to left we see "Vaiśravaṇa, the great saint, god king of the north", then "Virūḍhaka, god king of the west"; and to the left of the canopy, "Dhṛtarāṣṭra, [god] king of [the east], then "Virūpākṣa, god king of the south". Apart from the inversion of the names of the kings of the west and south, the figures are correctly and symmetrically arranged around the canopy: north and south, with yellow cartouches, are placed near the edges, west and east, with reddish-brown cartouches, are situated near the canopy. The same symmetrical arrangement but in mirror reversal occurs in painting 98, depicting the same subject, in which we find south and east on the right and north and west on the left. Different again is the lay-out of a painting in Delhi, in which the kings of the south and west are placed on the right, and those of the north and east are on the left.[53] In that painting, however, we discover the same concern for symmetry, already mentioned in the note to plate 78, according to which the opposite cardinal points, north-south and east-west, are usually located on opposite sides of the central canopy. In the paintings, the Guardian Kings are often reduced to two, and rarely bear their proper attributes. In this case, the two kings nearest Guanyin – that is to say of the east and west – each carry a sword; the king of the east also holds a jewel in his left hand, and the king of the west holds lasso or cord in his left hand. We know from other representations that the attributes of these kings are the bow or the club in the case of the first, and the sword for the second (see the note to plate 78). The jewel and the lasso seen here are however well attested to from the middle of the seventh century.[54]
2) Beneath the kings, at the level of Guanyin's face, are "the hermit Vasu" and "the great goddess of eloquence", Sarasvati, whose names are inscribed in yellow cartouches. The hermit has been discussed in the note to plate 91, to which the reader is referred. On the other hand, the name of the female deity opposite does require some comment. She is usually called Śridevi, Mahāśri or Lakṣmi, or more often "Heavenly maiden of meritorious accomplishment", as, for instance, in plate 98. It seems however that there has also been frequent confusion between Sarasvati and Śridevi.
3) Beneath the aureole, at either side of the censer, there are two small figures standing with their feet in the pool of water located behind the offering table; these are the dragon-kings, the brothers Nanda and Upananda, already mentioned in the entry for plate 92. They are included in the twenty-eight attendants. The names which appear in the yellow cartouches bear however no relation with them. These read in fact, from right to left: "Great *vajra deva*" and "*Vajra* with secret footprints" ("Guhyapada"). The second, whose name heads the list of twenty-eight attendants, is also called "Giant *vajra*", or more generally "*Vajra*-bearer" ("Vajradhara"). It is this deity who, when doubled, guards temple gates. He is encountered again, this time multiplied, in the group consisting of the eight great *vajra*-bearers; the list of these – and sometimes their depictions – appear at the beginning of copies of the *Diamond Sūtra* in thirty-two stanzas discovered amongst the Dunhuang manuscripts. The "*Vajra* great *deva*" is the double of "Secret footprints", and appears in the list in the eighth and last place.[55]
4) Two six-armed, wrathful deities, dancing against a fiery background like the kings of knowledge. Their names, which appear in green cartouches, are "Blue poison *vajra*" on the right and "Fire-headed *vajra*" on the left. The former has his principal hands crossed in the manner of Kuṇḍali. His attributes are the double trident and the wheel, the rod and the chopper. The second deity has his principal hands joined, and carries the same attributes minus the chopper; his middle left hand seems to be empty. This is perhaps Ucchuṣma, who, it may be recalled, is also known as "Fire-headed". Having previously broached this subject in the note to plate 81, we will not return to it here.
5) Two *vināyaka* appear beneath the wrathful deities, fleeing towards the sides of the painting while looking back with their hands raised in a gesture of fear. The right-hand *vināyaka* has a brown boar's head, and the left-hand one a white elephant's. Their names, Vināyaka, may be read in the yellow cartouches located in the lower corners of the composition, with a different character for the third syllable in each case. Mentioned in the note to plate 82, these figures are the descendants of the elephant-headed Hindu god Gaṇesa or Gaṇapati, adopted by the Buddhists. Their nature is ambivalent but here they are considered as maleficent demons who pursue people in order to create obstacles and difficulties. The *vināyaka* are elephant-headed in the usual iconography as well as in the literary sources. A boar-headed *vināyaka* is a most unusual partner for the *vināyaka*-elephant in locations other than Dunhuang, but is not unknown. It occurs, for instance, in the

outer enclosure of the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala*, which is guarded by twenty *devas*, six of whom form the group known as the "six *devas* of the four directions". This consists of four *vināyaka* placed at the cardinal points, to which are added the chief of the *vināyakas* – strictly speaking the elephant-god – called "Joyful *deva*" and the figure in our painting, named Vajramukha ("*Vajra*-headed *deva*")or "Boar-headed god". Although he is not referred to as a *vināyaka*, there is surely a good reason for his association with the *vināyaka*-elephants, and with Gaṇapati in particular. The latter's dual appearance – male and female – is well-known, "Double-bodied Joyful *deva*". A tantric work translated at the beginning of the eighth century mentions as an exception an image of the Gaṇapati couple with elephant and boar heads (*Taishō*, 1268, p. 302a). An unidentified commentary incorporated in the *Kakuzenshō*, a late Japanese work, informs us that "Vina has an elephant's head (this is the husband). Yaka has a boar's head (this is the wife)".[56] The *Kakuzenshō* definition is not unlike the inscriptions in plate 98, where the boar on the right is labelled "the demon Vina" and the elephant on the left "the demoness Yaka". There the inscriptions are reversed, for it is beyond doubt that the elephant is male, as stated in the *Kakuzenshō*. For another depiction of these two partners, *cf.* also the manuscript P.4518(8).

6) To the left and right of the altar are two bodhisattvas, each offering flowers in a dish, whose names are given in pink cartouches as Sūryagarbha, " Sun-womb", and Candragarbha, "Moon-womb". These rare names for the sun and moon are found in the painting in Delhi referred to above in the section devoted to the Guardian Kings, but the figures to whom the names there apply appear at the very top of the work, as is appropriate for these heavenly bodies. As we have already stated with regard to plate 81, the sun and moon often appear in depictions of Guanyin, but always in the upper part of the representation. Their names notwithstanding, the two bodhisattvas of offering represented here in no way evoke the sun or moon, unless perhaps something can be construed from the dominant red of the halo and mandorla of the "sun" on the right and the appreciably paler colours of the "moon" on the left. Again we have an error in the inscriptions on the painting.

On the right in the lower part of the composition is a portrayal of Water-moon Guanyin accompanied by a cartouche containing his name. The reader is referred to the note on a comparable painting, shown in plate 83, for discussion of this pictorial form, though we will make some remarks on certain divergences. The bodhisattva, who is turned towards the left, holds a willow branch and a flask. The moon, immense and of a luminous white, is clearly evident behind the bodhisattva and acts as his nimbus. Stein painting 15 bears a close resemblance to this work (Whitfield, 2, pl. 52-1 and p. 331-332).

A woman dressed in the tenth century style kneels on a platform on the left side, followed by a servant bearing a parcel wrapped in cloth. The unusual white of the woman's robe and Guanyin's moon counterbalance each other and add an original note to the painting. The inscription contained in the green cartouche reads as follows: "Offered by a sincere heart [for my] deceased mother, *née* Zhang, *upāsikā* of the sudden Awakening of the Greater Vehicle, of Sanjie monastery". The title given the deceased is rare, but equivalents may be found in cave inscriptions – for instance in Yulin cave 25.

The central text, consisting of ten columns on a light brown background read from left to right, is written in a grandiloquent and occasionally obscure style. Spoilt in places by some incorrect characters, it does not warrant a translation in full [the full text appears in the margin of the French edition]. The man who commissioned the painting is a modest official named Ma Qianjin, no doubt son of the recently deceased woman in white. He presents himself as one faithful to the pure faith, *jieduyaya*, with responsibility for the duties of the second warden of the canals (?) of the rear,[57] bearer of honorific titles such as *yinqing guanglu dafu* and tutor to the crown prince. "In the first month of autumn, at the full moon [*i.e.* the fifteenth day of the seventh month, day of the *avalambana*, the Buddhist festival of the dead], thinking with affection of my dear parents whose traces are become hard for me to see, I summoned a skilful artist. At the same time as he executed a funerary portrait [of my mother], I, with great respect, had him make a painting of the great compassionate bodhisattva Guanshiyin with his attendants, and also a painting of Guanyin of moon and water, in two panels". This is followed by vows and prayers of no particular interest, and finally by a date: "Written in the eighth year of Tianfu, *guimao*, [943 AD], the thirteenth of the seventh moon".

Plate 97
Thousand-armed, thousand-eyed Guanyin
Five Dynasties (first half of the 10th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 29 x 42 threads per cm. H. 89.5 cm; W. 60 cm. EO.1151. **MS**

As far as it is possible to distinguish them, the gestures of the principal hands and the attributes held in the others resemble those seen in large paintings such as plate 96 or Stein painting 17 (Whitfield, 2, pl. 6). The white halo surrounding the stylised hands and forming the nimbus observed in plates 96 and 98 is absent here as from other works depicting this subject. The lotus blossom upon which the bodhisattva sits is supported by a wreathing vapour, which emerges from the front edge of the pool rather than from its centre that is dotted with lotus leaves and flowers.

At the base of the painting, to the right of the pool, is a kneeling female donor who carries an offering on a tray; she is dressed and coifed after the fashion of the tenth century, but in a rather austere way if one consid-

ers the black robe and the white scarf. The yellow cartouches placed in front of this donor and the male donor on the left (of whom only the lower part survives) are empty.

The preliminary pale ink outline is still visible and betrays a certain clumsiness. The cartouches were thus drawn after the main composition and, despite their yellow colour, the contours of the petals of the lotus throne show through. Similarly, the tiling of the pool and of the lower border show through the knees and the rug of the woman donor. The colours were thickly applied but have faded and even fallen off in places. Some lines have been gone over in darker ink. The complexion is heightened with touches of vermilion. The painting is in a poor condition. Coarse retouching may be observed in the upper part.

Plate 98
Standing thousand-armed, thousand-eyed Guanyin
Northern Song dynasty; 6th year of the Taipingxingguo era (981 AD). Painting on silk. H. 189.4 cm; W. 124 cm. MG.17659. See also fig. 40. **MS**

Few of the paintings are as imposing and sumptuous as this work. As a representation of thousand-armed, thousand-eyed Guanyin, it does not differ fundamentally from that reproduced as plate 96. It is however exceptional, firstly owing to its very late date, which makes this one of the most recent paintings in the collection. One of its unusual features is its blackish background decorated with beige flowers. Its most distinctive element, unique amongst the large paintings, is that Guanyin is depicted standing. This posture for thousand-armed Guanyin occurs also in plates 94 and 95, but these are simplified works, serially produced, which cannot be compared with an important painting that resulted from a specific commission. Nevertheless, it is inconceivable that the creator of the simplified form would have used a design that was not already well-known. One of the interesting points about this painting is that it may be compared with another work, Stein painting 35, kept in the British Museum (Whitfield, 1, pl. 18), despite the fact that the latter differs considerably in style, that in it Guanyin is seated, and that Whitfield judges its date to fall within the first half of the ninth century. The present work is characterised by the large number of secondary figures included in it – there are not less than fifteen groups or pairs of figures around Guanyin, forming a total of forty-six figures. There are as many in Stein painting 35, but not all are the same. It should be remembered that there are only six pairs of figures in plate 96.

The bodhisattva makes the same gestures with his principal hands as for example in plate 96. He has thirty-six secondary hands, as is normal, but they are unequally distributed between the two sides. More importantly, a standing transformation buddha may be seen in the nimbus as well as Amitābha in his head-dress. The presence of the former is inexplicable, but adds a majestic note to this remarkable painting.

We will firstly examine the attendants, in particular those who do not appear in plate 96; all are accompanied by perfectly legible cartouches.

Almost all the names which appear in the cartouches are accompanied by various expression: "come[s] to the assembly", "helps the assembly", or in the case of protective deities, "protects the assembly". Sometimes the term "*shi*" is added, which literally means "the moment" but in this context must be understood as "the episode" or "the scene"; one could also translate it as "here". This is an expression characteristic of the inscriptions on the complex wall-paintings. Perhaps – though this is pure speculation – it is an echo of the preaching sessions during which the audience was shown various illustrated scenes while a given sūtra was being explained. The assembly is in theory the one during which was taught the *dhāraṇi* of thousand-armed, thousand-eyed Guanyin, but it is composed for the most part of figures who are included in the list of his "twenty-eight attendants". The cartouches are painted various colours, probably in order to make it easier to pair off the deities placed on the left and right of Guanyin. We have already observed this arrangement in plate 96. Pairs of deities also share the the same pattern among the great variety of haloes and mandorlas. We also note the wreathing, multi-coloured clouds around most of the attendants, like those also seen in Stein painting 35. The effect of these decorative motifs is to fill the empty spaces in the painting, but they also add to the legibility of the composition by creating 'pathways' between the figures. The latter are described below, reading the composition from top to bottom and from right to left.

1) In the upper corners, two groups of "buddhas of the five directions" which together constitute the buddhas of the ten directions. They are also encountered in Stein painting 35, in two groups of five, both of which are labelled in the inscription as "the transformation buddhas of the ten directions". Ten are represented but in fact they represent *all* the buddhas in the ten directions. They illuminate the body of Guanyin when he pronounces his great vow, and it is also promised that they will come to welcome, at the moment of death, the faithful who utter the *dhāraṇi*.
2) The *feitian*, being the spirits that fly with their hands joined in a gesture of worship at either side of the canopy. These are decorative elements without any textual basis, and may be compared with the naked infants seen in the same position in certain paintings of Guanyin – for instance Stein painting (Whitfield, 2, pl. 27). They are absent from Stein painting 35, in which are found instead the sun and moon, named "bodhisattva Sunlight" and "Moonlight".
3) Two bodhisattvas each carrying a tray of flowers, called "Flower Ornament", Huayan, and "Excellence of lotus blossoms". Amongst the persons attending the assembly mentioned in the sūtra are the bodhisattvas Huayan and "Great majestic", Dazhuangyan (*Taishō*, 1060, p. 106a). These are unknown, and were introduced to make up the numbers. Stein painting

replaces them with two equally fanciful attendants named "The one who gives fragrance", Tuxiang, and "The one who spreads flowers", Sanhua.

4) The great god Brahmā and Indra, king of the gods, each escorted by two attendants. They also appear in Stein painting 35, but are the other way round. Brahmā figures in the sūtra as Guanyin's interlocutor (*Taishō*, 1060, p. 108a), whereas Indra appears there only indirectly. We know however that it is rare for these figures not to appear together in Chinese Buddhist art.

5) Two very well-known forms of Avalokiteśvara, six-armed Cintāmaṇicakra and four-armed Amoghapāśa, who are depicted meticulously with a few departures from the usual iconography. They are, of course, not mentioned in the sūtras devoted to thousand-armed Guanyin. It seems to us that their presence here, as well as in Stein painting 35, illustrates – or was intended to illustrate – the pre-eminence of the thousand-armed manifestation.

6) On the right, four-armed Maheśvara, seated in the posture of ease on a buffalo which is theoretically white but is here more like a dragon in its colouring. This ancient Indian deity, incorporated by the Buddhists into their own pantheon, appears in the list of twenty-eight attendants and is also found in Stein painting 35. On the left is a wrathful black-skinned deity, easily recognisable by his exceptional iconography: Mahākāla, who stretches an elephant hide and holds two captives by the hair. The name given him in the cartouche is "the god Kapila", which appellation does indeed appear in the list of twenty-eight attendants but only as the last part of a longer name. It belongs to one of the great *yakṣa* guardians of the east who seems to have enjoyed a certain success under the Tang, though not enough to be portrayed in Guanyin's court. We see the same figure in Stein painting 35, but there the cartouche does indeed contain the name Mahākāla. Confirmation for this is found in the manuscript P.3352 which gives the inscriptions arranged around a painting of thousand-armed Guanyin; in it there is a mention of "the god Mahākāla assists", on the left opposite Maheśvara.

7) On the right, "the *devī* of the world of desire" (*kāmadhātu*). The *Sūtra of the dhāraṇi of Guanyin* mentions the *devī*s of the *kāmadhātu* almost at the end of the list of bodhisattvas and deities who attend the assembly, but these deities cannot be represented in the form of a woman holding a young child in the crook of her arms. This is surely Hāriti, widely known as the Guizimushen, the Mother of the Demons,[58] who figures in the list of twenty-eight attendants under the name of Holy Mother. She is encountered carrying two children in the same location in Stein painting 35, but without a cartouche. The figure corresponding to the Mother of the Demons on the left side of the painting is a general named "Jintoutuo, illustrious amongst the gods". The prefix *shenming* is added to his (probably incomplete) name, which is also found in certain enumerations of the gods, for instance in chapters 1 to 5 of the *Guandingjing* (*Taishō*, 1331); it should perhaps be translated as "of divine name" or "the name of the god is [...]".The name of the protective deity depicted here seems however to be unknown. Stein 35 sheds no light, for there too the same military figure is found without a cartouche opposite Hāriti.

8) The bodhisattvas Maitreya and Mahāsthāmaprāpta, the former appearing as a buddha, the latter as a bodhi-sattva, just as in Stein 35 (in which their names are not given). Guanyin and Mahāsthāmaprāpta are closely linked, owing to the fact that both are acolytes of Amitābha. By contrast, nothing warrants Maitreya's appearance in Guanyin's entourage, and there is even less justification for his being paired with Mahā-sthāmaprāpta. It is true to say that both are named in the list of the assembly at the beginning of the *Sūtra of the dhāraṇi of Guanyin*, but there they are found with others and with no particular connection with each other.

9) The Guardian Kings. On the right, the kings of the south and east, on the left side the kings of the west and north. None of their attributes are interesting apart from Vaiśravaṇa's *stūpa* (north) and Dhṛtarāṣṭra's rod (east). This arrangement does not correspond with that in plate 96, as we have noted there.

10) The two bodhisattvas "Golden-winged kings of the birds" (*garuḍa*) and "Queen of the peacocks"; each has three faces and six arms, and is seated in the posture of ease on their respective mounts. These two do appear in the list of twenty-eight attendants, but without the title "bodhisattva" given them in their cartouches. Their faces and supplementary arms are little different in Stein painting 35, in which the pea-hen has a clearly feminine expression. The latter, Mahāmayūri, is a "queen of knowledge" whose origins lie in Indian mythology. Like the peacocks whose power she possesses, she is the natural enemy of snakes, the antidote for and destroyer of poisons.[59] The *garuḍa*s are also the enemies of dragons, but it may be fair to think the *garuḍa* was chosen essentially to act as counterpart to the divine pea-hen.

11) The hermit Vasu on the right and Śrīdevī on the left. As we have already mentioned, these are the most common of thousand-armed Guanyin's attendants. We note that Śrīdevī's hair is dressed here as in Stein painting 35; this coiffure is discussed in the note to plate 91.

12) "The poor man begging coins" and "the *preta* begging for the sweet dew". The former is dressed in a patched tunic, his knees are bent, and he extends his arms to receive the three gold coins which fall from the last left hand; the latter figure stands in the same posture, girdled with a white loincloth, and catches the drops of water represented by three lines of barely visible dots which seep from the bottom of the water pot. The same figures, who obviously represent categories of existence rather than individuals, appear in Stein painting 35, in which the dew drops and gold coins seem to fall in a more orthodox fashion from the two lowest secondary hands; the sources refer to the latter as "hand of the sweet

dew" and "hand making the gesture that causes fearlessness". The inscriptions of Stein 35 as well as the manuscript P.3352 are worded differently: "The gift of the seven treasures to the poor man" and "the gift of the sweet dew to the *preta*". The rôle played by Guanyin with regard to the *preta*s and other beings mired in suffering is well-known – his vow, according to the *Sūtra*, is to annihilate the hells and to feed the *preta*s. Another treatise, moreover, alludes to a representation of Guanyin giving water to a *preta* from his down-stretched right hand (*Taishō*, 1039, p. 27a). The poor man is mentioned nowhere; he is a typically Chinese invention. These two figures were such an interesting novelty that they are shown as sole attendants, depicted at the feet of the bodhisattva, in an image of the thousand-armed Guanyin kept in the Bibliothéque Nationale de France (P.4518(13)). It is not at all surprising that Guanyin, the paragon of the beneficent bodhisattva and object of fervent devotion, should accord the faithful that which they most desire – prosperity in this life and deliverance from the sufferings that may lie beyond the grave.

13) The usual two kings of knowledge, depicted against a flaming background; six-armed, the middle pair is crossed like Kuṇḍali's. Here their names are called "*Vajra* avoider of poison" and "*Vajra* voice of fire". These names are variations of "Blue poison" and "Fire-headed" that have already been encountered in the notes to plates 81 and 96; we will not discuss them again here.

14) The boar-headed *vināyaka*, called "Father Vina", and his elephant-headed partner "Mother Yaka". The reader is directed to the note on plate 96. The right-hand *vināyaka* in Stein painting 35 is damaged, while the left-hand figure bears the curious name "Pinnalejia".

15) Two figures seated against a fiery background, one four-armed and the other six-armed, are named Sanmei shizun, "Venerated in the world of Samaya", and Trailokyavijaya. The latter is a well-known king of knowledge: as "conqueror" or "subjugator of the Triple World, he is a cleansing deity who destroys obstacles to spiritual progress.[60] The way in which he is depicted here in no way corresponds with his usual iconography. The other figure bears a fanciful name, particularly when we consider the title "Venerated in the world of Samaya" attributed to him. It is possible to construct a hypothesis whereby both names derive from that of the ninth *Vajradhātu maṇḍala*, the *Trailokyavijayasamaya- maṇḍala*, which name has effectively been cut in half. Trailokyavijaya manifests on the right in Stein painting 35, with a cartouche; his appearance there against a flaming background closely resembles the present painting. His opposite counterpart in Stein 35 has all but disappeared through damage. The manuscript P.3352 confirms the arrangement and the inscriptions of our painting, for in it we read the name "Trailokyavijaya" on the left and the on the right, partly erased, the name "Sanmei shizun".

The lower part of the painting consists of three elements: a vignette of Kṣitigarbha on the right, a long inscription at the centre, and a donor with a cartouche on the left.

Kṣitigarbha is seated in the posture of ease, dressed as a monk with his head covered with a shawl, and carries the *khakkhara* and the jewel. The inscription to the right reads: "The moment when the bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha comes to the assembly and examines the beings". In front of him stands a bare-headed monk with his hands joined; the inscription reads: "The moment when the master Daoming returned". An animal is seated beneath Kṣitigarbha, with the inscription: "The lion with the golden mane helps the saint". We have here an example of "Kṣitigarbha with his head covered". We are familiar with this idiosyncrasy of dress and with the other elements thanks to an account included in the manuscript S.3092. According to this text, a monk called Daoming, depicted in the painting, was summoned to hell by mistake in 778 AD. Before he returned from there he saw a monk who announced that he was Kṣitigarbha, and asked him to propagate throughout the world his true image – that is to say, with the head-dress. Kṣitigarbha's companion was a lion, incarnation of Mañjuśri. We will discuss these figures further *à propos* other paintings (see vol. 2, pl. 61 and 62.

On the left-hand side of the lower part of the painting is the donor, wearing an official's garb and followed by servants, one of whom carries his sabre, another his fan, while the youngest, wearing a yellow tunic, carries a ewer. This group of servants is similar to another that may be seen in plate 99. The clothes of master and servants are very carefully depicted. The cartouche placed in front of the donor reads: "Offered whole-heartedly by the donor, Fan Jishou, head of the office [in the administration] of the governor, [bearer of the honorific title of] grand master of the imperial household with silver seal and blue ribbon, tutor to the crown prince, and simultaneously the vice-president of the tribunal of censors". This figure may be the same as the *yaya* Fan Jishou mentioned in a letter preserved on the back of the manuscript P.4418(11). His seemingly important titles are purely honorific, and can be likened to those borne by numerous notable citizens of Dunhuang at that time (see the inscriptions of cave 98, which pre-dates this work by some forty years). His actual rank is that of *jiedu dutou*, a petty government official.

The text of the stele is far too long to be translated here; a transcription appears in the French edition. It vaunts the merits of Guanyin, eulogises the donor and his family, and formulates vows. It is signed by the *jiedu yaya* Fan Yanxing, and dated the sixth year of Taipingxingguo, 981 AD.

Plate 99

Maṇḍala of Guanyin "with the unfailing lasso" (Amoghapāśa)

Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on silk. H. 115 cm; W. 65 cm. EO.3579. See also fig. 41, 42. **MS**

This impressive painting has a particularly elegant mount which does not appear in the reproduction: it is in fact bordered by two strips of yellow silk damask, 16.5 and 12.5 cm wide, sewn on at the top and at the base of the composition. Six tension loops (three above and three below) made of purple *moiré* silk are attached to each of these strips, and measure 4.3 cm long by 3.8 cm wide. A stiffening rod is covered by silk at the upper edge of the mount. The side edges are left unpainted for a width of 9 cm. This form of mounting indicates that the work was intended for hanging and display. Its perfect condition and the absence of any inscription in the lower register suggest to us that for some reason, such as an event in the family, faulty design or execution, the painting was refused by the commissioner. The work is made up of three sections.

The upper section depicts the five buddhas of the Diamond-world *maṇḍala* as we find them in plate 46, arranged in the same way with Vairocana in the centre and then, moving clockwise from the east (at the bottom left), Akṣobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha and Amoghasiddhi. Their colours (to which we shall return), the animals incorporated into their thrones and their attributes are the same as in plate 46, with the exception of Amoghasiddhi who here holds – as he ought – the *viśvavajra*. The five buddhas are framed by two images of Avalokiteśvara, who appears in his thousand-armed, thousand-eyed form on the right, and as Cintāmaṇicakra on the left. Both of these conform to standard iconography, but we may nevertheless observe that the former has only eighteen principal arms (though it would have been well-nigh impossible to furnish him with any more), and the latter is reversed in relation to representations contemporary with this work (see plate 81). The canopies surmounting them resemble Vairocana's and are set at the same level, perhaps simply in order to balance the composition.

The real subject of this painting is of course the *maṇḍala* in the central part of the work. The principal figure at its centre is beyond doubt Guanyin, surrounded by a halo resembling the lunar disk; he wears a crown containing five buddhas and carries his usual attributes in his four hands. Eight other figures are seated on the lanceolate petals of a lotus blossom. Those four seated at the cardinal points are essential elements in the *maṇḍala*. The petals of the intermediate points are occupied by the four inner bodhisattvas of offering of the Diamond-world *maṇḍala*, while the outer bodhisattvas find themselves in the squinches beyond the circle. Eight symbolic motifs are arranged in the empty spaces between the circle and the enclosure. These are the flower, the jewel, the *vajra* and the *viśvavajra*, which are the attributes of the four directional buddhas as seen in plate 46, minus Vairocana's wheel. Added to these are the sun and moon at the top and two three-legged offering tables which resemble those visible in plate 46. The square enclosure is pierced by four coloured gates, each of which is protected by a guardian bearing his appropriate weapon and accompanied by his animal. The empty space here is filled with the 'eight auspicious objects', while *vajra*s placed on crescent moons in the corners of the enclosure and a frieze of *vajra*s on the black border running around the edge of the whole composition (but missing at the bottom) complete the ornamentation.[61]

An interesting aspect of the painting is the allocation of the colours corresponding with the cardinal points. These appear firstly in the skin tones of the five buddhas of the upper section, then in the complexions of the offering bodhisattvas and thirdly in the gates. The colours of the five buddhas are very pale but still visible. Identical with the colours in painting 46, their traditional order is thus: yellow (centre), white (east), blue (south), red (west) and green (north). This system of colour and directional correspondance does not belong to the Diamond-world *maṇḍala*, in which the order is white-red-yellow-blue-black (or green), nor to the Indian and Tibetan tantric order known from later evidence and sources, white-blue (or black)-yellow-red-green.[62] As we mentioned earlier with regard to plate 46, this distribution of colours is known in at least one Tibetan manuscript from Dunhuang. The colours of the eight bodhisattvas of offering are also the same. The order and position in the squinches corresponds exactly to the Five Buddhas above. We find pale pink for white in the south-east (in other words the lower left corner), blue in the south-west (upper left), a stronger pink resembling Amitābha's hue corresponding with red in the north-west (upper right), and grey-green for green in the north-east (lower right). The gates are painted the same colours: white for the east (at the bottom), blue-black for the south, red for the west and dark green for the north.

Having made these various observations and descriptions, it only remains for us to identify the *maṇḍala*, and first and foremost its central figure, a form of Avalokiteśvara. Unfortunately his attributes (the lasso, wilow branch, lotus blossom and rosary) do not allow us to resolve the problem. Tanaka Kimiaki has hypothesised in the Japanese edition of this work that this is Amoghapāśa, which theory is perfectly possible but by no means certain. The lasso (if this attribute prompted the idea) is not exclusively used by Amoghapāśa. Moreover, the antelope hide, a more important and distinctive iconographic characteristic than the lasso, is missing. Tanaka remarks that a passage in a Tibetan manuscript mentions a *maṇḍala* dedicated to this deity, but the description is regrettably short; it also seems that the *maṇḍala* to which the passage refers differs considerably from the one here.[63]

The bodhisattvas placed on the 'spokes' of the wheel pointing to the cardinal directions are the following:

1) to the east (at the bottom) a form of Avalokiteśvara with four arms (lasso, flower, vase and rosary), who can be identified as Amoghapāśa with quite as much justification as the central figure;
2) in the south (on the left) Hayagriva with a horse's head in his coiffure;
3) in the west (at the top) a wrathful deity against a background of flames, with a blue complexion, three heads and six arms (sword, *vajra*, skull and club).

His two principal hands are crossed in the manner of Kuṇḍalī. The figure is thought by Tanaka to represent Ekajatā rakṣasa, the demon with a single chignon, who is an incarnation of Avalokiteśvara;

4) in the north (on the right) another four-armed form of Avalokiteśvara, with rosary, willow branch, flower and water pot, who according to M. Tanaka is Bhṛkuṭi. This theory seems reasonable when we consider that on the one hand the attributes are close to those indicated in the texts, and that on the other Bhṛkuṭi is associated with Hayagriva in certain *maṇḍala*s of Avalokiteśvara, notably in the *maṇḍala* of Amoghapāśa.[64] This remains, however, speculative, as M. Tanaka himself recognises. We may add that the upper section of the painting certainly plays a rôle in the *maṇḍala* by reinforcing its association with Avalokiteśvara. We are however unable to say any more on the subject.

The donor figures in the lower register are quite as impressive as the *maṇḍala*. On the left we see a man standing on a rug followed by four sevants who carry various ceremonial objects: the two dressed in black carry a fan and a ewer, the little page wearing a red and yellow striped tunic holds a white staff ornamented with gold rings and surmounted by a golden *vajra*, and the figure in red carries a bow, arrows and a sword. Similar ceremonial arms are borne by one of the servants of Cao Yijin in a wall-painting in cave 16 at Yulin; the reproduction in *Chūgoku sekkutsu, Ansei Yurin kutsu*, Tokyo, 1990, pl. 58, is barely usable but a reproduction in colour published by Shen Congwen, *Zhongguo gudai fushi yanji*, Hong Kong, 1981, p. 284, allows us to observe the similarities between the weapons of the two paintings. The robes of the donors also resemble those of the Yulin wall-painting, as do their head-dresses; in this painting, however, the stiffened ribbons of the male donor's hat are angled downwards in this painting, whereas they extend horizontally from Cao Yijin's hat. The comparison with the Yulin painting also makes clear that the white object seen at the right of the belt the lay donor of plate 99 is likely to be an official tablet. The donor is probably of high rank, perhaps even a member of the Cao family. We also note the resemblances between the clothes and the coiffures of the servants of the two paintings. The group depicted in plate 99 should also be compared with a remarkably similar group found in plate 98, despite the fact that there are fewer servants in the latter group and that the weapons are reduced to a single cermonial sword. The paintings in plates 98 and 99 must both date from roughly the same period quite close to the depiction of Cao Yijin (who reigned from about 920 to 934 AD). The costumes of the female donors on the right of the painting are no less magnificent. The woman in lay dress carries a censer from which no smoke escapes despite the red flame burning at the top of it. This woman is in all likelihood the wife of the donor on the left; she is followed by a maid-servant half-hidden by the border. The nun wearing an extremely luxurious white robe is clearly a very close family member; in her left hand she carries a censer with an angled handle, and in the right a bell, the handle of which ends in a *vajra*. We may observe the extraordinary precision with which the costumes are depicted, as they are in plate 98.

The bright and contrasting colours have remained very fresh, and the work is in excellent condition. This painting is assuredly one of the finest pieces in the Pelliot collection on account of its elaborate mount, its careful execution, its artistic qualities and the religious interest of its subject.

NOTES TO PART ONE

For Abbreviations and Bibliography, please refer to *Les Arts de L'Asie Centrale* Vol. II

The Pictorial Language of Dunhuang

1 Here, for example, the contrasts of red and yellow-green, orange-yellow and violet. Simulataneous contrast "indicates a particular phenomenon when our eyes, for a given colour, call for its complementary hue, and perceive it even where it is not present" (J. Itten, *L'Art de la couleur*, Ravensburg, 1974, p. 87).

2 Effective date of the fall of Dunhuang; *cf.* P. Demiéville, *Le concile de Lhasa*, Paris, 1957, p. 167, 168.

3 "Gandhâra and Mathura, their cultural relationship", in *Aspects of Indian Culture*, Leiden, 1972, p. 33.

4 To take cinnabar and vermilion as examples, the best-known Tang sources for these pigments were in South China: Hunan, Guangxi, Guangdong, Zhejiang and the central province of Sichuan, closest to Serindia. In the North, on the other hand, the deposits and centres of production around Xingzhou, in Shaanxi province, are the only ones to be mentioned (*cf.* Y. Yonezawa, "Chūgoku kodai ni okeru ganryō no sanchi", Tōyō Bunka Kenkyūjo kiyō, no. 11, Tokyo, 1956, p. 21).

Two Previously Unpublished Paintings

1 We use the term "liturgical paintings" to refer to all the movable works painted on a textile support – in this case, silk.

2 According to the *tri-kāya* theory of the three bodies of the Buddha, the body of Vairocana is pure reality, the reality of all omnipresent essences such as space, and defies definition. Beyond representation, he may only manifest an apparitional form, his "fruition body", the *saṃbhoga-kāya* (*baosheng*), which is held to be depicted preaching in the midst of the assemblies.

Captions to Colour Plates Vol. 1

1 *Fo benxing jijing*, *Taishō*, 190, pp. 709a-711b.

2 *Op.cit.*, p. 711b.

3 *Taizi chengdao jing bianwen*; *cf. Dunhuang bianwenji*, Peking, 1957, pp. 285-328.

4 Part of the London fragment shows the woman asleep (Stein painting 227, Ch.00518, described in *Serindia*, 2, p.1007), and the Delhi fragment has clouds on the steps of the royal dais (Stein painting 510, Ch.lv.0011, scene 1, described in *Serindia*, 2, p.1064).

5 *Tonkō kogo bunken* (*Kōza Tonkō*, 6), Tokyo, 1985, p. 8.

6 *Cf.* Monique Maillard, "Notes préliminaires", in *Carnet de notes de Paul Pelliot*, vol.VI, Paris, 1992, p. IX.

7 *Cf.* M.Soymié, "Quelques représentations de statues miraculeuses", in *Contributions aux études de Touen-houang*, vol.3, Paris, 1984, p.91.

8 *Cf.* the definition given by Mme K.Riboud and G.Vial in *Tissus de Touen-houang*, Paris, 1970, p. XXVII.

9 *Cf. Chūgoku sekkutsu, Ansei Yurin kutsu*, Tokyo, 1990, pl. 31

10 On the religious architecture seen in the wall-paintings, *cf.* Xiao Mo's article in *Bakkō*, 4, pp. 192-215.

11 As noted by A. Waley in his remarks on Stein painting 35*, the closest version relating the hermit's transformation into a hare was collected in the 13th century in a commentary of the Japanese monk Ryōchū (*Taishō*, 2209, p. 575c).

12 Version also mentioned by Ryōchū; *cf.* the previous note.

13 *Cf.* note 1 in the caption to the previous plate.

14 In *Bijutsu kenkyū*, n° 252, 1967, pp. 32-37.

15 H. Vetech has made a detailed study of this biography in two articles in *Contributions aux études de Touen-houang*, vol.111, Paris, 1984, p.137-148 and *Les peintures murales et les manuscrits de Dunhuang*, Paris, 1984, pp. 67-78.

16 *Carnet de notes*, vol.III, Paris, 1983, pp. 44-45, cave 106, fig. 247.

17 *Dunhuang yanjiu*, 2, 1983, pp. 101-105. The cave painting has been studied by Shi Weixiang in *Wenwu*, 1983, no. 6, pp. 5-13.

18 *Cf.* H. Vetech, in *Les peintures murales*, *op. cit.*, pp. 74-75.

19 See the reproduction in *Serindia*, vol.IV, Oxford, 1921, pl.LXXXIII

20 For further analysis, *cf.* K. Riboud and G. Vial, *Tissus de Touen-houang*, Paris, 1970, p. 347.

21 *Cf. Ryojun hakubutsukan shozō hinten*, Kyoto, 1992, pl. 48.

22 *Cf. Chung'ang Asia misul* [Arts of Central Asia], Seoul, 1986, pl. 24 and 25.

23 *Cf.* R. E. Emmerick, *Studia Iranica*, 13-2, 1984, p. 21; J. Hamilton, Toung-pao, 46, 1958, p. 151.

24 *Cf.* K. Riboud and G. Vial, *Tissus de Touen-houang*, Paris, 1970, p. 301.

25 The Indian iconography of the five buddhas, their attributes, their colours and their characteristic animals are discussed in detail by M.-T. de Mallmann, *Introduction à l'iconographie du tântrisme bouddhique*, Paris, 1975, pp. 91, 94, 99, 320, 392.

26 *Cf.* Ryūjun Tajima, "Les deux grands mandalas et la doctrine de l'ésotérisme Shingon", *Bulletin de la Maison franco-japonaise*, Nouvelle série, tome VI, Tokyo, Paris, 1959, pp. 184-188.

27 Another example of the transference of a buddha's colour occurs in a Tibetan manuscript, P. tib. 253, in which Akṣobhya at the centre is white, and Vairocana in the east is yellow.

28 M.-T. de Mallmann, *Introduction*, pp. 43-44. Here Akṣobhya is black, this being a variant of blue.

29 *Cf.* the same author, "Tonkō shutsudo no sekiseison mandara ni tsuite", in *Akiyama Terukazu hakushi kokikinen bijutsushi ronbunshū*, Tokyo, 1991, pp. 121-141.

30 We are using here D. Snellgrove's description in *Buddhist Himalaya*, Oxford, 1957, pp. 229-230.

31 *Cf.* M.-T. de Mallmann, *Introduction à l'iconographie du tântrisme bouddhique*, Paris, 1975, p. 420; W. E. Clerk, *Two Lamaistic Pantheons*, Cambridge, Mass., 1937, vol. II, p. 138, no. 4827.

32 The manuscript P.2613; *cf.* Hou Ching-lang, "Trésors du monastère Long-hing", in *Nouvelles contributions aux études de Touen-houang*, Geneva, 1981, pp. 164-165.

33 *Cf.* the textile analysis made by K. Riboud and G. Vial in *Tissus de Touen-houang*, Paris, 1970, p. 309.

34 *Cf. Ryojun hakubutsukan shozō hinten*, Kyoto, 1992, pl. 50.

35 See the wall-paintings of cave 159, dating to the period of Tibetan occupation (*Bakkō*, 4, pl. 81), and the corridor of cave 220, dated to 925 AD (*id.* 5, pl. 20); *cf.* also the xylograph P.4077.

36 The title *yueyingshi*, music officer (?), also occurs in the Pelliot Chinese manuscript 3490, dated 928 AD. Two characters have probably been inverted in the inscription.

37 In the Provincial Museum of Sichuan, reproduced in *Yiyuan duoying*, no. 9 (July 1980), p. 4. Fan Zaisheng, its donor, appears in a rental contract which probably dates to 983 AD (S.6452 Vo).

38 Reproduced by J. Leroy Davidson in *The Lotus Sutra in Chinese Art*, New Haven, 1954, pl. 26; *cf.* the article by Miyeko Murase, *Artibus Asiae*, 33 (1971), fig. 7.

39 He makes reference to a diagram with Avalokiteśvara at the centre, Amoghapāśa and Ekajatā at the top and bottom, and Bhṛkuṭi and Hayagriva to the right and left. The well-informed M.-T. de Mallmann does not mention this tradition. Associated with eleven-headed Avalokiteśvara, Ekajatā is known to appear as an attendant with some forms of Tārā.

40 See *Taishō*, 1084 to 1097.

41 *Cf.* R. H. Van Gulik, *Hayagriva, the Mantrayanic Aspects of Horse-cult in China and Japan*, Leiden, 1935; B. Frank, *Le panthéon bouddhique au Japon, Collections d'Émile Guimet*, Paris, 1991, p. 112.

42 *Cf. Taishō*, 1070 (translated in the second half of the sixth century), 1069 and 1071.

43 *Cf.* also M.-T. de Mallmann, *Introduction à l'étude d' Avalokiteśvara*, Paris 1948, pp. 154-155; and by the same author, *Introduction à l'iconographie du tântrisme bouddhique*, Paris, 1975, p. 112; B. Frank, *Le panthéon bouddhique au Japon, Collections d'Émile Guimet*, Paris, 1991, p. 109.

44 *Cf. Taishō*, 1249, p. 228c.
45 *Cf.* Tajima, "Les deux grands maṇḍala et la doctrine de l'ésotérisme Shingon", *Bulletin de la Maison franco-japonaise*, Nouvelle série, VI, Paris-Tokyo, 1959, p. 120.
46 *Cf.* M.-T. de Mallmann, *Introduction à l'étude d'Avalokiteśvara*, Paris, 1948, pp. 306-307.
47 *Cf. Chūgoku sekkutsu, Ansei Yurin kutsu*, Tokyo, 1990, pl. 17.
48 The Chinese appellation is rare but does occur in some tenth century caves.
49 This title is unknown, but can be related to another term "*bhadanta* at the altar" in use amongst the monks.
50 *Cf.* Xie Zhiliu, *Dunhuang yishu xulu*, Shanghai, 1955, p. 95.
51 Reproduced in Leroy Davidson, *The Lotus Sutra in Chinese Art*, New Haven, 1954, pl. 26.
52 Ryūjun Tajima, *Les deux grands maṇḍala et la doctrine de l'ésotérisme shingon*, Paris-Tokyo, 1959, p. 120.
53 Ch.lvi.0014, reproduced by Matsumoto, pl. 169; *Cf.* Waley, pp. 304-305.
54 *Cf. Taishō*, 901, p. 879a. These are the attributes given in the list of the tweny-eight attendants of Guanyin (*Taishō*, 1068, p. 138ab).
55 *Cf.* M. Soymié, "Notes d'iconographie bouddhique", *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie*, 3, 1987, pp. 9-26.
56 *Dainihon bukkyō zensho*, Tokyo, 1971, vol. 56, p. 31a.
57 *Cao* means "trough" or "manger". The title *houcaoshi* is unknown. We have corrected this to *cao*, "canal", although this seems unlikely.
58 *Cf.* B. Frank, *Le panthéon bouddhique au Japon, Collections d'Émile Guimet*, Paris, 1991, pp. 218-219.
59 *Cf.* B. Frank, *op. cit.*, p. 144.
60 *Cf.* B. Frank, *op. cit.*, p. 180.
61 A drawing kept in London, Stein painting 173 (Whitfield, 2, fig. 78) shows a sketch of a *maṇḍala* constructed in the same way; it includes the 'eight auspicious signs' set out in a different order, and the guardians with their weapons and animals. There are further examples of this genre.
62 *Cf.* M.-T. de Mallmann, *op. cit.*, under the names of the each of the five buddhas. This work admits the existence of numerous variations.
63 India Office, Ch.80.4, La Vallée Poussin, *Catalogue*, no.384, text 2.
64 *Cf.* M.-T. de Mallmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 73-74.

Part Two

Central Asian Sites and Works of Art in the Light of the Discoveries made by the Pelliot Expedition

Jacques Giès

Mogaoku, the "caves of unequalled height", a great complex of cave-temples situated near the Dunhuang oasis (known to Pelliot as *Qianfodong*, the "thousand-Buddha caves"), has been, through the paintings preserved in the Pelliot collection, the focus of the whole of the first volume and close on half of this, the second. We feel that our decision is amply justified by the extraordinary fact of the preservation, down to the present day, of so great a body of liturgical documents and by the desire to maintain this body in its integrity. By the same token, we include alongside these paintings a number of textiles and some of the most remarkable graphic works kept in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France that, formerly, were also immured in cave 17.

Any classification of a group of objects and archaeological documents which aims to create an instructive sequence into which at least some of these may fall (as we have sought to do with the paintings in the light of current research), implies a reassessment of other types of objects. Most important amongst these other types are sculptures, which, despite coming from the same site, are now examined from new perspectives suggested by the finds from other Serindian sites. These perspectives help to clarify the works in terms of iconography, style, even religious significance. This is precisely what we hope to achieve in this final part of the present publication, in which we bring together wooden carvings in the round, statues and statuettes from the Mogao caves and the largest and most important pieces in the collection, assembled by Pelliot from different oases along the Northern Route that crosses the Tarim Basin.

We have chosen to describe the excavations and discoveries made by the expedition by means of a brief presentation of the Serindian sites that Pelliot visited, thereby showing the coherence of these remains of ancient cultures in the order in which they were revealed. In this way, we hope to offer to the reader's consideration the means of assessing the importance of the work accomplished by the expedition.

The Buddhist edifices of Toqquz-Saraï (Tumshuq oasis)

The dating of the reliefs at Toqquz-Saraï, and consequently the establishment of a chronological framework for the religious edifices that make up the larger Buddhist complex of Tumshuq, not far from Maralbashi in the western Tarim Basin, remains to this day an open question, despite the length of time that has elapsed since their discovery. Quite apart from the purely stylistic problems raised by the art, it has, up till the present, not been possible to trace the entire history of the occupation and development of this monastic and cult complex – the most important west of Kucha – since these discoveries lack all evidence pertaining to any prominent incidents during the long time-span they cover, such as may be provided by written records. Even coins, whose timely discovery at other sites in Serindia has proved so useful, are here totally absent.

"Temple I"

Only a few days into the excavations on the promontory of Toqquz-Saraï, an eroded plateau on the flanks of the adjoining Mount Toqquz-Saraï-tāgh, on the 6th December 1906, Pelliot noted in his diary "... such marked differences of style among objects from different parts of the temple that there can be no doubt that they derive from widely separated periods ...". A further assertion, made a few days later, that "... the pieces from temple I unequivocally display a classical influence ..." confirmed his initial impression and suggested the outlines of a chronological framework, as long as he could attribute this influence to 'Greco-Buddhist' or Gandhāran origins as the mark of greatest antiquity suggested for any Central Asian structure. From the time of its discovery, therefore, the date envisaged for temple I – and hence of temple J, regarded as contemporary and also located in the south-eastern section of the monastic buildings surrounding the courtyard at the eastern end of the great *stūpa* A – has been held to represent the earliest period of the site.

In the absence of any contradictory or divergent discoveries, the consensus of opinion still maintains this view. There are important implications, for, although this is one of the most ancient structures of Toqquz-Saraï, it is also the one that has produced pieces of remarkably diverse styles, evidence of a highly inventive spirit which is not to be found in later works, such as the reliefs of Temples B and D. In support of this assertion, the reader is referred to plates 126 (EO.1070) to 130 (EO.1062), all of which were found in Temple I.

"Temple D"

The discovery of the crowned head (plate 136; EO.1374 [4]) in the "small temple D" or, as Pelliot occasionally put it, "the small temple with bas-reliefs", establishes for us, on the basis of the preceding evidence, the date of this relief: that is, it belongs to a late phase in the art of the religious complex of Tumshuq, comprising Toqquz-Saraï and, facing it to the south-east, Tumshuq-tāgh (excavated by the Germans), a site on the far side of the Tumshuq pass. This inferred date relating to the find-spot of the head is not, however, based on the particular structure of the temple, in which nothing suggests an architectural evolution; nor is it founded on any historical evidence, the signal absence of which we mentioned earlier and which Pelliot emphasised when he was later at Kucha. The great quantity of such evidence discovered at Kucha only served to underline, for him, the mystery of Tumshuq and its lack of records. The chronology proposed here is based on the comparison of styles illustrated by the sun-dried clay figurines that form part of the narrative tableaux decorating the temple and which were brought to light in sufficient number to validate the comparative method. We, after Pelliot, argue that this head possesses the characteristic features of an evolved or late style at Tumshuq. However, a certain harmony in the modelling relates this piece to other reliefs in the same temple, thus suggesting that all parts of the decor date from one and the same period, contrary to what is found in temples I and J. Consequently, it is of considerable interest to look at the location of this temple, which occupies the northern side of the promontory. Facing it to the east, about fifty metres distant on the same alignment, there was uncovered the altar of temple B, whose high reliefs reveal a style of similar date (*cf. infra* and plates 137 to 139; EO.1056, 1057 and 1055). Thus there is every reason to think that the expansion of this religious complex took place along the northern side of the Toqquz-Saraï *saṃghārāma* or monastery, this being the principal building, consisting of a large central courtyard dominated at one time by a *stūpa* – *stūpa* A in the expedition report – around which were built the shrines intended for worship, such as temple I.

It was in temple D that Pelliot, on the 30th October 1906, became certain that the ruins of Tumshuq were of Buddhist origin, whereas they had previously been thought by Sven Hedin to be probably Islamic. Pelliot reached his conclusion during preliminary explorations, upon unearthing fragments of reliefs and, in particular, a very expressive head, closely akin to the characteristic guardian spirits of doorways, the *dvārapālas*. There were also traces that bore witness to the destruction of the buildings by fire, which explains why a large number of originally unbaked clay reliefs show the marks

of irregular and thus accidental firing.

On the 10th and 11th December 1906, just before Pelliot's departure from Toqquz-Saraï, the resumed excavations in this particular part of the complex enabled the configuration of temple D, more elaborate than hitherto thought, to be established with precision. It turned out to be composed of two adjoining structures that contained, respectively, an altar in the shape of a three-sided cella, the outer surfaces of whose walls were decorated with high reliefs, and a *stūpa*. The whole gave onto a courtyard encircled by a bench backing onto the enclosure wall and designed, in the manner of a long pedestal, to support reliefs of sun-dried clay. The general plan was thus seen to be a replica on a smaller scale of the two temples flanking the central monastery building.

"Small temple N"

Pelliot's full name for this temple, "outer temple N", arose from its particular position as an outpost located to the south-east, below the level of the promontory upon which the main group of buildings once stood. Though badly ruined, this temple has produced a large number of fragments of sculpture, amongst which the heads of the statuettes that, in all likelihood, were formerly part of a cycle of reliefs. Of the original plan of the edifice itself, on the other hand, nothing appears to have survived the effects of erosion, land-slides and the proximity of late Islamic tombs. Nevertheless, the expedition repeatedly excavated the site during November and December 1906. Eventually, amidst the jumble of these remains, what Pelliot called an "altar" took shape (this term was used by him without further qualification, as we have seen in the case of temple D, to denote either an interior 'cella' enclosed on three sides or a solid masonry structure that corresponds to what is more usually meant by an 'altar'). There emerged "a sort of plinth for bas-reliefs", possibly the remains of a *stūpa*-altar, and a "low balustrade with elephant's heads of baked clay" which ran the length of the temple wall. That the latter must once have supported statues is borne out by the discovery of a "refired and very friable" figure, though there is no apparent trace of monumental cult statuary as such in the temple.

The above elements are clearly insufficient to outline a coherent plan for the temple. Hallade[1] suggests that the traces of the wall adjoining the balustrade might have been part of a cella occupying the interior of the chapel. In this light, the arrangement of the building would be brought into closer relationship with that of temples B and D, accepted as belonging to a later period through the study of the style of their sculptures. The reliefs from temple N, as a matter of fact, do show aspects more akin to an artistic phase that we would call 'middle' or intermediary in relation to the whole body of pieces found at Toqquz-Saraï. The presumed presence of an interior cella, its walls decorated with scenes in relief, would also raise questions of a general and theoretical nature as to the evolution of the ground-plans of the Toqquz-Saraï temples: thus, if this is indeed the case, we would be faced with an anticipation in the lay-out of a type of temple assigned to the final phase! The possibility of the existence of this cella and, consequently, of the reliefs said to have been part of this "altar" would, in the light of the panels surviving from temple B (see below), permit us to see them as fragments of narrative compositions bearing, perhaps, on the life of the Buddha and possibly on his previous lives. The alternative possibility, which takes literally the presence of a solid "altar" inside the temple, with space for ritual circumambulation, takes us back (according to Pelliot's notes) to the model considered for temple I and thus, to the very earliest ground-plan identified on the site.

"The line of the altar", once it had been cleared, revealed at its far end a singular feature: "... two canine heads, the only ones preserved, that were *on* [*sic*] the two feet of a statue ...". Then came the discovery of "quite a large statue of a bodhisattva" (diary entry for 23rd November 1906), which, while not helping to establish the shape of the altar, does give an idea of the importance of this religious monument.

It was in this place that there appeared very fragile fragments of wall-paintings, humble witnesses of the former monumental decor; of unintelligible design, they were characterised by gold lines on a blue ground. Pieces of glazed brick were also found, together with fragments of statues

and green-glazed tiles that, according to Pelliot, "... the fire had turned to blue ...". L. Hambis has suggested linking these pieces with similar ceramic items that were widely distributed in the "south-west temple" of Tumshuq-tāgh, excavated by Albert von le Coq (1913[2]).

"Large temple B with bas-reliefs"

It is thanks to the discovery of the sun-dried clay relief depicting one of the previous lives of the Buddha, identified as the *Viśvaṃtara-jātaka* (plate 137; EO.1055), made during the initial explorations, that Pelliot decided to uncover the building on the site that he referred to as the "large mound B". In his diary entry for the 4th November 1906, two days before the whole group of reliefs was uncovered, describes this relief as follows: "... though badly damaged, the first bas-relief [...] shows the emaciated Buddha standing, with a brahmin of high birth at his right, who wears his sacred thread looped around him and is seated on a tall drum; on the Buddha's left are four women ...". In the note to this work, we show that the identification of the figures is quite different and that the story depicted here is, in fact, one of the most famous in the narrative repertoire of Buddhist tales and apologues.

Following the uncovering of this relief came the discovery of two complete panels adorned with figures (plates 138 and 139). Executed in the same manner, these also illustrate – according to our interpretation – Buddhist tales borrowed from various literary sources: the *jātaka* or birth-stories (to which the first relief belongs) and the *avadāna* or "heroic acts" of the Buddha's previous lives, those "roots of good", planted in the past, that make up the story of his life. Preserved almost intact (as can be seen today), these panels formerly adorned, as a continuous outer facing interspersed only by decorative frames, the south-west and best-preserved wall of the "cella-altar" of temple B, discussed above in connection with temples D and N. A fourth relief, part of the sequence of surviving panels, produced only one fragmentary figure (plate 137; EO.1055) that was added – by mistake or because of its manifest similarity – to the *Viśvaṃtara-jātaka* panel during restoration (*cf.* photograph *in situ*). The illustration of the *Viśvaṃtara-jātaka*, adjoining a preceding panel (now lost), opened the final cycle in the original sequence of narrative panels, which the worshipper would have beheld on his right in the course of his ritual circumambulation or *pradakṣiṇā* around the altar.

In addition to these reliefs, temple B is the only one of the many edifices of Toqquz-Saraï to have provided evidence of monumental statuary. Although not very explicit as to the precise location of its discovery, Pelliot's notes refer during the initial excavations to "a colossal Buddha head", fifty-five centimetres high, that was found inside the "cella-altar" (decorated on the outside with the panels mentioned above), which suggests that the large head of a bodhisattva (plate 140; EO.1059) may have come from this same site. Judging by its size, we suggest that this figure was once part of a group of principal cult images that consisted, at the very least, of a Buddha triad, in which this bodhisattva would have been one of the acolytes flanking Śākyamuni Buddha. One would expect, therefore, the existence of a second and similar figure, the counterpart of this bodhisattva.

In point of fact, no less than three large bodhisattva heads were brought to light (only one of them is illustrated here; *v.* fig. 96). These fragmentary heads resemble each other so closely that it seems reasonable to suggest not only that they were taken from the same mould but that they may well have formed part of the same cult group. But what, we ask, was the nature of this group? And what was the large composition with its attendant bodhisattvas exceeding the usual number that stood on the altar, if we were indeed dealing with but a single Buddha triad? The plan of the temple drawn up by Vaillant indicates three semi-circular monumental pedestals, probably representing lotus flowers, up against the rear wall. The theory of a devotional triad would thus be more readily acceptable, but where are we to place the figures of the other bodhisattvas? It seems that we must rule out that they backed onto the two side walls, an arrangement encountered in some of the Mogao caves at Dunhuang dating to the Sui dynasty – these, curiously enough, are near contemporaries of the Tumshuq temple. The excavations have indeed revealed two 'benches' or stands for reliefs, running the entire length of the side walls, but these are only some forty centimetres deep. In other

words, these benches are too shallow to have accommodated large statuary. Could the ruinous condition of the front section of the altar, towards the south-west, have perhaps deprived us of the evidence of statue bases? But these are not the only remnants of reliefs whose original locations are problematical, owing to the fact that nothing remains of the walls of the temple, which, judging by the surviving fragments, must have once been extensively decorated with large narrative reliefs in sun-dried clay (*cf.* note to plate 136), like the more eastern temples of Shorchuk (Karashahr).

Works of unknown provenance

The specific origins of a few pieces are not known, apart from the fact that they were not found at the Toqquz-Saraï excavations. The head of a little statuette (EO.1083; plate 144) presents a problem of attribution to one or other of the stylistic phases represented in the buildings explored so far. Pelliot made some soundings at the neighbouring site of Tumshuq-tāgh, later excavated by the Germans; other Buddhist structures in the vicinity may have offered the chance of such discoveries. Comparing this head with the different styles encountered at Toqquz-Saraï, our first impression is that it resembles the reliefs of temple B, a fact already remarked upon by Hallade.[3] It appears to us that the lines of research concerning the art of the monastic and sacred structures of Tumshuq should be guided by examples such as these and the thoughts they provoke in the wider context of western Serindian sites.

Archaeological complexes in the region of Kucha: the Kumtura caves

Although the Pelliot expedition did not return with any significant fragments of wall-paintings from the rock-cut temples of Kumtura, for which the site was as famous as the *"Ming-oï"* at Kyzyl further to the north, the expedition did, however, obtain a small number of important examples of sculpture that span a long period of activity at the site. This is revealed in the cycles of murals and of graffiti present in large numbers in the northern group of caves, which apparently date from around 500 AD – *i.e.* contemporary with the earliest art at Kyzyl – up to the eighth century, a period in which the influence of Tang dynasty Buddhist art is clearly evident in comparison with the earlier local styles, which we will call "Kuchean".

Of the five works presented here, one (MG.23760; pl. 146) appears close in terms of style to the reliefs of the final phase at Toqquz-Saraï (sixth-early seventh century) and to similar art at Shorchuk, further to the east, and, going by the local chronology of Kucha, may be attributed to to the second half of the seventh century at the very latest. Three polychrome heads, made of clay (MG.23759, EO.3570, MG.23761; pl. 147, 148 and 149), clearly show the influence of the Chinese aesthetic of the end the seventh-eighth century. As the for the fifth object, a wooden figurine of a bodhisattva (EO.1354; pl. 150), this is a small portable image, which therefore is perhaps not of local workmanship. It yet remains to establish its stylistic origins more precisely, as far as is possible to do so with such an expressive but badly-damaged work.

The Kumtura caves, situated south-west of Kucha on the lower reaches of the Muzart not far from the temples of Duldur-Āqur, are, like the cliff sites at Kyzyl and Kyzyl-Qargha, related to those religious complexes known as *"Ming-oï"* or "thousand houses" in the local Turkic tongue. In this case, in fact, they number only one hundred and twelve. The temples were mainly hollowed out of the upper part of the slope on the left of the eastern bank of the river that here flows from north to south, but, as at Kyzyl, there are also a number of caves tucked away in the folds of the side gorges and ravines, whence their name *goushiku* ("caves in the gorges"). The numbering of the latter starts with the southernmost caves and helps us to gain an idea of their topographical distribution.

The most recent surveys, carried out by Chinese archaeologists, distinguish between two separate complexes along the 4.5 kilometre stretch of cliff that has been worked. These groups are of varied appearance, as is suggested by the proposed dating of their wall-paintings. One of these ensembles, located to the south and known as "the group at the valley entrance" (*gukouqu*), comprises thirty-two caves (prefixed GK.1-32) distributed over the first four gorges (*gou* 1-4). The other

complex lies to the north, in and around the "great gorge", *dagouqu*, known as the third gorge, Grünwedel's "*dritte Schlucht*" or "*Inschriften-Schlucht*", which in Pelliot's diary is referred to as the "gorge of the inscriptions".[4] This complex is much larger than the other, with eighty caves (numbered from 1-80), of which only a few are located in the gorge itself (caves 40-53). The remainder are cut into the cliff-face, one group named *gunanqu* to the south of the depression (caves 1-39 and 79-80), the other, known as *gubeiqu*, to the north (caves 52-72).

Pelliot spent only a short time at Kumtura (from 14th-16th April, 1907), just a year after Grünwedel's visit. Apart from the inscriptions and graffiti in both Chinese and Sanskrit which give the gorge its name and which were photographed by Pelliot, the only discoveries mentioned by him came from "a cave of this group, preceding the third gorge", that is to say, a cave of the northern group, Grünwedel's "*Haupt Gruppe*". There follows in the journal a brief list of "the only interesting objects ... a small wooden statuette [plate 150], a very damaged yet still very expressive head made of clay and straw [plate 148 or 149], and, finally, a nearly-intact wooden halo and nimbus from a Buddha of very fine workmanship [EO.1356; plate 151]... ".

We have already mentioned certain artefacts which are representative of the Chinese-influenced style. These unavoidably pose the question of when this style was introduced. To this day, the sole dated inscription known at Kumtura, only recently discovered in cave 22, gives the date 649 AD (twenty-second year of the Zhenguan era)[5], which corresponds exactly to the time of the first occupation of Kucha by Chinese armies, as recorded in the *Jiu Tangshu*. The duration of this occupation is still uncertain and the subject of continued debate, owing to the Tibetan conquest (670 -692 AD) that, with the defeat of the Chinese at Wuhai, near Lake Kokonor, brought to a close two decades of Tang domination of the oases in the Tarim Basin. Controversy surrounds a rumoured Chinese recapture of the four garrison towns, which then included Kucha, supposed to have taken place in 679 AD. Chinese sources, however, contain no mention of this event.[6] On the other hand, it is said that the garrison towns may have been recovered under the Empress Wu Zetian, but here too the sources, if they exist at all, are extremely reticent about the matter. Nevertheless, it is possible to establish that the middle of the eighth century marks the end of the second, or perhaps even the third, Chinese occupation. In 751 AD the battle of Atlak was fought near the town of Talas, the first and last confrontation between the Arabs and the Chinese; but, above all, it was the An Lushan rebellion of 755 AD and the consequent withdrawal of imperial troops from Central Asia that brought it to a sudden close. The resulting vacuum further encouraged the ambition and sudden upsurge of power of the kingdom of Tibet, whose regional supremacy was finally secured by the treaty of 821 AD, according to the terms of which China yielded, thus severing her direct contact with the west.

The monasteries and temples of Duldur-Āqur

The fragments of wall-paintings brought back by the Pelliot expedition from this site west of Kucha will seem singularly few in number, considering the importance of this religious complex and, in particular, the exceptional examples of pictorial art at both Kyzyl and Kumtura.

The scarcity of pictorial art at Duldur-Āqur can be explained by the fact that this site consisted of erected buildings, as opposed to the rock-cut temples of Kucha in which great pictorial compositions were sheltered and survived. Serindian buildings display a certain uniformity in that they are built of rammed earth, with the use of timber limited to wooden beams, which method of construction renders them, of course, extremely vulnerable to erosion. Yet it was the destructiveness of mankind, ignorant of the sacredness of the place, that proved the undoing of the site, as had happened earlier at Tumshuq. From the very outset of the investigation, on the 17th and 18th April 1907 and the following days, the expedition uncovered the traces of a conflagration that had ravaged most parts of the monastery at a fairly early date, seemingly in the course of the ninth century.

The paintings of Duldur-Āqur

Duldur-Āqur is not the only monastic complex built near Kucha that has left us evidence of its painted decor, which must have shared an equal place with figurative reliefs and devotional statuary in the iconographic programme of the temples. To the north-east, the twin religious settlements at Subashi furnished mural compositions of a comparable kind, consisting of two of the most complete known to this day, but now preserved only in the photographs taken by the expedition (*Mission Pelliot, III, Koutcha*, pl. LV-LX). To be sure, the examples of pictorial art at these largely ruined sites are too isolated to rival those of the cave temples, but these painstakingly-gathered fragments from Duldur-Āqur merit our particular attention, in the knowledge that these are amongst the rarest remains of their kind still in existence from buildings on the Northern Silk Route.

Pelliot mentions two sites where paintings were discovered at Duldur-Āqur: the first of these (diary, 27th April) was in the "library", a building which Pelliot reconstructed "in the shape of a chapel with balustrades on three sides", with a note on the still discernible sacred iconography of largely vanished statuary and above all a decor of "... larger standing Buddhas, painted on the main walls ..."; the second such site (8th May) directly concerns the wall-painting fragments shown here (pl. 152-155). These were revealed after the excavations had been moved from the "monastery" – the principal building and, apparently, the original kernel of the complex – to a group of buildings in the northern section, whose main feature was its alignment along a great avenue, bounded on the far side by a monumental *stūpa* (the second at Duldur-Āqur, the first being *stūpa* A, located in the south of the great courtyard). The fragments of wall-paintings lay scattered over the ground in the "north-east buildings" as a result of their collapse, which explains the jumbled disorder of the pieces. All were pieces of large compositions that must once have covered the walls like those found at Subashi, the panels of which depict assemblies of Buddhas and bodhisattvas.

Both excavated sites had escaped the fire, with the result that Pelliot was also able to find a number of wooden sculptures: statuettes and also fragments of decoration, some of which came from architectural elements such as lintels and beams. On the other hand, he found no trace of large statuary in the painted chapel, contrary to what the "library" might have led one to expect.

These works were "the first paintings found at Duldur-Āqur" and also the last. Some general characteristics can be deduced from them, which allow us to identify distinct groups. Nearly all are fragments of figures: faces, parts of bodies, glimpses of dress and ornaments. The majority are highly expressive, particularly the faces which are portraits in the real sense of the word, with animated features that convey at least three states of being or postures: contemplation or *samādhi*, the image of Buddhist absorption; the rapture of a person witnessing the wonder of the Buddha preaching to an assembly; and, finally, animation, apparent in the figures' movement and excitement that signal the sublime and lofty presence of Śākyamuni accompanied by great bodhisattvas. Even where there are only fragments, mere glimpses of bodies, a broad range of devout expressions can still be made out: gestures of veneration and devotion from worshippers (*añjali-mudrā*), the graceful play of hands and supple fingers in the conventional gesture of argumentation (*vitarka-mudrā*), *etc.*. Two related fragments depict the emaciated bodies of brahmin ascetics, depicted prior to their conversion and still governed by their passions and false beliefs. Most of these figures are quite large-scale, giving us some indication of the size of the original compositions.

We are able to set out some of the main iconographic features from the characteristics we have outlined above. Thus we recognise two depictions of the Buddha, numerous gods and figures that may already represent bodhisattvas, which would indicate the adoption of Mahāyāna doctrines, and, lastly, one or two ascetics. There is also a portrait of a monk whose exaggerated expression is of a type found in paintings at Kyzyl and in pictorial cycles at Turfan and Dunhuang. Lastly, other fragments show the presence of a royal couple, in whom we would be inclined to see, as in many other examples of Kuchean painting, the superimposition of historical personages of the royal line of Kucha upon characters who feature in the life of the Buddha, such as the Indian rulers who converted to Buddhism in the time of Śākyamuni.

The figures are occasionally depicted against a decorated background, and here we should note the recurrence of earlier motifs found in Gandhāra and in India, as well as those relating to local Kuchean themes also attested in the wall-paintings at Kyzyl and Kumtura. The painterly proficiency revealed over the whole range of subjects is comparable to that seen in the paintings of the above-mentioned sites, and, despite some differences of detail, demonstrates the uniformity of what may be termed the school of Kucha.

There remains, of course, the problem of dating. The classification according to style of the fragments collected *in situ* reveal two, or better, three distinct periods. The third of these is illustrated by the fragments reproduced in plates 166-168, to which we will return below. The fact that we can distinguish these phases is remarkable, given the small number of these fragments. These phases would cover, moreover, the whole period of artistic activity at Kucha, which, in all probability, also corresponds with the length of time over which it remained not only the religious centre in this part of Serindia but also the centre of regional power. This would show that Duldur-Āqur enjoyed a long existence, stretching from the ancient era, contemporary with the first Kyzyl caves (around 500 AD), up to the last period when Buddhist communities were present in this part of Central Asia, that is, up to the ninth century when there was a marked stylistic influence from China. A single fragment dates from the second period: the head of a *devatā* (plate 165), which serves as a reminder of the art of an intermediate phase that corresponds exactly – so much so that one could easily confuse them – to the aesthetic of what we call the "second style" at Kyzyl, of around 600-650 AD. Thus these fragments of wall-paintings, that to some might seem insignificant, enlighten us as to the duration of monastic life at the site, a span of religious activity comparable to that of the rock-cut temples around Kumtura. Here again arises, in contrast, the unsolved question relating to the enigma of the Kyzyl caves to the north, where all parallel traces of significant artistic creation disappeared after the middle of the eighth century. But let us now examine this late art of Kucha, that is to say, of Duldur-Āqur.

Kuchean paintings from the Tang dynasty

The fragments EO.1123B and EO.1123*a*, *b* and *c* (plates 166-168) belong to the third pictorial style at Duldur-Āqur, known thanks to the excavations undertaken by the expedition. The features that distinguish these from earlier works can be plainly discerned, both in the formal canon of the figures and in the pictorial technique appropriate to its representation. It is here that we find, for the first time in this part of Central Asia, the characteristic and clearly recognisable aesthetic of Tang Buddhist painting. This constitutes an appreciable break with the Kuchean school with which we have dealt so far; it is marked out by the visual importance given expressive draughtsmanship, as opposed to the skilful chromatic technique used earlier to model figures. The new, Chinese influence can be dated to around the eighth century, which would in turn accord with events that took place in the history of the area at that time.

Though we are unable to cite any qualitative change in the palette used,[7] owing to the scarcity of surviving fragments, we draw attention to the conspicuous absence of lapis-lazuli blue. Is it fair to take this as evidence for the severing of ancient supply routes, resulting from political upheavals and broken alliances in the region, which made access to the traditional Afghan (Badakshan) source of the gem problematic even in Kucha? The historical clue revealed through painting in these few fragments showing the Sinicised style corresponds in all likelihood with the ephemeral *Pax Sinica* in the Tarim Basin in the great years of the reign of Xuanzong (712-756 AD).

Nevertheless, we would not attribute the new aesthetic character to these external causes alone and deny the imponderable inclinations of the artists who executed the last paintings at Duldur-Āqur, who show themselves to be less audacious colourists than their predecessors. As regards the figures, a profound change is clearly visible in the rounded forms, in the free brushwork of the outlines and in the solemn expressions of the countenances, from which the half-smile and rapt, unfocussed gaze, partially veiled under heavy lids, have disappeared. This new style, which we

might call "realist" after what preceded it, faithfully follows Tang convention. Adopted in both Buddhist painting and sculpture, it reached its stylistic zenith in the Kaiyuan era (713-741 AD).

In addition to these rare pieces of evidence from Duldur-Āqur, Kuchean painting has provided us with other examples of Tang style, notably in the Kumtura caves. There the paintings have preserved the coherence of the original compositions and are monumental in their dimensions and architectural context. Some were painted entirely in the Sinicised style: cave 16, known as the "cave of the *kinnara*", cave 38 "of the *nirvāṇa*", cave 45 "of the *apsarasas*". These call to mind the paintings of Turfan (Gaochang and Murtuq) and Dunhuang (Mogao and other caves in western Gansu), where this influence is less unexpected since they are located in areas peripheral to Imperial sway.

The wall-paintings of Kyzyl-Qargha

Pelliot reached this rock-cut complex, the nearest to Kucha (eleven kilometres from the present town), in the spring of 1907, but left no description, intending, as he says, to undertake a more thorough study of the inscriptions he had noticed there on returning to the site (journal, 8th May). The loss of the notebook covering this period has deprived us of his thoughts on the subject, but, in addition to his discovery of the inscriptions in cave 25 (according to the current Chinese numbering), he was able to bring back some fragments of wall-paintings from his brief visit.

Though few in number and small in size, these fragments reveal, upon examination, traces of subjects evoking important pictorial compositions comparable to those in the caves of Kyzyl and Kumtura. The exact site of their discovery remains unknown, but it would seem very probable that two fragments, MG.17809 and MG.23743 (pl. 169 and 170), if not a third – MG.17808 (pl. 171) – all came from one and the same painting.

We shall consider these fragments on the basis of the pictorial cycles of comparable style preserved *in situ*, recently brought to light during Chinese excavations. The most significant examples were found on the walls of caves 11 and 14. In the case of cave 11, a group of donors processing along the passage leading to the chapel; in the second case, an image of the bodhisattva Maitreya with an assembly in the Tuṣita heaven.[8] Though in poor condition (the facial features being particularly damaged), these surviving fragments of works contemporary with the stylised phase confirm to us the long duration of the temples of Kyzyl-Qargha, in keeping with the phases given for the religious structures of Kumtura and Duldur-Āqur.

The site was first reported by the Otani expedition (Watanabe Teshin) on the 6th August 1903. Pelliot came after this, followed by Stein (1908) and by von le Coq (1913), neither of whom left any detailed records – indeed, von le Coq went only so far as to mention its poor state of preservation. The Japanese expedition listed forty-four undamaged caves, while Chinese archaeologists have now finally recorded sixty-one (including both caves and isolated niches, without distinction[9]).

Pelliot's interest in the inscriptions found on some walls (interest in written documents being always primary in his research) was recently to be fully justified by the discovery in cave 25 of a graffito that provides us with the first fixed date found in any document in the Tokharian language. This inscription gives the date 642 AD, *i.e.* in the reign of Suvarṇadeva, king of Kucha. By virtue of this historical evidence, which appears to commemorate a pilgrimage, the site that was so often neglected before the Chinese excavations owing to its poor condition has now acquired a new documentary importance in relation to the large religious complexes of Kucha.[10] The date associated with the name of the sovereign finds an echo in some of the inscriptions at Kyzyl, written in the cartouches that accompany representations of figures, in that it complements the list of six kings of Kucha – which includes the name of our sovereign – and one queen that were deciphered in Sanskrit manuscripts discovered in the "cave of the red dome".

The sum of the data collated and correlated from these diverse sources enables us to draw a more accurate sketch of the local historical context corresponding to the second pictorial style at Kyzyl, if we are indeed justified in suggesting that the latter is contemporary with the present fragments from Kyzyl-Qargha.

The statuary of Duldur-Āqur

The only substantial remains of large statuary to have been found at Duldur-Āqur came from the vicinity of the north-western *stūpa*, the second at the site, somewhat removed from the central monastic complex with its great courtyard surrounded by cellas and temples for worship and, on the south side, by the first *stūpa*, occasionally referred to by Pelliot as the "principal *stūpa*". At many points around this structure, the expedition uncovered fragments of large statues, including "an enormous Buddha head". However, the really significant discovery of monumental art at Duldur-Āqur', of which the two life-size heads reproduced in plates 176 and 177 were a part (MG. 23757 and MG.23756), was made subsequently around the second or outer *stūpa*. Apparently encouraged by these results, Pelliot returned to the first *stūpa*, in the courtyard of which he came upon niches in which "Buddhas sat enthroned, all but one destroyed" (diary, 28th May).

In addition to the light that they shed on the statuary, these two sculptures are the only ones from this site that enable us to visualise a cohesive programme of figurative decoration around the base of the monument and along the walls of the encircling *pradakṣiṇā* corridor. This is thanks to their inherent expressive qualities that are complemented by other figures and compositions, and also to photographic records made at the time of their discovery. In these, incidentally, can be seen many more figures than were actually brought back, all in pieces.[11] It thus appears that groups of large figures in relief formerly stood on a base in the form of a bench that ran along the walls of what was probably the corridor intended for *pradakṣiṇā* around the monument. Once-colossal Buddha figures, of which only the lower parts have survived, can be glimpsed through the débris; these remains show that the Blessed One was represented under two of the prescribed canonical forms: standing or sitting in *padma-āsana*. Arranged next to these were attendant figures – *devatā*s or bodhisattvas? – to which group belong the two heads under discussion here. We can easily and safely extrapolate, on the basis of these characteristics and the frequency with which such arrangements are encountered in other sites, an iconography consisting of large assemblies of bodhisattvas, quite literally dominated by figures of Śākyamuni Buddha sculpted on a monumental scale greatly exceeding that of the attendants. Such compositions are by no means rare: on the contrary, we can observe the process of their iconographic development beginning with the art of Gandhāra and, more specifically, that of Haḍḍa. As for more direct comparisons, considering only the high religious places of central and western Serindia, we may turn to the remains of *stūpa*s at Tumshuq ("middle *stūpa*"[12]) and at Rawak, a site near Khotan on the Southern Route.[13]

The western city of Subashi

Having left Duldur-Āqur on the 4th June 1907 with the words "the pickings here are fewer [than at Tumshuq] but, on the whole, I am content thanks to the abundance of manuscripts", Pelliot planned to dig in Subashi, a prominent site west of Kucha, where this dual city rises on the eastern and western banks of a river of the same name. He had high hopes that the dig here would solve some of the puzzling questions raised by the objects so far discovered. The encounter with the Russian scholar Berezovskii, who had reached the site before him, and the exchange of learned information resulting from this meeting, appears to have greatly stimulated his own research. Berezovskii was already at work and had brought to light "a small chamber, undamaged by fire, decorated with fairly good frescoes", when Pelliot showed him a cave "literally covered with graffiti, mainly in *brāhmī* but also in Uighur and Chinese".

His hopes of important evidence were soon dashed, for the excavations of western Subashi, begun on 11th June, produced but few finds. The most important discoveries were funerary urns found in the tumuli near the "great *stūpa*". Nearly fifteen such urns were uncovered, including some of the most beautiful examples of this genre (along with the famous urn brought back by the Otani expedition and nowadays housed in the Tokyo National Museum). Those urns which were made of wood (most of the others were made of clay; *v.* EO.1091, fig. 140) and shaped like cylindrical

boxes with conical lids are remarkable for their exceptional and varied painted decorations: some are adorned with geometrical designs and birds against a brown background (EO.1092; pl. 182), others with figures including a lute-player. None, however, equals the box decorated with "little angel-musicians", which has survived in perfect condition owing to its being still wrapped in an animal hide at the time of its discovery (EO.1094).

While these objects invite comparison with similar urns found at Tumshuq, such comparison would lack any common denominator, owing to the unequalled skill and artistry that was brought to bear on the Subashi urns. It is a curious fact, observed in the case of all the comparable funerary objects from the site (including the Otani box), that none of these bear any inscriptions, causing Pelliot to conclude that "... with this, the hypothesis that the inscriptions written in black using *brāhmī* script, found in many ceramic fragments in the Kucha region, represented funerary inscriptions seems to collapse ...".

A strange object, which to this day remains unique, was discovered during excavations in a small temple not far from the "great *stūpa*": this is an anthropomorphic terracotta jar in the shape of a kneeling figure of which only the lower part survives. The work remains a puzzle to this day, since there are no comparable objects; indeed, we cannot even imagine what the vessel looked like when complete.

Apart from these discoveries, however, the excavations continued "in perfect monotony", Pelliot's evident weariness alluding to the finds already made in other sites of the region: "... coins, fragments of wall-paintings with some *aksara* (letters of the alphabet) in *brāhmī* ...".

The caves of the Qianfodong (Mogaoku) of Dunhuang

In addition to the collection of manuscripts and paintings from the so-called "manuscript-cave" (Pelliot 163; cave 17 according to the Dunhuang Academy) that were acquired from the guardian monk Wang at Dunhuang, the expedition also had the opportunity to obtain other pieces testifying to the religious activity at the site: wooden statuettes, fragments of clay statues and various bronze ritual objects, and even occasional traces of secular life. Although these were found in various locations, most of the small statuettes were apparently taken from cave 17.

The expedition arrived at the caves that Pelliot called 'Qianfodong' on the 25th February 1908. Of his three-month sojourn at the site (from 25th February until the 27th May), he was able to spend only three short weeks, from 3rd to 26th March, examining the contents of cave 17. His outstanding study of the caves consisted of their description, transcriptions of a great number of inscriptions[14] and the making of photographic records.[15] The immense field of research provided by the site better illustrates the exceptional scientific qualities of the expedition's young leader (he was only thirty years old) than does his previous archaeological work on the other sites in Central Asia. It was at this site, where he made his most important discoveries in Serindia before moving into Chinese territory around the Yellow River, that he was able to deploy the full range of his talents and linguistic accomplishments. We must admire the symmetry of the expedition's research, revealed to us over this long interval of time. From the very outset, Toqquz-Saraï, the first site to be explored and a place then untouched by other expeditions, gave rise to what amounted to an archaeological act of creation, in that Pelliot discovered its Buddhist origin. Here he was rewarded with extraordinary finds, which made him regret all the more the absence of manuscripts and inscriptions that, for him, were ever of primary importance, as is proved by his diary. By contrast, just when the Central Asian part of the expedition was reaching its end, an incomparable linguistic field was to open up before him. One has only to glance at the notes he made during the exploration of sites in mid-Serindia, between Kucha and Turfan, over a period of close on two years, to discern a general impression of disappointment in spite of some fine achievements: for in many instances the expedition was frustrated by foreign 'competitors' having been over the ground ahead of it. This was also the case at Dunhuang, where Stein had preceded him; but despite this setback, the scientific work that he accomplished there stands out as one of Pelliot's titles to lasting fame.

In order to complement what has already been said in volume 1 concerning the Pelliot expedition, we return to those 'archaeological' discoveries that shed light upon his work and achievements. He emerged "utterly exhausted" from his studious seclusion in cave 17 on the 27th March and "... returned to the study of the caves ...", a task that had occupied him from his arrival while waiting for that cave to be opened. He was as much occupied by the inscriptions on the walls as by the wall-paintings. These consisted of dedicatory texts on votive works and donors' cartouches, which he copied almost in their entirety.[16] The approaches he suggests for dealing with the problems raised by these documents are outstanding and his results frequently shed new light on the history of Dunhuang.

He was, for example, able to apply the knowledge he had recently acquired from his reading of dated and/or signed manuscript colophons dating to the period of hereditary government at Dunhuang to the names and titles found in the inscriptions on the cave walls. These colophons refer to the ties that Zhang Chengfeng (894-919 AD) of the Zhang family and, subsequently, the Cao family (*shi*) maintained with the Uighur kingdom of Gansu. On other occasions this process is reversed: a manuscript signed, for instance, Cao Yijin (d. 936 AD), is backed up by an inscription in cave 52 (cave 108), which mentions a Uighur princess among the female donors. This is in fact a reference to one of the nieces of Cao Yuande, son of the above, given in marriage to the grandson of the "Great khan of the northern Uighur realm". Similarly, we find mutually complementary information in both manuscripts and cave inscriptions concerning a daughter of the King of Khotan, given in marriage to Cao Yuanlu (976-1002 AD) the nephew of Cao Yuande, for purposes of political alliance (cave 61, Pelliot's cave 117). It was by this masterly method that Pelliot first opened up the highly specialised discipline of epigraphy at Dunhuang.

The objects to be seen here – mainly wooden statuettes and a few heads that bear witness to the presence of cult images in the caves – come from different parts of the site. Some, and most of the small wooden cult images, were preserved in cave 17. It is certain that the 'printing block' with an image of the Buddha (MG.23966; fig. 148) mentioned in Pelliot's diary was found in that repository– it seems, in fact, that this is a piece of wood carved to serve some quite other liturgical purpose – and, probably, the works reproduced in plates 191 and 192 (EO.1103 and EO.1115), and in figures 142 (EO.1117) to 147 (EO.1111). As for the remainder, the details are, unfortunately, not precise enough for us to be able to pinpoint individually the caves of origin, though they are known to have been found in one or other of the following: Pelliot 120*n* (cave 285 according to the current Chinese numbering), 75*d* (cave 215), 5 (cave 143), 54 (cave 105), 13 (cave 151) and two caves of the northern group, numbers 181 and 182 (caves 464 and 465 respectively). A set of movable types bearing Uighur characters was found in the latter cave, but is not illustrated here.

The Silks of Dunhuang

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Cave 17 (Pelliot 163), ancillary to Cave 16 at Dunhuang, contained a great quantity of manuscript scrolls, painted banners, and many other historically important documents, which had been stored there for almost a millenium. Pelliot could take stock of this large deposit for the first time on 3 March 1908. Earlier, in spring 1907, Sir Aurel Stein had investigated the same place. In the rich harvest of finds which both of them garnered, neither explorer failed to include a good number of textiles, mostly consisting of richly-decorated silks, but including some of hemp cloth and ramie. All of these fragments, from the most minute to the largest, show that here were precious offerings made by pilgrims and Buddhist donors from China, Central Asia and probably from part of Sogdiana which at this time operated a lucrative trade with China.

These fragments of textiles with stunning patterns, mainly woven, embroidered or achieved by resist methods such as clamp-resist (Chinese: *jiaxie*), or wax-resist (*laxie*), show in a brilliant way how trade and knowledge of silk technology had reached their height in the Tang period, especially in the period from the eighth to the tenth centuries. Today we can be in no doubt that even the least of these silk fragments was a valuable item. So, among the treasures of the monasteries of Dunhuang at this time, there were pieces of textile, some of them much worn, sewn together and assembled; their cutting and shapes show us that many of them, even those not actually sewn as such, were intended for the triangular heads of banners, for side streamers or for borders to frame paintings. Precious items of silk had been used to fabricate hangings or other decorative items to adorn altars; or, again, to make up wrappers to hold the rolls of sacred Buddhist texts.

The three major collections originating from Cave 17 are represented by about a hundred specimens kept at the Musée Guimet and a few at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.[1] The Stein collection includes a great number of documents from Cave 17 that are kept in the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and the National Museum in New Delhi.[2] Finally, numerous fragments brought from Dunhuang in 1914 by the Russian scholar S. F. Oldenbourg are kept in the State Hermitage, St. Petersburg.[3]

All the specimens mentioned above appear to be to some extent related, and it would seem that several of them have been cut from a single piece of cloth. We should note too that in the past forty years or so there have been discoveries made by Chinese archaeologists in other Dunhuang caves, and at the sites of Minfeng, Astana, Kara-Khoja, which have provided us with important comparative pieces, becoming a precious source of new materials for research, and enabling us to make comparisons on the basis of style, of technique and even of motifs, all of which were current in the

Tang period. Most of all, we have to bear in mind the vast repertory of woven textiles, and of ritual objects made with textiles, especially of precious patterned silks, kept in the Shōsō-in in Nara. There some thousands of fragments, some of which we know thanks to occasional exhibitions, or from the plates in splendid publications, show us that in the Nara period (that is during the eighth century), the treasures of Japan had been notably enriched by textiles from China. The textiles in Japanese collections are stunning in the beauty of their designs and the refinement of their techniques; moreover, they have been remarkably well preserved.

Sūtra-wrappers (*jingzhi*).

Among textiles intended for ritual use, the most important type is that of the sūtra-wrappers, which will be the main focus of our study here. Various techniques were employed to create these wrappers for texts, showing a lively imagination both in their construction and in the adoption of materials such as bamboo strips, or paper to make them. Moreover, they provided valuable information about the titles of collections then in frequent use in Buddhism.[4]

In the Pelliot collection and in the collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, there are at least eleven wrappers and labels that had been used to hold sacred texts.[5] As a rule, these wrappers would each hold up to ten manuscript scrolls. Among them we can find different types of mounting, which are nonetheless entirely typical, as we can observe from those kept in other collections.

Wrappers in silk and bamboo

Three of the wrappers in the collection (figs.58 and 59 [EO.1200]; pl.106 and fig.62 [EO.1208]; figs.60 and 61 [EO.1209/1]) are made of bamboo and silk, patterned with multi-coloured silk warp threads (in blue, green, pink, fawn, ivory and straw), skilfully twined around the wefts which are extremely fine strips of bamboo. Acting as wefts, each of these passes between pairs of warp threads, which are twisted (like twine, hence the term, 'twined warp'). Between each bamboo weft, the pair of warp threads make either a complete or a half-twist. Where there is a half-twist, the colours change. All three of these wrappers have nine separate bands with geometric or stylized floral motifs. Although each pair of warp threads can have no more than two colours, there may be as many as five or six colours. One should note that originally these silk and bamboo wrappers always had borders of precious patterned silk on all four edges, in order to protect the ends of the bamboo strips. Except in Japanese collections, where some intact specimens are still preserved, elsewhere there are sometimes only traces of these borders. Normally spaced in nine bands with a spread of various colours, the decoration on these wrappers is very lively: this is characteristic of all the sūtra-wrappers known to us. We may note a set of sūtra-wrappers made in Japan in this fashion for the *Issai-kyō sūtra* during the Heian period (794-1192), and originally kept in the Jingo-ji. One of these wrappers bears a date written in ink on the bamboo part, giving the date of their manufacture as 23 April 1149 (fifth year of Kyūan).[6]

Two bamboo and silk wrappers found in Cave 17 by Stein are similar in date, provenance and spirit to the three wrappers in the Pelliot collection.[7] One should note that the bamboo and silk wrappers, EO.1200 (Pelliot, figs. 58 and 59) and MAS 859 (Stein) both have index characters twined around the wefts. The Chinese characters on EO.1200 (figs. 58 and 59) read *Dazhilun diyizhi*, identifying the first wrapper of the *Dazhilun, Treatise of the Perfection of Wisdom* (referred to in its abbreviated form); on the British Museum example, there is a single character, *yin*, framed in a square, the whole of which is formed by silk twined around the bamboo wefts. On another bamboo and silk wrapper, similarly dated in the Heian period (1149), and kept in the Jingo-ji, a wooden label is attached at the fastening point by a braid, bearing the Chinese characters for the title, *Daichidoron*,[8] namely the same sūtra as that found on EO.1200 (figs. 58 and 59).

Three of the thirteen sūtra wrappers kept in the Middle Treasury of the Shōsō-in at Nara are also of bamboo and silk.[9] One of them is very similar indeed to those in the Stein and Pelliot collections: the two others are somewhat different in appearance since the silk warp threads entirely cover the

bamboo wefts. For example, the famous sūtra wrapper with Chinese characters, better known by its Japanese title, *Konkōomyōsaishōōkyōo* (*Saishō-ō* sūtra), twined in purple and white silk threads which cover the whole surface, bears a powerful design of two medallions and numerous Chinese characters which give the date 742 AD (fourteenth year of Tempyō) as well as the name of Emperor Shōmu. The fact that such sūtra wrappers were employed over considerable periods of time is shown by one of Stein's finds at Kara-Khoja, Turfan, a site dated between the ninth and the twelfth centuries.[10] In 1957, other Chinese wrappers of bamboo and silk were found in the Yunyan pagoda, in Suzhou district, Jiangsu province: these were dated by an inscription on the base of the casket containing them, corresponding to 961 AD in the Song dynasty.[11] Each of these wrappers was 47 cm high and 37 cm wide.

Different types of sūtra wrappers

Sūtra wrappers from Dunhuang are generally rectangular in form, but there are some variations. The most elaborate have polychrome patterned silks and fastenings which are usually triangular (somewhat similar to the triangular tops of the banners at the Hōryu-ji). Some others are simpler in their conception and execution, without much ornament. All of those that we have studied have one characteristic in common (including the Japanese examples from the Heian period): whatever their precise form or the materials of which they are made, their width is always between 27 and 32 cm. This fact is significant, since we know that paper in China (from the time of its invention in 105 down to the Tang period), was made in a standard size: the width of paper used for manuscripts at this time was never more than 24 to 25 cm.[12]

Comparing the *Saishō-ō* wrapper with the two from the Pelliot and Stein collections (pl.107 [EO.1199]; MAS 858), we can note a degree of similarity in the general construction and the type of fastening. Their fastenings are of triangular shape with three fastening tapes, two of them diagonal, the third vertical in the centre, all with ends sewn in triangular form. The arrangement seems to indicate a common tradition

On MAS 858, the Chinese character *kai* (to open), written in black ink, seems to be written in the same hand as the character *kai*, also in black ink, on EO.1207 in the Pelliot collection (fig.63). The two almost identical wrappers found by Stein and Pelliot (MAS 858; pl 107 [EO.1199]) are both constructed with pieces of patterned polychrome silk, cut from the same silk material. The pattern is extremely lively: it consists of two lions face to face, within a pearled medallion, and surrounded by petal-like shapes (similar to those that surround the medallion also containing facing lions, on the large silk textile known as "the winding sheet of Sainte Colombe and Saint Loup", probably dating to the eighth century and kept in the treasury of Sens Cathedral). On the patterned silk of these two wrappers, the heraldic attitude of the lions is marvellously accomplished; the material is woven in weft-faced compound weave (samite). As to its origin, it has been suggested that it might come from Sogdiana. Although we have no information as to the exact place where this kind of decoration might have been woven, this theory is worth keeping in mind, for both the style and spirit of the design betray an unmistakable Iranian influence.[13] In the Pelliot collection, there are four fragments with this kind of design of pearled medallions, all woven in the weft-faced technique. Technical analysis has shown that some of them (MAS 858; pl.107 [EO.1199]; fig.63 [EO.1207]) exhibit a considerable degree of coincidence in the density of warp and weft threads and of step, which might indicate a single place of manufacture.

Two examples, EO.1199 (pl.107) and MAS 858 have, sewn down the centre, two narrow bands of polychrome patterned silk, executed in the *kesi* technique. These two bands, and some others which are similar but not sewn on, are very unusual pieces.

Archaeological discoveries have proved to us that the *kesi* technique was not fashionable in Tang China; its use and development are only evident beginning in the Liao dynasty (907-1125) and Northern Song dynasty (960-1127). The pattern on these bands, and their somewhat rudimentary execution, have led some authors to attribute their manufacture to peoples coming from outside central China, such as the Uighurs (from the eighth and ninth century onwards).[14]

Materials used for sūtra-wrappers

We have described the wrappers made of bamboo and silk; concerning their final appearance, we have noted that the combination of silk warps and bamboo wefts allowed a varied decorative effect and a regular disposition. For other sūtra wrappers, strong paper was used to reinforce the cover: this is the case, for example, with EO.1207 (fig.63), and again with the wrapper kept in the Shōsō-in,[15] which held the first chapter of the Flower Garland Sūtra (*Kegon-kyō*), whose title is written in ink on the outside. This last wrapper is dated 756 AD, and, despite some differences in the materials used to make them, the two wrappers are very similar in appearance. With the *Kegon-kyō*, the central part is in linen, and the borders are of paper decorated in wax-resist (Japanese: *rōkechi*; Chinese: *laxie*). On EO.1207 (fig.63), the borders in patterned weft-faced silk (samite) are sewn on to a sheet of strong paper, while a plain undyed silk fabric is in the centre. We note as well that in the two wrappers already mentioned above, EO.1199 (pl.107) and MAS 858, the borders are sewn on sheets of paper and the backs are lined with smooth silk.

Inscriptions on the sūtra wrappers in the Pelliot collection.

Here we give for the first time the details of the inscriptions on the sūtra wrappers.

Seven specimens, in the Pelliot collection, bear inscriptions that identify the titles of the sūtras that they held: 1) EO.1200 (fig.58 and 59) is the only bamboo and silk wrapper that has a title twined in silk: *Dazhilun diyizhi*, identifying the first scroll of the *Treatise of the Perfection of Wisdom* (*Taishō*, no.1509). The inscriptions written in ink on the other wrappers provide the following information: 2) on EO.1207 (fig.63) a single Chinese character, *kai* (to open); 3) on EO.1209/1 (fig.60) an inscription in Chinese, on a piece of paper pasted on the border, identifies the first scroll or chapter of the sūtra known as the *Mohebanruojing* (*Taishō*, no.223); 4) on MG.23082, which is made of silk, is a Chinese inscription identifying the fourth chapter of the *Dafang guangfo Huayanjing* (*Taishō*, no.278); 5) on MG.23083, as in the previous example, an inscription written on the silk in ink in Chinese identifies the first chapter of the *Mohebanoruojing* (*Taishō*, no.223); 6) BN.4514/16 is a smooth ivory silk label with a Chinese inscription identifying the *Wusuoyoupusa jing* (*Taishō*, no.485); 7) BN.5013 is another silk label with a Chinese inscription identifying the thirty-fifth chapter of the *Dahanruojing* (*Taishō*, no.220). One should note that these two labels end in triangular sewn points, so that we feel that originally they could have been the central vertical fastening ribbon on a triangular-headed wrapper.

To sum up, we should note that the title of the *Dashidulun* sūtra appears twice: a) on the bamboo and silk wrapper EO.1200 (figs. 58 and 59); and b) on the wooden label of Heian date in the Jingo-ji. The character *kai* also appears twice: a) on MAS 859 and b) on EO.1207 (fig.63).

Note also that EO.1209/1 and MG.23083 were wrappers for chapters of the same sūtra, that is, the *Astasāhastikā prajñāparamitā sūtra*,*Taishō*, no.223.

Banner tops.

Van Gulik, in the book we have already cited, described two different categories of banner; here we shall simply make some remarks about the importance of the triangular banner tops. The Japanese specialist K. Matsumoto informs us that at present, five or six hundred banners of various sizes have been discovered in the vast collections of the Shōsō-in.[16] These must date from the middle of the eighth century. The Shōsō-in has a number of inscribed silk banner tops; several of these had belonged to ritual banners used in ceremonies such as that of the Great Buddha of Tōdai-ji (on 9 April 752 AD) or the first anniversary of the death of Emperor Shōmu (on 2 May 757 AD).

Concerning the examples in Japanese collections, K. Matsumoto distinguishes two kinds of inscribed banner tops: type A, with a note of the cyclical date of the donation, and type B – in the great majority – clearly indicating dates in the middle of the eighth century. The triangles of the type A banner tops are very acute and are, according to Matsumoto, probably older in manufacture; while the banner tops of type B, dating from the eighth century, are in the form of an equilateral triangle.

This information provides us with valuable facts on account of the close links between China and Japan at the height of the Tang. The mounting of banners in Japan in the eighth century is just like that of those made in China at the same time. The mounting of an aniconic banner (known in China as "five-coloured banners" or *wusefan*) was composed of several pieces of coloured textile (generally these were pieces of silk, considered to be more precious), sewn together one above the other, and corresponding to the Five Directions and the Five Cosmic Buddhas.[17] At Dunhuang, triangular tops and separate ribbons, sometimes painted, were part of the mountings of such banners. The side streamers were in some cases fastened to the lower corners of the triangular top, and three or five other streamers were nearly always attached at the bottom.

EO.1192A (pl.108) is what remains of a small votive banner (h.21.5cm; w. 22.5cm). With its decoration of simple floral motifs, executed in bright colours by the *jiaxie* (clamp-resist) technique, it moves us by the earnest piety that it evokes. In this small banner, two pieces, one triangular, the other rectangular, are sewn together.

EO.1192C1 (pl.109) is a triangular top, marvellously symmetrical, and with a spectacular arrangement of floral motifs in lozenge groupings. This too is executed in the *jiaxie* technique, and is identical in shape, cut and ornament to a banner top in the Dunhuang collections of the State Hermitage Museum. In both cases, the patterned textile undoubtedly comes from the same piece of silk with a resist pattern, and the same plain silk has been used for the broad silk borders sewn along the three edges of these banner tops.

The Pelliot collection includes side streamers which must have been part of mounted banners: EO.1204 (pl.110) illustrates these examples with various motifs painted on plain silk, having birds (ducks?) with outstretched wings, standing on a flower and holding a stem in their beaks, the design further enriched with stylised floral stems and butterflies. Most of all, there is the fetching motif, twice repeated, of a naked child, Chinese in aspect, seated on a flower and playing the flute. Such children represent souls, recalling the Sukhāvatī, and can be found in the painted banner EO.1152,[18] in the wall paintings of Cave 112 (Pelliot 134) at Dunhuang, and also in some Heian period works, elegantly woven in the polychrome patterned silks of one of the Jingo-ji sūtras.[19] So, in the Pelliot collection, there is a whole series of side streamers, mostly painted in black with the brush, on damask silk taffeta or on patterned silk. Motifs vary from Chinese-style clouds (pl.113 [EO.1195]) to all kinds of floral emblems. Some painted streamers (EO.1204 bis) also have wavy plant stems, extending from top to bottom of the streamer.

Techniques found among the Dunhuang textiles.

The twenty pieces shown here encompass the principal techniques seen in the Pelliot collection. They can be divided into two main groups according to whether the decoration was done after weaving or in the course of weaving.

Decoration applied after weaving. Decoration done after weaving, on a plain woven textile, either taffeta or lozenge twill, is the result of either a painting (pl.110 [EO.1204]; EO.1204*bis*), a block, stencilling (pl.125 [EO.1194]), *jiaxie* clamp-resist (pl.108 [EO.1192A]; fig.64 [EO.1192C]; pl.112 [EO.1196*ter*]), or through tie-dyeing (pl.114 [EO.1196*bis*]).[20]

Decoration applied in the course of weaving. Decoration executed in the course of weaving may be seen in various techniques:

– **in silk tapestry** (*kesi*) in taffeta weave: here the pattern is achieved by the use of silk threads of several colours, or gold leaf on paper, which only cover the various areas to be coloured, leaving narrow slits at the edges of these areas where the wefts turn back again.

– **gauzes**, with embroidered decoration (pl.124 [EO.1191 A]), with the characteristic appearance of Chinese gauzes, namely that the two sides of the lozenge are not perfectly symmetrical and even.

This is on account of a peculiar method of manufacture having to do with the disposition of the threads in the various parts of the loom.

– **textiles with twined warps** (pl.106 [EO.1208]) where the polychrome warp threads are twined in groups of two, which make either a full or a half twist between each weft, which consists of a fine bamboo sliver.

– **damasks**, whose shiny or matt areas of the design and the background are produced by a warp float (shiny) or a weft float (matt) in a single twill or in two different twills. In Chinese damasks of the Tang dynasty, one encounters either a 3:1 twill on its own, or a 2:1 combined with a 5:1 twill (pl.113 [EO.1195]).

– **weft-faced compound twill**, the general effect is of a warp-faced twill made of various colours (two at least) alternating to cover the whole surface of the cloth. There are supplementary warp threads which remain completely hidden, but whose function is critical since they cause the correct warp colour to appear on the surface. There is a 2:1 twill in the weft achieved with a second supplementary weft. The result is that one side of the fabric has warp floats and the reverse has weft floats (pl.115 [EO.1193 F] and pl.116 [EO.1203 H]). This might be due to a more complicated setting up of the loom than that normally used for weft-faced compound twill. Both of these specimens have raw silk warp threads, without any twist, contrasting with other brocades whose warp threads show a Z twist.

– **warp-faced compound weaves**; these appear as a purely warp-faced twill, where several warp threads (at least two) alternate. It should be noted that, up to a point, this is done according to the principle of the weft-faced weave, but with the warp instead of the weft, as if the brocade had been turned through ninety degrees. The twill is still 2:1 on half of the weft passes, the remainder keeping the warp threads apart.[21]

Some of the techniques mentioned here show that the loom had developed considerably and had become a loom with operating elements comprising cords, heddles and pedals for making various patterns. One can therefore propose that at this time, in most cases, a 'draw loom' was certainly being used.

Captions to Colour Plates: Volume II

The contributors have initialled their entries thus:

TA (Terukazu Akiyama), JPD (Jean-Pierre Drège), DE (Danielle Eliasberg), (JG) Jacques Giès, PM (Paul Magnin), KO (Keiko Omoto), KR (Krishna Riboud), MS (Michel Soymié).

Plate 1
The bodhisattva Samantabhadra (Puxian)
Tang dynasty (second half of the 8th century). Painting on silk. H.50.6 cm; W.13.4 cm. EO.1210. **PM. MS**

The representation of the bodhisattva Samantabhadra seen here corresponds with the description given him in the *Lotus Sūtra*, in the chapter called "The Encouragements of the bodhisattva Samantabhadra" (*Taishō*, 262, p. 61; see also *Taishō*, 277, p. 389-390). This great bodhisattva, whose name means "Universally devoted to good"[1], is the paragon of means, the indispensable counterpart of wisdom which is the domain of Mañjuśrī. He frequently appears with the latter beside Śākyamuni Buddha, but despite his importance, he apparently never enjoyed the same popular devotion as Mañjuśrī.

Often depicted in the posture of ease, the bodhisattva is here represented in the lotus position, with his feet hidden under his robe. The painting bears a close resemblance to a work in Delhi representing Mañjuśrī seated upon a lion (Waley, no. CDXLIV, Ch.xxii.001). Though surely produced in the same workshop, the two banners do not, however, form a pair, since Samantabhadra faces us in this example, while the Delhi Mañjuśrī turns to the left. Moreover, their two mounts are moving in the same direction rather than towards each other. Unlike what we can observe in many portable as well as mural paintings from Dunhuang, in which the bodhisattva's mont is richly caparisoned, the elephant in this painting is got up very plainly. A similar saddle-cloth appears in Stein painting 5 (Whitfield, 1, pl. 23). The lower frieze closely resembles the corresponding section of the painting reproduced in plate 74.

Plate 2
The bodhisattva Mañjuśrī (Wenshu)
Tang dynasty-Five Dynasties (9th-10th centuries). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 25 x 46 threads per cm. H.64.5 cm; W.18 cm. EO.1399 (P.129). **PM. MS**

Like Samantabhadra, with whom he is frequently associated in his rôle as one of Śākyamuni Buddha's attendants, Mañjuśrī is one of the great bodhisattvas of the Buddhist pantheon. He is generally represented seated on a lion, in the same way as we usually encounter Samantabhadra on the elephant. Though principally envisaged as the lord of wisdom, he is also charitable to the poor and the sick. His popularity derives in part from his rôle as interlocutor of the lay sage, Vimalakīrti, during their eloquent battle of wits recounted in the *Sūtra of Vimalakirti*, a work of profound spirituality. (*Taishō*, 474-476). Their debate is the subject of some of the most beautiful wall-paintings in the Dunhuang caves. Like all the great bodhisattvas, Mañjuśrī has an abode in this world, which in his case is in China, at Wutaishan, the "range with five terraces", in Shaanxi province. This popular place of pilgrimage is depicted in plate 6 of this volume.

This banner, with Mañjuśrī facing to the left in three-quarter view, must surely have been one of a pair of paintings accompanying a statue or a painting of Śākyamuni Buddha, the other banner depicting Samantabhadra in a similar position but facing towards the right. The twin lotus buds in his head-dress may be compared with those depicted in a painting of Avalokiteśvara, which is thought to date from the ninth century (vol. 1, pl.60)

Plate 3
The bodhisattva Mañjuśrī
Tang dynasty (8th-9th centuries). Painting on silk. H.81.5 cm; W.18.8 cm. EO.1398(P.196). **PM**

Seated in the posture of ease on a lotus throne placed

on the back of the lion, Mañjuśri makes the gesture of appeasement with his left hand and that of teaching the Law with his right. He is sheltered by a circular canopy crowned by a large white lotus blossom. Despite a certain clumsiness, particularly in the drawing of his rather stiff left leg, the image gives an impression of lightness and the execution is careful.

This work has an added triangular headpiece, consisting of two pieces sewn together; the pink floral motifs on a blue ground seem to have been produced by the *jiaxie* or clamp-resist dyeing process.[2]

Plate 4
The bodhisattva Samantabhadra
Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (9th-10th centuries). Painting on silk. H.59.8 cm; W.17.8 cm. MG.17770. **PM. MS**

The inscription located in the upper right of the painting identifies this bodhisattva standing on a lotus blossom as "the bodhisattva Samantabhadra", but since there are no specific attributes, the figure could just as well be any other bodhisattva. Neither the three-branched lotus stem held in the figure's right hand nor the inclined position of his head are characteristic of Samantabhadra.

The figure's costume and the unusual style of the representation are the most interesting features of the painting. Firstly, the bodhisattva's head-dress is quite unlike what we find in the other works from Dunhuang. We note the three fine, fluted prongs surmounting each of the medallions of his crown; these may be compared with those seen in the crowns of the Five Buddhas reproduced in volume 1, plate 46, dated to the end of the tenth century. The same arrangement of prongs rising from a three-sectioned crown may also be seen in a drawing kept in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Pelliot chinois 4649R°.); the style of this work is also exceptional, though very different from the example under discussion here. Another curious detail of the head-dress is the decoration of palmettes above the central section, also found in the coiffure of the figure depicted in plate 7. The costume, which reveals the upper body, consists of very thin textiles in shades of vermilion and reddish-orange ornamented with flowers. The bistre scarves are transparent, at least where they pass over the bodhisattva's arms, and his legs are visible through the skirt which leaves their lower part bare. Such transparent skirts, slightly hitched-up over stiff legs, have an exotic appearance reminiscent of a group of paintings in an 'Indian' style (using this term in its broadest sense) kept in London: Stein paintings 101 and 102 (Whitfield, 1, pl. 46 and 47). The garland of flowers may be compared with the garland worn by the 'Indianised' bodhisattva reproduced in plate 20. The horseshoe-shaped halo may also be associated with influences of this type. Finally, the strings of pearls between the leaves of the lotus blossom are most unusual. Although the painting is in many respects out of the ordinary, the lower frieze conforms to a standard model.

Plate 5
The bodhisattva Samantabhadra
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 18 x 34 threads per cm. H.82.5 cm; W.47 cm. EO.1149. **MS**

Samantabhadra is seated in the posture of ease (with the right foot supported on the pendant left leg) on a pink lotus on the back of a white elephant. He holds a flask in his left hand while making the gesture of appeasement with his right, which also holds a stem with three branches ending in flower buds. Surrounding him are four secondary bodhisattvas, two of whom carry tiered, cylindrical banners whose draperies move to the right as if billowing in a wind, and two additional figures: a servant dressed in a loincloth who pulls the elephant by a halter and a young boy with hands joined together who looks at Samantabhadra as if praying to him.

This representation brings to mind the paired paintings depicting Mañjuśri on his lion and Samantabhadra on his elephant which flank images of Śākyamuni Buddha. The most beautiful examples of these are the wall-paintings of Mogao cave 159 (*Bakkô*, 4, pl. 80 and 81) and Yulin cave 25,[3] both dating from the period of Tibetan occupation, and Stein paintings 33 and 34 (Whitfield, 2, pl. 13 and 14). In these paintings, the effect of the wind blowing mentioned above is not apparent in the representation of the cylindrical banners, appearing instead in the tassels of the canopies – they can be seen blown towards the right above Mañjuśri, in an opposite direction to that taken by the lion, and towards the left above Samantabhadra, in the opposite direction to the movement of the elephant. While lending momentum to the representations, this arrangement also has the advantage of placing the bodhisattvas at either side of the central buddha, or, in the absence of the latter, of establishing a relationship between the two. If considered as part of a pair, the painting under discussion here would be placed, contrary to the usual rules, on the right side. We should note furthermore that a servant dressed in a loincloth is depicted near the mounts in all the paintings referred to earlier. In these, the brown or chocolate colour of his skin indicates that he is a foreign slave, which is not the case here; again, the servant usually guides the elephant with a stick, like a mahout, while Mañjuśri's lion is led by a halter. The young lad with his hands pressed together would normally not appear. If, as we are tempted to believe, this representation of Samantabhadra with the mahout is an imitation of the image of Mañjuśri, then it is possible that the boy is Sudhana (Shancai tongzi).

The donors in the lower part of the painting kneel on rugs similar to those seen in volume 1, plate 46 and volume 2, plate 84. The men wear bonnets with a sort of buckle at the back which do not occur in other works in the collection. The women's hair, on the other hand, is dressed in a style which we see in the paintings referred to in the previous paragraph. Lastly, the brown colour of the clothes of both men and women closely resembles what we find in vol. 1, plate 46.

The painting of the principal subject of the composition is in a style quite different to that of the majority of works in the collection. Without going into great detail, we would like to point out certain similarities between this image and painting 46, particularly the use of pale blue, blue-grey and brick-red. Taking these into account, it seems beyond doubt that the painting here discussed also dates from the end of the tenth century.

Plate 6
The bodhisattva Wenshu (Mañjuśri) on Wutaishan
Date uncertain. Painting on silk. H.164 cm; W.107.5 cm. EO.3588. **MS**

Although this painting was apparently acquired by Pelliot, it is not certain that it came from Dunhuang. Considered suspect, it was not included by Mme Nicolas-Vandier in *Bannières et peintures de Touen-houang*, published in 1974. It was again left out of the list of paintings to be published and commented upon when the first version of this work was prepared in 1985.

Mañjuśri is seen at the centre of the composition, seated on the lion in the posture of ease. In his right hand he holds his usual attribute, a *ruyi* sceptre, though in this case it has a curved shaft surmounted by a mushroom of immortality, quite different from the sceptres carried by Mañjuśri in the Dunhuang paintings. His left hand, resting on his knee with the palm facing upwards, appears to be empty. He wears a finely worked tiara which is doubtless a "five buddha crown" even though only three buddhas seated in meditation can in fact be seen – the other two, at the sides, are out of sight. The rectangular panel with a triangular top that can be seen behind his head would seem to be a halo of very unusual design. The lion is black, instead of the customary white. The large red ball worn around the lion's neck and its collar of small bells (?) distinguish this mount from its more sober fellows in the art of Dunhuang.

Six figures make up the entourage. Least interesting are the four bodhisattvas. Two of these, distinguished by orange haloes, carry offering dishes. The other two have greenish haloes; the right-hand figure holds a flower while his counterpart on the left holds an unidentifiable object.

A rather more remarkable figure is the man who leads the lion; he has a beard and a moustache, a prominent nose, an expressive face, and is wearing boots. He leads the lion by means of a long halter which he has passed over his shoulders, and which he tautens with a lively gesture of his right hand, completely different from the rather fixed appearance of the other figures. Lastly, we note the presence in front of the lion of a young boy with his hands joined together who turns towards Mañjuśri. The bearded man is King Udayana, who, during the tenth century, came to replace the dark-skinned servant in depictions of Mañjuśri riding upon his lion. The boy is Sudhana (Shancai tongzi), Mañjuśri's companion and associate. We also encounter these two figures, arranged in the same way, in a wall-painting in cave 220 dated 925 AD (Bakkō, 5, pl. 20) and in tenth century wood-block prints (Pelliot chinois 4077 and 4514[2]).

Two figures stand face-to-face amongst the coniferous trees growing on the mountain in the lower left of the painting. They are depicted on a smaller scale. The figure on the right is an old man with a thick beard, dressed in white and wearing a tall black hat which extends downwards to his shoulders. Holding a long staff which resembles a shepherd's crook, he welcomes with his right hand the figure in front of him, who bows with his hands pressed together. The latter's shaven head indicates that he is a monk, although his white robe cannot be interpreted as a *kāṣāya*. Judging by his gaiters or puttees, he must be the monk-pilgrim Buddhapāli. Of Kashmiri origin, this monk visited Wutaishan in 676 AD in order to worship Mañjuśri, who appeared to him in the form of an old man such as we see on the right. Monks wearing *kāṣāya* seem to be observing the scene. Two others stand on a hill-top from which they appear to be watching Mañjuśri riding in glory on his lion. The same group, consisting of Mañjuśri on the lion accompanied by King Udayana and Sudhana on one hand and Buddhapāli and the old man on the other, without the monks observing the scene, appears in a sketch kept in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Pelliot chinois 2040), which probably dates to the tenth century. In Japan, where it survived in contrast to its disappearance from China at an unknown date, this group is called "Tokai Monju" or "Mañjuśri crossing the sea".

The background consists of a panoramic view of Wutaishan, the five-terraced mountain located in the western province of Shaanxi so important for pilgrimage and the cult of Mañjuśri. Monasteries, with their red and white buildings, and various other locations are marked by cartouches whose inscriptions are nearly all effaced. We are, however, able to read the names of two monasteries on the central terrace, Jingesi or "monastery of the golden pavilion" and Zhulinsi, "monastery of the bamboo forest", as well as the names of "the diamond cave", Jingangku, and "the debating rocks", Duitanshi, site of the doctrinal debate between Mañjuśri and Vimalakirti.[4]

Regarding the composition, it is clearly quite deliberate that the brightly-coloured main group, consisting of Mañjuśri and his acolytes is depicted on a large-scale in the centre of the painting. The group appears on many-coloured clouds, signifying that it emanates from the heavens, and is situated above the mountain but outside his earthly abode. The same interpretation can be given to the cloud composed of the 'five colours' which winds down from the sky, passing behind Mañjuśri before disappearing behind the offering bodhisattva on the right. A huge sun, various displays of light and a buddha emerging from behind the clouds are depicted in the upper part of the painting. These extraordinary phenomena probably represent the miracles which occurred alongside the glorious manifestation of Mañjuśri above the mountain. Further research would perhaps identify the literary sources which describe the scene.

The style of the painting and its pictorial conven-

tions are very different from what we observe in other works. The oval haloes, the geometric form of Mañjuśri's halo, the lotus flowers beneath the feet of the bodhisattvas and the lion, the flames surrounding Mañjuśri's mandorla and halo and the treatment of the trees are so many surprising stylistic features found neither in the paintings from cave 17, nor in the wall-paintings of the caves of the Dunhuang area dating from after the eleventh century. Nevertheless, the subject of this work could have been popular in Dunhuang and the surrounding region.

Plate 7
Bodhisattva carrying a vajra
Five Dynasties (10th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 50 x 25 threads per cm. H.48.7 cm; W.13.5 cm. EO.1189. **MS**

The figure depicted on this banner sways gently to his left, leaning his head to one side, and supports a five-pronged *vajra* vertically on his right hand. He could be a *vajrapāṇi*. Though the colours have retained their freshness, the white paint has cracked off and with it the outlines of his face, upper body, arms and legs. Details worthy of note are the pinkish-red ('peach') colour, the swirling movement of the lower part of the robe and the brownish-purple scarf backed or lined with green. These features should be compared with the robe of the right-hand Avalokiteśvara in Stein painting 5, dated 864 AD (Whitfield, 1, pl. 23). The scarves in these two works are not the same colours, but appear nevertheless very similar.

Setting aside its colours, the drawing of the lotus flower upon which the figure stands is exactly like the blossom at the foot of a standing image of Kṣitigarbha reproduced as plate 51 of this volume. The frieze, consisting of red and green lozenges decorated with floral motifs, is identical with what we find in plate 51; this is true even though the diamond shapes lean towards the right in this example, and to the left in the painting of Kṣitigarbha. In the notes to plates 38 and 40, we emphasise the fact that such inversions are commonplace in banners produced by the same workshop. The upper part of the painting above the canopy is decorated with festoons and blue and mauve flowers. We find exactly the same decoration in the banner referred to above. Both are, moreover, framed by a thin brown band. Finally, their dimensions are similar, at least in terms of width (13.5 cm and 14 cm for plate 51); there is a difference of 4.3 cm in their respective heights, which can probably be explained by the fact that the upper part incorporating the festoons seems to be damaged or mutilated when we compare it with plate 51. Such similarities can only be explained if we accept that the two paintings were indeed painted in the same workshop. On this basis, it seems that both works date from the same period.[5]

Plate 8
Standing bodhisattva
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 48 x 22 threads per cm. H.75.3 cm; W.16.8 cm. MG.17654. **PM**

The swaying movement of this rather thick-set bodhisattva, seen head-on, is particularly pronounced. He stands on a lotus blossom whose mauve petals are partly outlined in red. One of his hands is raised to the level of his chest, the other to the shoulder; together they make a gesture related to the *mudrā* of preaching the Law. Above the canopy, the upper frieze is made of blue lambrequins against a red background with a band of rosettes. The triangular headpiece is decorated with a single large red rosette.

Plate 9
Standing bodhisattva
Tang dynasty (8th-9th centuries). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 50 x 25 threads per cm (approx.). H.81.5 cm; W.18 cm. MG.17776. **PM**

It is impossible to identify the figure owing to the lack of an inscription in the cartouche located in the upper left. The figure stands on two lotus flowers with his body facing the viewer but with his head turned in a three-quarter pose. He holds an apparently transparent vase in his right hand. A finely worked metal ornament in the shape of a shell or net covers his hair at the back of the head (on the left side for the viewer). In this respect his coiffure resembles that of the bodhisattva placed in the middle of the right side of the *maṇḍala* reproduced in plate 80 of volume 1, thought to date from the second half of the eighth century. The modelling of the face and the lines are of superb quality. The colours have almost entirely disappeared, but the banner has retained its triangular headpiece with its roof-shaped mounting.

Plate 10
Standing bodhisattva
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 51 x 30 threads per cm. H.40.3 cm; W.13.5 cm. MG.17777. **MS**

An outstanding feature of this bodhisattva is his crown, which incorporates a central pear-shaped medallion or plaque on which a small buddha seated in meditation could have been depicted. In it, however, we can only make out a trace of brownish-purple colour – not enough to justify Akiyama's contention that it did once contain the image of a transformation buddha. Although the work is torn as well as damaged on the left side and in the lower part, the lines of the painting are very clear. The carefully applied colours are still fresh. It is inconceivable that the painter would have been content to represent a transformation buddha by a mere spot of colour, if such had been his intention. Rather, we are

dealing here with a gleam of light from the precious stone mounted in the medallion. The crescent moons which ornament the sides of the crown are rare. In plate 26, however, we find a comparable head-dress, whose central, similarly shaped medallion contains a small circle; its side ornaments also consist of crescent shapes.

The fold of the lips articulates a faint smile, while the face has an expression of gentleness. All the lines of the face and body are accentuated in red against the white complexion. The slightly swaying body contributes a certain sense of movement. The robe is made of a light, almost transparent material, vermilion and orange-red in colour, decorated with florets. This work may be compared with Stein painting 124 (Whitfield, 1, pl. 50 and pl. 335, where the author mentions a possible influence from the Khotan region).

Plate 11 and 12
Standing bodhisattvas. Paintings on silk
Plate 11. Tang dynasty (9th century). Warp and weft: 48 x 51 threads per cm. H.99.1 cm; W.28.2 cm. MG.17651. Plate 12. Five Dynasties (10th century). Warp and weft: 42 x 30 threads per cm. H.76 cm; W.25.5 cm. EO.1399(P.93). **MS**

Despite a number of petty differences – for instance, in the lotus flowers and the lower friezes – the two paintings are identical even in tiny details. Such a close similarity can be explained either in terms of carefully executed copies taken from the same model, or by the use of a particular process which is hard for us to identify. At any rate, its seems that the initial sketch was drawn in pale ink, after which the colours were applied, and, lastly, the forms and contours were emphasised in darker ink. Both sides of the upper part of the painting reproduced in plate 12 are damaged; moreover, the work shows signs of wear which has caused the colours to fade and the lines to become less clear. On the other hand, painting 11 is as new. This would suggest that its lack of mount does not result from the latter having somehow disappeared, but that it was never added. The costume and general appearance resemble those of plate 30, though the robe is grander here, as seen especially by the use of a red cloth with blue semi-circular motifs.

The dates given above are Akiyama's, according to whom the more recent date of plate 12 is justified by the fact that it is in certain respects less refined and less well executed, containing simplifications and more conventional aspects. All this is undeniable. We are nevertheless surprised that there should be such a difference in date for these two works which, after all, resemble each other so closely – indeed, it seems hardly likely.

Plate 13
Bodhisattva with a pink lotus
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 63 x 43 threads per cm. H.111.5 cm; W.28.2 cm. EO.1399 (P.149). **MS**

Although it has suffered considerable losses at the edges and in the lower part, this banner is a very fine work, both in terms of its pictorial quality and the richness of its decoration. The figure is an unidentified bodhisattva. His attribute, held in both hands, is a long-stemmed lotus ending in a large pink flower in full bloom and a blue bud. The physiognomy is given character by the eyes represented flush with the surface of the face, the delicate folding of the ears, carefully drawn in red, and the locks of hair curling over the forehead. His crown, robes and jewellery differ from what is usually encountered in representations of bodhisattvas on banners. The canopy is most remarkable, consisting of a hoop decorated with flaming jewels seen in perspective. Below, amidst unusually long cylindrical pendants, appears a curious element formed by two small pieces of wood arranged in a cross. A finely worked ball is suspended from this element. The upper frieze and the triangular headpiece are matchless in their magnificence.

A strip of dark red material has been sewn onto the sides of the banner, which are bordered with a narrow floral band in the same red and blue tones as the pelmet of the upper frieze. The triangular headpiece is mounted onto a dark green strip 2.5 cm wide, covered with floral motifs. This is folded at the top in order to provide a suspension loop.

Plate 14
Standing bodhisattva with a bowl of flowers
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 56 x 50 threads per cm. H.80.5 cm; W.27.7 cm. MG.17650. **PM**

The condition and freshness of this painting are remarkably good. The artist disposed of an extensive palette, as in plates 11 and 13, in particular for the beads, jade diadem and the scarves falling to the figure's knees.

The bodhisattva leans a little backwards. His head is encircled with a diadem embellished with precious stones and lotus flowers. His face, with an imperial, a moustache and prominent eyebrows, bears a close resemblance to the face of the bodhisattva reproduced in plate 11. Turning towards his right, he concentrates completely on his gesture of offering. This is immediately evident from the arms and hands raised to chest height, at either side of a wide space circumscribed by a sort of long ribbon which falls from the diadem down to his knees. He offers a bowl filled with flowers with his left hand, but the right hand is more significant, making the gesture of appeasement. It is a pity that the two cartouches are uninscribed.

Plate 15
Head of a bodhisattva
Tang dynasty (end of the 8th-first half of the 9th century). Painting on paper. H.24.5 cm; W.19.1 cm. EO.1214. **JPD**

This bodhisattva head with halo is most interesting for its white complexion highlighted in pink. The figure wears a diadem with red fleurons surmounted with

leaves, from which hang two tassels. The colours have been applied on a base of white mixed with silver. On the right of this damaged fragment we can make out the shaft of a long rod or pole, while on the left is a green decorative element, possibly a leaf. Comparing this work with another fragment kept in London, Stein painting 178* (Whitfield, 2, pl. 50 and fig. 83), R. Whitfield has suggested that both fragments must once have formed part of the same painting, which may have been a representation of a "Pure Land".

The Guimet fragment consists of two pieces of paper, the left part thicker than the right. Damage and creasing have produced serious cracks, resulting in the disappearance in places of colours and base. Judging by the type of paper and its thickness, R. Whitfield has proposed that the work was executed at the beginning of the ninth century at the latest. This argument seems to be totally sound, for, if we examine the different types of paper used for the manuscripts discovered at the same time as the paintings, we find that no paper serving as support for visual images seems to be earlier than the ninth century and that, for the most part, the papers appear to have been manufactured prior to the tenth century.

Plate 16
Standing bodhisattva
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 44 x 40 threads per cm. H.53 cm; W.17 cm. EO.1185. **DE**

The upper part of the banner is much damaged and has in fact partly disappeared. The bodhisattva turns towards the left and stands upon a large lotus pedestal. Dressed in a princely costume, his *paridhāna* is slightly hitched up, revealing his naked legs beneath. His small hands, pressed together, his feet and his ears are outlined in red. The fleshy mouth contrasts with his eyes, whose narrowness is further accentuated by the barely visible eyelid.

It is worth noting that this figure bears an astonishing resemblance to the bodhisattva represented in the banner Ch.xxiv.006 kept in New Delhi (*Serindia*, pl. 78). If we set aside the facial features, trifling details of clothing, colouring and the lower frieze, we find that the posture and costume (apart from a few slight folds) are exactly the same; similarly, the treatment of the limbs is identical in both, in particular the small, narrow hands and the position of the fingers. Furthermore, the lotus pedestals, which in these two paintings is larger than usual, are a perfect match. Evidently these two works have a common origin. Perhaps one is an exact and careful copy of the other, or maybe both were painted using the same model. It is also possible that they were both produced using a stencil or a "chalk model". Only further research in depth on the works themselves will clarify the matter.

This painting includes only one important difference. The lower frieze consists of two rows of tiles with floral motifs at the centre of each. The upper row is made up of lozenges, the lower one of squares, which gives an effect of a tier or step with an element of perspective.

Plate 17
Bodhisattva in monastic dress
Tang dynasty-Five Dynasties (9th-10th centuries). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 38 x 38 threads per cm. H.52 cm; W.19 cm. EO.1219. **DE**

This banner is of cruder manufacture than the preceding one. In it, a stocky bodhisattva of smaller size faces the viewer, standing on a lotus flower with a dark brown centre. Dressed in the monastic *kāṣāya*, he wears a crown decorated with lotus motifs resembling Vaiśravaṇa's in plate 74 of this volume. As Mme Nicolas-Vandier observed in her note to no. 146 of her catalogue, it evokes crowns of Iranian type. The figure's nose is unusually long, with a moustache above the rather narrow mouth. Except for the thumb, all the fingers of his raised right hand are bent; the fingers of his left hand are also bent, leaving the palm visible.

Plate 18
Bodhisattva with a pink lotus
Tang dynasty-Five Dynasties (9th-10th centuries). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 38 x 34 threads per cm. H.62.5 cm; W.19 cm. EO.1170. **DE. MS**

Judging by his general appearance and features – the slightly hooked nose, the pale, elongated eye and the heavy chin – this bodhisattva does not seem very 'Chinese'. He is, in fact, extremely Indianised, and is the only example in the Pelliot collection of a figure simultaneously represented in profile and from the back. As he walks towards the left, he tilts his upper body and hips forwards, which movement allows us to see not only his back but his right arm, bent upwards, holding a large pink lotus in his up-turned palm. His other arm is lowered in front of his body, while the hand catches hold of a fold of his scarf. There is a certain imbalance between the skilful treatment of the upper body and the less polished lower part, characterised by clumsily drawn feet and stiff lower folds in the garment.

Comparison of this painting with works in other collections shows that this banner, whose top and bottom have been cut, is not the only one of its kind. Bodhisattvas of this type are also found in London: one of these, Stein painting 120, is quite naïve (Whitfield, 1, pl. 55); two others are more elaborate than the Paris example (Stein painting 104; Whitfield, 1, pl. 49 and fig. 97). A further work, Stein painting 156/ Ch.i.002, kept in New Delhi, was judged by Waley to be a copy of the preceding one (*Serindia*, pl. 78).

It is worth noting that a figure in very much the same posture can be seen in cave 196, which dates to the end of the Tang period (*Bakkō*, 4, pl. 189). The relevant cartouche contains the name of the bodhisattva Mahāsthāmaprāpta. It is not certain, however, that it is his image represented in the painting here discussed.

Plate 19
Bodhisattva holding a lotus
Tang dynasty-Five Dynasties (9th-10th centuries). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 44 x 22 threads per cm. H.75 cm; W.19 cm. EO.1177*c*. **DE**

Unlike most of the compositions containing a single standing figure, the head of this bodhisattva is not painted in the middle of the silk, being depicted instead near the right edge. This is in keeping with the movement of the body, and results in a graceful posture similar to that seen in representations of court ladies painted either earlier or at the same period.

Turned towards the left, the bodhisattva appears to contemplate the lotus bud with pink and bluish-green petals which he elegantly clasps between the thumb and fore-finger of his raised left hand. He holds a plain-necked flask in his lowered right hand. Mme Nicolas-Vandier interpreted this as an image of Avalokiteśvara (*Bannières*, no. 60); although the painting lacks an inscription, this theory seems to have a reasonable basis.

Three borders placed one above the other are painted below a triangular headpiece with floral motifs. These, as well as the lower band giving a tiling effect, resemble those of banners EO.1177*a*, representing a bodhisattva (fig. 15), and EO.1177*b*, representing a deity (pl. 81).

Plate 20
Bodhisattva with a lotus
Tang dynasty (8th-9th centuries). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 43 x 31 threads per cm. H.56.2 cm; W.18.7 cm. EO.1398(P.203). **DE. MS**

It would seem that the piece of silk taffeta (10 x 17 cm) decorated with grasses and flowers, was added on to the upper part of the banner and was not included in the work in its original state. As is evident from the traces of a lateral border, this piece was narrower than the main body of the banner; it is, moreover, of a different weave (thread count: 58 x 58 threads per cm).

In spite of the wear and loss of parts of this painting of a bodhisattva, the colours are still very fresh. The figure is small and plump, with a narrow waist. Facing the viewer, he stands with his feet on a lotus of which only a single petal survives. His round and youthful face was formerly golden; he wears a moustache and an imperial. His right hand is raised to chest height, with the fingers bent to hold a long stem with one large leaf and a pink lotus flower in full bloom. His left hand, lowered in front of his body, lifts up a long garland of flowers attached to a green ribbon. The robe leaves most of his chest uncovered, resembling what we find in the following plate. The short green skirt wrapped tightly round his thighs and the short mantle or cape reaching to his elbows are very similar to some of the garments worn by the figure shown in plate 27. The white fringes of the robe (worn under the skirt), decorated with a pale red Greek fret, and the flower garland mentioned earlier are both rare in the art of Dunhuang and suggest a foreign influence. The painting, the next and plates 26 and 27 are all stylistically linked to one another and are assumed to have a common origin.

Plate 21
Bodhisattva with a lotus
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 50 x 42 threads per cm. H.66.5 cm; W.17 cm. MG.17653. **DE**

Similarly rounded, this very Indianised bodhisattva recalls the previous painting. He retains his original white complexion, on which the modelling is rendered with light touches of pink and pinkish-ochre, while the contours and the folds of the body are outlined in red. His blue hair frames a beardless, rather plump face, the eyes are quite particularly pale, the nose hooked, the mouth full and fleshy. Three-quarter turned towards his right, he holds between thumb and forefinger a long, leafy lotus stem with a pink flower just beginning to open. His other hand is lowered in front of his body, below the knot of his belt.

Above him appear the remains of a circular canopy, surmounted by a dome and three flaming jewels. A fragment of tiling can be seen in the lower part.

Plate 22
Bodhisattva with a red lotus
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on silk. H.79 cm; W.26.3 cm. EO.1399(P.92). **JPD**

Despite the differences in posture and gesture of the figures represented, this painting and those following display certain common features which suggest to us that the works date from around the same period.

The hooked nose and pale eyes of this bodhisattva are most unusual. His feet are supported by two lotus flowers; his left foot gives the impression of being lifted. He stands with his body turned towards the left, while his head turns to the right. Although static, he is thus given the appearance of movement. He holds the stem of a budding lotus in his left hand. Above him appears a canopy whose tassels are damaged; beneath, there is a frieze with tile motifs oriented towards the left and right. Two narrow borders edge the banner's sides. The cartouche is uninscribed.

Plates 23 and 24
Bodhisattvas with a jade ring
Tang dynasty (9th century). Paintings on silk. Plate 23: H.72 cm; W.25 cm. EO.1399(P.119). Plate 24: H.58 cm; W.17.7 cm. EO.1399(P.144). **JPD. MS**

These two banners have a feature in common, though they do not form a pair: the gestures of the two figures depicted in them are exactly symmetrical. The bodhisattva in plate 23 holds a ring in his right hand in precisely the same way as the bodhisattva of plate 24,

who holds it in his left hand. Similarly, the lowered left hand in plate 23 is in the same position as the right hand of the bodhisattva of plate 24. The jade ring (in the form of a broken circle in plate 24), worn over the thumb and held by the index finger, is one – in fact, according to the texts, it is the fortieth – of the multiple attributes held by thousand-armed, thousand-eyed Guanyin. This is, however, insufficient to support the proposal that it is Guanyin who is represented in these banners.

The bodhisattva of plate 23 turns his head slightly towards the left; he is characterised by a rather prominent, hooked nose with flaring nostrils. Perhaps the most distinctive element of his rich costume is his belt, fastened with a cabochon buckle and ornamented with square motifs resembling the friezes which decorate the lower edge of many banners, while the border of his robe with its floral motifs is also unusual. The canopy above the bodhisattva is damaged. The sides of the banner are decorated with geometric patterns.

The drawing of the face of the bodhisattva represented in plate 24 is very like that of plate 22, though the eyes are, in this case, black. There is no canopy in this painting, but the halo is surrounded by flames which flare up from its upper part. Unusually for these repetitive but quite carefully executed images, the feet of the bodhisattva are disproportionately large. Decorated with diagonal lines, the tiles that make up the lower frieze are set squarely, rather than leaning as is more commonly the case, and are decorated with diagonal lines.

Plate 25
Standing bodhisattva
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on silk. Total height: 68 cm. Principal composition: H.55.3 cm; W.17.5 cm. MG.17771. **JPD**

Unlike the preceding banners, this one appears to have retained its triangular headpiece. As Mme Nicolas-Vandier has already indicated, however, the colours used in this part are not found in the principal scene. The headpiece is separated from the bodhisattva's halo by a band of red-petalled florets and deep purple half-florets. The figure's blue eyes are half-shut. The colours of the main section have almost totally disappeared, with the exception of the outline of the folds in the skirt, highlighted in red, and some ornaments and jewellery which are also painted red, occasionally also green and blue. The central disc of the halo has retained its green colouring.

Plate 26
Bodhisattva with a lotus
Tang dynasty-Five Dynasties (9th-10th centuries). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 44 x 32 threads per cm. H.65.3 cm; W.19 cm. EO.1398(P.205). **PM. MS**

The figure's robe leaves his upper body uncovered, but in other respects it conforms to the standard model of the time. Nevertheless, certain details are of interest, in particular the red cape and the cone-shaped folds at the bottom of the robe. We shall discuss these further in the note to the following plate. The head-dress is the most interesting part of the costume, consisting of a finely worked crown ornamented with three medallions which may be compared with the one worn by the bodhisattva of plate 10. Like the latter, the central medallion is pear-shaped; it does not contain the purple gleam found in the other that has been interpreted by some as the trace of a transformation buddha. The medallions at either side of the central one each consist of a ball surmounted by a crescent containing a pointed drop-shape, possibly a flame. This motif corresponds more or less with the one ornamenting the crown in plate 10. Note the green halo ringed with a red line and a brown band, and the wavy strand of hair falling in front of the figure's right ear: these details will be discussed in the note to plate 27.

The painting is in poor condition; the silk is unravelling and torn, especially at the top and bottom.

Plate 27
Bodhisattva with an offering bowl
Tang dynasty (end of the 8th-first half of the 9th century). Painting on silk
Warp and weft: 44 x 32 threads per cm. H.67.5 cm; W.19 cm. MG.17652. **PM. MS**

The figure represented in this banner belongs to a type we call, for want of a better expression, 'Indianised', much like those reproduced in plates 20 and 21. With his chest largely uncovered, the bodhisattva is dressed in a beige or bistre robe lined with white, with green braid decorating the lower edge; the folds of the robe form cone shapes along the length of the lower leg (*cf.* Mme Nicolas-Vandier, *Bannières*, no. 178). A short green over-skirt is worn over the hips, just as in plate 20. As well as a long red scarf lined with green, the bodhisattva wears a sort of pale mauve mantle or cape, folded over at the shoulder and descending as far as the elbows. The lower part is decorated with lines. Identical garments can be seen worn by the figures in plates 20, 21 and 26. A sort of twisted cord hangs from the belt, decorated with red and blue stripes; described as a "Bayadère belt" by Mme Nicolas-Vandier, it is a most unusual detail. The jewels and necklace, the bracelets worn on the wrists and the medallion worn over the stomach also resemble what we find in the plates mentioned above. With a scrolling protuberance at the back, the head-dress is in some respects similar to those of plates 9 and 29.

It is more or less certain that both this painting and the banner reproduced in plate 20 were executed in the same workshop, if not by the same hand. This is apparent from numerous details found to be identical in the two paintings – for instance, the haloes, the wavy strands of hair in front of the ears, the colour, weave and width of the silk (the paintings are of different lengths merely owing to the fact that the bottom of this one is damaged). It is therefore difficult to agree with

Akiyama that this one, plate 27, dates to the end of the eighth century or to the first half of the ninth, and that plate 26 dates to the ninth-tenth centuries.

Plate 28
Bodhisattva with a flask
Five Dynasties (first half of the 10th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 40 x 26 threads per cm. H.145 cm; W.14 cm. EO.1226. **PM. MS**

The figure holds up a flask on the palm of his raised right hand, while making the gesture of appeasement with his left. The robe is of classic type, but the colour of the scarf – brown-green lined with blue – is quite unusual. His hair, which curls over the forehead, is dressed with a crown whose central ornament is of a rare design. He stands on not one but two lotus blossoms of different colours; while not exceptional, this feature is also quite rare. The upper decoration consists of a festoon, from which hang two rattles. The lower frieze contains a motif of palmettes reminiscent of plates 1 and 74.

The flask is known as one of the attributes of Avalokiteśvara. Though usually held in one of this bodhisattva's lowered hands, it is occasionally encountered on the palm of the hand, as is the case here and in plate 72 of volume 1. Is it justified on the basis of this detail alone, and in the absence of a transformation buddha, to interpret this figure as Avalokiteśvara as has been suggested by Mme Nicolas-Vandier (*Bannières*, no. 58)? The cartouche which would have clarified this question is uninscribed. There are, however, representations of Avalokiteśvara which, though without any of his characteristic attributes, are clearly identified as such by inscriptions.

The refinement and precision of the lines, the fine delineation of the face and hands, the harmony of the colours and the good condition of the work make this a painting of high quality.

Plates 29 and 30
Standing bodhisattvas
Tang dynasty. Paintings on silk. Warp and weft: 56 x 50 threads per cm. Plate 29: 9th century. H.62 cm; W.18.2 cm. EO.1398(P.195). Plate 30: 8th-9th centuries. H.50 cm; W.18 cm. EO.1398(P.200). **DE**

These works are well drawn, and resemble each other in terms of their style, dimensions, the type of cloth, their lower friezes and the black borders edging their sides, although both paintings are badly worn and have pieces missing, while that reproduced in plate 29 has undergone some clumsy restoration to its upper part. They stand out from the rest of the collection for two reasons. Firstly, they are characterised by a marked Indian influence, especially the bodhisattva on the right: this influence is evident in the smooth, soft lines, their plump faces (especially around the jaw), long, heavy-lidded eyes, slightly prominent noses and small, fleshy and sensual mouths. Secondly, these paintings use a distinctive palette consisting of warm tones; this is dominated by the vermilion of the skirts and scarves, itself harmonising with the yellow of the diadems and jewellery which stand out against the bare flesh. All these features mark these paintings as somewhat special.

Plate 29
The smooth-faced bodhisattva is naked from the waist up, and stands in the centre of a lotus in a three-quarter pose. Some of his wavy hair (in all likelihood originally blue) is gathered up in a chignon and bound with an elaborate diadem. This hair-style is related to those seen in plate 80 of volume 1. At the top of a double central medallion, a crescent can be seen surmounted by three balls; according to Mme Nicolas-Vandier, this motif is of Sasanian origin (*Bannières*, no. 140).The remainder of the bodhisattva's curly hair can be seen falling behind his shoulders at the back of his neck. His right hand, brought round in front of his chest, holds a lotus flower in full bloom, while the other hand makes the gesture of appeasement.

The remains of a garland of red flowers of rare design can be seen above the figure. The frieze at the bottom of the painting is made up of five squares, each with a central circle surrounded by four partly-effaced petals.

Plate 30
Turning in the opposite direction to the previous figure – that is to say, towards his right – this pale-eyed bodhisattva nonetheless resembles plate 29 in many respects. The diadem enclosing his tall chignon is made of multiple medallions, topped in the middle and at the two sides by the motif already encountered of a crescent surmounted with three balls. His right hand is brought round in front of his chest, while the other is turned backwards, displaying the palm. The basal frieze is the same as that of plate 29, except that it includes six squares.

Plate 31
Standing bodhisattva
Five Dynasties (10th century). Painting on silk. H.55.5 cm; W.18.7 cm. EO.1224. **JPD**

Though easily distinguished from the group of bodhisattvas reproduced in the following plates, this one does share some features with these: the position of the hands, the violet frill on top of the feet, and a festoon as in plates 34 and 35.

The bodhisattva's eyelids are clearly marked. He wears a heavy ring in his ear. His feet are placed on two lotus blossoms, one blue and the other carmine; these are only partly visible. The bottom of his *paridhāna* is lifted up, forming a characteristic folding of the material. We should note the extensive use of blue in this painting, employed for the rim of the halo, the cloak, the lotus in the diadem, the beads of the earring and necklace and for edging the skirt.

Plate 32
Bodhisattva wearing monastic robes
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on silk. Overall height: 195 cm. Main composition: H.76 cm; W.18 cm. EO.1414. See also fig. 1. **JPD**

This banner is complete, with its triangular headpiece, suspension loops, ribbons and weighting board. The borders of the triangle and the ribbons are decorated with little tufts. Like the four banners that follow, this one may have been produced with the aid of stencils. Painting EO.1399(P.120) is, moreover, an almost perfect replica of this one. All these banners constitute variations of a single model. The bodhisattvas are represented turning towards the left or right, and are dressed either in princely costume or patched monastic robes. The canopy above their heads is sometimes replaced by a cloud painted in five colours. All this suggests that these works were produced as a series.

If the function of these banners is quite well understood, the same cannot be said regarding their origin or the evolution of their mounting. According to the *Zhiguan fuxing hongjue*, compiled by Zhanran (711-782 AD), these banners signalled the virtues of the buddha and bodhisattvas, much as the standards of an army identified its generals (*Taishō*, 1912, p. 189c). It seems, however, that initially the banners bore no images, since one could not offer these 'divinities' their own likeness (*cf.* "Ban", *Hōbōgirin*, v. 1, p. 49 *sq*). This is the reason why the banners depicted in the wall-paintings of the Mogao caves include only geometric designs. These banners could be attached to the top of *stūpa*s, in memory of the legend of the emperor Aśoka, and also to poles, as witnessed by several mural and portable paintings, such as those carried by the bodhisattva Yinlu. Banners were also hung from pillars or from the ceiling inside places of worship. The offering of banners is recommended, with the particular object of prolonging life. Several texts amongst the Dunhuang manuscripts mention the presence of banners during ceremonies, as well as the manufacture of images, paintings or sculptures, and the copying or reading of sūtras. These works, such as Pelliot 3541 or *kun* 76, also mention the brilliant colours of the banners, constructed of several pieces of silk, as they fluttered in the breeze.

Succeeding other types of banner, including the swallow-tailed form so often represented in the caves from the sixth to seventh centuries, a different genre of banner appeared, possibly during the eighth century, on which were represented divinities, buddhas and bodhisattvas. Some of these were anonymous, others clearly identified, such as Avalokiteśvara and Kṣitigarbha. These banners are further characterised by a new type of mount, which is illustrated in plates 32 to 34. As has been observed by R. Jéra-Bezard and M. Maillard,[6] the triangular headpiece does not have to be made of the same fabric as the principal composition. The latter is stretched by two rods which serve as stiffeners at the top and bottom. A ribbon, fixed to the upper rod, hangs down at either side of the main composition. The lower part is lengthened by three or four ribbons (sometimes only two for the small hemp cloth banners). A small painted wooden board, serving as a weight, is attached at the bottom of these ribbons in order to prevent the banner from flapping and tearing in the wind.

Plate 33
Bodhisattva wearing monastic robes
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on silk. Overall height: 186 cm. Height of the painted area and triangle: 83 cm; W.18 cm. MG.22797. **JPD**

The bodhisattva stands upon two lotus blossoms, one red and the other blue. The frills above the feet are absent in this case. The movement established by the patchwork of the *kāśāya* draped over the shoulders is rather stiff. The hands are joined together, the fingers interlocking. Nonetheless, we observe here the same facial expression as in plate 32. The figure is surmounted by a cloud of three colours – vermilion, green and white – comparable to what we see in the next two plates, though here it supports three flaming jewels. These jewels recall those that decorate most of the canopies seen in the banners; see, for instance, plate 36. Their presence is hardly surprising, since we consider the coloured clouds to be substitutes for canopies. The banner is mounted and includes a painted, trapezoidal board acting as a counterweight (see *Bannières*, pl. 150 for a full reproduction).

Plates 34, 35 and 36
Standing bodhisattvas
Tang dynasty (9th century). Paintings on silk. Overall height: 210.4 cm. Plate 34: Painted area: H.70 cm. W.17.3 cm. Tokyo National Museum. TA.159. Plate 35: Painted area: H.81.4 cm. W.17 cm. EO.1399(P.112). Plate 36: Painted area: H.71 cm; W.17.4 cm. MG.17769. See also fig. 2 for banner 34. **JPD**

These three banners, from the same series as the one described in plate 32, resemble each other closely. In particular, those shown in plates 34 and 35 are copies of the same model, and are distinguished only by the different colours used for the halo, lotus, garments and scarves, jewels and clouds. There are, besides, minute variations of form, for example in the number and arrangement of the pendants in the head-dress, or the number of folds in some parts of the robe. Both upper and lower friezes as well as the triangular headpieces of these two works are exactly the same. The banner in plate 36 is closely linked to the other two but shows further variations, especially in the canopy, while the decoration of the upper part is totally different. Its upper triangle and lower frieze are missing. The mounting of the banner reproduced in plate 34 is preserved complete; it is worth noting that the side streamers are decorated with beige tufts at the bottom, as is the stiffening rod to which is attached the lower tail, cut into three ribbons.

Plate 37
Two standing bodhisattvas
Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Painting on hemp cloth. H.164 cm; W.133 cm. Tokyo National Museum. TA.160. **MS**

Though formerly part of the Pelliot collection of Dunhuang material, this painting was presented by the Musée Guimet to the Tokyo National Museum in 1957, together with paintings 34 and 35. Accordingly, some of Akiyama's descriptive information has been borrowed from the Japanese edition. This painting actually consists of two pieces of hemp cloth, 52.3 cm and 54 cm wide respectively. A border of the same material measuring 12.7 cm wide has been added to the sides and top of this work. This border does not, in fact, act as a frame, for the flowers and foliage ornamenting the background extend into it along the sides. The structure of the painting is visible in the plate given here, but is even clearer in an older photograph published by Mme Nicolas-Vandier (*Bannières*, pl. 180). The painting was hung by means of ribbons of hemp cloth, of which one on the right still survives. The general style of this painting, as well as the scarves which roll up slightly at their ends are reminiscent of plates 38, 39 and 41. The gesture made by the figure on the right is similar to that of plate 39. The execution of the work under discussion here is, however, more refined. The comparison made by Akiyama between this work and banner 28 seems groundless to us.

The painting is interesting for several reasons. It includes two figures depicted side by side; a more usual format would have seen each bodhisattva figuring on a separate banner, painted by the same artist, who might have introduced small variations as is commonplace with serial productions. Without attributes or distinctive characteristics, their faces three-quarter turned in the same direction, the figures do not form a pair such as, for instance, the two images of Avalokiteśvara represented in Stein painting 3 (Whitfield, 1, pl. 24). They seem rather to be bodhisattvas of offering or of decoration, as is so often the case with our banners. The widths of the two pieces of hemp cloth are the same as in the majority of paintings on hemp, *i.e.* between 50 and 53 cm.

In the lower part of the painting, six figures – three men on the left and three women on the right – can be seen kneeling at either side of a large cartouche, which, like all the cartouches in this work, is uninscribed. The two principal donors are nearest the centre and present flower offerings; each of the secondary figures holds a bud between his or her joined hands. We should note that there are hardly any paintings offered to minor bodhisattvas as seems to be the case here. One would have thought that the benefit of such an offering was perhaps slight. For this reason, we cannot exclude the possibility that both the bodhisattvas represented here are (or at least were, in the intention of the artist) images of Avalokiteśvara.

Akiyama has pointed out the barely visible trace of a drawing of a canopy in the left-hand cartouche, level with the bodhisattva's forehead. The outline of one of the petals of the lotus blossom on which the left-hand bodhisattva stands extends into the central cartouche. The painting contains further anomalies, which indicate that the painter changed the painting's design, or that earlier sketches were scratched out, at least in the left half of the work.

Plates 38, 39 and 40
Standing bodhisattvas
Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Paintings on hemp cloth. Plate 38: Overall height: 106 cm. Painted area: H.51 cm. W.17 cm. MG.17667. Plate 39: Overall height: 109 cm. Painted area: H.51.4 cm. W.16.5 cm. MG.17680. Plate 40: Overall height: 107.5 cm. Painted area: H.51 cm; W.17 cm. MG.17668. **MS**

It is not uncommon to be able to attribute paintings and banners to a particular workshop. This appears to be the case with these three banners, which we have therefore grouped together. The banners in plates 38 and 39 are painted on the same type of hemp cloth, with 16 warp and 17 weft threads per cm. The support for the banner in plate 40 is rather more coarse, with a thread count of 15 x 12 threads per cm.

Despite a few differences to which we shall return, the dimensions of these banners, their brown cloth mounts and the type of loop attached to the apex of each triangular headpiece are features which betray their common origin. The decoration of the headpieces, the framing lines, the friezes at the top of the main compositions, the yellow cartouches and the lower friezes of coloured lozenges with a much-simplified four-petalled flower motif are also evidence of serial production from a single model. The lozenges lean to the left (plates 39 and 40) and the right (plate 38) for no apparent reason.

In plate 38, the bodhisattva holds a pink lotus blossom in his left hand, and wears a robe which covers the upper body. This, according to Waley, is a robe of a Chinese type, as opposed to the Indian version which leaves the upper body uncovered. The *verso* of Stein painting 152, kept in the British Museum, is very similar to this work, though it is inverted: the figure turns towards the left, the flower is held in the right hand, the cartouche is located on the right edge, and the lower frieze is angled towards the left (Whitfield, 2, fig. 67). The figure represented in plate 39, also standing in three-quarter pose and turning to the left, bears a close resemblance to Stein painting 152 but does not hold a flower. The bodhisattva of plate 40 is dressed in the Indian style, and stands in a three-quarter pose turned towards the left. This figure is very similar to another bodhisattva, Stein painting 153, also kept in London (Whitfield, 2, fig. 65). The latter, however, is once again inverted: the figure turns to the right, and the lozenges of the lower frieze are angled towards the right. Waley surmised that all these banners represent Avalokiteśvara, but there seems to us to be no justification for this identification. We would rather interpret them as worshipping bodhisattvas or as attendants with no particular per-

sonality, who were intended to accompany paintings of buddhas or great bodhisattvas such as Avalokiteśvara when not already incorporated into the main image. This would explain why these banners seem to form pairs, with one turning to the left and the other to the right. We suggest that banner 40 and Stein painting 153, and Stein painting 152 and plate 38 constitute such pairs, and would have flanked a central painting on the right and left respectively.

Similar banners produced in the same workshop are kept in Delhi – for instance, Stein painting 504/Ch.liv.009, whose dimensions are very close to those of Stein painting 152 – but these have never been photographed. The iconographic interest of these paintings is slight. The simplified lines and the limited palette suggest that these works were produced in great number and at low cost. These banners and their original mounts are in excellent condition, as if they had never been used.

Plate 41
Yuezang (Candragarbha)
Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Painting on paper. Chain-lines: 5 per cm. H.63.5 cm; W.31.8 cm. MG.17696. **DE**

Identified in the large cartouche at his left, which reads "Homage to the bodhisattva Yuezang", the bodhisattva "Moon receptacle" or "Moon womb" represented in this painting and the one following does not seem to be mentioned in the texts. His name does appear occasionally, however, near the top of representations of thousand-armed, thousand-eyed Guanyin, in which he is paired with Rizang, "Sun receptacle". There are two instances of these two deities, one in the Musée Guimet (volume 1, plate 96) and the other in New Delhi (Stein painting 536). They are found in the same location in other paintings depicting this subject, but are called Yueguang, "Moonlight", and Riguang, "Sunlight", two bodhisattvas who act as witnesses in the sūtras dedicated to thousand-armed, thousand-eyed Guanyin. These bodhisattvas have no particular individuality, and do not seem ever to have been the object of a cult. We can do no more than simply note the inscription in praise of a bodhisattva who is, to the best of our knowledge, of no importance. Fly-spotting indicates that the painting was displayed. The lower part of the work is badly mutilated.

The bodhisattva Yuezang is of rather stocky build; he turns to the left and holds a vase in his raised right hand. The transparent vase allows us to see his chubby fingers through its base. From the vase emerge two leaves and a single lotus blossom surmounted by a flame. In his lowered left hand he holds a long-necked flask. In many respects, he resembles the painting of *The bodhisattva who prolongs life*, illustrated in plate 63 of volume 1, particularly in his general bearing, his costume and the colours. This painting seems to have been produced by the same workshop as the depiction of *Mañjuśri visiting Vimalakirti* kept in London, Stein painting 31* (Whitfield, 2, pl. 53). The long scarf coiled up at the ends brings to mind the banners shown in plates 38 and 39 of this volume.

Plate 42
Yuezang (Candragarbha)
Five Dynasties (10th century). Painting on hemp cloth (*recto verso*). Warp and weft: 14 x 17 threads per cm. Overall height: 138 cm. Painted area: H.87 cm; W.17.6 cm. EO.3645. **DE**

This is another representation of the bodhisattva Candragarbha, this time on hemp cloth rather than paper. The cloth used for the main composition is not the same as that from which the edging pieces for the sides and bottom are cut (warp and weft: approximately 14 x 10 threads per cm). The side strips do not appear on the *recto*. The lower strip, added on to the base of the painting, is divided lengthways into two pieces. Two pieces are folded over and sewn onto the top of the headpiece, along with a suspension loop. Part of a stiffening rod remains in the seam.

On the *recto*, Yuezang stands on a lotus with his hands joined, turning to his left. A flower placed over his head acts as a canopy. An inscription appears in the cartouche on the upper right: "Homage to the bodhisattva Yuezang". The *verso* represents the same subject, inverted and without any inscription. A banner depicting Guanyin, kept in the British Museum (Stein painting 151; Whitfield, 2, fig. 72) must have been produced by the same workshop, if not by the same hand.

Plate 43
Standing bodhisattva
Five Dynasties (10th century). Painting on hemp cloth (*recto verso*). Warp and weft: 15 x 9 threads per cm. Overall dimensions: H.169 cm; W.36 cm. Painted area: H.87 cm; W.23.5 cm. MG.17682. **PM**

This banner has no headpiece, but instead is bordered at the top by a strip of off-white, slightly shiny cloth measuring 4.5 cm wide (warp and weft: 38 x 24 threads per cm). A suspension loop made of the same cloth remains attached to the border, which extends considerably at either side of the painting in order to allow for the fixing of side streamers (missing). A piece of hemp cloth partially cut in two to make tail streamers is attached to the base of the banner. The double seam at the bottom of this must have held a weighting board, now gone. The *verso* has been covered up for conservation reasons, and is no longer visible. There are good grounds to believe that the figure depicted on the *verso* is exactly the same as that represented on the *recto*.

The bodhisattva's chest turns slightly towards the right, while his head turns to the left. Though the figure is of classical type, unusual emphasis is given to the face, eyes and mouth. His square chin does not conform to the standard canon. The diadem, necklace, bracelets and belt resemble those of plate 42, but the hands and feet show that the two paintings are not by the same hand.

Plate 44
Standing bodhisattva
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on hemp cloth (*recto verso*). Warp and weft: 8 x 8 threads per cm. Overall dimensions: H.124 cm; W.35 cm. Painted area: H.90 cm; W.24 cm. EO.3659. **PM**

Though in very poor condition, this banner does at least retain its headpiece, in which the incomplete outline of a buddha is clearly visible despite losses. A strip of hemp cloth 6 cm wide with a double suspension loop borders the upper edges of the headpiece. A fragment of the mount survives at the base of the composition, sewn around a broken stiffening rod. The bodhisattva is of a common model, with the feet clumsily placed wide apart; Akiyama guesses that this coarsely executed work was produced with a reed pen. Of all the many banners on hemp cloth of this type in the collection, EO.3646 (fig. 20-21) bears the closest resemblance to this one. The painting on the *verso* corresponds exactly with the depiction on the *recto*.

Plate 45
Standing bodhisattva
Five Dynasties (10th century). Painting on hemp cloth (*recto verso*). Warp and weft: 12 x 9 threads per cm. Overall dimensions: H.152 cm; W.33 cm. Painted area: H.62 cm; W.16 cm. MG.17788. **PM**

The conservation of this double-sided banner and its mounting on card has rendered the *verso* invisible. Unlike what we find in a great number of the banners, the triangular headpiece is not separated from the body of the banner by a border or frieze. It is decorated with a floral motif. The banner retains its suspension loop and its two reinforcing strips 6 cm wide. The lower part of the painting presents characteristics identical with features of plate 43.

Unlike the preceding bodhisattva, the feet, hands and head of this one all face in the same direction. His chest leans towards the right. The arch of his eyebrows is represented with a strong line. His halo resembles that of plate 39. If we set these details to one side, then this banner departs little from the pattern of the preceding banners. The treatment of the costume, with its dominant green, follows a well-established tradition and contrasts with those banners of the same type dominated by ochres and browns.

This banner bears a close resemblance to Stein painting 156, and doubtless forms part of the same series (Whitfield, 2, pl. 42 and fig. 60).

Plate 46
Standing bodhisattva (detail of a long banner)
Five Dynasties (10th century). Painting on blue silk (*recto verso*). Total H.580 cm. Width of upper section: 64 cm. Width of lower section: 32.9 cm and 30.9 cm. EO.3647.

See also fig. 24. **DE. JPD**

The banner consists of a broad width of dark blue silk (warp and weft: 34 to 36 x 20 to 26 threads per cm [7]). A large bodhisattva is depicted in yellow over the whole width of the cloth. Squarely facing the viewer, he stands on a lotus with his hands joined together. Beneath him the silk is cut up the middle; both pieces thus produced are hemmed, like banners. Eight smaller bodhisattvas with pronounced features are represented in two rows in this split section. These bodhisattvas stand with their hands pressed together; they turn towards each other in three-quarter pose, thus forming pairs. Each pair is separated by two cartouches placed side-by-side, level with their heads. This design is reproduced on the *verso*, which clearly indicates that the banner was intended to be seen from both sides.

R. Whitfield has suggested that two banner sections of very similar workmanship and of more or less the same width, kept in the British Museum, belong to a single work which would include EO.3647 as its upper part (Stein paintings 214(1) and 214 (2); Whitfield, 2, pl. 34, 35 and fig. 49 and 50). According to his hypothesis, another long piece from the Musée Guimet (reproduced as plate 47) also belongs to this single work. Although beguiling, this theory seems to us uncertain. Not only is the background of the London paintings darker, but they do not appear to be painted at all on the reverse. On the other hand, a long banner (323 cm) consisting of bodhisattvas painted against a blue ground, formerly part of the Otani collection and now in the National Museum of Seoul,[8] would seem to complete Stein painting 214(1). We should also mention Stein painting 215 as another example of the genre, though in this case the very poor condition of the work prevents us from clearly seeing what is represented.

According to Whitfield, who bases his argument on a passage from the *Bhaiṣajyaguru-sūtra*,[9] this type of long banner may be linked with the cult of the bodhisattva "Master of remedies". The Chinese translations of the sūtra [10] mention the preparation of forty-nine foot long banners which were to be hung by devotees. This hypothesis is confirmed by an inscription in Stein painting 246 (Whitfield, 2, fig. 47), dated 956 AD, which informs us that the donor commissioned just such a banner. This was then suspended from a dragon-shaped hook, from which it floated like a bird in flight. It seems, however, unwise to use this information to support suggestions pertaining to the exact measurements of the banners. When complete, they must have been between 12.25 and 15 metres long, depending on the length of the unit of measurement used (at that time the foot was not a fixed unit). It is surely preferable to regard the prescribed forty-nine feet as symbolic. Indeed, the various translations of the *Bhaiṣajyaguru-sūtra* are in agreement that the sūtra must be read forty-nine times, that the faithful should build a *stūpa* comprising seven levels with seven images on each (that is, forty-nine images), and that forty-nine lamps should be lit for a period of forty-nine days.

Plate 47
Standing bodhisattva (detail)
Five Dynasties (10th century). Painting on blue silk (*recto verso*). Overall height: 800 cm; w.29.5 cm. EO.3648. **DE**

This work may well be the left-hand section of a much larger banner similar to the preceding one, made from half a width of dark blue silk taffeta. The right side is hemmed along its entire length.[11] The resemblance between the two is indeed striking. The postures of the bodhisattvas (seven in EO.3648) are exactly the same in both – three-quarter turned towards the right, their hands joined together. Their costumes are also identical. Doubtless a substitute for gold, the yellow paint is still vibrant. The excellent condition of the work allows us to imagine the effect produced by this impressive banner.

Plate 48
Standing bodhisattva
Tang dynasty (9th century). Gold on blue paper. H.26.5 cm; w.12.5 cm. EO.1228. **DE**

Drawn in gold on dark blue paper, this elegant, round-faced bodhisattva makes the gesture of fearlessness with his right hand. His head is encircled by a flaming halo. Despite the cracks, the extensive retouching in the lower right and the fact that the gold has in some places disappeared, the ease and vigour of the lines are nevertheless very striking.

There are a few works in the collections of manuscripts from Dunhuang which were executed using the same technique on blue paper. These are two fragments of unidentified sūtras in the Stein collection, S.5720, and two superb copies of the *Lotus Sūtra*, Pelliot chinois 4511 (the section entitled the *Sūtra of Guanyin*) and Pelliot chinois 4512. Although the height of the sheet of paper used here is a little greater than that of these manuscripts, the hypothesis put forward by Mme Nicolas-Vandier (no. 183) and R. Whitfield remains viable. Both suggested that this work might be a frontispiece detached from a sūtra. It is not impossible that a small transformation buddha formerly figured in the unusually tall chignon of the bodhisattva, now partly worn away. The bodhisattva would then of course be Guanyin, and the painting – though this is, of course, mere speculation – might therefore be the frontispiece of the *Sūtra of Guanyin*, the twenty-fifth chapter of the *Lotus Sūtra* (*Taishō*, 262) which, entirely devoted to this bodhisattva, became so popular that it was the subject of numerous independent copies.

Plate 49
Two seated bodhisattvas
Tang dynasty (9th century). Paintings on silk, Warp and weft: 42 x 42 thread per cm. A: H.12.5 cm; w.14.5 cm. EO.1211a. B: H.14 cm; w.13.5 cm. EO.1211b. **MS**

The figures are each seated on a lotus blossom, with the right foot visible. Each has a halo and mandorla, the oval halo in plate 49A shaped almost like a horse-shoe. Both wear tiaras with three triangular peaks, of a type unknown in the other paintings but faintly reminiscent of those worn by the figures seated on the upper right and in the middle of the lower row of the *maṇḍala* reproduced in plate 80 of volume 1. The pink bodhisattva on the left holds a white disc surmounted by a flaming jewel between his hands. The pale ochre figure on the right grasps a sort of club surmounted by an unidentified object in his right hand, while raising the index finger of his left hand. Their diadems, the uncovered upper part of the body and their transparent skirts (which also echo those of the bodhisattvas of plate 80 mentioned above) all betray a foreign influence.

It is difficult to identify these figures. Questioned on the subject by Akiyama, Tanaka Kimiaki has suggested that they form part of the group of sixteen bodhisattvas who, divided into groups of four, surround the buddhas of the four directions of the Diamond-world *maṇḍala*. He proposes that 49A be identified as Vajratejas, the bodhisattva Vajra-light (of the sun), yellow-coloured, who holds the solar disc in his hands. The second figure would be Vajraketu, the bodhisattva Vajra-comet, green, who holds a banner on which is depicted the philosophers' stone.[12] Though frail, Tanaka's theory is nevertheless seductive. The two paintings are, perhaps, all that remains of a series of related images representing the sixteen bodhisattvas and other deities of the *maṇḍala*.

Plate 50
Fragment of a paper crown
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th cent.). Painting on paper. H.28.7 cm; w.54 cm. MG.17781. **MS**

The painting is executed on two sheets of paper, 46 cm and 8 cm wide respectively. Their upper part is cut out. The light beige paper is thick and irregular, with wide chain-lines, and, as such, is characteristic of the tenth century.

The ink drawing, highlighted in colour and cut out, is a paper imitation of the "five Buddha" crown or tiara, known as the *wufobaoguan*, according to the model of the Diamond-world *maṇḍala*. Its length corresponds with the circumference of the head. Two pieces attached to each end probably enabled the crown to be worn by an officiant. The central figure is Vairocana. Also crowned with a five-pointed tiara, his hands are linked in *dhyāna-mūdra*. The four other buddhas are seated in meditation, with their hands concealed beneath their robes. This is an unusual representation. The five buddhas are sometimes arranged in a row along the crown, with the central depiction of Vairocana rather larger than the others, as on the paper crown kept in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, P.4518(7). They are, however, most frequently represented in the form of a quincunx on the central panel. The arrangement adopted here seems rare, if not exceptional. The dispar-

ity between the costumes and postures is particularly striking. Usually all five buddhas are depicted either in meditation, with neither attribute nor *mūdra*, like the four secondary buddhas represented here, or individualised in the same way as Vairocana.

Akiyama mentions a problem raised by Tanaka Kimiaki in the Japanese version of this book. According to the latter, Vairocana's *mūdra* here is called the *fajieding yin*, and is characteristic of representations of Vairocana in the Womb-world *maṇḍala*. It is not the "fist of knowledge" *mūdra*, the *zhiquan yin* (left fist enclosing the index finger of the right hand) proper to Vairocana in the Diamond-world *maṇḍala*. While perfectly true, these theoretical considerations seem pointless to us, since they tend to be contradicted by the facts.

Plate 51
The bodhisattva Dizang (Kṣitigarbha)
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 48 x 26 threads per cm. H.53 cm; W.14 cm. EO.1186. **DE. MS**

In an Indian Buddhist context, the name "Kṣitigarbha"[13] refers to a bodhisattva quite devoid of personality. The belief in his salvific powers first appears in Central Asian apocrypha, translated into Chinese at various periods between the fifth and ninth centuries. The most important of these texts are the *Sūtra of the Ten Wheels* (T.410) and the *Fundamental Vow of the Bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha* (T.412). It was the Sanlun school of the "three treatises" which contributed most to the blossoming of faith in this bodhisattva – a faith which was to raise Kṣitigarbha almost to the level of Avalokiteśvara and Maitreya. He became the object of great devotion during the ninth century and, most especially, during the tenth century, when his sphere of activity had come to be closely linked with the hells and the welfare of the dead.

With the exception of the Womb-world *maṇḍala*, in which he appears as a bodhisattva in princely dress, and some wood-block prints such as Pelliot chinois 4514(5), dating to the tenth century, Kṣitigarbha is always described and represented as a monk. Thus we find him, shaven-headed and standing, in several banners of this collection. This one, apparently the earliest, dates from the ninth century. None of these banners contain dedicatory or votive inscriptions. In fact, although already considered important at this time, he does not appear to have been the object of personal devotion before the tenth century. He is the only bodhisattva to wear monastic costume. We will also encounter another type of representation – that of Kṣitigarbha wearing a cloth over his head – which is examined below (see plate 60 *sq.*).

In the tenth century banners he generally carries a precious jewel as his attribute which we will discuss in the note to plate 60. In these works, however, unlike later ones where it is ubiquitous, he never carries the *khakkhara*, the staff symbolising the monastic state.

This painting is the principal part of a banner which has lost its headpiece. The shaven-headed bodhisattva is represented standing, dressed in a *kāṣāya* (to which we shall return); he stands in three-quarter pose, turning towards the left as if walking. In his right hand he holds the jewel, circled with flames. Rising above and behind the halo is a cloud shaped like the 'mushroom of immortality', surmounted on each side by a flower and two leaves. His left hand is brought round in front of his chest. As we have already remarked, the lotus blossom, the decoration of the upper part and the lower frieze suggest that both this banner and that of a bodhisattva holding a *vajra* (plate 7) were produced in the same workshop.

Plate 52
The bodhisattva Dizang (Kṣitigarbha)
Five Dynasties (10th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 54 x 50 threads per cm. H.72.5 cm; W.16.5 cm. MG.17768. **DE**

Unlike the previous depiction, Dizang, here with a relatively long face, wears neither the bracelets nor necklace typical of a bodhisattva. Squarely facing the viewer, he makes the gesture of appeasement with his right hand, while his left, brought round in front of his chest, holds the flaming jewel. The earlobes, hands and feet are partly drawn in red, the dominant colour of the whole painting. The edges are ornamented with grey-blue lozenges. What little remains of the headpiece, sewn onto the main body of the banner, is embroidered with a floral decoration.

No inscription appears in the cartouche located on the left edge of the painting. The tile motif seen at the bottom resembles that of the preceding banner, as well as plates 7, 51 and 80.

Plate 53
The bodhisattva Dizang (Kṣitigarbha)
Tang dynasty-Five Dynasties (end of the 9th-first half of the 10th century).
Painting on silk.Warp and weft: 42 x 28 threads per cm. H.65 cm; W.18 cm. EO.1398(P.198). **DE**

Once again, this is the main body of a banner whose triangular headpiece is missing. The red edges decorated with green triangles give a precious aspect to the work. The bodhisattva Dizang, identified as such by the cartouche at the upper left, stands on two lotus blossoms of different colours. His right hand makes the gesture of appeasement, while the other is brought round in front of his waist, with the palm open, just as in the preceding plate, though here the jewel is absent. The figure wears a *kaṣāya* like those of plates 51, 54 and 55; it also resembles those of plate 60 *sq.*, in which he is seated, with his head covered. In most of these paintings, the traditional monastic robe is made of a greyish material covered with small black lines like ripples (barely visible in this plate), giving the impression that the robe is light and slightly creased. The cloth is decorated with small areas of colour – in this case, orange-red and pale green. The black bands, which effectively divide the robe

into different sectors, and whose arrangement and number obey particular rules, are the essential characteristic of the *kāṣāya*. Usually, as here, a part of the *kāṣāya* is attached to a cord which lifts it up towards the left shoulder. This makes the lining of the *kāṣāya* visible – in this case it is red.

A common decorative motif is the white scarf, which hangs down below the *kāṣāya* to rest on the lotus (see also plates 33 sq.). This stereotyped motif was inherited from representations of figures dressed as bodhisattvas. There is no reason for the appearance of the scarf in this depiction of a figure wearing a monk's habit. It does not appear in the other depictions on banners of standing Kṣitigarbha.

Plate 54
The bodhisattva Dizang (Kṣitigarbha)
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on silk. H.83 cm; W.18.1 cm. Tokyo National Museum. TA.158. **MS**

Presented by the Musée Guimet to the Tokyo National Museum, this beautiful banner of Kṣitigarbha is of a type well represented in the collection. The shaven-headed bodhisattva wears a grey *kāṣāya*, streaked with black ripples and decorated with small areas of red and green. His right hand makes an unusual gesture – a closed fist – level with his shoulder. Apparently downward-looking, the gentle face contrasts sharply with the severe expression of the bodhisattva of plate 53. The decoration of the upper part of the banner, the headpiece as well as the lower frieze composed of multi-coloured tiles, are almost identical with those of plate 33. The canopy resembles that of the next plate. According to Akiyama, an X-ray photograph has shown traces of gold lines in between the ink outlines of the canopy.

Plate 55
The bodhisattva Dizang (Kṣitigarbha)
Tang dynasty-Five Dynasties (10th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 40 x 28 to 32 threads per cm. Overall dimensions: H.194 cm; W.25 cm. Composition: H.72 cm; W.16.8 cm. MG.22798. **MS**

Stylistically similar to the preceding painting, this banner retains the whole of its original mount. A stiffening rod at the base of the headpiece is held in place by two seams. The headpiece is made of the same cloth as the main body of the banner. Two bands of damask twill 3.6 cm wide are sewn onto the headpiece. A double suspension loop is attached to the apex of the triangle, one made of thread, the other of cloth. Two taffeta ribbons, 81 cm and 83 cm long, frame the sides of the painting. A piece of taffeta decorated with lozenges added to the upper part of one of the ribbons is evidence of period restoration work. The lower ends of the ribbons are trimmed with tufts. Four ribbons cut from the same material as the side streamers are attached to the lower part of the painting by means of a double seam enclosing another stiffening rod. A small, painted wooden board, decorated with flowers, hangs down from these ribbons.[14]

The figure's right hand forms the *vitarka-mudrā* in front of his chest, while his left, level with his shoulder, makes a gesture similar to that of Kṣitigarbha in the preceding plate. The figures represented in these two banners thus make the same gesture but in mirror reverse. Their lotus blossom supports differ from each other, but their bracelets, necklaces, haloes and canopies are comparable. The face of the bodhisattva is not so finely executed as in plate 54, but is without doubt in the same style. The decoration of the upper frieze, complete with rattles, resembles those of plates 78 and 79. The same is true for the lower frieze of coloured lozenges. It is difficult to analyse the motifs in the headpiece owing to its worn state. In conclusion, banners 78, 79, 54 and even 33 are remarkably similar to this one, in particular plate 54. Now, since all these other banners are judged to date to the ninth century, it is quite impossible that this one dates to the tenth century, as has been proposed by Akiyama in his plate heading in the Japanese edition. Even his more prudent suggestion in the caption, that the work may date from the end of the ninth century or the beginning of the tenth century, is unacceptable.

Plate 56
The bodhisattva Dizang (Kṣitigarbha)
Tang dynasty (second half of the 9th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 50 x 40 threads per cm. H.67.5 cm; W.19 cm. EO.1168. **DE**

In this case, unlike the preceding banners, the bodhisattva does not wear the banded *kāṣāya* but a red cape over a green robe with a brown border. Such a type of dress also occurs in plate 58 and Stein painting 119 (Whitfield, 1, fig. 19). Although none of these bear any inscriptions, we can be fairly certain of the identification owing to the fact that his clothes resemble the monastic habit, and because he holds a flaming jewel in the palm of his left hand. He stands in three quarter pose on two lotus blossoms; above him is a large canopy, surmounted by four bells and also a frieze whose motifs are almost entirely worn away. His right hand is brought round in front of his chest and seems to hold up a fold of his long scarf.

The left and right sides of the painting are bordered by a narrow, dark green band bearing a white floral motif. The tile effect of the lower part is reminiscent of plate 53.

Plate 57
The bodhisattva Dizang (Kṣitigarbha)
Five Dynasties (10th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 42 x 26 threads per cm. H.57 cm; W.18.3 cm. EO.1180. **DE**

This is another representation of Dizang, standing and bare-headed. The red robe covering his shoulders has

bands of a stronger red, clearly indicating that in this case his costume is a *kaṣāya*. The hands of this rather stocky figure are joined in front of this chest, with the fingers interlocking. There is an uninscribed cartouche on the left. Two rattles hang from a frieze above him. At the bottom of the work is a band of plain tiling.

Plate 58
The bodhisattva Dizang (Kṣitigarbha)
Tang dynasty (second half of the 8th century-mid 9th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 50 x 40 threads per cm. H.85 cm; w.28.6 cm. MG.17779. **DE**

This representation of Kṣitigarbha stands apart from the other paintings of this series by virtue of the figure's impressive stature. The blue-eyed bodhisattva is characterised by the high and angular top of the skull. The area between his nose and upper lip, his earlobes and the inner contours of his hands and feet are painted red. Although the painting is worn and damaged, the colours of some parts of the work are still very strong – the bright red of the monastic robe contrasts with the green of the undergarment, bordered with a floret-covered braid, and with the fairly bright blue of the scarf. An inscription showing through from the *verso* appears in the lower right corner, just above the frieze of tiles. This reads *Yong'an* ("eternal peace"), which is in all likelihood the name of the monastery to which the painting once belonged.

Setting aside the face, a few details of clothing (the pattern of folds in particular) and the placing of the feet on a single lotus blossom, this bodhisattva offers a striking resemblance to Stein painting 119 (Whitfield, 1, fig. 93). The drawing is, on the whole, the same as that of Stein 119, especially the drawing of the hands. The flaming jewel is held in the palm of his right hand, while the left is turned towards his chest, above the waist, with two fingers bent inwards. As is the case with many of the Dunhuang banners, it would seem that one of these works is a direct copy of the other, or that both were produced with the aid of a stencil or a chalk model.

Plate 59
The bodhisattva Dizang (Kṣitigarbha) or an eminent monk
Tang dynasty (17th year of the Kaiyuan era; 729 AD). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 42 x 20 threads per cm. H.63.6 cm; w.58.7 cm. MG.17658. **JPD**

On the evidence of the inscription located in the lower left of the painting, which reads "Offered wholeheartedly by [the lady] Zhang, wife, in the seventeenth year of the Kaiyuan era", this work must be the oldest of all the portable paintings from Dunhuang bearing a date. The name of the dynasty is not mentioned in the inscription.

The identification of the figure is a subject of controversy, and depends on which one of the two faces is picked out. Very different from each other, the two faces correspond with two states in the painting's execution. One of them, represented in three quarter position, displays the features of an old man with a prominent nose. It calls to mind the monk Mahākāśyapa, a disciple of the Buddha, with whom this painting has often been identified. This argument is based in particular on a sculpture at Longmen (cave M).[15]

There is, however, a second group of characteristics, corresponding with the second face, which point in quite another direction. The second one also belongs to a monk, but in this case it is square to the viewer. The haloed figure's right shoulder is uncovered. He wears an undergarment whose border is decorated with blue-grey half-rosettes from which lines fan out, terminating in white dots. These are comparable to what we find in some other representations of Dizang, for instance plates 58 and 60. Over this he wears a black-banded *kāṣāya*, made of a greyish cloth with black ripples and areas of blue and green, again in keeping with other representations of this bodhisattva. He holds the *khakkhara* in his right hand and a rosary in his left. Floating above him on a cloud is a small buddha with halo and mandorla, seated on a lotus. The last two characters of the inscription may be deciphered as *pusa* (bodhisattva). There would thus appear to be ample grounds for identifying this figure as Kṣitigarbha. This painting, however, borrows from representations of standing Kṣitigarbha, dressed as a monk and without his staff, and also of Kṣitigarbha as the "Lord of the Six Ways", generally seated, with his head covered and holding a *khakkhara*. This damaged painting must formerly have included other elements.

Plate 60
The bodhisattva Dizang (Kṣitigarbha) with head-dress
Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 49 x 21 threads per cm. H.76 cm; w.58.7 cm. MG.17664. **MS**

We have already examined, in plates 51 to 59, those banners which represent Kṣitigarbha standing bare-headed. In this work, and in those following, the bodhisattva is shown seated, always wearing monastic dress but with the characteristic addition of a cloth draped or tied onto his head. A text, to which we referred in the note to plate 98 of volume one, recounts that the bodhisattva manifested himself in this new form – that of a *śramaṇa* with his head covered – to the monk Daoming when he visited hell in 778 AD. This type of representation is unknown before the tenth century, though we must also point out that this new genre did not supplant the older form of Kṣitigarbha as a shaven-headed monk. The bodhisattva indeed appears in this older form in a votive image dating to the mid-tenth century, P.4518(35), kept in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

This representation is exceptional in that the bodhisattva is not clean-shaven, but rather wears the fine moustache and imperial more commonly associated with Avalokiteśvara. His *kāṣāya* is of the type described in the note to plate 53. The spots of colour are in this case red, blue and yellow, and the bands of the robe

are pale blue. The bodhisattva is represented seated in the posture of ease typical of this genre, on a rocky outcrop. The rock, which also appears in most of these paintings, is probably a reference to the southern mountain regarded as his abode.[16] This, of course, is reminiscent of the iconography of Water-moon Guanyin, who sits in a similar fashion upon a rock evocative of Mount Potalaka, situated in the southern oceans. Kṣitigarbha's black head-cloth with its four-dot motif is a constant element of these representations, though in this case, rather unusually, it is arranged in the shape of a hat widening at its crown. He carries the necessary attributes – flaming jewel and *khakkhara* – whose powers are invoked in the votive prayer of a painting of this same type kept in London, Stein painting 19 (Whitfield, 2, pl. 22): "May my merits [acquired by my offering] cause [Kṣitigarbha] to shake his golden *khakkhara* [so that] lotus blossoms may bloom in hell, and [cause] his jewel to illuminate the paths of illusion". It is generally said that the jewel lights up the "dark ways", the hells. In this instance the *khakkhara* is noteworthy for the length of its black shaft, decorated with gilded semi-circles. Similar decoration may be seen on the *khakkhara* in plate 98-12 of volume one and plate 64 of this volume. The jewel is transparent and enveloped with orange-red flames, the same colour as the halo surrounding the aureole and mandorla. The flask of pure water placed to the right of his feet is one of the personal objects often represented near religious masters. This detail does not appear in the other paintings of this type. The crouching animal on the left is the golden-maned lion, incarnation of Mañjuśrī, perceived by Daoming near the bodhisattva according to the text mentioned earlier.

Kṣitigarbha's rôle as saviour of the souls of the dead is illustrated by the depiction of the "six ways" of rebirth. In principle, his compassion is only directed towards beings who find themselves in the three evil ways, but is difficult to isolate these from the whole group of six. This is the reason why he made a great oath to save all beings who suffer ceaselessly, tossing about in the Six Ways of life and death (*Taishō*, 412, p. 779b). Represented in the form of rays emanating from the nimbus of Kṣitigarbha, the ways are as follows (right side, moving from top to bottom):

1.) the way of the *deva*, illustrated by a bodhisattva (*v.* the note to plate 66 of this volume and *cf.* also Stein painting 19; Whitfield, 2, pl. 22);
2.) the way of the animals, in which we see a bull and a horse;
3.) the way of hell, with one of the damned in front of a boiling cauldron prepared for him by a demon, while an open-mouthed snake advances to devour him; left side, moving from top to bottom:
4.) the way of human beings, represented by a man and a woman;
5.) the way of the *asura*, with a four-armed figure holding a lance and a shield;
6.) the way of the *preta*, represented by a naked and wretched figure fleeing from flames.

The depiction of the Six Ways is certainly common in paintings of this type, but is not absolutely necessary. The Six Ways may, on the other hand, be represented in works showing Kṣitigarbha in his standing, bare-headed form.[17] The two figures appearing as acolytes below the central figure, each holding a scroll, are the two Boys of Good and Evil. These register all the good and bad actions, committed actively or passively by the deceased throughout his lifetime, and report these to the god Yama at the moment of judgement, in the presence of Kṣitigarbha. The boys are also depicted in some paintings of Avalokiteśvara, apparently for the same reason (see plates 52, 84, 85 and 86 of volume one). We shall return to this subject in the notes to the paintings which follow.

Six figures are represented in the lower register. The man on the right and his wife opposite him on the left side are probably the donors. The husband is preceded by two nuns, the first of whom kneels while holding a dish covered with offerings. Another nun may be seen standing in front of the wife, behind whom stands a very small boy with his hands joined together. All these figures, dressed in tenth century fashion, are doubtless members of the same family. Their cartouches are uninscribed, as are those of the main composition. The fact that the nuns are placed in front of the two lay donors does not indicate that they are older or of higher rank. Comparison with other paintings seems to show that they are given pride of place even over their parents in deference to their religious status.

Plate 61
Dizang (Kṣitigarbha) and the Ten Kings
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: ? x 24 threads per cm. Overall dimensions: H.105 cm; W.54.8 cm. Composition: H.89 cm; W.54.8 cm. MG.17793. **MS**

The central figure is seated on an octagonal throne in the same posture as in the preceding painting. His left foot is visible, placed on a small lotus blossom which is partly hidden by the altar. The *khakkhara* is very simple, as is the flaming jewel held in his left hand resting on his knees. The *kāṣāya* is made of a light blue cloth with areas of light green over which are rows of white dots. *Kāṣāya*s of the same material are worn by Kṣitigarbha in plate 62 and by the itinerant monk in plate 88. The black bands are decorated with small lozenges cut out from gold leaf and stuck onto the painting. The black head-cloth, decorated with the same motif, also covers the shoulders, while the cloth knotting it about his ears hang down at either side of his face.

The Six Ways, whose names are given in the cartouches, are represented by vari-coloured clouds emanating from the nimbus. From top to bottom, on the right, we have:

1.) the way of the *deva*, symbolised by a palace (the cartouche reads: "The way of rebirth among the *devas*");
2.) the way of human beings, represented by a figure

with joined hands (the incorrect cartouche reads: "The way of men and *deva*");

3.) the way of the *asura*, represented by a figure who, without the cartouche, would easily be taken for a *deva*.

From top to bottom on the left:

4.) the way of the *preta*, represented by an unclothed and unkempt individual;

5.) the way of animals, symbolised by a white horse;

6.) the way of hell, represented by a cauldron surrounded by glowing flames.

More interesting is the group of figures in the lower part of the painting, amongst whom are depicted the Ten Kings of hell. The latter illustrate what is perhaps the essential aspect of the popular devotion to Kṣitigarbha – that is, the bodhisattva's presence in the hells in order to intercede in behalf of the deceased when they come to be judged. According to the text referred to in the preceding note, this is precisely what the bodhisattva revealed to the monk Daoming. Although he only plays a minor part in the *Ten Kings Sūtra*, in some works he is represented enthroned beside Yama, or is even shown presiding over the assembly of the Ten Kings in frontispieces in which he takes on the rôle usually played by the Buddha.[18] This belief is expressed in a very short apocryphal work, the *Sūtra of the bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha*, known through copies discovered among the Dunhuang manuscripts (*Taishō*, 2909). A monk located in the upper right is identified by a cartouche as the "Master Daoming", already referred to. The two officials standing near next to him, one of whom holds a scroll and the other a tablet of office, are the 'secretaries of the earthly bureau'. Opposite these, on the other side of Kṣitigarbha, are their counterparts, the 'secretaries of the celestial tribunal'. Lower down we can see the two 'Boys' (here they appear more like girls) of Good and Evil, one holding a rolled-up scroll and a brush, the other an unrolled scroll. The two registering bodies and the boys are described as follows in the *Ten Kings Sūtra*: "The petitions presented by uttering the names [of the deceased] will rise to the Six Tribunals. The Boys of Good and Evil will report these to the officials of the Celestial Tribunal and the Earthly Bureau, who will inscribe them in their registers".[19] The two lay figures, a man and a woman, who kneel in front of the offering table, are believers praying for one of the deceased. Judging by the way these two are incorporated into the painting, it seems unlikely that these two are, strictly speaking, the donors of the work – at least, not those who commissioned it. The painting appears to be of standard type.

Nonetheless, it is dedicated to a person whose name appears in the cartouche in the upper right: "In perpetual homage in behalf of the faithful deceased, *née* Guo". The title of the painting is inscribed on the left: "The Ten Kings and the bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha, an image". This inscription should perhaps be linked with and precede that on the right, the title coming before the dedication.

Inscriptions in Uighur script can be seen to the right of the *preta* and to the left of the horse. There is no doubt that the script is Uighur, but the words are Mongolian. Moriyasu Takao has been able to decipher one of the two inscriptions, which reads "monkey and white horse".[20] It is true that the *preta* could pass for a monkey, especially since these animals were not well-known in Central Asia. As we suggested in the note to plate 5 of volume one, these graffiti could well have been made by some visitor to Dunhuang after the opening of cave 17, but before Pelliot's arrival. There are no grounds to believe that the painting originally came from a cave dating to the Mongol period. Owing to the fact that we have nothing to compare this with, it is difficult to pinpoint the style, which appears relatively late. The hats with limp side-pieces hanging down at the back indicate a late tenth century date, and may be compared with plate 73 of volume one and plate 63 of this one. Two thin strips of orange are painted along the sides of the painting, while two bands of green silk are added to the top and bottom, constituting a rough mount. The execution of the painting is fairly clumsy.

Plate 62

The bodhisattva Dizang (Kṣitigarbha) with the Ten Kings

Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 54 x 40 threads per cm. H.84 cm; W.53.6 cm. MG.17795. **MS**

This bodhisattva closely resembles the preceding one in his posture and particularly in his dress. His *kāṣāya* appears to be made of the same light blue cloth decorated with rows of white dots. Its borders and black bands, and also his head-cloth, all of which bear the gilt lozenge motif, are more refined than their counterparts in plate 61. A small, finely-drawn tie lifts part of the robe towards his left shoulder, revealing the garment's lining. It is quite different from those more common types which we find in plates 7 (Śākyamuni and Prabhūtaratna), 11 (Bhaiṣajyaguru, at his right shoulder), 92-2 (a nun) of volume one, and 60 and 63 of this one. Though only five in number, the rays of light bursting from the top of the halo may probably be linked with the ways of rebirth. An odd detail of this painting is the superfluous lotus blossom placed next to the one supporting the bodhisattva's left foot. We find the same curiosity in painting 67.

Unlike the preceding work but in conformity to a well-known model which we will again encounter in the next painting, the Ten Kings are arranged at either side of the bodhisattva, each one presiding over his own court (symbolised by the red platforms). Each king is flanked by two assessors in female clothing, who are the "Boys" of Good and Evil, repeated for each scene. All but two of the kings resemble each other, despite the different colours of their robes and other details, chosen by the artist in order to break the monotony of the composition. The king at the top right is Yama, the fifth and principal king from whom all the others are derived. He wears the imperial hat (*mian*), surmounted by a black mortarboard decorated with golden lozenges

from which hang vari-coloured tassels. His black robe is adorned with constellations and other designs picked out in white. In the upper left corner, opposite Yama, sits an armoured figure. This is the tenth and last king, Wudao Zhuanlun Wang or the "king who turns the wheel in the five ways", responsible for the reincarnation of the deceased in one of the six ways. One of his assessors is a scribe, who, unlike the others, carries a scroll, but this detail has no particular significance. On each of the desks of these two kings we see a scroll and a black object, probably an ink-stone. The four officials who stand behind the offering table are in all likelihood the four secretaries whose names are given in the next painting. The animal crouching at the foot of the table is doubtless the golden-maned lion.

The kings' ten cartouches are all uninscribed, though a clumsy inscription does appear above the fifth king, in the upper right: "The hundredth day, the King Yama". This is a graffito added after the painting's completion; it is, moreover, incorrect. The soul comes before Yama in the fifth week following death, not on the hundredth day. On the other side of the painting, behind the tenth king, appears another, quite clumsy inscription, in three columns from right to left: "The disciple with the [sur-]name Fu/ [had] an image painted for her own benefit/ of the Ten Kings together with Dizang and offered it"[21]. If the lady Fu had commissioned the painting herself, then her name would appear at the bottom, in a cartouche along with her portrait. It seems that she was content to buy the painting ready-made, and simply scribbled (or had someone else add) her own, slightly faulty text.

The comparison of this painting with the preceding one reveals some significant differences in composition and colour, and also in the kings' robes and the facial expressions. It is also undeniable that the paintings do resemble each other in some respects. Chief of these, and already mentioned, is the cloth of the *kāṣāya*. The offering tables both display a red upper section, ornamented with identical blue motifs. The top of the table in plate 61 is blue all over; while that of plate 62 is white, it is partly covered with a rug of exactly the same shade of blue. The character *wang*, appearing in the kings' hats, is inscribed on a sort of red plaque. Judging by the style, the two works were produced by different artists who nevertheless borrowed from one another and perhaps even worked together. These paintings are of a particular genre, and seem to date from the end of the tenth century or the beginning of the eleventh century.

Plate 63
Dizang (Kṣitigarbha) with the Ten Kings
Northern Song dynasty (8th year of the Taipingxingguo reign; 983 AD). Painting on silk. H.229 cm; W.160 cm. MG.17662. See also fig. 26. **MS**

This painting is made up of three pieces of silk, measuring (from right to left) 64 cm, 63 cm and 32 cm wide. This very large work is the most beautiful example of this iconographic subject. The fullness and balance of the composition (even though the central figure is slightly off-centre), the finesse of its execution, its relatively good condition and the fact that the painting is inscribed with a date make this a work of great artistic and documentary interest.

Kṣitigarbha adopts the posture familiar from the preceding paintings, but here he is seated on a lotus blossom rather than a rocky outcrop. The rock is, however, present in the work in the rather reduced form of the offering table. The secondary rock serving as a table is, in fact, the natural complement to the rocky throne, as can be seen in plates 60 of this volume (Kṣitigarbha) and 69 of the first volume (Avalokiteśvara). His headcloth is of the usual model though mauve in colour. The lower end of the *khakkhara* is placed on a lotus flower, while the jewel is missing from his out-stretched hand. Nevertheless, the fingers of his left hand are arranged as if he were in fact holding it. A white aureole with a red outer rim completely encircles the bodhisattva along with his halo and nimbus, giving a certain sense of majesty to the composition.

The canopy is of a fairly classic style, though it is distinctive for the parasol which surmounts it and for the doubling of the central panel. The Six Ways, emerging from the top of the aureole and apparently compressed between this and the canopy, do not have the same visual importance as in plates 60 and 61. On the right side, from top to bottom:

1.) the way of human beings, represented by a man and a woman with their hands joined in worship;
2.) the way of the *asura*, in which we see two four-armed *asura*s gesticulating;
3.) the way of hell, without a cartouche, represented by the figure of one of the damned and a cauldron;
on the left side, from top to bottom:
4.) the way of the gods, represented by a man and a woman who can be distinguished from those depicted in the way of humans only by their long scarves floating in the wind;
5.) the way of animals, with a horse, a bull and an almost illegible cartouche;
6.) the way of the *preta*, whose cartouche seems to be uninscribed.

The kings are arranged in a clockwise fashion about the central image, with the first in the upper right and the tenth in the upper left. The inscriptions give the names of the kings before whom the deceased must appear, and also (except in the case of the first king) the date from the day of their death when they must do so. Thus we read: "The first [seventh day], the King Qin guang", *etc.*. These inscriptions are in fact excerpts from the *Ten Kings Sūtra*, with the verb *guo*, "to come before", omitted. The kings are seated behind the tables of their respective tribunals, a scroll open in front of them, accompanied by their assessors as in the preceding painting. The fifth king, Yama, wears the imperial hat with mortarboard and tassels. The tenth is armoured. Some of the other kings – the first, third and eighth – wear white head-dresses also encountered in other paintings

of this genre, for instance plates 64, 65, 66 and Stein painting 23 (Whitfield, 2, pl. 24); it is not possible to associate this head-dress to any one king in particular. The others wear the ordinary royal hat, with the addition of a sort of red fan-shaped front piece with white feathers that may also be seen in plate 64.

The monk Daoming, the golden-maned lion and four figures in officials' dress seated on stools appear at either side of the offering table. According to the cartouches, the latter are *panguan*, clerks or secretaries; their names are Zhao, Cui, Wang and Song. The same group of four figures is found without cartouches in paintings 62 and 64. They bring to mind the four officials known as the 'secretaries of the Earthly Bureau and the Celestial Tribunal' represented in plate 61. The clerks Zhao and Cui appear by name in painting 65. The clerk Cui appears on his own as Yama's assessor in Stein painting 23, referred to earlier. These figures are mentioned nowhere and seem to have been forgotten, with the exception of Cui. The latter appears under the name of Cui Ziyu as the hero of an account preserved in a Dunhuang manuscript dating to the beginning of the 10th century, S.2630. This work recounts the visit of the Tang dynasty Emperor Taizong to hell. This figure, whose name sometimes varies, and his story were taken up and popularised in the novel *Journey to the West* (*Xiyouji*) at the end of the Ming dynasty. This character, under the name of Cui Fujun, remained a figure in the pantheon of popular religion up to the modern period.[22]

A woman standing on a rug and holding a golden flask can be seen in the lower right of the painting. Her sumptuous costume closely resembles that worn by the donor of painting 99 in volume one, as does her headdress though it is, in this case, fractionally less elaborate. It contains a number of gold ornaments, including a phoenix with outstretched wings. One of her four ladies-in-waiting carries a long-handled fan, while the others hold various unidentifiable objects. One of these is a mysterious oblong package which may also be seen in the hands of a female servant in Stein painting 41, dated 939 AD (Whitfield, 2, pl. 17); another is a crescent adorned with arabesques, almost identical to one carried by a servant in painting 99 mentioned above. Much simpler than that of their mistress, the coiffures of the ladies-in-waiting are of a type also represented in a sketch, P.4514(14), kept in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

The identity of the woman is revealed by the long central inscription, consisting of twenty-one columns from left to right, inscribed in the green 'stele'. The title of the inscription is "Eulogy for the portrait of the deceased lady of Qinghe named Zhang, with preface". Thus we learn that this person belonged to a family of note from Dunhuang, and married a certain prince Cao who was formerly the imperial commissioner of the "eleven prefectures of the land east of the river". The inscription unfortunately contains no other concrete information, neither in the preface nor in the eulogy. The latter is written in a pentasyllabic verse-form typical of this very conventional literary genre. We may suppose that the lady was the wife of Cao Yuanzhong who reigned from 945 to 974 AD. The date is clearly given at the end of the inscription: "Made in the eighth year of the Taipingxingguo, the *guiwei* year, in the eleventh month whose first day is *guichou*, the fourteenth day *bingyin*" – that is to say, the fifteenth December 983 AD.[23]

A cartouche identifies the figure on the left, descending on a cloud and carrying a long banner, as the bodhisattva "who shows the way". Turning backwards, he appears to be guiding the soul of the deceased represented on the right. See plates 68 to 73 for further discussion of this figure. This arrangement, with a deceased person on one side and a divine psychopomp or saviour on the other, also appears in paintings 96 (Guanyin) and 98 (Dizang) of volume one.

There are two inscriptions in the lower register, both written in an unusual Uighur script similar to what we have already noted in paintings 5 of volume one and 61 of the present volume. One of them, in two columns, is located between the lady and her followers; the other, consisting of a few words, is situated near the bodhisattva Yinlu. James Hamilton and Peter Zieme, working in Paris and Berlin respectively, hoped to transcribe these but failed to recognise even the language used. Owing to the fact that there can be no doubt regarding the date of this painting's execution, we must yet again put forward the hypothesis that these inscriptions were added after the opening of cave 17 but before Pelliot's arrival.

Plate 64
Guanyin (Avalokiteśvara), Dizang (Kṣitigarbha) and the Ten Kings
Five Dynasties (10th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 52 x 52 threads per cm. Overall dimensions: H.138.5 cm; W.74 cm. Painted area: H.125 cm; W.58 cm. EO.3644. **MS**

The lower part of the painting in which the donors are represented consists of a separate piece 17 x 54 cm sewn onto the base of the main composition. The whole painting is enclosed by a wide silk taffeta border; the white spots against the red ground are achieved by a process of reserve-dyeing. If we compare its present state with the photograph reproduced by Mme Nicolas-Vandier, it appears that the work has been much restored (*Tissus*, pl. XII, facing p. 225 in the volume of text).

The most distinctive feature of this painting is its representation of both the bodhisattvas Avalokiteśvara and Kṣitigarbha, on the left and right of the upper part of the painting respectively. Represented simultaneously, they appear to be very much on an equal footing. Unlike the more commonly encountered models, Avalokiteśvara here has twelve rather than eleven heads, arranged as follows in three levels: at the lowest level, the principal head and face and two side ones; six heads in the middle; three heads on the topmost level, with the central one a Buddha-head. In his entry in the Japanese edition of this book, Akiyama does not include the Buddha-head, thus reaching a total of only eleven heads. This extra head should, however, be taken into account

as in the case of images of nine or eleven-headed Avalokiteśvara (*v.* the note to pl. 89, vol. 1). The six-armed figure holds various attributes, some of which are properly his – the sun and moon, the willow branch, the water flask. The flaming jewel carried in his middle left hand is not part of his usual panoply; it can, perhaps, be associated with Kṣitigarbha's jewel. Kṣitigarbha wears a black head-cloth adorned with golden lozenges and a blue *kaṣāya* with black ripple patterns and stained here and there with pale red. He holds the light-giving jewel in his left hand, while his right grasps a *khakkhara* with a long shaft decorated as in plate 60.

The unity of this upper part of the whole composition stems from the disposition of the two figures, seated in the same posture on identical lotus blossoms and turned in three quarter pose towards each other. Though their haloes and mandorlas are different, the canopies above the figures are very similar. *Apsarasas* fly in pairs at each side of the canopies; those on the left appear to be dancing, while one of the right-hand figures plays a mouth organ and the other offers a white object, apparently a flower bud. The two bodhisattvas share the same offering table and a single rocky outcrop, upon which is placed a transparent bowl – probably glass – filled with flowers (for a similar bowl, *cf.* Stein painting 473, a depiction of Kṣitigarbha and the Ten Kings, kept in New Delhi; Matsumoto, pl. 109).

The Ten Kings appear below the two bodhisattvas, at either side and in front of the offering table. The kings kneel on platforms draped with cloth as in plate 62, accompanied by their assessors, standing figures of the usual type like the Boys of Good and Evil. Yama appears at the bottom right, and is the only king to be recognisable by his costume. With the exception of one king who wears a white hat, all the others wear head-dresses like those of the kings in plate 63. The monk Daoming and the golden-maned lion are depicted at either side of the transparent bowl, while the four clerks, who we met in the preceding painting, appear below seated in front of individual tables.

The lower register is occupied by donors – three men followed by a young boy on the right and three women with a little girl on the left. The first of the three men is the chief donor, the head of the family, for it is he who carries a long-handled censer. He raises his hand in front of the rising incense smoke in a fairly common gesture, seen also, for instance, in plate 15 of volume one. The second man holds a flowering spray between his joined hands. The three women hide their hands in their sleeves. The last woman on the left is most important of these, and is probably the wife of the man carrying the censer; her clothes are richer and her gold head-dress is more ornate than those of the other women. The placement of this woman suggests that the two preceding her are already dead. Like all the other cartouches in this painting, the central cartouche which could have provided this sort of information is, however, uninscribed.

It is well-known that Avalokiteśvara is the saving bodhisattva *par excellence*, and that he is universally powerful. His rôle was in no way diminished by the development of faith in Kṣitigarbha, despite the fact that during the tenth century at least, the latter was held to specialise in succouring the deceased when they came to be judged in the hells. The two bodhisattvas seem to have sometimes been linked together in the prayers of the faithful, on the grounds that two precautionary measures are better than one. There are several examples of this type of prudent iconography, amongst which this work and the next are perhaps the most convincing. A further instance is provided by the frontispiece of a scroll of the *Ten Kings Sūtra* kept in London, Stein painting 78 (Whitfield, 2, pl. 62 and fig. 91). This consists of two images, firstly a representation of Avalokiteśvara and secondly, Kṣitigarbha surrounded by the Ten Kings. Avalokiteśvara "who saves from misfortune" does indeed figure in the sūtra as one of a list of "six bodhisattvas of light", which also includes Kṣitigarbha; the bodhisattva of compassion intercedes on behalf of the souls of the deceased, but his rôle is relatively minor, certainly no greater than that of Kṣitigarbha. The artist, on the other hand, swayed by contemporary beliefs, thought it appropriate to represent both figures, though he gives Kṣitigarbha greater importance by having him preside over the assembled kings. Similarly in the present case (EO.3644), the association of Avalokiteśvara and Kṣitigarbha does not prevent the latter from presiding over the scene depicted below them, as is shown by the presence of the monk Daoming and the lion. No matter whether Kṣitigarbha's rôle is that of advocate or intercessor at the tribunals, Avalokiteśvara nonetheless retains his power. This is probably the reason for the frequent appearance of the Boys of Good and Evil in representations of Avalo-kiteśvara (see paintings 52, 84 and 86 of volume one; also Stein painting 54; Whitfield, 2, pl. 27).

Plate 65
Thousand-armed, thousand-eyed Guanyin, Dizang and the Ten Kings
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on hemp cloth. Warp and weft: 11 x 9 threads per cm. H.76 + 77.5 cm; W.50 cm. EO.1173. See also figs. 27 and 28. **MS**

Two different compositions separated by a frieze of alternating hexagonal motifs are painted on the same cloth. The same frieze isolates the lower register in which the donors are represented from the rest of the painting. We shall see presently that the painting as a whole is most interesting, but we should first briefly describe the two compositions.

Thousand-armed, thousand-eyed and eleven-headed Avalokiteśvara is depicted in the upper part of the painting. His two side faces are almost invisible. Seated upon a lotus blossom within a white nimbus, he holds his usual attributes. The figures who surround him do not demand any special comment. They are, from top to bottom:

1.) the buddhas of the ten directions disposed in two groups of five. These same figures appear in the large painting reproduced as plate 98 of volume one;
2.) the bodhisattvas "Sunlight" and "Moonlight";
3.) Śridevi (Chinese: Gongdetian), with her hair arranged in a looping coiffure which we have already encountered several times, and the hermit Vasu, who accompanies the goddess in a number of paintings;
4.) two wrathful six-armed deities, one green (on the right), the other white (on the left), both depicted against a background of flames. Their weapons are not easily made out, and their cartouches contain traces of inscriptions;
5.) two figures with their hands joined as if in prayer, standing in the pool at either side of the cloud supporting the lotus blossom. These are the two dragon or serpent kings.

The canopy is of a common model, though distinguished by the addition of the wavy rod that surmounts it.

The lower composition shows Kṣitigarbha, wearing a head-cloth and a *kaṣāya*, seated in his usual posture and holding the *khakkhara* and the flaming jewel. A cartouche in the upper left bears his name: "The bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha". The standard figures are arranged around him, their names for the most part worn away. The four officials carrying scrolls at the top are the four clerks whose names are given in plate 63. One of the left-hand cartouches still displays the words "clerk Cui", apparently followed by one or two illegible characters. Another cartouche on the same side displays the character "Song" (deciphered by Mme Nicolas-Vandier). "Clerk Zhao" appears on the right, while the name of clerk Wang has disappeared. Lower down, the two juvenile figures with their hair dressed in chignons are the Boys of Good and Evil. The lion seated at the bodhisattva's feet must surely be the one observed by the monk Daoming. The Ten Kings, holding their tablets of rank, are divided into two groups of five. On two of their cartouches are clearly legible: "The first, King Qin guang descends" and "The fifth, King Yama descends". These phrases are inspired by the short version of the *Ten Kings Sūtra*: "When the purification ceremony (*zhai*) of the first seventh [day after death] [takes place] King Qin guang descends [to consider the merits accumulated by the family of the deceased]".[24] Although the artist has varied to some extent the kings' clothes and head-dresses, Yama does not appear in his distinctive imperial costume, nor does any of the others wear military dress.

The four donors depicted in the lower register kneel at either side of the central votive text, which consists of twelve columns inscribed from left to right. The text has almost entirely disappeared, but it is still possible to make out the first few columns: "The disciple with a pure faith [called] Wang Qingzhu, having resolved so to do, respectfully [had] painted an image of the great compassionate bodhisattva with one thousand hands and eyes, together with his attendants, [as well as] the bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha [...]". The first donor on the right is "the man of pure faith Wang [Qingzhu?]"; the next is called Wang Tong[...]. The first female donor on the left is the wife, *née* Cao. The inscription of the second woman has been effaced. It is possible that a third person was to be included, since there is one remaining, empty cartouche. A man named Wang Qingzhu is mentioned in the manuscript Pelliot chinois 3067, the inventory of a monastery, which seems to date from the mid tenth century.

The few words of the votive text that we have been able to decipher clearly demonstrate that these two paintings were not painted on the same cloth with the intention of later separating them. The intention was to address a common prayer to both Avalokiteśvara and Kṣitigarbha. Herein lies the chief interest of the painting, which itself acts as further evidence in support of what we proposed regarding this subject in the note on the preceding work.

Plate 66

Illustration of a Pure Land with Dizang and the Ten Kings
Five Dynasties (10th century). Painting on hemp cloth. Warp and weft: 11 x 8 threads per cm. H.128 cm; w.69 cm. EO.3580. **MS**

This painting's support consists of one width of cloth to which has been added a strip about 17.5 cm wide. The seam appears clearly in the plate. Like the preceding painting, this one includes two different subjects, though in this case they are not separated by a frieze, but are artfully presented together in a way which emphasises the link between the two representations.

Owing to the absence of an inscription, it is difficult to identify with any certainty the paradise depicted in the upper part, though in all probability it is the realm of Amitābha. His is the most frequently represented paradise, being the expression of a widely-held faith. Moreover, the apocryphal sūtra dealing with Kṣitigarbha that we mentioned in the entry for plate 61 promises rebirth in the Western Paradise to devotees who make images of Kṣitigarbha, copy the sūtra or invoke his name.

The central buddha makes the gesture of setting in motion the wheel of the Law. His chief attendants are two high-ranking bodhisattvas, each of whom has a halo and nimbus, as well as being sheltered by a smaller canopy. Although these two are without their distinctive attributes, they may reasonably be identified as Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta. The two monks, one young, the other older, are Ananda and Mahākāśyapa, two disciples of Śākyamuni who are also associated with Amitābha. One of the two Guardian Kings at the upper corners wears, as is customary, a helmet, the other wears the head-dress of a bodhisattva (see, for instance, plate 91 of volume one). Two female musicians play the *pipa* (on the right) and clappers (on the left). Two other female musicians, located in front of the other two, gesture as if playing a pipe and a transverse flute respectively, but their instruments are not to be seen – probably forgotten by the painter. In conform-

ity with the norm, the paradise consists of a wooden, balustraded platform built over a pool. A bridge spans the pool, and it is this which links the two scenes, the paradise above and hell beneath.

Kṣitigarbha is seated in his usual posture on the top of a rocky outcrop covered with a rug. The six ways of rebirth emerge as so many rays from his nimbus, symbolised by miniature figures comparable to what we have already seen in the preceding paintings. Only the way of the *devas*, located in the upper right, is of particular interest. Its figures are a man and a woman who kneel on clouds rising from a larger, turbulent cloud. A buddha, seated in meditation on another cloud, is placed slightly above them. It is hard to say whether he shows them the path to follow, or whether he himself is considered as a *deva*. We know that the idea of the *deva* was not entirely clear to the Chinese, and it seems that the painters of Dunhuang were not sure how to represent this type of being. Generally represented as human beings wrapped in floating scarves, they also appear in the form of bodhisattvas in plate 60 as well as in Stein painting 19 (Whitfield, 2, pl. 22, dated 963 AD). From a doctrinal point of view, it is quite impossible to interpret the *devas* as either bodhisattvas or buddhas, but the confusion is perhaps not surprising when the hoped-for goal is rebirth in Amitābha's paradise.

The Ten Kings are split, as is customary, into two groups of five. Yama and the tenth king wear their appropriate attire, while the others wear either white head-dresses or officials' hats with the character "king" marked on the front. The two 'Boys' of Good and Evil appear in the lower corners, while the monk Daoming and the lion are shown in front of the offering table. All the cartouches are empty.

The composition is surrounded on all four sides by a border of lozenges which, in terms of design and colour, closely resembles that of another painting on hemp cloth reproduced as plate 91 of volume 1. The comparison can be extended to the consideration of the mandorlas of the buddha and Avalokiteśvara, both of which contain a spear-head motif, and to mandorlas of the bodhisattvas. We should also point out in this respect the yellow cartouches, painted on the bridge of this painting and on the altar cloth of plate 91. The remaining cartouches are in both cases very narrow. All in all, it seems likely that these two works are by the same hand.

The painting is in an excellent condition. Akiyama interprets the stiff quality of the lines as possible evidence for the use of a reed-pen. We feel that this is hardly justified.

Plate 67
Dizang (Kṣitigarbha) and the Ten Kings
Date uncertain. Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 44 x 46 threads per cm. H.137 cm; W.55 cm. MG.17794. **MS**

Kṣitigarbha here barely differs from what we have seen in the preceding paintings in terms of his posture, head-cloth, monastic costume, *khakkhara* and jewel (the latter is hard to make out against the white nimbus). His *kāṣāya*, made of a grey-blue cloth decorated with rows of white dots and stained with patches of red and blue, is very like the robes of plates 61 and 62. It bears a close resemblance to that worn by the monk accompanied by a tiger, plate 88. A second lotus blossom is seen next to the one supporting the bodhisattva's left foot; this detail appears in plate 62.

The composition is not centralised, with most of the figures grouped on the right side of the painting, while Kṣitigarbha, his face turned slightly towards the right, is located a little left-of-centre. The first nine kings, including Yama in full imperial dress, are assembled in the lower right, from where they gaze upon the bodhisattva. The tenth king, wearing military dress, stands apart from the others on the left side of the painting, in front of two demons from hell. The four clerks can be seen above the kings, while the two Boys of Good and Evil appear on a cloud, each holding a scroll and bowing to the bodhisattva. The assembly is completed by the presence of the monk Daoming and the lion. Exotic foliage emerges from behind the nimbus. The significance of the wooden post-and-rail fence behind the clerks and the nimbus is unknown. Two narrow bands along the sides are painted orange.

The painting is bordered with blue silk (warp and weft: 33 x 28 threads per cm) 15.2 cm wide at the top and 11 cm wide at the bottom. A piece of red paper (10.5 x 29 cm) glued onto the upper strip bears an horizontal inscription consisting of four large characters read from left to right: "Method [or ritual] of the breath of the celestial court". Both mount and inscription seem very recent; it is not impossible that they – or at least the inscription – are the work of the Taoist priest who guarded the caves and discovered cave 17.

The composition immediately strikes one as quite different from the preceding works. For reasons which he does not give, though probably on stylistic grounds, Matsumoto suggests that the painting is late, dating even to the end of the Yuan dynasty – that is to say, the fourteenth century (Matsumoto, p. 386). It is true that in some respects, such as the kings' costumes and their strange head-dresses in particular, this painting bears no resemblance to what we know, yet we do not think that it is a work of the Yuan dynasty. As we observed above, Kṣitigarbha's *kāṣāya* is very similar to that of plate 88. Now, if the latter dates from the second half of the ninth century, as proposed by Akiyama, then perhaps this one is of similar date.

Plate 68
The bodhisattva Yinlu, "who shows the way"
Five Dynasties (10th century). Painting on silk. H.57.4 cm; W.37 cm. EO.1133. **JPD**

Four paintings in the Pelliot collection and two in the Stein collection depict the bodhisattva Yinlu, "who shows the way". To these should be added the image found in a painting of Kṣitigarbha and the Ten Kings, plate 63 of the present volume. Only two of these paint-

ings give the bodhisattva's name.

The name "Yinlu" does not seem to appear in any sūtra, although textual sources do contain the idea of deities who guide souls. Owing to this fact, once the Dunhuang material had been discovered, Yinlu was for some time confused with Kṣitigarbha who is also held to guide the souls of the dead. We are indebted to Tsukamoto Zenryu (1931) who was able to distinguish between these two bodhisattvas. An image or statue of Yinlu is mentioned in a pillar-banner (*chuang*), at the end of a text known as the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing*, written in 932 AD, in which the bodhisattva appears as a companion of Kṣitigarbha. Later, in the eleventh century, he figures as one in a list of six bodhisattvas whose images were commissioned by a devotee, Su Xun (1009-1066 AD), on behalf of the deceased members of his family. Under the name "king guide of souls", Yinlu Wang, the bodhisattva is associated with Avalokiteśvara, Mahāsthāmaprāpta and Kṣitigarbha (*cf. Jiayouji*, j. 14, ed. Sibu Congkan, p. 3b). The rôle of Yinlu does, in fact, encroach upon those of the deities with whom he is associated and with whom he is sometimes confused, as in Stein painting 46 (Whitfield, 2, pl. 10). In the latter example the bodhisattva, bearing an image of Amitābha in his head-dress, is Avalokiteśvara.

The bodhisattva appears to be walking, his feet each placed on a lotus blossom. He dominates a group of three figures whom he leads on the path to paradise. He holds the shaft of a banner in his right hand and a willow branch in his left. The bodhisattva seems to turn towards those he guides, the deceased, borne on clouds. A man dressed in black with a stiff-ribbonned hat is followed by a woman, whose face is damaged, dressed in a blue robe with a red floral motif. There is a little girl next to them, who wears a similar dress. The two cartouches, located to the left of the bodhisattva and above the man, are both uninscribed.

Plate 69
The bodhisattva Yinlu "who shows the way"
Five Dynasties (10th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: approximately 50 x 28 threads per cm. H.94.5 cm; W.53.7 cm. MG.17657. **JPD**

This painting was formerly mounted, but now only one strip of blue silk 7 cm wide sewn onto the lower edge of the work survives.

As is the preceding painting, the bodhisattva guides the soul of a dead man, who is represented bearded, his hands joined together, dressed in white and wearing a black hat. Dwarfing the dead man by his great stature, the bodhisattva precedes him along a path of cloud leading to paradise. He is represented in mid-stride, with each foot stepping on a pink lotus. A scabbard adorned with pink volutes hangs at his left hip. In his right hand he holds the shaft of a long pole ending in the head of a dragon, who seems to spit forth a banner decorated with red and blue ribbons. He carries a long-handled censer in his left hand. In front of the bodhisattva is a youth dressed in a long robe and a cape, carrying a three-tiered parasol.

Three heavenly pavilions can be seen amongst clouds in the upper left part of the painting. Below these appear seven musical instruments attached to streamers – three different types of flute, cymbals, clappers, a drum and a zither.

A cartouche situated in the upper left contains the following inscription: "Offered wholeheartedly by the disciple with pure faith of the Kang family, who [commissioned an artist who] painted an [image] of the bodhisattva Yinlu in behalf of her deceased husband Saquan".

Plates 70 and 71
The bodhisattva Guanyin carrying a banner
Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Paintings on hemp cloth. Plate 70: Warp and weft: 11-12 x 9 threads per cm. H.165 cm; W.54 cm. MG.22795. Plate 71: Warp and weft: 14.5 x 10.8 threads per cm. H.162 cm; W.55 cm. MG.22796. **JPD**

These banners, of a very similar size, both retain their three original suspension loops.[25] Though these two paintings do not actually form a pair, they share many characteristics. This suggests that they were executed as a series, while incorporating some variations in colour as well as in the bodhisattva's gestures and facial features.

Identifiable thanks to the buddha depicted in his diadem, the bodhisattva Guanyin stands with his feet placed on two lotus blossoms of different colours. In one hand he holds a pole surmounted by a crook, from which floats a banner with a triangular headpiece. The main body of the banner is extended by two waving streamers, and the lateral borders are similarly lengthened by two shorter streamers. The bodhisattva's other hand holds a long-handled censer in plate 70, and makes the gesture of argument in plate 71. It would seem that in these two works, Guanyin is invested with the same function as the bodhisattva Yinlu "who shows the way", as also occurs in Stein painting 47, kept in London (Whitfield, 2, pl. 10).

It should be noted that in the London painting, as well as in those of the Pelliot collection, the beneficiaries are represented next to the bodhisattva. In the case of plates 70 and 71, however, the beneficiaries and donors are depicted below the bodhisattva, though they are not separated from him by the line customary in votive paintings. They are arranged at either side of a large, uninscribed oblong. Three women kneel on the left, the first of them carrying a dish of flower offerings. On the right are two men wearing hats with drooping ribbons, one of whom holds a censer, the other a lotus bud. Another man and a little boy appear behind these right up against the edges of the paintings, placed beside each other in plate 70 and one behind the other in plate 71. With the exception of the two figures on the far right in plate 70, all the others are accompanied by uninscribed cartouches.

Plate 72
The bodhisattva Yinlu "who shows the way"
Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Painting on paper. H.71 cm; W.42 cm. MG.17697. **JPD**

Bordered by a double line, this painting is drawn in an ogival triangle. This unusual shape is formed using four pieces of paper:

a.) the central portion, measuring approximately 44.5 x 33 cm, is arranged vertically;
b.) three other pieces are glued onto the above, two forming the ogive, the third corresponding to the left-hand curve.

The painting has been mounted on a special backing sheet for conservation purposes.

Unlike the silk paintings reproduced in plates 68 and 69, the bodhisattva does not appear to be walking. Instead he seems to be standing still, his feet resting on two lotus blossoms surrounded by a thick, scrolling cloud. He grasps the dragon-headed shaft of a banner between the fingers of his right hand. The bodhisattva's face turns towards a damaged figure wearing a woman's robe. The deceased woman, also borne along by a cloud, carries a censer. Above her, and partly hidden by the banner, is an empty cartouche placed on a plinth and surmounted by three flaming jewels.

Plate 73
The bodhisattva Yinlu "who shows the way"
Northern Song dynasty (second half of the 10th century). Ink drawing highlighted with colours on paper. H.43.7 cm; W.31.9 cm. EO.1398(P.175). **JPD**

The image, currently occupying a whole sheet of paper, may however have been cut down. The bodhisattva stands still, as in the preceding painting, on a single lotus of which only the upper part can be seen. The topmost parts of the banner, the pole and his halo are also invisible. As seems customary, Yinlu here guides the soul of a deceased man, who is represented with a beard and joined hands, and who wears a stiff-ribbonned hat and a black robe like that in plate 68, characteristic of the tenth century. The bodhisattva's left hand is raised with the index and middle fingers outstretched.

The drawing is quite crude. Fixing holes located in the four corners indicate that the image was displayed, doubtless during funeral rites.

Plate 74
Pishamen (Vaiśravaṇa), Guardian King of the North
Tang dynasty (8th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 44 x 40 threads per cm. H.44 cm; W.13.5 cm. EO.1190. **JPD**

Several forms of Vaiśravaṇa are known which illustrate his various functions. These include his rôles as Guardian of the North, god of war, and, under the name 'Kuvera', god of prosperity and king of the demons or *yakṣa*. His origin is complex and mysterious. Frantz Grenet proposes that formerly he figured in the Sogdian pantheon as guardian of hell, as seen in the wall-paintings of Panjikent.[26] Here Vaiśravaṇa is represented in the form which was propagated and preserved in Japan, in which country it is known as 'Tobatsu-Bishamon'.

He wears a tiara or crown, three of whose sections are visible, of a model that remains fairly constant in this type of representation. We mentioned in the note to plate 17 the possibly Iranian origin of this head-dress. His cuirass of armoured scales and his slatted coat of mail are of a common Central Asian design. He stands squarely facing the viewer with his feet resting on the hands of the earth-goddess, Pṛthivī – a posture often adopted in the portable paintings from Dunhuang. With a sword hanging from his belt, he holds a *stūpa* and a lance with a triple point and a pennon. These attributes and their arrangement are described in numerous texts. According to tradition, there is an image enclosed in the *stūpa*, the sight of which subjugates the *yakṣa*. The placement of the lance in the left hand and the *stūpa* in the right would seem to correspond with indications given in the *Tuoluoni ji jing* (*Taishō*, 901, p. 879a). The position of the left hand, with the index finger hooked around the weapon's shaft, is characteristic. Two horns rise from his shoulders, which are sometimes interpreted as flames, sometimes as elephants' tusks symbolising treasures.[27] A pink volute rises behind him. The features of Vaiśravaṇa's face have been largely effaced by the disintegration of the pigments, leaving only his eyes still visible. The lower part of Pṛthivī's body has also partly disappeared. The border of palmettes at the base of the painting is exactly like that in the painting of Mañjuśrī reproduced as plate 1 of this volume.

Plate 75
Pishamen (Vaiśravaṇa), Guardian King of the North
Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Painting on paper. H.40 cm; W.26. 5 cm. MG.17670. **JPD**

Vaiśravaṇa stands squarely beneath a stylised canopy. Owing to the damage in the lower part of the painting, the figure's feet have disappeared and it is not known whether he was once carried by the earth-goddess as in other paintings. He wears a moustache and a goatee. His head-dress is related to that of the preceding plate, but is taller and more decorated. It includes two side pieces which frame the face before falling behind his shoulders. Both costume and attributes conform to the standard iconography of this type of representation: cuirass, coat of mail formed of armoured scales, flames, sword, lance and *stūpa*. In this case, he holds his two-pronged lance, decorated with ribbons, in his right hand and the *stūpa* in his left. This arrangement also occurs in a number of paintings on paper kept in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France – for instance, Pelliot tibétain 2222, reproduced in this volume as plate 95. It

corresponds with the description given in the ritual named *Hongjiatuoye yigui*, translated into Chinese in the eighth century by Vajrabodhi (*Taishō*, 1251). This type of representation may also be linked with another, known through a number of xylographic copies made at the command of Cao Yuanzhong, king of Dunhuang in 947 AD (Pelliot chinois 4514(1) and others).

Plate 76

The Buddha Śākyamuni, accompanied by Vaiśravaṇa, Sarasvati and Mahāsri. Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Painting on paper. H.27 cm; W.43 cm. EO.1162. **JPD**

The haloed Buddha in the centre of the painting is smaller than the figures on the right. He stands on a lotus flower and, with his two hands, makes the gesture of teaching the Law. His monastic cape is red, with toning bands and a green lining.

On the left we see Vaiśravaṇa, standing, who holds his customary *stūpa* and lance with a pennon. He is supported by the earth-goddess Pṛthivī and two *yakṣini* companions named Nilanpo (on the left) and Pilanpo (on the right). Two figures, standing to the right of Vaiśravaṇa, turn towards the Buddha. Their upper bodies are naked, while their hips are wrapped in leopard or tiger skins. One has a greyish skin and two projecting teeth; in his right hand he holds a money bag, which is possibly made out of mongoose hide. The other figure is pink and wears a head-dress in the form of a lion's head; he carries two flower petals and what seems to be a food offering. The lion's head coiffure is characteristic of the *gandharvas*, one of whom always acts as Vaiśravaṇa's assistant. These two acolytes, the second holding an infant at arm's length, appear in wood-block prints of Vaiśravaṇa dated 947 AD such as, for instance, Pelliot chinois 4514(1).

On the right of the painting, two figures stand on mountains, their faces turned towards the Buddha. The figure nearest the Buddha is Sarasvatī (Chinese: Biancai tian), the goddess of eloquence. According to the most developed text relating to this goddess, the *Jin guangming zuishengwang jing* (*Taishō*, 665), Sarasvatī grants wishes; she is held to dwell in a reed hut on the summit of high mountains, and wears clothes made from knotted grasses. She is represented here with three heads and eight arms. According to the tradition, it is this form which is invoked in order to obtain victory in war; her attributes in this type of manifestation are an iron wheel, an arrow, a sword and an axe on the right, and a lasso, a bow, a *vajra* and a trident on the left. The arrangement of these is different in this painting; moreover, the axe is absent, leaving her middle left hand outstretched but empty.

The other figure on the right is Mahāsrī (Chinese: Jixiang tian). Considered as Vaiśravaṇa's wife as well as his attendant, she is the goddess of good fortune. She is frequently confused with Sarasvatī, and is often represented next to her (*Taishō*, 665, j.8). In one hand she holds a lotus blossom and two leaves, while her other hand grants wishes (*Pishamen tianwang jing*: *Taishō*, 1244, p. 215c). Her robe and head-dress are reminiscent of the costume worn by Uighur women in the Turfan region. The head-dress is even described in the *History of the Five Dynasties* (*Xin Wudai shi*, Beijing, Zhonghua Shuja, j. 74, p. 916), compiled in the eleventh century. This text mentions that the women wore their hair in high chignons enveloped in a piece of red gauze; after marriage, they would add a felt hat.

A representation of Mahāsrī, with a similar costume and head-dress and attending Vaiśravaṇa, appears in a wall-painting on the west side of the south wall of Dunhuang cave 154, dating to the period of Tibetan occupation (*Bakkō*, 4, pl. 99). This type of image seems fairly common in the area around Dunhuang between the end of the Tang dynasty and the end of the tenth century. Other examples on paper include Pelliot chinois 4518(27), in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, and Pelliot chinois 4518(31), a curious representation of Śrīdevī (Chinese: Gongde tian) who seems to be attending Bhaiṣajyaguru. In the latter work, as well as in the wall-painting mentioned above and the present work, the goddess stands on uneven ground scattered with jewels (?) and broken crab-like rings, the significance of which remains unexplained. Mahāsrī's head-dress is always the same, with the sole exception of a woodblock print of Vaiśravaṇa accompanied by his attendants, dated 947 AD, of which more than a dozen copies survive. There Mahāsrī wears a head-dress which resembles those worn by women in Dunhuang during the tenth century. As Matsumoto Eiichi has already made clear, the representation of Sarasvatī and Mahāsrī together accompanying the Buddha is well attested to in the written tradition.

The faces and bodies of the principal figures were formerly covered with a layer of gold. The disintegration of the gold has given the painting a yellowish-grey patina. This technique seems to coincide with a ritual described in the *Beifang Pishamen tianwang suijun hufa zhenyan* (*Taishō*, 1248, p. 224c), whereby if a person covers the cuirass and the image of Vaiśravaṇa, and also offers him flowers and food, while at the same time uttering his *mantra* one hundred thousand times, then that person will be saved from perils.

The work is painted horizontally on a piece of paper of a standard tenth century type. R. Jéra-Bezard has suggested that it may have served as the frontispiece to a Buddhist text.[28]

Plate 77

Pishamen (Vaiśravaṇa), Guardian King of the North, crossing the ocean

Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Painting on silk. H.86 cm; W.57 cm. MG.17666. **JPD**

As Matsumoto Eiichi has already emphasised (Matsumoto, p. 463-464), the existence of a number of images representing Vaiśravaṇa crossing the ocean, painted during the Tang and Five Dynasties, is known thanks to the catalogue of paintings belonging to Emperor

Huizong of the Song dynasty, *Xuanhe huapu*, j. 2-3.

Vaiśravaṇa, supported by a cloud, marches at the head of eight figures. He holds a halberd with pennons in his right hand, and a *stūpa*, resting on a lotus flower, in the palm of his right hand. His cuirass, adorned with floral motifs, is highlighted with gold. Two flames flicker and wave above his shoulders. The haloed woman behind him is probably his wife, Mahāsrī, also said to be his sister. The woman is flanked by two men just behind her, one of whom carries a tablet. These may perhaps be interpreted as two of Vaiśravaṇa's five sons. The most well-known is Nazha, who habitually exchanges a *stūpa* with his father. According to the *Beifang Pishamen tianwang suijun hufa zhenyan* (*Taishō*, 1248, p. 225c), he is sent to help troops in the protection of the country. According to another text dealing with a ritual of Vaiśravaṇa called the *Pishamen yigui* (*Taishō*, 1249, p. 228b-c), the other son, Dujian, is supposed to be the saviour of the besieged town of Anxi, the seat of the protectorate established by the Chinese in Central Asia, then situated in Turfan.

The three figures are followed by five *yakṣa*, one of whom is Vināyaka with his elephant-head, another Vajramukha, the boar-headed. The uppermost one carries a standard. The presence of the five *yakṣa* is attested to in the texts, though names and order are not always in agreement. Vajramukha and Vināyaka do not figure in these lists.

In the upper left corner, and partly hidden by an uninscribed cartouche, we see a representation of a gate into a town surrounded by hills. This scene probably evokes the siege of Anxi in 742 AD. This episode, recounted in the ritual of Vaiśravaṇa mentioned above, is worth giving in full, following P. Demiéville's translation (Hōbōgirin, "Bishamon", p. 82):

"... In the fifth year of the *tianbao* reign (742 AD), the five kingdoms of Xifan (Tibet), Dashi (Arabs), Kangju (Sogdians) and others together laid siege to the town of Anxi. On the eleventh day of the second moon, a report was put before the emperor asking for reinforcements. The emperor said to the master Yixing, "Teacher, the town of Anxi is besieged by Arabs and others, and is calling for more troops; but since it is situated at a distance of twelve thousand leagues, it will take my troops eight months to reach their destination. I do not know what to do." Yixing replied, "Why does Your Majesty not call to his aid the Guardian king of the North, Vaiśravaṇa, with his celestial armies?" "How may I invoke him?" "By the mediation of the Serindian monk Amoghavajra." The emperor sent for this monk, who invited him to take a censer and to accompany him into the temple; the monk uttered a magical formula twenty-seven times; the emperor then saw hundreds of armed soldiers appear, and the monk explained to him that these were the troops of Vaiśravaṇa's second son, Dujian, coming to take their leave before leaving for Anxi. Four months later a report arrived from Anxi, which declared that on the very same day as the ceremony, giants clad in golden cuirasses had been seen to the north-east of the town, wrapped in a dark fog. A great noise of drums and horns had been heard, and the ground had shaken; the troops of the five kingdoms were appalled and retired to their camps, where rats gnawed the strings of their bows and crossbows. A disembodied voice in the air ordered that the lives of those too old and weak to escape be spared. The Vaiśravaṇa appeared in person on the north gate of the town; his image was drawn and sent to the emperor attached to the report ..."

According to the *Da Song seng shilüe* (*Taishō*, 2126, p. 254a-b), by Zanning (919-1001 AD), which completes the above text, the emperor commanded that images of Vaiśravaṇa be placed in the north-west corners of towns, and also ordered the founding of a shrine in Buddhist monasteries so as to make offerings to him.

In the other paintings of Vaiśravaṇa crossing the ocean, Stein paintings 26 and 45, kept in the British Museum (Whitfield, 2, pl. 15 and 16), and in Pelliot chinois 5018(1), a monochrome work on paper in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, one of Vaiśravaṇa's attendants is a figure with the features of an old man. This is Vasu, often linked with Vaiśravaṇa (*Taishō*, 2149, p. 228c).

Plates 78 and 79
Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Guardian King of the East
Tang dynasty (9th century). Paintings on silk. Warp and weft: 56 x 26 threads per cm. Plate 78: H.72 cm; W.16.8 cm. EO.1172a. Plate 79: Banner: H.187.3 cm; W.30.6 cm. Painting: H.71 cm; W.17.3 cm. EO.1172c. **MS**

The haloed warrior is one of the four Guardian Kings or *lokapāla* who guard the four directions of space, and also act as protectors of the religion. We have already encountered them in a number of paintings in volume one, notably amongst the entourage of Avalokiteśvara. It is generally agreed that the king who holds a bow and arrow is Dhṛtarāṣṭra (Chinese: Chiguotian). As we remarked earlier, however, the kings' attributes are not absolutely fixed. The Guardian of the South, Virūḍhaka, also carries a bow.29

The two paintings here are not exactly identical. The most visible of the few minor differences between them concern the anklet of the demon trampled beneath the king's feet, the end of the scarf passing beneath the demon's body and the number of coloured squares in the belt. On the other hand, the similarities (even in the upper and lower friezes) are so numerous that we are tempted to believe that these works are not simply products of the same workshop but are actually the work of one artist. Moreover, despite their petty differences, the mirror reversal of the paintings is so precise as to make one wonder how this was achieved. Careful copying or by means of tracing or stencils are all possible methods. Here and there the colouring is also slightly different – for instance, yellow flesh tones in plate 78, greyish ones in plate 79.

Of especial interest are the scale armour,[30] the helmet with earflaps,[31] the bow and the arrow. The arrow-head is forked, which doubtless means that it has a magic function. This type of arrow-head occurs in some

representations of deities belonging to the Tantric pantheon. The Guardian King of Stein painting 112 bears a close resemblance to these two (Whitfield, 2, fig. 107); he wears the same helmet, but the tip of his arrow is invisible.

Exactly the same upper decoration and lower frieze is found in plate 55 of this volume, whose dimensions (composition only) match those of the banner reproduced in plate 78. The banner in plate 79 retains its complete original mount, with a damask headpiece, silk side streamers and tails, the painted wooden weighting-board. Two stiffening rods are sewn into braid at the top and bottom of the banner.[32]

Plate 80
Jin ganglishi
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on silk. H.72 cm; W.17 cm. EO.1172b. **MS**

The name *'jin ganglishi'*, "giant *vajra* [bearer]", is usually used for minor protective deities whose chief characteristic is the wielding of a *vajra*. The latter term meaning "diamond", symbolises the firmness of the Buddha. The name is also an abbreviation of *jin gangchu*, "diamond pestle", often translated as "thunderbolt"; this is the name of a liturgical object of varying shape, of highly symbolic character and wide-ranging function. It is these holders of the *vajra*, *vajradhara*, *vajrapāṇi*, or simply *vajra*, who, reduced to a group of eight, protect the *Diamond Sūtra*. They also guard in pairs the doors of monasteries.

There are many representations of these figures on the banners kept in London and Delhi, in the wall-paintings and in sūtra illustrations, both drawings and woodblock prints. Most of these follow a fairly fixed model, known from the very beginning of the eighth century. The painting on this banner is a fine example of this type: a bearded figure with a threatening expression and a powerful musculature, especially developed in the legs and protruding knee-caps. The *vajra* is lengthened so that it appears like a rod made of two narrow cones attached to each other.[33] Stein painting 123, another banner (Whitfield, 1, pl. 57), bears a close resemblance to this work, although its colouring is slightly different. Whitfield dates this very convincingly to the end of the ninth century or the beginning of the tenth. The lower frieze is of the same model as those of plates 7 and 51. It is likely that this *vajradhara*, turned in three quarter pose to the right, was once paired with another, who would have turned towards the left.

Plate 81
Deity
Five Dynasties (first half of the 10th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 44 x 32 threads per cm. H.72 cm; W.18.6 cm. EO.1177b. **MS**

The identity of the figure is not known, though the sceptre or staff surmounted by a skull is Yama's characteristic attribute. This Hindu deity, personification of Death and guardian of the south, was incorporated into Tantric Buddhism and then given a more Chinese interpretation in the well-known form of King Yama, who sits in judgement in hell. Can we be certain that the figure is Yama? His right hand, which forms a closed fist, is held in front of his chest; this gesture is unlikely to be fortuitous but is nevertheless difficult to interpret. There seems, furthermore, to be no evidence for Yama's trampling of a *yakṣa* or any reason for his wearing a cuirass. These traits normally belong to the Guardian Kings. A staff or club – without a skull – is the attribute of either the King of the East, as seen in the wall-paintings, or the King of the South, Virūḍhaka, as in an illustrated booklet kept in Delhi (see the note to plate 78, volume one). Yama is in fact strongly associated with the south. The problem of identifying this figure remains, however, unresolved.

The face is not without interest, with its wide-open, exaggerated eyes, the nose with its flaring nostrils, the hooked moustache and the beard consisting of just three wavy strands. His military dress stands out for the richness of its ornamentation – observe, for instance, his finely-worked greaves. The style of this painting is rather different from that of most of the banners. The posture of the *yakṣa*, who grasps the *deva*'s right ankle, is noteworthy. His facial features – eyes, nose and mouth – been added when the rest of his body was already complete. His pose and rather comical expression may be compared with those of plates 78 and 79.

The upper frieze and the headpiece present some similarities with those of banner EO.1177a (fig. 15), though the red drapery of this banner is replaced by a band of rosettes. The lower friezes of these two works seem to be identical.

Plate 82
The goddess Mārici in front of the sun's rays
Five Dynasties (10th century). Painting on paper. H.57 cm; W.31 cm. MG.17693. **JPD**

Mārici, the "ray of light", is a goddess associated with the sun, sometimes also with the moon, who affords protection from violence and war. According to the descriptions given in several sūtras devoted to her, translated into Chinese in the eighth century by Amoghavajra, Mārici is represented as a heavenly maiden.[34] In her left hand she holds a fan on which a swastika may be represented.[35] Her right hand hangs down, palm outwards for the granting of wishes. The goddess is accompanied by two attendants who, like her, appear as celestial maidens. The present painting is in almost total agreement with the above description, with a few minor differences – for instance, here, the right hand is outstretched. The figures are dressed in Chinese costumes typical of the tenth century, with turned-up, square toes.

On her head, which is haloed, Mārici wears a diadem surmounted by a phoenix. One of her attendants wears a simpler diadem, while the other is bare-headed. The three figures are supported by clouds which seem to descend from (or rise towards) the top of the paint-

ing. The sun itself is badly damaged, and we can see only its rays clearly. A three-legged bird is painted within the solar disc. The scene depicted behind Mārīcī's head is perhaps intended to evoke a sea, although it is actually represented as a closed basin. Above her rise mountains, barely visible on account of tears in the painting, while below them appears an uninscribed cartouche.

The painting was executed on a sheet of paper typical of the tenth century, extended above and below by two strips 12.4 cm and 2.3 cm wide respectively.

Plate 83
The goddess Mārīcī in front of the sun's rays
Five Dynasties (10th century). Painting on paper (frontispiece to a booklet). Page size: H.15 cm; W.11 cm. EO.1157. **JPD**

This image is an illustration from a booklet of which only one other page survives. Only about a hundred of the thousands of manuscripts discovered at Dunhuang are illustrated, and of these barely a score include a frontispiece. Rather than taking the form of a scroll, this particular work takes the form of a little booklet of the 'butterfly' type. Although the execution of the frontispiece is far clumsier than that of the preceding plate, these two works closely resemble each other in terms of composition. This example does, however, include a few variants on the pattern established by plate 82 – for instance, Mārīcī's hands are in this case joined together, while one of her female attendants carries a dish of offerings. The sun and the mountainous landscape are fully visible.

This illustration may usefully be compared with Stein painting 207, kept in the British Museum (Whitfield, 2, pl. 68), in which the goddess is represented turning towards the right rather than the left. There the direction in which the goddess is facing combined with the actual placement of the painting, stuck on to the cover at the end of a vanished book, are indicative of the fact that, unlike the Guimet example, this work could not possibly have been a frontispiece. Nevertheless, the relationship between text and illustration is, in both cases, hard to define.

The colophon which appears on the back of the painting mentions the disciple Fan[-]ding, "commanding officer of a squad of ten soldiers attached to the administrative bureau" (*yaqian zhengshijiang*), who visited the kingdom of Khotan and commissioned the copying of the *Sūtra of Guanyin* (*Guanyin jing*), the *Molizhi tian jing*, devoted to Mārīcī, and the *Sūtra of the benefits received from parents* (*Fumu enzhong jing*). According to the inscription, he offers these wholeheartedly for the benefit of his deceased parents, in order that they find rebirth in the Pure Land and not sink into the three evil ways; for all the members of his family, in order that they may obtain longevity; on his own behalf, that he may travel even far away in safety..., that he be without worry while on the road, that his sins be taken away and that merit may accrue to him, that the sages and saints...protect. Though rare, the donor's title is known from another Dunhuang source, an act of promotion dated 938 AD (Pelliot chinois 3347). The deceased man depicted in plate 51 of volume one, dated 955 AD, is given the same title, though his is honorary (*san*) rather than functional (*zheng*). On the basis of the colophon referred to above, we would expect to find fragments of the works mentioned in it in the single surviving page of the book reproduced on the left of plate 83. An extract from the *Fumu enzhong jing* does indeed appear on the *verso* of this page, but the text on the *recto* is linked with the stories of the filial sons Guo Ju and Shanzi (Śyāmaka). These are well-known anecdotes which appear in a number of Dunhuang manuscripts. It is probable that the two sheets of paper illustrated here did not originally follow one another. It is, furthermore, most unusual to find the colophon on the back of the illustration, it being generally found at the end of a text rather than at its beginning and preceding the frontispiece.

Plate 84
Fragments of a frieze representing donors
Five Dynasties (10th century). Left: H.32 cm; W.31.2 cm. Right: H.27.5 cm; W.16.5 cm. EO.1157. **MS**

The donors painted on these two fragments were originally located in the lower section of a painting which may have measured some 50 cm wide. They kneel at either side of a pedestal which appears near the right edge of the left-hand fragment. The plinth is represented by two horizontal rectangles separated by circular motifs. Nothing remains of the inscription which should once have appeared above this base.

Eight female donors are depicted in the left-hand fragment, preceded on the right by a small child whose face is turned towards the left. The first of the women is a shaven-headed nun; the only surviving character in the cartouche located above her is *zi*. Behind the nun appears a magnificently dressed woman who is rather larger than the others. Her size is probably a conventional device used to express her seniority in terms of both age and her status within the family. Her cartouche reads: "[To my] tender mother, *née* Yin, offered wholeheartedly". She is probably the mother of the chief donor. Five women stand behind her in two rows, three in front and two behind them. The cartouche of the first of this group is complete, but only its last two characters are legible: *niangzi*. This woman is likely to be Yin's daughter. Each of the women holds a gilded stem topped with a bud. The group of men on the right must necessarily have included Yin's son, the principal donor. Only four figures survive, the first of whom (on the left) is damaged. The second holds a budding flower like the women opposite; the lower part of his cartouche contains the character *zi*. He is followed by a youth with joined hands and a young boy. Like the women, the men kneel on an off-white rug decorated with pale red lozenges, each of which contain another, smaller, grey lozenge enclosing a white dot. A very similar carpet is found with the donors in the large painting representing the Five Buddhas of the Vajradhātu, reproduced as

plate 46 of volume one.

The head-dresses of the female donors are the most interesting detail of these fragments. Conforming to a type rarely encountered in the paintings, they may be compared with those of the two women in plate 46 of volume one. These consist of a golden diadem attached by three clips to a plait forming a loop behind the head, with jewels pinned to the hair. This type of head-dress is also worn by the donors in plate 5 of this volume. The figures of plate 5 are represented kneeling on a rug similar to those of these fragments and plate 46 of volume one, and also hold flowers in the way described above. Such head-dresses are also worn by Māra's daughters in plate 5 of volume one. Despite the small size of these fragments, this detail of costume as well as the carpets allow us to date them, like plate 46, to the end of the tenth century.

Plate 85
Long banner with five apsarasas
Northern Song dynasty (10th cent.). Painting on silk. Total length: 301 cm; w.19.6 cm. EO.1166. See fig. 50. **DE**

Resembling angels but wingless, these graceful celestial beings are *apsarasas* (*feitian*). They may be seen adorning the ceilings of even the oldest caves at Dunhuang. Without any precise function, these beings have an essentially decorative importance. They often bear offerings, and frequently appear in pairs, dancing benign attendance upon buddhas and great bodhisattvas. Only the first and third *apsarasas* are reproduced here, taken from a series of five depicted vertically on a long banner like those illustrated in plates 46 and 47. In this case, the representations are outlined in red against a yellow ground. The folds of clothing, the long, billowing scarves and the modelling of the bodies are executed in ochre pigment. Only the eyebrows, pupils and the lower edge of the eyelids are drawn in black ink, just like what we find in two other long banners, each depicting bodhisattvas, also dating to the end of the tenth century and now kept in London (Stein paintings 216 and 196; Whitfield, 2, pl. 32 and 33). The fact that four of the figures depicted turn towards the right suggests that this banner was perhaps one of a pair.

The *apsaras* on the left plays a set of chimes, her companion on the right a flute. Both of them are represented with one leg extended, the other bent and raised very high. The impression of upward movement produced by this posture is heightened by the floating, sinuous scarves and the small upwardly-scrolling clouds.

Plate 86
Apsaras
Tang dynasty (8th century). Painting on silk. H.50.2 cm; w.33 cm. EO.1155. **DE**

This representation of an *apsaras* is far more elaborate than the preceding plate. The many areas of damage and retouching detract little from the luminous freshness of the colours, which, though the product of a limited palette, are nevertheless particularly refined.

Drawn with a sure and regular line, perhaps with a reed pen, on a ground of bamboo and flowers, the airborne deity descends almost vertically from the sky, carried by scrolling clouds whose volutes are delicately highlighted with red. This fragment manifestly belonged to a much larger composition. As Mme Nicolas-Vandier has pointed out, some have interpreted this image as a representation of the Mahāsattva *jataka*, in which the bodhisattva throws himself to a starving tigress. This hypothesis seems most improbable given the image's similarity with the *apsaras* motifs depicted in the portable works as well as the wall-paintings. Akiyama believes this to be a representation of an *apsaras*, suggesting that it was originally part of a paradise depiction. While it is true that *apsarasas* are found in paradise paintings, being celestial beings *par excellence*, they also figure in a number of other paintings in which they often appear in pairs, one on either side of the canopy sheltering a buddha or a bodhisattva. A fine example of this type is provided by Stein painting 6 (Whitfield, 1, pl. 7), in which we see two such aerial deities amongst flowers. Riding on clouds, they are depicted at either side of the canopy that hangs over the two *bodhi* trees under which the Buddha sits preaching the Law.

Plate 87
Monk accompanied by a tiger
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on silk. H.79.5 cm; w.54 cm. EO.1138. **JPD**

Thirteen paintings representing a traveller accompanied by a tiger have been discovered at Dunhuang. These works are dispersed amongst the collections of the Musée Guimet (three), the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (four), the British Museum (two), the National Museum of Seoul (one), the State Hermitage in St. Petersburg (one), and, finally, a painting in the private collection of Nakayama Masayoshi in Japan, which seems to have been acquired by the library of Tenri university). Only two of these paintings are executed on silk; these are reproduced in plates 87 and 88. Although the silk paintings display many of the elements found in the works painted on paper, they nevertheless remain quite distinctive.

In all instances of this subject, the figure remains mysterious, despite numerous studies devoted to him. The man appears to be a monk. In this example he walks, wearing gaiters and sandals, over rough and arid ground from which grow a few sparse tufts of grass. He is bent beneath the weight of the enormous basket on his back. The artist's desire for realism is clearly evident in this image. The man appears to be exhausted. The large, curving nose betrays his non-Chinese origin. His head and eyebrows are shaved, and his open mouth is bright red. The edges of his *kāṣāya* are accentuated by a sort of gold braid. In his right hand he holds a rosary and in his left a crooked staff from the top of which a

white volute seems to rise. Several objects hang at his waist, including two knives and a censer. The woven lid of his basket is decorated with florets, while the basket itself contains sūtra scrolls, indicated by red dots surrounded by circles. These unmistakably represent the lacquered ends of the rods used for rolling manuscripts. The scrolls appear to be wrapped in bundles. One large scroll emerges from the top of the basket, and from it there hangs a small censer. The framework of the basket is picked out with gold lines. A fly-whisk (an accessory held by the monk in other representations of this subject), a sort of flag and a few everyday objects are attached to the back of the basket. Two clouds rise upwards from the monk's head; one of these is incomplete, while the other supports a small buddha with halo and nimbus, seated on a lotus. Two birds fly about in the air, while another stands on a rock. A tiger with stylised markings walks at the monk's right side. There is an uninscribed cartouche at the upper right. It is evident from some areas of retouching that the painting has undergone a certain amount of restoration.

Several hypotheses regarding this figure have been put forward. He was initially identified as one of the eighteen *arhats*, Dharmatrātā, who is often represented in the tradition of Tibetan iconography as a monk carrying books. Pelliot, and later Matsumoto Eiichi, cautiously qualified the figure as a travelling monk. Some scholars, including Akiyama Terukazu, have suggested a link between this figure and some later paintings representing the renowned translator and traveller Xuanzang. Basing his theory on the presence of inscriptions in several other paintings (for instance, plate 88, or the paintings in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Pelliot chinois 4074 and 4518[39]), Akiyama argues that the *tathāgata* Baosheng – that is to say, Prabhūtaratna – mentioned in these inscriptions, could have been the patron of monks who travelled through Central Asia. Mme Nicolas-Vandier interprets these pilgrims as images of Baosheng himself. Paul Demiéville and subsequently Whitfield suggest that the *tathāgata* is represented by the small buddha image.[36] These travelling monks do indeed raise many a question, since, with their foreign features, they cannot easily be assimilated with the Chinese monks who went to Central Asia and India in search of texts. With their baskets filled with scrolls rather than with books in the Indian style, they cannot be interpreted as foreign missionaries. According to yet another theory, proposed by Victor Mair,[37] these monks would be wandering actors who transported transformation texts or *chantefables* which they performed for the public with the aid of illustrated scrolls such as that reproduced as plate 91. This hypothesis remains, however, the most conjectural of all these theories.

Plate 88
Monk accompanied by a tiger
Tang dynasty (second half of the 9th century). Painting on silk. H.79.8 cm; W.54 cm. EO.1141. **JPD**

In this painting the wandering monk appears to be stationary while his tiger companion is in motion. The figure's head is shaven and surrounded by a halo. His expression and drawn features show that he is exhausted. His neck is wrinkled and he has bushy eyebrows. He wears a robe and a *kāṣāya*. As we observed earlier, the latter, made of grey-blue cloth covered with white dots, closely resembles that worn by Kṣitigarbha in plate 67. Unlike the other depictions of this subject, he wears short boots.

The ground is dotted with small plants. A wavy horizontal line seems to indicate a sharp change in the level of the ground, while at the same time delimiting the earthly part of the image in relation to the rest which seems more symbolic. A pink volute rising from the lower right corner serves as a background for the figure. In his hands the saintly monk holds a fly-whisk and a long staff whose crook ends in the head of a dragon.

At his side he wears a blue bag tied with a string, from which hang scissors, a duster and other everyday objects. The basket differs from those of the other paintings, in that it is cylindrical and apparently made of cane. It is not clear whether or not it contains any sūtras. Several objects hang from it, including, at the back, a small table for reading sūtras. A cloud or volute curls upwards from the basket's circular lid, though we do not see its top. This, unlike what we find in the other representations of this subject, does not include a small buddha image. There is, on the other hand, a cartouche containing an inscription written firstly in large characters and thereafter in two columns. This reads as follows: "An image of the *tathāgata* Baosheng, painted on behalf of [my] deceased younger brother Zhiqiu on the occasion of the fast of the third period of seven days [after his death], and offered in his praise".[38] Baosheng (Prabhūtaratna) is the first of five or seven *tathāgata* invoked in ceremonies during which offerings of food are made to the starving souls, according to rituals translated in the eighth century by Amoghavajra (*Taishō*, 1316, p. 468a; 1318, p. 471a). The name of Baosheng appears only in one other painting of the itinerant monk, that kept in the Nakayama collection.

The image, bordered by two vertical fillets, is damaged at the top and bottom. The first character of the inscription is incomplete, but the cartouche gives the impression of being undamaged owing to some slight restoration.

Plate 89
Monk accompanied by a tiger
Five Dynasties-Northern Song dynasty (10th century). Painting on paper. H.49.6 cm; W.29.4 cm. MG.17683. **JPD**

This image of the travelling monk with his tiger contrasts with the preceding plates. Not only is it painted on paper, but the figure wears a hat similar to those other works on paper preserved in other collections. The representation is more conventional than in the silk paintings. The monk wears sandals and walks on a cloud which descends from the top to spread out at his feet. A

small haloed buddha can be seen seated on a cloud in the upper left. The monk carries a fly-whisk and a crook. All these elements appear with but a few minor differences in the other paintings on paper. One of these, Pelliot chinois 4029, kept in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, is identical with this work, bar the fact that the figure walks towards the right.

Several rolls containing Buddhist texts are visible on the figure's back, attached to a frame designed for the purpose. R. H.van Gulik has compared this frame with the system of shelves known as *qijia* or *lanjia* ("shelf of the lazy") invented, according to Lu Fayan's Qieyun, by Cao Cao (155-220 AD) in order to read in bed. This type of shelf, reproduced several times in the later works of the Ming dynasty, seems in fact to have been placed against a wall so as to serve as a support for correspondence and small scrolls.[39]

Plate 90
The Buddha Yaoshi (Bhaiṣajyaguru)
Tang dynasty (8th-9th centuries). Illustrated manuscript. H.26.5 cm; total length 132 cm. Bibliothèque Nationale de France: Pelliot chinois 2013. **JPD**

More than half of the hundred-odd monochrome and polychrome paintings preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in fact illustrate manuscripts, either directly accompanying the text or as frontispieces. Two types of arrangement are possible in the former case: a pictorial strip, simultaneous with the text, with one image succeeding another in the upper part of the work; splitting up the text sequentially and alternating the sections of text with the images. The latter format was adopted to illustrate the twelfth *juan* of the *Guanding jing* (*Taishō*, 1331). This chapter is in fact an independent sūtra. Several copies of the apocryphal twelfth chapter, the *Guanding bachu guozui shengsi dedu jing* said to have been translated by Śrīmitra in the 4th century, have been found amongst the Dunhuang manuscripts. Sometime it is given another title, the *Yaoshi jing*, or *Sūtra of Bhaiṣajyaguru*. Only this one is illustrated. It deals with the help given living beings by the *tathāgata* Bhaiṣajyaguru to reach the other bank of the river and to escape suffering, the torments of the hells and rebirth.

The surviving manuscript fragment includes six images, four of which are the same representation of the Buddha and Mañjuśrī. The second image, reproduced here, shows Bhaiṣajyaguru holding the medicine bowl and standing in front of two figures. These are probably the good man and woman mentioned in the sūtra, who will enter the correct path thanks to Bhaiṣajyaguru. The illustration precedes the relevant section of text, as is customary with this alternating type of arrangement.

The almond-shape of Bhaiṣajyaguru's nimbus permitted a reduction in the width of the image. His ogival halo is also quite rare. Akiyama considers this to be one of the oldest illustrated manuscripts, but we feel that this is not at all certain. The criteria of codicological dating incline us towards giving it a relatively late date, attributing it to the ninth century or later. The style of the paintings and of the writing nevertheless suggest the second half of the eighth century. The wear resulting from the work having been rolled up and unrolled has brought about a loss of colour.

Plate 91
The magical fight between Raudrākṣa and Śāriputra
Tang dynasty (9th century). Illustrated manuscript. H.27.1 cm; total length 571.3 cm. Bibliothèque Nationale de France: Pelliot chinois 4524. **JPD. MS**

When the Buddha Śākyamuni had preached the Law and had assembled his first disciples, he had then to find a place in which to establish a permanent monastic community. Sudatta, the minister of King Prasenajit of Kosalā, was converted to Buddhism, and it was he who acquired the Jetavana, the park of the king's son Prince Jeta situated on the outskirts of the capital Śrāvastī, as a gift for the Buddha. Those whom the Buddhists called heretics – that is, the adepts of rival religions and sects – took umbrage at this action. The king organised a contest of magic powers between the Buddhists and their enemies in order to settle the matter. The Buddhist champion was Śāriputra, one of the ten great disciples of the Buddha and known as the wisest. The so-called heretics chose Raudrākṣa, an expert magician, to represent them.

This story has been the object of several popular literary works, made known by the Dunhuang manuscripts and developed from various sources, the closest being a work called the *Sūtra of the Wise Man and the Fool, Xianyu jing* (*Taishō*, 202). Six contests take place one after another, in which Śāriputra and Raudrākṣa rival each other in their magical displays, but each time the Buddha's disciple was able to overcome Raudrākṣa's prowess.

Five scenes survive on this document, each separated by a tree. The protagonists are arranged at either side. On the right we see Śāriputra, seated on a lotus in front of a group of monks over whom floats a small cloud. Raudrākṣa is on the left. The non-Buddhist masters are seated in a tent. One of the contests takes place in the middle. This is the fight between the buffalo created by Raudrākṣa and the lion-king produced by Śāriputra, which, having overwhelmed the former, makes it vanish. The paintings in this scroll succeed each other without any text. We find verses appropriate to each scene arranged at intervals on the back of the scroll. Much ink has flowed on the subject of this arrangement of text and images, from the studies of Mme Nicolas-Vandier and Akiyama Terukazu up to the recent arguments of Victor Mair. Although no other example of this type has been discovered amongst the manuscripts of Dunhuang, there is every reason to believe that the scroll was used to illustrate a form of sermon, during which the images were shown to the audience while the verses written on the back were read out or sung, as the scroll was gradually unrolled.[40]

The same story extolling the wonder of Buddhism is also the subject of large wall-paintings in some of the Dunhuang caves dating to the second half of the ninth

century. Preparatory sketches of these paintings have been preserved amongst the manuscripts, featuring in particular in Pelliot tibétain 1293, reproduced in the present volume as figures 46, 47, 48 and 49.[41]

Plate 92
Illustrations to the Ten Kings Sūtra (detail)
Five Dynasties (first half of the 10th century). Illustrated manuscript. H.29.5 cm; total length 760 cm. Bibliothèque Nationale de France: Pelliot chinois 2003. **MS**

The full title of the *Ten Kings Sūtra* (*Shiwang jing*) is *Foshuo Yanluowang shouji sizhong yuxiu shengqi wangsheng jingtu jing*, the "Sūtra, preached by the Buddha, of the prophecy made to King Yama [in which it is told how] the four classes of being who practise the preliminary [fast] which guarantees life in the seven [periods of seven days of intermediate existence] will be reborn in the Pure Land". This work is one of the important manuscripts discovered at Dunhuang, though it was not totally unknown owing to a Korean edition dated 1429 AD which is very close to the Chinese text, and also a Japanese version revised at an uncertain date. A very interesting detail is that the text is said to have been "expounded" (*shu*) by a certain Zangchuan, a monk from Chengdu in the western province of Sichuan. This is a rare piece of evidence for the links between Dunhuang and this province. Although the text was lost in China, the tradition of the system it sets forth has been preserved up to the present day by means of well-known popular works.

Assembling and ordering diverse elements borrowed from Buddhist beliefs and practices of Chinese origin, the text describes how the soul of a deceased person must come before ten tribunals. The Ten Kings who preside over these are lesser forms of Yama. As we stated earlier in the note to plate 61, Yama himself presides over the fifth court in the presence of Kṣitigarbha. The first seven kings rule over the seven periods of seven days after death, which conform with the old Buddhist idea of the 'intermediate existence'. The other kings pass the judgements which take place on the hundredth day after death, after one year and lastly after three years, and thus reflect funerary practices of purely Chinese origin.

A great many copies of the sūtra were found amongst the manuscripts. Many of these were of a small format, pocket-sized, used by the Buddhist faithful and also copied by them, which explains the numerous mistakes they contain. There are also some copies written on scrolls and illustrated like the present example. The images lend a greater vivacity to an already lively text, and provide some interesting details.

The upper scene shows the second tribunal presided over by the second king, who, like his colleagues, is seated behind a desk on which appears an unrolled scroll. This is either an act of procedure or a list of names. The assessors standing at his sides are the Boys of Good and Evil, though in other scrolls they are simply clerks. These are the same judgement scenes that are depicted in paintings of Kṣitigarbha and the Ten Kings such as plate 63. The illustration also shows the river in which the judged have been pushed by a bull-headed demon (the river is a homophone of *naihe*, "what to do?", in other words "there is nothing one can do"). Two of the damned, wearing cangues, can be seen making their way to the next court having emerged from the river. A woman who has been acquitted steps crosses a bridge, having been led there by a man holding a banner. The text on the left reads as follows: "On the second seven, the deceased cross the river Nai. They ford the waves of the river in their thousands and ten thousands. The bull-headed demons who show them the way carry staffs on their shoulders. The demoniacal henchmen who urge them on brandish their pitchforks".

The lower scene shows the coming of the souls before Yama. The king is dressed in the same fashion as his colleagues, but he also wears the royal hat with a scarlet mortarboard marked with the constellation of the Great Bear and adorned with tassels, as in the paintings. The figure in a deferential posture is no doubt a functionary of the infernal administration. A condemned soul wearing a cangue observes in the "mirror of actions" the crimes he committed during his life. As in all the other illustrated scrolls, we see in it the slaughter of a bull. This seems to have been a serious sin in the eyes of the clergy at that time. Three young Boys run away in fear. We imagine that they have just been sent away by Yama, perhaps after an admonishment, to the next court for another examination. The text reads: "On the fifth seven, Yama ends the questioning. The hate in the hearts of the criminals has not yet softened. Pulled by the hair in order to raise their heads, they look into the mirror of actions. It is only now that they fully understand the actions of their previous life".

The palette is very limited: brown, pale brown, red vermilion and a darker red, orange and almond-green. The lines are simple but the figures are quite well portrayed.

Plate 93
Legendary beasts of good augury
Tang dynasty (8th century). Illustrated manuscript. H.27 cm; total length 460 cm. Bibliothèque Nationale de France: Pelliot chinois 2683. **JPD**

The two images in this plate illustrate a work devoted to animals and objects of good augury, according to an arrangement of text and image known as *shangtu xiawen*, "image above, text below". This form of illustration was fairly common in the earliest printed works.

The incomplete manuscript has no title, but seems to resemble the *Ruiying tu* or the *Xiangrui tu*, which we find mentioned in historical texts and encyclopaedias. According to Matsumoto Eiichi who edited this manuscript, the first works of this type appear to date back to the Han dynasty.[42] The text includes forty-two paragraphs, six of which are concerned with tortoises, thirty-one with dragons and five with the phoenix. Eighteen of these paragraphs are not illustrated. The legends which generally accompany the images are occasionally absent or incomplete.

We see two specimens of the tortoise here. This creature expresses duration, and is linked with divination, allowing a person to foresee what is lucky and what is unlucky. On the left is a tortoise called 'Black warrior', [*Xuan*]*wu*, who advances carrying a serpent on his back; it symbolises the north.

The dragon depicted in the lower image illustrates the famous and often mentioned legend of the Hetu (River Picture). It is said that the mythical emperor Yao found himself at the edge of the Yellow River, when a dragon appeared carrying some sort of two-dimensional representation – we do not know whether this was a grimoire, a map or a diagram. It was, at any rate, supposed to reveal the heavenly mandate allowing him to govern. This kind of literature was greatly developed during the Han dynasty and gave rise to a vast quantity of prophetic writings.

Plate 94
Illustration to the Sūtra of Guanyin
Tang dynasty-Five Dynasties (10th century). Illustrated manuscript. H.27.5 cm; total length 520 cm. Bibliothèque Nationale de France: Pelliot chinois 2010. **JPD**

Often considered an independent work known as the *Sūtra of Guanyin* or *Guanyin jing*, the twenty-fifth chapter of the *Lotus Sūtra* was copied numerous times at Dunhuang. It was also represented visually in the form of paintings, both portable and mural, in which the principal perils from which Guanyin allows escape by means of his intervention were depicted (see plates 72 and 73 of volume one). With these visual representations must be included illustrated manuscripts, four of which have been found amongst the Dunhuang material. One of these, kept in the British Library (s.6983) was published a few years ago by Fukieda Akira.[43] There is another example in the Stein collection of the British Library, in which the monochrome images and text are rather squat and densely-packed (S.5642). The format of both these works is small, resulting in booklets which the faithful could easily have carried about with them. Two pages from such a booklet are found in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Pelliot chinois 4100). The fourth example is, on the other hand, a scroll (Pelliot chinois 2010, partially completed by P.4513). As in the other manuscripts illustrating this sūtra, the space is limited by the upper and lower margins, and is divided into two registers in which the images and text are arranged. The registers are separated by a horizontal line. Every single one of the perils from which Guanyin can save a person is represented. These images often take up more space than the relevant text which is then broken up sequentially and separated by ruled but uninscribed columns.

Plate 94-1 corresponds with the prose section of the sūtra in which all the various divine forms that Guanyin may take in order to preach the Law are listed – *deva, yakṣa, gandharva, asura, garuda, kinnara, mahoraga* and *vajra*-holders. The third image of this extract is a neutral illustration in which only Guanyin and the Buddha's interlocutor, the bodhisattva Akṣayamati, 'Limitless intention' (Wujinyi), are depicted.

The verse section begins with plate 94-2. All the episodes dealing with the perils are taken up and illustrated: if someone seeks to harm one or tries to push one into a fire, Guanyin will transform this fire into a pool; if one is submerged beneath the sea or preyed upon by aquatic demons, if one is about to fall off a precipice, pursued by thieves, assaulted by enemies or bandits, Guanyin will succour one. Whether one is incarcerated, put in irons, threatened with poison or attacked by poisonous dragons, ferocious beasts, vipers and scorpions, as we see in plate 94-3, all these perils will vanish thanks to the bodhisattva Guanyin.

Plate 95
Pishamen (Vaiśravaṇa)
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on paper. H.30 cm; W.11.5 cm. Bibliothèque Nationale de France: Pelliot tibétain 2222. **JPD**

Four paintings on paper representing Vaiśravaṇa are found in the Pelliot tibétain material in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, including some with inscriptions which seem to have been mistaken for Tibetan.

In this example, Vaiśravaṇa wears a crown of Iranian type, and carries a *stūpa* and a three-pronged lance with pennons. He stands with his feet placed on the hands of Pṛthivi. The cartouche on the right, partly covering the *stūpa*, is inscribed in Chinese: "King of the gods Vaiśravaṇa, great saint of the north". An inscription in Khotanese appears beside the deity. The painting's two suspension loops are clearly visible. A third loop can be seen at the bottom of the work.

Plate 96
Monk accompanied by a tiger
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on paper. H.50.5 cm; W.30.6 cm. Bibliothèque Nationale de France: Pelliot chinois 4518(39). **JPD**

Similar to the other representations on paper of the mysterious monk with his companion tiger, this painting bears an inscription on the left: "Praise be to the Buddha *tathāgata* Prabhūtaratna". This refers to the little cloud-borne buddha image above. The gnarled stick, fly-whisk and book-carrying frame are characteristic elements of this iconographical type, as are the figure's hat, long nose, beard and open red mouth. Strips of paper formerly lengthened the central image to give it the appearance of a banner; now, however, only a fragment on the lower edge of the painting survives.

Plates 97, 98 and 99
Ornamental banners
Tang dynasty (8th-9th centuries). Silver on pink silk. Plate 97: Bird with a flowering branch. H.197 cm; W.34 cm. Painted area: H.78 cm; W.22 cm. EO.3586. Plate 98:

Kalaviṅka playing a lute. H.195 cm; W.34 cm. Painted area: H.79 cm.; W.24 cm; EO.3585. Plate 99: Bird with a flowering branch. H.190 cm; W.34 cm. Painted area: H.81 cm; W.23 cm. EO.3584. **DE**

Banners such as these, with their mounts complete and in such extraordinarily fresh condition, are extremely rare. Visibly belonging to the same series, all three must originally have been of the same dark blue-green. Their similarity is striking: almost identical dimensions, damask headpieces containing a floral motif surmounted with silk strips forming a 'roof', side streamers terminating in a lozenge shape and also decorated with floral motifs, and, finally, long ribbons ending in a trapezoidal wooden counterweight. In both subject and technique, the silver compositions recall other ornamental works with a bird motif, such as plate 100 and the ducks taking flight in Stein painting 127 (Whitfield, 2, pl. 31).

In the banners in plates 97 and 99, which seem to form a pair, we see a bird with outspread wings holding in its beak a flowering branch with gently-falling foliage. In the left-hand example, the foliage ends just above three volutes representing auspicious rising clouds. The foliage extends down to the bottom of the right-hand composition. This motif can be linked with the 'bird pecking flowers' motif, widespread in Sassanian Persia and highly prized in Central Asia, China and Japan. Many different types of fowl are represented – duck, the phoenix, falcons, wild geese, parrots, *etc.*, each of which carry an object. The latter include necklaces, flowering branches and tendrils. This motif is widely found at Dunhuang, for instance in the illustration reproduced in the next plate, where two birds hold flowering foliage in their beaks.

A *kalaviṅka* is represented in plate 98. This mythical creature has a human head and upper body, and the lower half of a bird complete with a huge arabesque tail. It usually appears in paradise depictions, playing a musical instrument. There is also a two-headed variety, known as the *jiva-jiva*.[44] Both creatures may be observed at either side of a throne in the lower part of a paradise of Śākyamuni (Stein painting 1; Whitfield, 1, pl. 11-1). In the present case, the creature appears as a bird-woman playing a *pipa*, with a plectrum in her left hand while her right hand presses the strings. Her tail takes the form of a large, leafy decoration. It is interesting that on the magnificent, many-petalled lotus base of a censer, dating to the eighth century and kept in the Shōsō-in in Nara, we find side-by-side the motif of a bird holding a flowering branch in its beak, a *kalaviṅka* and a floral decoration of flowers and fruit. The latter closely resembles the long tail of the mythical bird represented in plate 98. It seems, therefore, quite fair to assume that the association of these three themes which appear in the three Dunhuang banners and on the Shōsō-in censer-base is not fortuitous, but rather reflects an aesthetic fashion in vogue at that time in East Asia. In addition to their decorative value, it seems highly likely that these subjects had an auspicious significance. As Whitfield has suggested, they may evoke the Western Paradise.

Plate 100
Fragment of a banner: two birds and foliage
Tang dynasty (9th century). Silver paint on faded pink silk (*recto verso*). H.37 cm; W.18 cm. EO.1164. **DE**

Painted in silver on fine silk cloth (warp and weft: 60-64 x 40-44 threads per cm [45]), this banner, like the three preceding ones, takes up the fashionable motif of the 'birds pecking flowers'. In the upper part of the painting, below a frieze of garlands and floral ornaments, we see two birds facing each other, their wings outspread, perching on a large central flower and grasping a ring with their beaks. Tendrils curl outwards from the ring, from which hangs the floral motif which occupies most of the composition.

This motif is ordered around two waving branches springing from a single stem, which define a large medallion filled with foliage and a stylised flower. Two more birds appear in the lower part of the painting, but these are damaged and largely missing. Here and there are traces of the side borders.

Plate 101
Two birds with outspread wings (banner headpieces)
Tang dynasty (8th-9th centuries). Painting on hemp cloth. Warp and weft: 21 x 15 threads per cm. H.17.8 + 4 cm; W.32.4 cm. MG.24643. H.17.4 + 5 cm; W.32.2 cm. MG.24646. **DE**

These carmine red headpieces lined with green have kept their original border, which is folded and sewn onto both sides to form a band 3 cm wide. The border is cut from the same red cloth, but without any concern for the arrangement of its motifs. Fragments of side streamers also survive. A coin, together with the inscription "coin in circulation during the Kaiyuan era", is enclosed in the suspension loop fixed to the apex of each headpiece. It is therefore tempting to date these headpieces to that period (713-742 AD), but in fact coins such as these may have been used for decorative purposes well after this time.

Golden-bodied birds with multi-coloured outspread wings are grouped in pairs. Given the repetitive appearance of these motifs, which also appear in other headpieces belonging to this series, it is possible that a stencil was used to reproduce the initial design.[46]

Plate 102
Strip of cloth with foliage scrolls
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on silk. Warp and weft: 44 x 39 threads per cm. H.72 cm; W.17.2 cm. EO.1160. **PM**

Two lotus stems, curving upwards from the base of the composition, intertwine so as to form, alternately, three small ovals and three medallions containing floral motifs. In the heart of the lotus in the central medallion, we see a round, stylised fruit that resembles those represented in the ornamental banner reproduced in plate 98. The luminosity of the calyx of the flower contrasts

with relative opacity of the petals surrounding it. The floral composition is bordered above by a band decorated with floral motifs, a strip of *trompe-l'œil* drapery and a row of pearls, which seem to date from the same period as plates 33, 53 and 54. The lower part terminates in a frieze of polychrome lozenge-shaped tiles, each with a central floret. This bears a close resemblance to what we find in plate 2, though there the 'tiles' are not lozenge-shaped.

The existence of such floral decoration is not in the least surprising when one considers the importance of such adornments in the descriptions of the paradises, especially that of Amitābha.

Plate 103
Strip of cloth with foliage scroll
Tang dynasty-Five Dynasties (9th-10th centuries). Ink on yellow silk. Warp and weft: 40-44 x 26-32 threads per cm. H.860 cm; w.28 cm. EO.3651
See also fig. 56. **PM**

This length of silk, with selvedge and hem, is damaged along its edges and shows several stains. The motif is sober and perfectly symmetrical. It consists of a stem and four leaves, from each of which spring identical foliage elements.

Another long piece of silk, bearing a different and more supple decoration of curving, leafy stems, is also kept in the Musée Guimet (EO.3650). *Cf.* K. Riboud and G. Vial, op. cit., p. 325 and pl. 73, which reproduces both works side-by-side. A is EO.3651 and B is EO.3650.

Plate 104
Strip of cloth with foliage motif
Tang dynasty-Five Dynasties (9th-10th centuries). Red design on blue silk. Warp and weft: 40-50 x 22-26 threads per cm. H.610 cm; w.31 cm. EO.3649. **PM**

This piece of decorated textile is of the same type as the preceding work. Both would have been used during important ceremonies in the temples, when such pieces were suspended to act as decoration and flames in honour of the buddhas. We know, for example, that the monk Yijing, who set off on a pilgrimage to India, was entrusted with such lengths of cloth by the faithful in order to honour the great temples constructed on sites associated with the Buddha's life. This banner has a selvedge and a hem, like the preceding one, but its decoration is slightly different. This consists of a curving stem from which spring leaf sprays, each ending in a particularly long, pointed leaf.

Plate 105
Table-cloth with a motif of a censer, two lions and phoenix
Tang dynasty (9th century). Painting on hemp cloth. H.76 cm; w.92 cm. EO.1174. **DE**

Three pieces of hemp cloth, measuring 25 x 46 cm, 25 x 46.5 cm and 50 x 92.5 cm, are sewn together to form this table-cloth. The sides are hemmed. It is one of a kind as much because of its subject as because of its unusual format. The palette is limited to three colours: black, used for the drawing, pink and bistre. Akiyama believes that the bistre was originally green.

In the middle of the lower register we see a tiered censer surmounted with a flaming jewel. From the top of the censer rise two volutes of incense smoke. The base of the censer rests on a pink-petalled lotus. Two lotus stems emerge from the censer's base, each of which carries a flask of holy water. The base is itself supported by a tripod with feline feet. This type of censer, placed on a table or altar and associated with the two flasks, appears in a number of paintings – for instance, in the representation of Amoghapāśa, plate 78-1 of volume one. This motif, along with traces of burning in the lower part of the cloth, suggest that the work was used as an altar-cloth during ceremonies. Two winged lions spew vapour at each side of the censer. The mouth of the lion on the right is open, while the other's is shut. In the upper part of the cloth, we see two phoenix, their wings outspread, their tails held high, supported by two lotus blossoms linked by a single stem. They each hold a stem in their beak, which join together in a single flower. A border containing floral motifs frames the composition.

Plate 106
Sūtra-wrapper (jingzhi) recto (for verso see Fig.62)

Tang dynasty (7th-8th century). Material: Warp: sized silk, fairly variable S-ply. Weft: bamboo splints. Technique: Silk warp threads twined around bamboo wefts. Overall size: H.44.7 cm; w.29 cm. Repeat: varies in the individual bands; the broad bands in the centre feature only a single repeat; the remaining bands have a repeat approximately every 1.5, 3.0 or 6.3 cm. EO. 1208. **KR**

This sūtra-wrapper is made up of fine strips of bamboo, and polychrome silk threads forming the decoration. While the warp threads are silk, fine strips or splints of bamboo, assembled with great care, have been used to form the weft. The polychrome silk threads are wound with great skill around the strips of bamboo. Each of the latter has been inserted between the two silk threads twisted around each other like twine (the technical term for this kind of structure is "twined warp"). The two threads in each twist make either a complete turn, or a half turn, around each bamboo splint. If they make a complete turn, then the same colour remains visible on the *recto*; if a half-turn, then there is a change of colour. Two other sūtra-wrappers in the Pelliot collection (fig.58 and 59 [EO.1200]; fig.60 and 61 [EO.1209/1]) have exactly the same structure. The sūtra-wrapper MAS 859 in the British Museum, which is very similar to those in the Pelliot collection, has already been published. (Whitfield, vol.3, pl.7).

Each of the three wrappers in the Pelliot collection has nine separate bands of decoration, with geometric forms or stylised flowers, which are variations of

baoxianghua or precious flowers. In the one illustrated here, we can see that the bands alternate between wide (about 18 mm) and narrow (7 mm). The width of plain bamboo between them is about 12 mm. Two of the wider bands show sections of floral scrolls framing a small floret, while the other two wider bands have a symmetrical decoration of lines and large florets. The two narrow bands near the edges serve as framing elements. Originally, such sūtra-wrappers of bamboo and silk were almost always protected on all four sides by a piece of precious patterned silk, so as to protect the ends of the bamboo strips.

Among the thirteen wrappers for Buddhist ritual texts that are kept in the middle section of the Shōsō-in and in other monasteries such as the Jingo-ji, there are wrappers of bamboo and silk. The impressive exhibition of Japanese art treasures, shown at the Tokyo National Museum in 1990, displayed two important sūtra-wrappers (nos. 156 and 157 in the catalogue). Both of these had been offered to the Jingo-ji by Goshirakawa Hōō (an emperor who had become a monk), and date from the Heian period (twelfth century). In both of these wrappers, the bamboo splints are dyed black, and all four edges are framed by fine patterned silks, orange in colour. The famous wrapper for the *Konkōmyō Saishō-ō-kyō*, also made of bamboo splints and silk threads (with the bamboo entirely covered by the twined silk), bears the date 742 AD in Chinese characters. So, this extremely rich collection of eighth to twelfth century sūtra-wrappers preserved in Japan shows a certain uniformity in format that was the rule in China and Japan at that time. It is thought that each wrapper held ten scrolls.

These sūtra-wrappers made of fine bamboo splints, together with silk for decoration, correspond to the Buddhist spirit. The recent finds at a site in Jiangsu, and the those kept in Japanese collections, bear witness to this.

Note to figure 62 (verso of EO.1208)
The *verso* of the sūtra-wrapper (pl.106 and fig.62 [EO.1208]), as can be seen in the illustration, had been strengthened on the back by sundry pieces of paper, now yellowed. The nine vertical columns (one on the left mounted upside down) bear Chinese characters written in ink by various hands. There are four different pieces of paper in all, bearing nine columns of text (the last column on the left has been stuck on upside down). The Chinese text shows that originally one of these fragments was an important military pass, which also served as credentials. Some official titles and names of persons are mentioned on it: a) Protector of the army, *hujun*, named Linghu huaiji; b) Head of services, *zhushi*, named Shilun; c)secretary-scribe, *shulingshi*, named Su Chun. There are also impressions of seals in red.

Plate 107
Sūtra-wrapper (jingzhi). Tang dynasty (8th century). Paper and silk. *Brocade*: Warp threads: Z-ply. Supplementary warp: Z-ply. *Kesi*: Warp: raw silk. Weft: silk, with no appreciable twist. *Base taffeta*: warp: raw silk. Weft: raw silk. *Lining on the back*: warp: raw silk. Weft: raw silk. Overall size: H.67.5 cm; L. about 24.5-25 cm. Repeat: H.incomplete; W.24.5-25 cm. Technical specification: Weft-faced compound weave with 5 complementary wefts; plain silk; *kesi* bands. EO 1199. **KR**

This sūtra-wrapper, or roll for manuscripts, is made up of six pieces of patterned polychrome silk, a piece of plain silk taffeta, and two bands of polychrome silk done in the *kesi* technique. The middle of the wrapper is made of a green silk taffeta, now discoloured brown, pasted on a backing paper. The wrapper, which is rectangular, ends in a triangular point which served to fasten it. The six pieces of patterned silk were cut from a larger piece which originally had a stunning design; these pieces were used to make up the borders and the triangular end. The centre of the wrapper was reinforced by the two narrow bands of silk *kesi*. The manuscripts themselves were usually grouped in sets of ten and then rolled up in this wrapper, whose triangular end was then hooked up.

An identical wrapper, made up in a similar way from pieces of silk from the very same textile, allowed Stein to reconstruct the original pattern. This was the wrapper MAS 858 in the British Museum. His reconstruction shows a design of confronting lions in the middle of pearled medallions. The lions are shown with a stylised mane and with short wings. Inspired by the Orient, that is, Sasanian Persia, this design seems to have been executed outside central China; some experts consider that the silk had been woven in Sogdiana. What seems certain is that a draw loom was employed for this complex pattern, known as samite (warp-faced compound twill). We can also note that the pearled medallions are not decorated with the usual round pearls, but that they are surrounded with petal or flame-shaped motifs, probably a sign of Buddhist influence. The two narrow bands of silk in *kesi* technique are, as far as we know, the first time that this technique was used in China. Some authors have suggested that it was brought to China by peoples coming from outside her borders, by the Uighurs for example. Four items in the Pelliot collection are executed in this technique: (pl.123 [EO.1193/N]; pl.107 [EO.1199]; pl. 122 [EO.1203/A]; fig.63 [EO.1207]): all of them are decorated with motifs arranged in zig-zag fashion. Item 1193N also has one lacquered and gilt weft wrapped in gold leaf.

We come across a certain similarity of form and construction between this wrapper and the magnificent wrapper for the *Konkōmyō Saishōōkyō* (*Saishō-ō* or *Saisō-ō*) kept in the Shōsō-in. The materials used in the Japanese sūtra-wrapper are fine splints of bamboo, and silk. The borders are of polychrome patterned silk. In this particular case, the very fine bamboo splints are entirely covered by silk threads of violet and white; the decoration, which is typical of the Tang dynasty, features two medallions with floral motifs, rinceaux and thirty-four characters. Besides these, there are motifs of human heads. An inscription gives the date of the fourteenth year of the Tempyō reign, corresponding to 742 in our calendar. Originally, this wrapper must have held the ten scrolls of the *Saishō-ō-kyō*, one of the sūtras most in fashion in the Nara period. In fact, in 741, Emperor

Shōmu had decreed the construction of state Buddhist temples in every province, known as *kokubun-ji*, for monks, and *kokubun-niji*, for nuns. He stipulated that a copy of the *Saishō-ō-kyō* should be installed in each temple, to bring about peace and for the protection of the realm. Of all the textiles in the Shōsō-in, this wrapper is the oldest to bear a precise date.

Plate 108
Fragments of silk decorated in reserve
Tang dynasty (8th-9th century). Taffeta with *jiaxie* (clamp-resist) decoration. Material: warp and weft: plain silk. Overall dimensions: H.22.5 cm; W.21.5 cm. Design repeat: incomplete. EO. 1192/A. **KR**

This item is composed of two silk fragments, one triangular, the other rectangular, cut from the same piece of cloth and sewn together. They make up a small banner, with a triangular top, and whose central rectangular portion is now lost. Such votive banners, of typical shape, were usually made up of fragments of cloth that were thought precious, and were probably pious offerings made by Buddhist pilgrims. The triangular top has a plain border of 4-5 mm. wide. Although the repeat is incomplete, floral motifs with multiple radiating petals can be made out, sometimes with buds.

The ornament must have been done by the resist method known as *kyōkechi* in Japanese, and *jiaxie* in Chinese. The cloth, undyed to start with, appears to be degummed (or only to have kept a little of its sericin). Colours such as blue-green (indigo) and red were subsequently applied with the *jiaxie* technique. To do this, the cloth was compressed between carved boards, leaving areas of reserve or resist in between which the colours were successively introduced.

Plate 109
Silk fragment with the central part decorated in resist.
Tang dynasty (8th-9th century). Taffeta with *jiaxie* decoration. Material: warp and weft: plain silk. Overall dimensions: Sides: 30-33 cm; Diagonal: 37 cm. Design repeat: H.: incomplete; W.Incomplete. EO. 1192/C-1. **KR**

The piece shown here is just the triangular head of the banner. The yellow, orange and greenish blue colours on an undyed ground were obtained by the *jiaxie* clamp-resist technique and the differently coloured patches constitute an internal four-part design. The quite large central motif is about 14 mm square. It may be that each motif was individually worked out, in the *jiaxie* technique, and not by folding. There are similar examples, from the same cloth, both in the British Museum (MAS 886) and in the Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg. The latter was brought from Dunhuang in 1914-1915 by the Russian scholar Sergei Oldenburg. All three items have plain silk borders.

Plate 110
Three banner streamers, painted plain silk.
Tang dynasty (8th-9th century). Painted taffeta. Material: warp and weft: plain silk. Overall dimensions: Streamer no. 1. H.85 cm; W.4 cm; Streamer no. 2. H.86 cm; W.4 cm; Streamer no. 3. H.45 cm; W.7 cm. Design repeat: incomplete. EO. 1204. **KR**

These long painted streamers were for the lower part of the banners. In China, during the Tang dynasty, the latter had a triangular headpiece, side and bottom streamers. One should note that the lower part generally had three or five streamers. In the present case, it is difficult to know if all three streamers, long ago separated, were from the same item or from different banners. In several cases, the ends of such streamers are of pointed shape, while in others they are fastened in a narrow strip of wood, which is often painted, as a counterweight.

The streamer on the left is decorated with typical Chinese motifs of the Tang period, showing a bird with outstretched wings (a duck, symbol of happiness and fidelity) holding a lotus bud in its beak and standing on a plant. Other flowers with stems and flowers also decorate this streamer. The middle streamer shows a boy playing the flute, kneeling on a flowering lotus. This motif of young boys represents reborn souls, evoking the Pure Land of the West, or Sukhāvātī. The same subject is represented on the painted banner EO.1152 from the Pelliot collection, on a mural painting in Cave 112 at Dunhuang, and most of all in the patterned silk borders of the sūtra-wrappers made of fine bamboo strips and kept in the Jingo-ji in Japan. Streamer no. 3, partly torn along the fold, has stylised floral motifs and butterflies. It is just possible that this was part of a different banner.

Plate 111
Lower part of a banner, partly cut, painted plain silk.
Tang dynasty (8th-9th century). Painted taffeta. Material: warp and weft: plain silk (originally undyed). Overall dimensions: H.60- 64 cm; W.of each strip about 4 cm; W.of the base: 14-15 cm. EO. 1198. **KR**

This item was undoubtedly intended to form the lower part (corresponding to the lower streamers) of a votive banner. There are other similar streamers in the Pelliot collection, with minor variations of decoration. We have already noticed that the lower streamers were usually divided into separate streamers, all the same width and finely hemmed (rolled) along the cut edges: after which each streamer was separately and carefully sewn to the lower end of the main part of the banner. Here, the streamers have not been cut from top to bottom: they have been cut only for part of their length, simulating three separate ribbons. Their edges have been hemmed but the end has not been cut (perhaps this part was intended to wrap around a wooden board). Though not numerous, streamers of this type from Dunhuang can be found in various collections; they may have been in use between the end of the eighth and the beginning of

the ninth century ad.

Each streamer is adorned with waving stems which reach from top to bottom. Here, these stems are furnished with large toothed leaves and tendrils in alternation. Analysis of pigments carried out in the Louvre laboratories on drawings in black of the same type, lead to the conclusion that they were done in Chinese ink, with brushed details.

Plate 112
Fragments of resist-decorated silk
Tang dynasty (8th-9th century). Taffeta with resist decoration. Material: warp and weft: undyed silk. H.22-22.5 6 cm; w.11 cm and 6 cm. Design repeat: H.7.5 cm; W.9cm. EO. 1196 *ter.* **KR**

The decoration of these small fragments is composed of green motifs with undyed edges on a vermilion ground. They make up a stylised floral motif, with four branches (somewhat resembling clouds) and ending in opposing volutes. Another four-lobed modif, with undyed borders (the original colour of the fabric) and a rather regular green central spot, can be seen in all the spaces in between. The design is repeated every 7.5 cm in height and every 9 cm in width, approximately. From such small fragments, it is difficult to be sure if the design was printed or dyed in the *jiaxie* technique. According to the eminent specialist from the Basle Ethnographic Museum, Dr A. Buhler, who examined all the resist designs in the Pelliot Collection [47]: in the case of clamp-resist dyeing, "the fabric may be, either compressed between two carved boards leaving reserves between which colours are introduced, or compressed between a carved board and a plain board pressed against it. A similar method is known in Japanese as *itajime-shibori*."

One should note that among a dozen pieces of textile decorated in resist in the Pelliot collection, all are in fine silk taffeta; in all these cases the fabric appears to have been de-gummed or at least retains only little sericin.

Plate 113
Two pieces of painted patterned silk.
Tang dynasty (8th-9th century). Material: warp and weft: plain silk. Overall dimensions: H. about 28 cm; W. about 6.5- 6.7 cm. Design repeat: incomplete in both directions. Technical specification: Damask with twill ground, painted. EO. 1195. **KR**

According to the details accompanying these pieces, they were originally part of a monochrome patterned silk (damask on a twill ground) which was part of a banner headpiece (the border). In their present state, they have been unfolded and laid flat. One of the fragments still has its border, but they have been almost worn through at the fold and both fragments have suffered considerable damage. The damask ground motifs, which were probably floral, cannot now be made out, but the painted motifs, well spaced out and consisting of opposing scrolls with waving tails, are obviously intended as clouds. This decoration, so well represented in the Tang period, is in a fine black colour; the motifs are painted on the coral ground of the damask with a kind of paste (perhaps lacquer applied with a brush?).

Plate 114
Two silk fragments (A & B) decorated in reserve
Tang dynasty (8th-9th century). Painted damask with twill ground. Material: warp and weft: raw silk. Overall dimensions: A (on the left) H.61 cm; W.6.5 cm. B (on the right) H.32.5 cm; W.5.5 cm. Design repeat: A: H.about 13 cm: W.Incomplete; B. H.and W.both irregular. EO. 1196 *bis.* **KR**

The width and length of these two fragments lead us to imagine, from their shape, that they were made as streamers, but they could also have been used to fasten documents, or even simply as borders. The multi-lobed motifs on A are drawn using bright colours such as yellow, greenish blue and pink beige on an undyed ground in alternating triangles. In the centre is band of plain yellow in a zig-zag. The fragment is rolled (hemmed) for the full height. According to A. Bühler, this silk, which does not show the full repeat in the width, might have been decorated in the *jiaxie* technique.[48] Since it is so narrow, it is difficult to know whether the fabric was folded in order to produce the effect seen in the pattern.

Fragment B has small undyed patches (obtained by tie-dyed reserve) on a brown ground, and shows clearly that the *shibori* technique (*kōkechi*, or *jiaoxie* in Chinese) was used. There are very similar pieces from Dunhuang in the British Museum and the State Hermitage Museum. This technique was known to the Chinese, especially in Xinjiang, from the time of the Western Liang (AD 400-423). In 1967, two fragments of silk fabric with bright colours and tie-dyed points were found in the Astana cemetery, in tomb no. 85; they were dated by a funerary inscription to the year 418. It would seem that this technique, used at so early a date, might have been an importation to China from the peoples of the frontier.

Plate 115
Fragment of polychrome patterned silk
Tang dynasty (8th century). Weft-faced compound weave with 3 complementary wefts (the first broken), weft-faced on both faces. Material: warp: plain silk; weft: silk with no discernible twist. Dimensions: H.12 cm; W.5.5 cm. Design repeat: H. about 5.3 cm: W. about 1.75 cm; EO. 1193/F. **KR**

The ornament of this silk fragment consists of horizontal rows of medallions with a centre point surounded by spots, and rows of 'swastikas'. This decoration, in faded pink and ivory colours, is set on a ground of dark blue. The 'swastika' motif is an ancient solar symbol prevalent in the Buddhist repertory. It has been said that in the beginning, Buddhism adopted the wheel and the'swastika', meaning in Sanskrit 'well-being', as its principal emblems. At Dunhuang, Stein had found frag-

ments of gauze intended to form the pointed triangular ends of streamers for banners (MAS 954 and MAS 904). There were also gauzes that had been cut into narrow strips to make ribbons (MAS 953). Some very tiny fragments of gauze, purple in colour, have geometric designs, with 'swastikas' among them (MAS 901 and MAS 903). All the above-mentioned fragments were doubtless intended for making banners. Today they are kept in the British Museum, with another fragment Ch.00313 in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

In the course of his expedition among the ruins of Kara-Khoto, Stein had found fragments of silk. The designs on some of them had been created with a kind of reserve dyeing; among them was one small fragment dyed in indigo with *laxie* wax-resist motifs (Japanese: *rokechi*). This fragment has 'swastikas' (KK.II.033, in the collection of the National Museum, New Delhi).

Clearly, although the silk fragment EO.1193/F (pl.115) is woven in weft-patterned brocade and if its silk threads suggest a Chinese provenance, the appearance of the 'swastika' motifs on the pieces that have been mentioned indicates a Buddhist contribution made by peoples who had come from Central Asia.

Plate 116
Fragment of patterned silk.
Tang dynasty (8th-9th century). Weft-faced compound weave with 2 complementary wefts, weft-faced on both faces. Material: warp: plain silk; weft: silk with no appreciable twist. Overall dimensions: H.29.4 cm; W.5.5 - 5.7 cm. Design repeat: H.about 17 cm: W.incomplete; EO. 1203/H. **KR**

This fragment is a silk with a two-coloured design in pale beige on an orange-brown (or plum-coloured) ground; there is a wavy branch (fairly thick) which runs the length of the fragment, with stylised flowers and leaves on each side. Down the centre of this wavy branch is a fine line of the same colour as the ground, orange-brown. Since the repeat of the design is not complete, we can only note that some of the leaves (or flowers?), made up of three parts, are bound at the base by a double tie, and curve over to make scrolls that follow the movement and contours of the wavy branch.

We know that a great number of silks used for ritual purposes were found at Dunhuang by Stein, Pelliot, Oldenbourg and Otani. Most recently, numerous patterned silks, that had previously remained unpublished in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, have been brought to light. These small fragments offer a considerable field of research and are being examined. They are important both for their technique and for their iconography. The present fragment has two interesting aspects: in the first place, although it is fragmentary, and although the design shows some western influence, this silk is unquestionably a Chinese production, on the basis of the quality of the silk filament and the fineness of the weaving. Secondly, this fabric in the weft-faced technique with two complementary wefts is weft-faced on both sides, which is unusual. The warp threads separate the wefts, only uncovering the one needed for the design, and concealing the unused weft on the reverse. On the *recto* the wefts are in 2:1 twill but there is not the usual reversal of this pattern in 2:1 warp twill on the *verso*. So both sides of the fabric are wholly weft-faced. According to the expert D. de Jonghe, "this type of structure is a variant of the weft-faced brocade such as is only now to be found in Chinese textiles dating from the Tang dynasty. Nevertheless, the draw-loom [used for this weave] must have changed considerably in comparison with the drawloom used for ordinary weft-faced brocade." According to him "this shows that the Chinese weavers were the first to put this combination into practice."[49]

Plate 117
Fragment of two-colour patterned silk
Tang dynasty (8th century). Weft-faced compound weave with 2 complementary wefts. Material: warp: Z-ply silk; weft: silk with no apparent twist. Overall dimensions: H.27 cm; W.25.6 cm. Design repeat: incomplete in both directions
EO. 1201. **KR**

This fragment, tattered and threadbare, shows us just the lower part of a bird, with one foot raised: it is certainly a phoenix. The bird is framed by stems, tendrils and leaves of a vine, with curving bunches of grapes with pointed ends. At the lower left, there is the beginning of another framed motif in lozenge shape. This is made up of similar parts with added buds, and seems to contain a stylised floral motif. At the upper right there is the Chinese character *ji* (happiness). At first sight, this silk appears to be single colour: actually it is two-coloured, with a cream pattern on a beige ground. The fabric is a compound weft-faced weave, composed of two equal wefts in cream and beige silk. This two-coloured patterned silk seems to have been woven on a drawloom and would have needed more than seven hundred pulley-cords.

Another weft-faced brocade fragment preserved in the Shōsō-in,[50] has a pattern that is very close to EO.1201 (pl.117): a phoenix, with one foot raised, is shown in its entirety. This item, used to cover an arm-rest, was offered to the Tōdai-ji by Empress Kōmyō, the twenty-first day of the sixth moon of the eighth year of Tempyō-shōhō (756 AD). Comparing the ornament and the weaving quality with EO.1201, the noted author Kaneo Matsumoto remarked that the Shōsō-in piece was less refined than EO.1201. He thought that the fragment was part of a group of silks kept in the Shōsō-in, having the same ornament, the same structure, and used for other great ceremonies. A large banner with the same phoenix design was used at the ceremony to commemorate the first anniversary of the death of Emperor Shōmu (756).[51] It is likely that EO.1201, which was doubtless woven in China, was the model for the silks kept at Nara, which Matsumoto considers to have been woven in Japan. It is interesting to note that in China, a phoenix perching on one foot had already been represented as

part of the architectural ornament in stone in a lunette of the tomb of Yang Zhiyi, now in the Beilin in Shaanxi province and dated 736 AD. On a rubbing of this stone lunette, we see two phoenixes each with a raised foot, in the midst of floral motifs, scrolling stems and leaves, just like EO.1201 and the examples in the Shōsō-in. The phoenix, a mythical and auspicious bird, is purely Chinese in origin; and the leaves and scrolls are Tang in style. On the other hand, it is possible that the bunches of grapes, also visible on another silk in the Shōsō-in,[52] are due to Mediterranean influence.

Plate 118
Fragment of patterned silk (left: verso; right: recto)
Tang dynasty (8th-9th century). Weft-faced compound weave with 3 complementary wefts, used intermittently. Material: warp and binding warp: Z-ply silk; weft: silk with no appreciable twist. Overall dimensions: H.14.5 cm; W.3-8.5 cm. Design repeat: H.4.5 cm; W.3 cm. EO. 1201. **KR**

In this fragment, similar to one kept in the British Museum (MAS 922, Ch.00178), heart-shaped or floral motifs of cream colour appear on a dark beige ground. However, the reverse of this fragment (seen on the left) reveals both the original colours and the horizontal bands of colour in the weft, alternately bright blue and orange-yellow. Clearly visible here are six rows of motifs one above the other, and the beginning of a seventh. These heart-shaped motifs, arranged in staggered rows, have pointed ends, and are coloured according to the rows, either in blue or beige (the colour has faded). The horizontal bands visible on the reverse are the supplementary wefts used to obtain the contrasting effect. Under the microscope, five colours have been identified, three wefts being in continuous use, while the other two wefts are used intermittently (see also the commentary to pl.119). This is a subtle technique used in weft-faced brocades to achieve the maximum of contrast between the different colours. Thus, in the Shōsō-in silks we can find a great number of colours used with this technique in bands and interrupted bands of colour. The famous *biwa* cover,[53] with *karahana*, is one example of this; it is a weft-faced weave in which more than ten colours appear using the same method.

Plate 119
Fragment of patterned silk
Tang dynasty (8th-9th century). Weft-faced compound weave with 4 complementary wefts (the third used intermittently and the fourth interrupted). Material: warp and binding warp: Z-ply silk; weft: silk with no apparent twist. Overall dimensions: H.5 cm; W.21,5-26.2 cm. Design repeat: H.: incomplete; W.17.3 cm. EO. 1203/E. **KR**

In this silk fragment, which is brightly coloured, one can easily make out the lower part of four-footed animals, which seem to be advancing, within a pearled medallion of Sasanian type. The upper part of their bodies is missing, but one can see that the body of each animal is ornamented with two four-leaved motifs. Two fine fragments in the British Museum complete the design (MAS 862 a & b).

The style is different from typical Chinese designs, and resembles EO.1199 (pl.107) in conception and spirit. This style of ornament has led some authors to suggest a Sogdian origin of the seventh century. One should note that in the last forty years, several silks of this type, usually in weft-faced brocade, have been excavated from the Astana cemetery in Xinjiang. In that region, the faces of the dead were covered with a circular face-mask (*fumian*) whose upper part incorporated a medallion in a circle of large pearl motifs, inside which were quadruped animals or other motifs. All of them are dated in the middle of the eighth century. It is beyond doubt that this kind of ornament was introduced from outside China. Following examination, we can confirm that there are other characteristics to distinguish them from Chinese work, as for example, while they are woven in weft-faced brocade, the weaving is looser, the threads slightly thicker, and most of the colours are fugitive. In this particular example, the ground colour (a faded pink) is fairly well preserved, while more than seven colours have been used for the pattern. Both intermitent and interrupted weft techniques have been used. The intermittent technique involves the substitution from time to time of a differently coloured weft in order to obtain a greater variety of colours in the weft. The interrupted technique, in textiles with several supplementary wefts, the main weft for a time does not appear on the surface of the fabric. Here, the technique has been very skilfully employed.

Plate 120
Fragment of polychrome patterned silk (left: verso; right: recto).
Tang dynasty (most probably 8th century). Patterned twill with multiple warps, recto entirely warp-faced. Material: warp: silk dyed as thread, *organsin*; weft: silk partly degummed. Overall dimensions: H.25.5 cm; W.3.1 cm. Design repeat: H.:5.1 cm (4 repeats = 20.1 cm); W. Incomplete. EO. 1203/C. **KR**

This silk fragment, cut to a narrow band, would appear at first sight to have been made as a banner streamer. But there are two or three similar bands, with the same colours and ornament, sewn together in oblong fashion. One such, found by Stein at Dunhuang, is in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London (Ch.liv.005). Its shape recalls the fastening at the top of the *jingzhi* sūtra-wrappers EO.1199 (pl.107) and the *Konkōmyō* of the Shōsō-in, dated 742. Thus it is difficult to determine the original use of this band, though it was certainly for ritual use. Concerning its decoration, this is very similar to three other bands in the Pelliot collection (EO.1193*bis*, though with a beige ground colour). In the Stein, Oldenbourg and Otani collections (this last in the Ryūkoku collection, Kyoto), there are similar narrow bands, with similar kinds of pattern. On this fragment the pattern is made up of eight-pointed ro-

settes made up of little florets; they are linked to a concave-sided hexagon enclosing a six-lobed central rosette. Between the rosettes is an incomplete motif of another kind (probably a four-sided palmette). This specimen has 200 warp threads and 30.6 wefts per cm. The structure used in the Pelliot bands is the same as in EO.1206 (pl.121), that is "patterned twill with multiple warp threads, wholly warp-faced"; as has already been mentioned, this weave suggests that it was made in the seventh to eighth centuries.

Pl. 121.
Fragment of polychrome patterned silk.
Tang dynasty (7th- 8th century). Material: warp and weft: raw silk. Overall dimensions: H.67 cm, W.18 cm (the pattern woven in the direction of the weft). Design repeat: H.: 4.5 - 5.4 cm; W.10.2 - 10.6 cm. Technical specification: Twill brocade with multiple warps, *recto* entirely warp-faced. EO. 1206. **KR**

These are two similar fragments, A and B, the same size. The selvedge on both sides of the main piece shows the original width of the textile: 52 cm. The decoration on this silk seems to consist of stylised plant motifs, arranged in alternation; each of these is made up of three elements with a curved contour, spread out roughly in the form of a circle. Some might think that this design in yellow and old gold on a faded blue ground (we think that the blue threads were originally dyed in indigo) might suggest theatrical masks (rather than plant motifs) as with some textiles in the Shōsō-in.[54] In this particular case, one should note that the upper element, a kind of skull-cap which is hemispherical above and trilobate below, has a nick in the top, but only on every other row. This difference in the motif might be due to a minor fault in the setting-up of the loom, but we think that the effect was intended. A recent study of two fragments from the Stein collection, in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, allow us to put forward this alternative theory. In that collection, two streamers with triangular ends (Ch.00366 a & b) intended for making up banners, show exactly the same motif, with almost identical colours and a pattern of the same size. We noted that in every other row, there was a deliberate slight change in the motif.

The technique adopted in this silk is of considerable interest: instead of having been made in the technique of "patterned taffeta with multiple warps and *recto* entirely warp-faced" (a technique that was in use throughout the Han dynasty), a twill weave with warp-faced *recto* was used here. This kind of weave shows a mastery of technical skill, although specialists consider that this does not necessarily imply a change in the kind of loom used since the Han dynasty. A new type of look only appears when the samite weave (entirely twill with dominant weft) begins to be used. It is interesting to note that in the Victoria and Albert Museum Stein collection there are some fragments of silk which show a twill weave with warp-faced *recto*, but most of them are in monochrome silk with little geometrical motifs which, in our opinion, might be an intermediary stage between the warp-faced and weft-faced, and which should generally be dated from the seventh century onwards. To our knowledge, the fragments illustrated here (pl.120 [EO. 1203/C]) are among the last (dating between the seventh and eighth centuries) with a twill decor and a *recto* that is entirely warp-faced.

Plate 122
Fragment of silk kesi tapestry
Tang dynasty (7th-8th century). *Kesi* tapestry (Japanese: *tsuzure-ori*). Material: warp: raw silk with S-ply; weft: silk with no appreciable twist. Highlights in gold-leafed paper (*pianjinxian*). Overall dimensions: H.56.5 cm; W.from 2.6 to 3.3 cm. Design repeat: H.: about 6.8 cm; W.Incomplete. EO. 1203/A. **KR**

This strip, with a light ground, is a complete width, and is extremely important, since it is among the very first entirely silk tapestries from China that have come down to us (there are some in other collections). In the Pelliot collection, we have noted two ribbons of the same kind which were sewn parallel to each other in the central part of the *jingzhi* sūtra-wrapper EO.1199 (pl.107); two others were applied in the same way to the sūtra-wrapper EO.1207 (fig.63).

Stein had brought some wool tapestries from the Tarim basin, manifestly of local manufacture, or, when the patterns were more sophisticated, imported from the Near East. Modern Chinese textile specialists call these woollen tapestries by the name of *kemao*, but the first appearance of the characters *kesi* is only in the Song dynasty. These ribbons, or bands of silk, which for us today are classical tapestries, with slits or relays, are an important new development. In this weaving technique, the weft threads of a particular colour lie unused until they are needed for a new element of the design. Because of this, they float on the back between the end of one element to the beginning of the next. Despite the lack of sophistication in the geometrical design, we have noted that in the present case, the workmanship was very carefully done; on the reverse the floating weft threads almost appear like embroidery. In the Pelliot fragment, another important fact is the gold effect obtained by threads or strips of gold, used in small flecks around some of the motifs. This use of gold threads, in the Tang period, is found in the *kesi* strip in the British Museum (MAS 907) and in some very precious fragments in the Shōsō-in. In the Stein and Pelliot collections, we have only noted the use of the *pianjinxian* method (gold-leafed paper), while in the Shōsō-in collection, dated to the eighth century in the Tang dynasty, two distinct methods are used, namely:

a) *pianjinxian*, where gold leaf is pasted on paper and then cut into fine strips [55]

b) *nianjinxian* where the gold strips are rolled around a silk core.[56] In the Shōsō-in, there are also some embroideries where the contours of the motifs have been embroidered in gold. As far as we know, the use of gold in silk textiles was not very widespread in the Tang dy-

nasty during the eighth century, but, on the contrary, was to be found in abundance in the Jin and Yuan dynasties.

Plate 123
Fragment of silk kesi tapestry
Tang dynasty (most probably 8th- 9th century). *Kesi* tapestry (Japanese: *tsuzure-ori*). Material: warp: raw silk; weft: silk with no appreciable twist, and gold-leafed paper. Overall dimensions: H.18.5 cm; W.1.3 cm. Design repeat: H.: about 5.5 cm; W.Incomplete. EO. 1193/N. **KR**

This *kesi* fragment, very narrow in the centre, has a similar ornament to the fragment in the British Museum (MAS 907, Ch.00300). Stein thought that these fragments were hanging loops, and one can imagine that the narrowed section in the Pelliot example might have been caused by the piece being folded in two and this fold being the suspension point. This strip of *kesi* is the finest in design and execution of the seven pieces in the Pelliot collection. Motifs in various colours are set on a lapis lazuli blue ground: the density is 70-80 threads per cm. Examination with the microscope has shown, as with the piece in the British Museum, the use of specks of gold leaf on paper. Schuyler V. Cammann has explained the appearance of this kind of *kesi* with narrow strips and geometric designs, dating to between the eighth and ninth centuries, by the theory that Uighurs from the north might have introduced this kind of technique and design to China.[57] But a recent archaeological discovery, dated 694 AD by means of the associated funerary furnishings, means that we should revise this theory.[58] In 1973, Chinese archaeologists found a female funerary figurine in tomb no. 206 at Astana, which was dressed in original fragments of silk of the period and with a belt made of this kind of *kesi*. The Uighurs were not known in this region at this time, and so it is difficult to know what peoples might have introduced this technique and design into north China. These *kesi* strips are of great interest.

Plate 124
Fragment of embroidery on monochrome patterned silk
Tang dynasty (8th- 9th century). Ground of patterned twill weave, embroidered in satin stitch. Material: warp and weft: raw silk. Overall dimensions: H.15 cm, W.8 cm. Design repeat: incomplete. EO. 1191/A. **KR**

This charming portrayal of a bird, ascending to the sky, is executed on a monochrome compound twill weave (on the warp face), of fine quality. Despite the worn appearance of the fragment, the bird is seen to be flying with outstretched wings, holding a leafy stem in its beak. The support fabric, once undyed, is today discoloured brown; the embroidery was done in various colours. Executed in satin stitch, it is typical of the technique used from the Tang period onwards; before this, archaeological finds from famous sites such as Mawangdui (168 BC) and tomb no.1 at Jiangling (end of the fourth century BC) have contained numerous and splendid embroideries, but always in chain stitch. The stance of the little bird, as found also on several embroidered silks in the British Museum, is that of an auspicious image. We have recently been able to see embroideries on similar materials, decorated with similar birds displaying among flowers, foliage and scrolls: one should note that these embroideries are executed with gold threads, unusual for the period.They are numerous, and form part of the treasures recently excavated in the Famensi temple, in Shaanxi province, a large Buddhist monastery, dating from the height of the Tang dynasty. This fetching depiction enhances these works of Buddhist inspiration with the poetry of nature, serenely happy, as if drawn in the Pure Lands of the Buddha.

Plate 125
Fragment of silk, with traces of printing
Tang dynasty (8th–9th century). Monochrome patterned silk ground, decorated by a resist technique. Material: warp and weft: raw silk. Overall dimensions: H.49 cm (in two pieces); W.26 cm. Design repeat: incomplete in both directions. EO. 1194. **KR**

This large fragment, though worn through age, has a complicated design skilfully and dexterously made. It has curvilinear compartments bordered by repeated wavy stems (some with loops), with large areas of stylised plant motifs within them. The whole design is somewhat baroque in character, so lush is the decoration. The colours employed are green, light and dark orange, and the undyed colour on a fine indigo ground. There is a selvedge on the left edge of the larger fragment, and on the upper part right edge of the smaller one.

It is rather unusual to find textiles with large areas of resist, on patterned fabrics. In this instance, the lozenges are formed by warp floats over three wefts, on a taffeta ground. This very delicate fabric is also a rare case among the Pelliot fragments where the expert A. Buhler was unable to decide if it was made with the clamp-press.[59] According to Buhler and G. Vial, the fact that a small part of the fabric has no design casts doubt on the exact method of decoration: printing with boards, or resist dyeing? The term *ranxie*, mentioned in Tang texts, applies to textile designs obtained by resist techniques. This is a general term used for three main methods of resist dyeing:

a) *laxie* or wax-resist dyeing (Japanese: *rōkechi*)
b) *jiaxie* or clamp-resist dyeing (Japanese: *kyōkechi*)
c) *jiaoxie* or tie-resist dyeing (Japanese: *kōkechi*)

According to the Chinese expert Gao Hanyu, wax-resist dyeing was known to the peoples of south-west China. It would seem, therefore, that various methods of resist dyeing, little used in China before then, may have been introduced to China by peoples on the borders of the empire; these complex resist techniques may have come by way of the Turfan basin. Silks decorated with resist techniques were particularly popular during the Six Dynasties and Tang periods.

Plate 126
Head of a bodhisattva
Toqquz-Saraï (Tumshuq). "Temple I". 4th century. Sun-dried clay. H.13.5 cm; L. 9.2 cm; D. 8 cm. EO.1070 (Pelliot 74). **JG**

The antiquity of the temple, recognised only on stylistic grounds in the absence of any archaeological argument based on a stratigraphy, rests on an opinion for which this head is a fair illustration, insofar as it exhibits all the qualities of what Pelliot referred to as "classical influence". By this term, which we retain although we do not give it quite the same meaning, must be understood the borrowing from the Buddhist art of Gandhāra.[60] What is "classical" (in the common and generic sense of the term, with the later overlays of provincial Romano-Hellenistic style, as preserved in the art of the North-West) about this head is the perfect balance between the figure's idealised expression and the precise observation of the real morphology of a face. This is, in other words, the truthful translation of an ungraspable psychological instant, not that about the face which is fortuitous and passing, but its timeless permanence. We can discern a conventional stylisation of the features, such as the characteristic 'Greek profile', the treatment of the nose which is prolonged into the arch of the eyebrows, by the way in which the eyes and mouth are naturally placed, the modelling of the folds around the eyes in keeping with the half-smile, the detailed marking of the corners of the mouth and the nostrils. This stylisation in fact particularises the interior mobility of the face. This feature will become clearer as we go on, and will be found to be one of the dominant characteristics of the plastic techniques of the heads from Tumshuq.

In contrast to the mask-like face, the very simple coiffure seems to mark a stylistic break that is noteworthy for its iconographical and technical implications for sun-dried clay reliefs. This feature is common to all the heads of Tumshuq, as well as appearing in the art of a good number of other sites in the Tarim Basin. Linked to the technique of making reliefs and the use of moulds, the stylistic break observed above makes clear the composite nature of these heads, whereby each of the important motifs – here the hair – is fashioned independently from the face. This is true for other complementary elements which have not been preserved in this case, such as the hair ornaments and finely worked diadem ornamenting, for example, the figure of a bodhisattva.

The motif of the incurved locks of hair diverging from a central parting and the schematisation of the hair by means of a series of cuts in a volume are local characteristics common to a whole group of figures from Toqquz-Saraï. They hark back to known types of coiffure which evolved from a few rare models of Gandhāran buddhas of the third and fourth centuries; for instance, the schist head found at Sikri,[61] from Gandhāra proper, or a schist from Shotorak,[62] produced by the school in old Kapiśa, now in Afghanistan. The sketchiness of the ornament of the Tumshuq piece can be associated with the great number of faces produced by the temple workshop, even though the head is the only one of this type to have been discovered at the site. It matches stylistically the incised expression of the face, which itself evinces a very different plastic quality, rare even amongst the objects from temple I (see the note to plate 127 for the inspiration for this remark). We should therefore accept this workmanship as a style, or as a particular stage in the defining of a style distinctive to the art of Tumshuq.

We have not been able to make a convincing comparison of the plasticity of this head, quite exceptional even in Toqquz-Saraï, with the art of the other oases of the Tarim Basin, even though this has been possible with so many other examples from the site. On the other hand, the search for a precedent brings us back once again to the Gandhāran model, and to some very rare examples from Haḍḍa and Shotorak.[63] The resemblance of this piece with the haloed face from the latter site – an exception for Shotorak in that it is made of stucco – is truly remarkable in the similar expressions, the proportions of the features and the perfect oval of the faces and even in the coiffures, which, though differently rendered, nevertheless display the same characteristic. The comparison of these two heads clarifies the latter element: a strip of cloth knotted around the chignon.

The intimate relationship between this head and one of the forms of Gandhāran art tempt us to place the object at the beginning of the chronology of the art of Toqquz-Saraï-Tumshuq. On the basis of this resemblance, we consider that the head anticipates the local interpretation of North-Western aesthetics yet to come that we find at a similar if not actually contemporary period in the plastic creations of Shotorak.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, I et II, Toumchouq, vol. 1, fig. 62 and vol. 2, p. 340.
Monumenta serindica, V, p. 125.

Plate 127
Head of a bodhisattva or devatā
Toqquz-Saraï (Tumshuq). "Temple I". 4th-5th centuries. Sun-dried clay. H. 16 cm; W. 12 cm; D. 10 cm. EO.1074 (Pelliot 222). **JG**

The proposition made regarding the preceding work relating to the evolution of figurative plasticity in the art of Toqquz-Saraï, as well as the aesthetic diversity revealed by temple I, is well demonstrated by this head. Both heads were found in the same archaeological circumstances, but it would be difficult to claim, beyond the merely visual and iconographic resemblance, that this head proceeds from the 'style' of the preceding example. On the contrary, it seems to fit in rather better with the process, tending towards a clear separation of mass and volume, of a progressive and original stylisation in the art of Tumshuq, preceding the stages illustrated by the reliefs found in "forward temple N" and

"temples B and D". Found in the same deposit, these two works, so different in the quality and spirit which inspired their execution, bear witness to eclectic tendencies, if not to an innovative genius, that characterise, to our eyes at least, what is held to be the oldest phase of activity at Toqquz-Saraï. As far as can be judged by these cult effigies, this was a phase of 'free creation' in the formative years of that art. Perhaps, however, a more prosaic explanation for the differences in workmanship (which later seem to become so blurred as to be indistinct) lies in the individual temperaments of the artists. One should note that parallel cases exist elsewhere, and, what is more, in the sources most frequently cited for the sculpture of Tumshuq: the art of the Gandhāran North-West during the third and fourth centuries AD. We refer, for example, to the similarly diverse aesthetics of heads produced in the workshops of Haḍḍa and Shotorak, which used a much wider range of materials than that found in Serindia (including, for instance, stucco and stone).

The morphological canon distinguishes this head from the preceding example. Heavier, and at the same time sharper-featured, this head displays certain details which later become persistent, such as the rather too small proportions of the mouth and the contrasting exaggeration of the almond-shaped, slightly protruding eyes. The most striking element is, however, the sculptural quality of the piece. The smooth, uniform appearance of the relief, achieved by the application of a thin skim coat, reveals a high level of skill in the finishing of the piece, a technique which contrasts with the carving of the features of the preceding head directly into the clay. In its expression, however, this head resembles the latter, with the half-smile and ecstatic interior calm common to idealised figures – is it a bodhisattva or a *devatā*? Our uncertainty in identifying the head stems from the grotesque and grimacing masks decorating the crown which are not found in bodhisattva images. In one of the greatest surprises of the excavation, the plastic distinction between these two idealised heads finds a correspondence with two other heads also from temple I (examined below), of rather ambiguous character, perhaps just powerful beings. These two, EO.1331 and EO.1062, are of similar iconography, but are very different in their workmanship (see pls. 129 and 130). The second of these, EO.1062, resembles the present work in terms of plasticity.

The sharp and clear features link the workmanship with that of North-Western Indian stuccoes, in particular with those of Haḍḍa. This remark also holds true for the demonic head (pl. 129), as well as for a whole group of works from "forward temple N", considered a more recent structure at the site, for instance the head of a monk (pl. 133, EO.1079).

Like the whole production of similar works in Serindia, the art of the Tumshuq sculptors reveals that the range and canon of facial features were, of course, constrained within the limits of a representational form that was conditioned by a few idealised or character types, distantly influenced by models imported from beyond the Pamir range, while having freedom in the ornamental interpretation in the coiffures, which vary from simple hair-styles to more elaborate head-dresses with tiaras, diadems and other such adornments. The creation of these elements, which are more than merely decorative, seems to have opened to the artists a wide range of forms and associations of themes. Most of these seem to have been inspired by influences from western and also from more unexpected regions, which gives them their importance for the history of Central Asian art.

Clearly characteristic of these influences are the arrangement of the coiffure and the tiara decorated with two grimacing masks, which are of quite a different order than the facial features. We accept the typology established by Madeleine Hallade, and, like her, emphasise the fact that this coiffure "with short locks of hair falling onto the forehead"[64] is unusual not only at Tumshuq (where it appears in a few heads from temples I and J) but in the whole Tarim Basin. This coiffure can nonetheless be traced to some rare forms of Gandhāran art and to a stucco from Haḍḍa.[65] Its appearance in Serindia proper is diffuse and seemingly haphazard – thus, on the one hand, we find it at Yotkan (Khotan), and on the other, at a significantly later date, at Gaochang (Turfan).

Strangest of all in this coiffure are the grotesque masks. This feature is exceptional, for despite the fact that such motifs have existed throughout the Orient from a very early period, it is most unusual to find them in the coiffure of a crowned being bearing the ecstatic expression of a bodhisattva. Yet here again the origin seems to lie in Gandhāra, for we find a bodhisattva with the head of a lion in his coiffure in a relief discovered in the Swāt valley.[66]

Bibliography:
Mission Paul Pelliot, I et II, Toumchouq, pl. XXXII, fig. 64 and p. 341.

Plate 128
Head of a bodhisattva or devatā
Toqquz-Saraï (Tumshuq). "Small Temple I". 4th-5th centuries. Sun-dried clay. H. 18 cm; W. 16 cm; D. 9 cm. EO.1064 (Pelliot 72). **JG**

Like the two preceding pieces (pl. 126 and 127), this head was found in the small "Temple I". It shows, once again, the great diversity of 'styles' characterising the reliefs of this site. The face, bearing a peaceful and smiling expression, is a perfect example of a type in which the Buddhist quest for representations – apart from the Buddha himself as chief of all those who are revered – of "great beings of enlightenment" or bodhisattvas and, beyond these, of deities, *devatās*, and even, at the furthest extreme of sacred portraiture, of eminent monks and lay donors, as evidenced by a number of heads found at Tumshuq and at other Central Asian sites. The need to create in these images paragons of the serenity procured by adhesion to the Law, *dharma*, seems to have led the sculptors to employ a certain inescapable idiom, quite different from the representation of other beings

who were the objects of devotion and of others which were sometimes shown. The latter included imaginary beings, such as the spirits with their positively disquieting or ambiguous characters (see pls. 129 and 130); and supposedly real and historical ones, such as those listening to Śākyamuni, incredulous and sectarian polemicists before their conversion, as well as ascetics or brahmins with expressive physiognomies, many of whom were found at Tumshuq (*cf.* fig. 73-78).

Is this work the head of a bodhisattva or of a *devatā*? We simply have no way to tell, for the reason given above and because of the fragmentary condition of the piece. If we go by examples of Gandhāran art, confirmed at Tumshuq by the panels in high relief (see below), the twisted element that crowns the coiffure might just as well be the fastening for a bodhisattva's diadem as the element which sometimes characterises *devatās* or even lay figures represented in narrative scenes of the life or previous lives of the Buddha. The list is, in fact, not restricted to representations of benign celestial beings, since the crown (tiara or diadem) is also commonly found on the heads of wrathful figures, as witnessed by the 'character' portraits (pl. 130 and fig. 76).

Over and above this iconographic element which is so unhelpful, the figure fortunately shows – as is often the case with the reliefs from temple I – a particular sculptural expression which allows us to distinguish it stylistically. We are thereby able to identify the work as one of a group of related figures which, in the widest sense of the term, belong to one of the categories of beings to be worshipped. The sculpture is characterised by the rather flat relief of the face with understated modelling set in a perfect, almost circular oval. These features, more than any remarks we could make regarding its idealised form, reflect a canon reproduced (with some slight variations) at Tumshuq in such numbers that its stands out as a local aesthetic type over a prolonged period of activity. We have good reason to propose that it was this canon that was the likely source for the distinctive and almost uniform stylisation of the heads recovered from temples B and D.

Looking beyond Tumshuq, these particular features, shared by a whole group of figures from that site, are also found in other parts of Serindia. This is the case not only in the reliefs and sculptures in those places with the best examples of the image-makers' art, such as in Karashahr and even, to a slightly lesser extent, in Turfan (Khocho [67]), but also in the pictorial art of the Kucha schools and most particularly at Kyzyl, in what is generally referred to (after Grünwedel, von le Coq and Waldschmidt) as the "second style". In sculpture, the uniformity or resemblance can be more easily explained by reference to the use of moulds, which may, at a fairly early date, have removed the impetus to create new forms for each figure. In such a composite work as this, made in successive stages (see our earlier comments on the probable use of different moulds for the faces, hair and hair ornaments), we must note any clues to originality, whether sculptural or, more subjectively, aesthetic, that might reveal slight variations identifying similar figures as belonging to this or that category of venerated being.

It is evident that the modelling of the face is obtained very economically. Expressiveness in the features is shown by means of a slight swelling of the horizontally-slit eyes, achieved by an almost imperceptible raising of the line of the eyelids, expert modelling of the smiling mouth with deeply indented corners, partly-open lips revealing the teeth (an unusual detail), all harmoniously arranged around the ridge of the nose which blends smoothly into the whole through the splayed curves of the eyebrows. There is really nothing new to add to what we have already noted about the head found in the same temple, thought to be the earliest from the site (plate 126). In this idealised mask we find once again that characteristic mixture inherited from Gandhāran art, between naturalism and the plastic conventions proper to the type of figure represented. The smile – a rare feature in sculpture – is naturalistic but the idealisation and the fidelity to the canon leave their mark in the gaze, which, with its pupils with no indication of irises, cannot be said to be directed either inward or outward.

Apart from these signs of the features having been modelled after the use of a mould, the face appears as a rounded volume, smooth, without other exact indications of shape such as temples, jaw-line *etc.* In other related works, the chin is emphasised by a contour line that sometimes happens to correspond to the edge of the facial mould. Finally, the remains of a thin skim coat inclines us to think that originally this coat covered the whole of the features, probably as a base for a final polychromy.

As is the case with many other heads, the hair is treated as an independent plastic element. The same is true also of the 'crown', of which only the twisted element remains. We have already stated regarding the preceding heads how much these elements were composed or assembled for decorative reasons. Despite the numbers of heads that have been found, we cannot judge how far iconographic considerations may also have played a part in order to distinguish individual characters (*cf.* the high-reliefs of temple B, see below, pl. 137 to 139). In the absence of other signs, it is these ornaments which reflect, for us, the stylistic variety of the heads. For example, in three heads whose features of smiling deities relate them to this one, all apparently taken from the same mould, their 'individuality' or the almost imperceptible distinctions between them are apparent only in the coiffures (see fig. 66; two of the heads [EO.1063 and EO.1334] are not reproduced here). This corresponds with the arrangement we have already met with in the head shown in plate 126, the oldest known example from Tumshuq, identified by Hallade as "the bouffant hair-style with crescent-shaped, incurving locks".[68] This is the most elaborate of the types illustrated at Toqquz-Saraï, and the same goes for the motif of the twisted element. In comparison with the head reproduced in plate 126, the coiffure in this case is larger, framing the face from behind the ears. This arrangement is also found in the head shown in plate 136, as well as in the head now kept in the Tokyo National

Museum (plate 132). It seems to have become a particular idiom in the stylistic language of Tumshuq, insofar as this feature is ubiquitous amongst the heads from temples B and D.

In order to understand the iconography of the temple it is important to try to reconstitute the original reliefs or to work out their original location, but this is unfortunately difficult owing to the condition of the remains. Pelliot's excavation and site notes do, however, facilitate this task better than in other sites. On the basis of these indications, we may go so far as to imagine that the reliefs of temple I formed part of a large sculptural ensemble, covering either the walls or the central altar. The temple, the plan of which was rectangular, enclosed a small monument of uncertain purpose: the base of a large cult statue or altar-*stūpa*, revealed as a raised area in the course of the excavation. On the other hand, large sculptures were still visible on the two ledges that ran along the walls on either side of the entrance, a doorway giving onto the great courtyard of the monastery; these sculptures were identified by Pelliot as donors: "... five figures, wearing boots and tunics coming down to the knees, three to the left of the door and two on the right [...] also, praying figures on both sides, are still visible; those on the left were women, those on the right, men ..." (*cf.* photograph taken *in situ*). This description seems to shed some light on the heads of *devatā* or bodhisattvas. These could have come from the decor of the "end wall" (corresponding to the wall of the circumambulatory corridor around the altar?), where vestiges of "large scenes" in relief were noted (diary for the 13th November): "... there was a row of worshippers on both sides of the temple, linked at the rear, on the inner side, by other badly-damaged sculptured motifs ...". There is, however, no better example of what may have been the original composition than the surviving panels from temple B mentioned earlier. Given the limited results of the excavations, we must ask if there were once other registers of scenes in relief adorning the middle and upper sections of the walls, like the painted panels seen in some of the Kuchean cave temples (Kyzyl and Kumtura), that we are led to believe existed above the panels of temple B at Toqquz-Saraï on the one hand, and in the buildings of Shorchuk-Karashahr on the other, by the rows of holes appearing at different levels, corresponding to mortises used for attaching the multiple figures to the walls.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, I et II, Toumchouq, pl. XXXIV, fig. 67 and pp. 341, 342.

Plate 129
Head of a supernatural being with a lion head-dress
Toqquz-Saraï (Tumshuq). "Small Temple I". Sun-dried clay. H. 20cm; W. 18 cm; D. 12 cm. EO.1331 (Pelliot 7). **JG & KO**

This face is remarkable for its sculptural qualities, as it combines various intensely expressive features of a fearsome mask with the youthful appearance of an ephebe. The head imparts a contradictory character, in that the meaning of the grimacing lion's head ornamenting the hair is two-fold and ambiguous: this decoration may be the heroic trophy of a mythical figure or just the attribute of a demonic being. The savage and wrathful appearance thus expressed seems to be more reserved than active, and might thus belong to a divine being whose great powers no doubt stem from his presence in the midst of an assembly round the Buddha. Iconographically, we cannot imagine that it was alone.

The head's appearance, whether simply annoyed or positively demonic, suggests various interpretations for the scene from which it may have been taken. On the one hand, the head could be identified as one of Śākyamuni's privileged attendants, Vajrapāṇi; on the other, contrariwise, it might belong to one of the nameless figures who beset the Buddha in the tradition of the scene known as the "Assault of Māra" (amongst others). Whatever the interpretation, however, this fragmentary figure suggests the existence of a large narrative composition in temple I. Whether, given the state of our knowledge of the remains of Toqquz-Saraï, this would have been related to the high reliefs of temple B (see plates 137 to 140), or to a much larger ensemble comparable to the 'décor' of statues set on a ledge seen in temple XXV at Shorcuk [69]-Karashahr, this must remain a matter of pure speculation.

Such fierce beings as this, so different in their appearance from the conventional composure of bodhisattvas and *devatās*, belong to the long list of semi-divine beings, spirits and demons of Indian origin who the Buddhists then made their own, recasting them as protectors of the religion (see the head that follows, pl. 130; EO.1062). According to divine cosmology, they have a place in the lowest sphere of the triple world (*tri-loka*) – that is, in the sphere that corresponds to the lower plane of sensory experience of mankind and other beings, known therefore as the *kāma-dhātu* or "world of desire". While the gods of the upper, immaterial spheres have always remained more or less distanced or even remote from the immediate preoccupations of believers, these *kāma-devas* have more frequently invaded the imagination and expectations of devotees. Iconography shows us that a particular importance is given to the representation of these lower-caste supernatural beings, who are in turn disquieting and comforting, wild and benign (*yakṣa, gandharva, nāga* and *kumbhānda*); their doings add an epic note to the legend of the Buddha, in which they most frequently appear.

This spirit from Tumshuq owes much in sculptural terms to the art of this local school of image-making, in which the use of moulded reliefs was one of the components of the mass-production of religious images. This fact may explain why his fierce appearance, required by the particular iconography, is not immediately obvious owing to the smooth modelling of the type-cast face of a young man. We have already remarked on such contradictory characteristics. With the barely-individualised face of a youth, this spirit could be seen as pleasing, even smiling, were it not for his fangs and furrowed brow, which alone reveal the figure's wrathful charac-

ter. A very similar head was found at Turfan.[70] The character is rendered more convincing by the lion skin, its head serving as a head-dress. We can therefore suggest that the facial mask, moulded separately from the rest of the head, could have been used for several figures of diverse character. This process is made clear in the art of schools in the North-West which share a similar tradition in the making of religious images in relief, especially the stucco images of Haḍḍa, in Afghanistan.

The lion head-dress, however, sets this head apart from other ones. A reminder of classical antiquity, it seems to be taken from Herakles' customary costume.[71] Moreover, "to wear a lion skin" was a proverbial expression of courage in the Greek world. If we glance at the recurrence of the lion-skin theme in certain figures of the Buddhist pantheon, this more than any other feature sets this head apart from the anonymous horde of *yakṣa*s, those fierce spirits ruled over by the Guardian King of the north, Vaiśravaṇa (one of the *caturmahārājika-deva*s, the four Heavenly Kings entrusted with the protection of the Good Law), and suggests that this head be identified as belonging to Vajrapāṇi, the "Thunderbolt-bearer". This is supported by the iconography of Vajrapāṇi in Gandhāran reliefs, although he appears in a number of changing forms. These bear witness to a classical memory of the image of Herakles dressed in a lion skin of Némée (a relief from Sahri-Bahlol, excavated by Stein, "Visit of the *nāga* Elāpatra"[72]; see also the image of Herakles-Vajrapāṇi from the monastery of Tapa-e-shotor, Haḍḍa and another from a Gandhāran stele.[73] These representations vary from a beardless youth to a hirsute adult, from Hermes to Zeus). Yet another link – this time stylistic – with the art of the North-West can be observed in the treatment of the locks of hair, also found, for example, in a representation of a bodhisattva at Takht-i-Bahi.[74]

The place he occupies in representations accords with the importance given him as protector of the Buddha in the *Lalita-vistara* and the *Mahāvastu*, in which he appears accompanying Śākyamuni in all his manifestations – indeed, he often appears to rival, especially in Gandhāra, the Buddha's privileged and gentle companion Ānanda. He is also encountered with the Bodhisattva in the cycle of his previous lives, appearing, for example, as a divine attendant and witness of the prediction in the *Dipaṃkara-jātaka*.[75] Occasionally, as the master's favoured spirit, he is known (according to some texts) to act with great power upon the elements, in order to hasten some solution, as after the miracle of Śrāvastī, when he caused a violent storm to break, thereby dispersing the Buddha's opponents.

There is a case to be made for the identification of the Tumshuq spirit with Vajrapāṇi in his wrathful form of protector – let us not forget that originally he was a *yakṣa* –, ready to take up his thunderbolt to subdue those who oppose the Buddha, here with the ambiguous features of a gentle face. This is said bearing in mind the early date proposed for the site, as well as its western location not far from the origin of the legend. The figure suggests that it formerly belonged to a composition similar to that of a painting at Kyzyl (the 'Māyā cave' [76]) depicting a group of spirits and deities, all of fearsome appearance but pacified while listening to the Law. Nevertheless, elsewhere in Central Asia the identification of Vajrapāṇi is a matter of interpretation. The "images"(*xiang*) of the eight categories of supernatural beings (*babuzhong*) describe his forms in China at a relatively early date in the *Compendium of notes on the Tripitaka* (*Chu Sanzang jiji*; *Taishō*, 2145, p. 92*b* and *c*) by the monk Sengyou (435-518 A.D.). Grünwedel observed that representations of the *yakṣa* – like the series of eight, one for each of the Buddhas of the past and future, referred to by Xuanzang – may be multiplied, as at Bezeklik, where he attends forty-eight buddhas; he identified him essentially on the basis of his attribute, the thunderbolt-club. Figures of the spirit wearing the lion head-dress and wielding a *vajra*, however, as in the painting in the 'Cave of the two Vajrapāṇi' at Kirish,[77] are rather rarer. And if, on the other hand, images characterised by the lion head-dress are occasionally encountered in the paintings of the temples along the great arc of the Northern Silk Route, for example at Kyzyl (in the "Māyā" and "Hellish Cauldron" caves) and at Gaochang (on a fragment of a silk painting, now in Berlin), thus showing that this image is quite widely dispersed, there is an important piece of evidence from Dunhuang (on the left side of the altar in cave 25 or Pelliot 138), dating to the Song dynasty, which forces us to alter our earlier perception of the figure, who in this case is dressed in armour but who holds a *pipa* as his attribute, rather than the *vajra*.[78]

This last example of a *kāma-deva* (deity of the "world of desire"), appearing as it does in an assembly composed of overlords of spirits and demons preceded by bodhisattvas, would seem to link the image not with Vajrapāṇi but with *gandharva*s (music-making spirits); judging by his costume, he appears in cave 25 as their chief. The classical list would then identify him as one of the Heavenly Kings, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the guardian of the east, but the musical instrument as his attribute is an anachronism. He might instead be Pañcaśikha, the bard who witnessed the Buddha's visit to Indra[79] who was elevated in esoteric Buddhism to the rank of "emperor of the *gandharva*s",[80] or, alternatively, Druma, king of the *kinnara*s, who appears in the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śāstra* as the king of *gandharva*s.[81]

We have presented here two interpretations of the figure wearing the lion-skin, both of which have great resonance beyond Central Asia, in East-Asian Buddhist imagery, not to mention a possible representation of the assault of Māra which we exclude *a priori* since the size required by such a composition would be out of all proportion with the size of temple I. Indeed, the Kōfuku-ji of Nara preserves a remarkable image of a *gandharva* with the features of a young man, sunk in deep concentration.[82]

Bibliography:

Mission Pelliot, I et II, Toumchouq, pl. XXXIX, figs. 82, 83; vol. II, p. 345.
La Route de la Soie, Paris, 1976, no. 172, p. 46.
L'Asie centrale, no. 110.

Plate 130
Head of a supernatural being
Toqquz-Saraï (Tumshuq). "Temple I". 4th-5th century AD. Sun-dried clay
H. 20 cm; W. 18 cm; D. 14 cm. EO.1062 (Pelliot 70). **JG**

This expressive head could belong to the same class of semi-divine beings verging on the demonic – the *yakṣa*s – as the preceding one, in one of the identifications proposed for the latter. There is, however, no distinctive element comparable to the lion head-dress that would allow us to make a more precise identification of the figure (in this case, the head-dress is broken, and all that remains visible is a twisted braid which must once have supported a crown). For the same reason, we are unable to suggest what sort of composition this head may have come from. But, owing to the fact that these beings were enlisted by Buddhism to act as its protectors,[83] we may imagine this head in the midst of a scene illustrating the life of the Buddha, or perhaps amongst the great beings assembled in a preaching scene (*cf.* the numerous wall-paintings of this subject at Kyzyl). Alternatively, if the head's irate appearance outweighs any other characteristic, we should not exclude from the iconography of temple I the possibility of a relief depicting, for example, the assault of Māra: in such a work, this head would figure in the infernal army (to which Kuchean painting also bears witness) – indeed, this figure should perhaps be interpreted as the chief of that horde, owing to his head-dress that may once have included a crown.

Related by their wrathful expressions, which characterise the category of beings (either venerated or feared) sub-divided into "the eight classes of supernatural beings" (*babuzhong*) who protect Buddhism, these two heads, found in the same temple, show once more the variety of styles which is such a special feature of Toqquz-Saraï. They share many obviously related iconographical features: a perfect and impressive frontality, a tension in the gaze from beneath knitted brows, the capturing of a fugitive moment suggested by the half-opened mouth with its bared fangs, the pointed ears (a conventional feature of mythical creatures) and the curly hair so wholly similar to the head with the lion-skin head-dress. Nevertheless, the heads clearly respond to different aesthetic values as well as traditions. Like the preceding example, this one does not reveal an unequivocally demonic nature (until one notices the fangs). What distinguishes it is instead its powerful stylisation on the one hand, marked by the emphasis of the principal volumes and the accentuation of the lines, as in the sharp curves of the eyebrows ending in volutes; and, on the other, what we must call a 'realism' of expression, conveyed by the lively lips which seem to be in exclamatory mid-utterance. This two-fold quality, which is sculpturally compatible, is combined here with smooth surface modelling, of a workmanship similar to that of the head of a *devatā* reproduced in plate 127 (EO.1074), and which, like the latter, firmly places this one in the continuation of the stucco art of Gandhāra (see above).

We mention briefly the distinctive features of the hair-style, with locks divided by a parting in the middle of the forehead, features that may be of help in establishing dates, while noting once again its over-all similarity with the coiffure of the *devatā* (EO.1074) and the relative rarity of this arrangement amongst the heads from Toqquz-Saraï. Hallade first noticed it, however, and discovered the origin (or rather, the persistence of the motif beyond the date proposed for the Tumshuq relief) of these "curls shaped like elongated conch-shells" in comparable works belonging to the provincial schools of Gandhāran sculpture, those from Haḍḍa providing the earliest examples (third-fifth century), those from Fondukistan (in Kapiśa) and in the Swāt valley of the Hindu-Kush for the late phase (seventh century [84]).
The similarities in sculptural terms as well as in execution between these two heads from temple I are closer than they first appear, and incline us to relate these two heads and to set them apart from the other reliefs from the site. Their fragmentary condition does not allow us to reconstruct a coherent picture of their relationship. Although we cannot answer this particular question, the expressive nature of the figure suggests that he once formed part of a narrative composition with many figures, of the types mentioned in our preamble – that is, either a high relief, like those surviving from temple B (see below, pls. 137 *sqq.*), or, more probably, that these figures used to belong to a group of statues arranged on the ledge, uncovered during the excavations, that ran along the interior walls of the temple.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, I et II, Toumchouq, pl. XXXVIII, fig. 81 and pp. 344-345.

Plate 131
Buddha seated on a lotus blossom
Toqquz-Saraï (Tumshuq). "Forward temple N". 5th century. Sun-dried clay. H. 15 cm; W. 17 cm; D. 3.5 cm. MG.23691 (Pelliot 141). **JG**

It sometimes happens that the fragmentary condition of some reliefs in no way decreases their iconographic interest while preserving much of their stylistic character. This is certainly true for this Buddha image, seated on a lotus, which was discovered in the "forward temple N", located in the south-east below the promontory upon which most of the main buildings of Toqquz-Saraï were built.

The slender body is completely swathed in the long monastic robe, the *saṃghāṭi*, so that nothing can be seen of the anatomy except the hands in the lap, held together in the gesture of meditation (*dhyāna-mudrā*). This figure strikes us as an eloquent example of the play of influences from which the very individual art of Tumshuq was formed. Apart from the *mudrā*, the principal sculptural element is the heavy robe, wrapped like a scarf about the neck, covering both shoulders and falling in broad folds dominated by symmetry and a curvilinear

schema. Let us state at once which of these influences seems clearest here, so that, even without knowing its archaeological origin, one would be tempted to assign it to Gandhāran workmanship, whether that of the territory that gave its name to this art or of the larger area comprising the peripheral schools of Kapiśa and (since this iconography of the meditating Buddha seems to have spread much further) extending even into the first forms of Gupta art in North India.[85] We shall justify our acceptance of this 'Gandhāran' idea below, but firstly will pause to make a simple observation inspired by this evidence.

It is remarkable that this moulded clay impression, a work without the artistic pretensions of the more important reliefs found in such numbers at Toqquz-Saraï, reveals so many signs of the faithful transmission of the artistic tradition responsible for the first images of the Buddha. We must of course relate these signs to the character of the image, which would have formed part of the wall-decoration of the temple, showing Śākyamuni Buddha under different iconographies associated with various points of his career (here in the pose of meditation beneath the tree of Enlightenment at Bodh-Gayā); but this clay plaque could equally have illustrated one of the historical 'Seven Buddhas of the Past', or even one of those *ex-voto* images that appear in the midst of an unidentified series of 'Thousand Buddhas'. It is most often in these icons with little individuality, rather than elsewhere, that the persistence of the formal conventions of the old sculptural canon inherited from the North-West is best preserved.

The arrangement of the *saṃghāṭi* dominates the other features; it is characterised by a sketchy naturalism and a distant classical echo that is heightened by the *mudrā* of meditation which, more than other gestures, lends perfect symmetry to the disposition of the figure around the joined hands. We could give numerous examples that display this double character and show its iconographic origin to be the art of Gandhāra and its immediate sphere of influence – for instance, in Afghanistan (Taxila) and in North India (Mathurā, however rare at first). It will suffice to mention related figures in two works held to be the oldest representations of the meditating Buddha: the so-called "Kaniska" reliquary (found at Shāhji-kī-Dherī)[86] and the bas-reliefs from the *stūpa* at Sikri.[87]

The Tumshuq relief, however, is not absolutely faithful to these models. While one of its chief characteristics, as we can observe, is the symmetry of the semicircular curve that divides, at the centre, the fall of the drapery over the legs, there is, on the other hand, more freedom in the arrangement of the folds on the torso, which is more complex, apparently naturalistic but in fact highly stylised. Of all the 'Gandhāran' sources mentioned above, the Tumshuq relief corresponds most faithfully to the example from Taxila (reliefs from building L) although in the latter, which dates to a period sometime after the famous reliquary, the Buddha is depicted preaching (*vitarka-mudrā* [88]).

Now, it is precisely this stage of the development of the image that J. E. van Lohuizen de Leeuw (though her theory on this particular matter remains controversial) believes to be the model for the earliest iconography of the Buddha in *dhyāna-mudrā* at Mathurā.[89] There one finds, along with a greater suppleness of the folds and a more naturalistic arrangement of the material on the body, the characteristic curved section at the base of the robe, abstract and geometric, that covers the legs and the soles of the feet, ensuring the symmetry that we have observed at Tumshuq. In principle therefore, and owing to the fact that the iconography of the meditating Buddha is relatively later in India than in the North-West where it is associated with the most ancient representations, Indian influence, however tempting it may seem, was not necessarily the source for the Tumshuq Buddha.

In the Central-Asian milieu, there are numerous examples which reflect the spread of the iconography and form in the same way as the Tumshuq fragment. Hallade [90] has listed the most important ones which, from Dandan-Oilik and Rawak in the area around Khotan on the Southern Route, to Gaochang (Turfan), at the eastern end of the Northern Route, by way of Shorcuk (Korla), show the fate of this sculptural canon. We ought to add to this list some works found in Chinese territory that are exceptional owing to the historical precision of their inscriptions – the votive *stūpa*s dating to the fifth century now kept in the Lanzhou Museum (Gansu province).[91] Over and above the clear-cut aesthetics that we emphasised earlier in order to identify the specificity of the Tumshuq relief, these *stūpa*s must be intermediary witnesses of the transmission of models, showing the co-existence of two great canonical 'styles' of the Buddha image: one in *dhyāna-mudrā*, the form we have been discussing all along and which for convenience' sake we call 'Gandhāran'; the second either in *abhaya-mudrā*, the gesture of fearlessness, or *vitarka-mudrā*, the gesture of preaching – more implicitly Indian. The latter can be linked with Mathurā, particularly in the drapery which, while retaining the general arrangement seen at Tumshuq, leaves the Buddha's right shoulder bare.

Lastly, we cannnot pass over one further iconographic feature: that of the motif of down-turned petals on the lotus blossom. This is, unfortunately, in too fragmentary a condition to allow more than a brief remark, but it confirms, in a small detail, its source in the school of the western North-West (in present-day Afghanistan) of the old territory of Kapiśa. Their arrangement and stylised and modelled veins can be linked with some rare but significant schist sculptures from Pāitāvā – for instance, the stele in the Kabul Museum,[92] which, moreover, shows the Buddha in *dhyāna-mudrā*, and is thus in perfect harmony with the image from Tumshuq.

Risking a perspective view, one could take this modest evidence of the monastic life of the western Tarim Basin to be one of the clear stages of the earliest Buddhist art of China, where, in the stylistic conventions noted especially in the small, gilded bronzes dating from the Northern Wei dynasty (end of the fifth century), we can find both the appearance of these 'Gandhāran' Buddhas and the theme of the schematic lotus flower, often thought of as a Chinese invention.

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Mission Pelliot, I et II, Toumchouq, frontispiece and p. 358.
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Plate 132
Head of a bodhisattva or devatā
Toqquz-Saraï (Tumshuq). "Temple I". 4th-5th century. Sun-dried clay (partially burnt). H. 17.5 cm; W. 15.5 cm; D. 11.5 cm. TC435 (Pelliot collection EO.3572). Tokyo National Museum. **TA**

In 1957, the Musée Guimet gave to the Tokyo National Museum twenty-two works that had been brought back by Hackin and Pelliot from Afghanistan, Central Asia and Dunhuang, in exchange for archaeological materials previously sent from Japan. Apart from the paintings from Dunhuang (pl. 34, 37 and 54), these included a number of sculptures: eight from Haḍḍa in Afghanistan, ten from Toqquz-Saraï and one from Kumtura.[93]

It has already been mentioned, regarding the works reproduced in plates 126 to 130, that the statues that adorned the small temple I, situated near the west corner, in the series of small Buddhist buildings enclosing the great square courtyard of the monastery of Toqquz-Saraï (next to its south-east façade), are the most striking examples of Gandhāran style from this site. The group has, without any hesitation, been dated to this period. We must note, nonetheless, that the different heads and other fragments discovered in this temple present numerous variations in sculptural plasticity as well as in facial expression.

Within the group, this head is highly original, and analysis bears out this intuitive response. The breadth of the forehead where it meets the hair, the narrowing of the facial oval, the eyes, nose and mouth, the slight recession of the lower part of the face, are elements that create an impression of refinement and neatness of feature. The curve of the eyebrows that runs into the lines of the nose merit our particular attention. The eye sockets, set at either side of the upper part of the fine, narrow nose, form deep hollows, from which stand out the vigorous lines of the half-open eyelids. The short nose flares quite strongly at the nostrils and is firmly drawn down to the emergence of the mouth. A marvellous smile plays about the slightly fleshy, closed lips. A distinct hollow underlies the lower lip, while, lower still, the chin is undeniably firm, complementing the volume of the nose with striking effect, enhanced by the line drawn under the jawbone.

If we compare this head with those other pieces presented from plate 126 onwards, we find that the hair has been treated in a rather unusual manner in that the luxuriant mass of hair is precisely defined. Although the chignon lost its skim coat when it was excavated, the appearance of the hair as a whole has survived complete.

A large lock, rolled around itself in the form of an incurved water-drop, occupies the centre, around which thick waves of hair are symmetrically arranged. These are gathered together at the base of the neck, forming a gentle curve, while the area around the ears is characterised by rather wild strands. From the back of the ears to the back of the head, large curls describe an ample and generous movement.

As we stated above, the chignon covering the crown of the head lost its skim coat when excavated. The topmost part of the chignon is pierced with a hole roughly 3 cm in diameter, and measuring 5 cm deep at the front and 3 cm at the back (the bottom was level). The clay walls of the hole present traces of wood and planing, which show that the hole was formerly filled with a cylindrical wooden support. The existence of the chignon bears witness to the sumptuousness of the work, comparable with objects from Shorchuk to which we will refer below.

These statues discovered in the small temple I are fire-damaged and have lost their original colouring, owing to the burning of the Buddhist monasteries at the time of the Islamic invasions. We may surmise that the facial features were intensified by the flames. Similarly, the browny-red flush that can be seen in the left part of the face is surely linked to this event. A careful examination of the areas in between the curls of hair reveals traces of colouring, albeit faded or altered. One can imagine a blue-green pigment in the right side of the hair, while a white skim coat remains on the face around the hair-line. Given these indications of the statue's original condition, and by referring to the polychrome statues [95] discovered at Shorchuk by the German expedition, as well as to the magnificent colouring of the fragments of wall-paintings [96] found by that same expedition in the chapel built on the hill opposite Tumshuq and murals at Kyzyl, Duldur-Āqur and Kucha, we can imagine the statue in all its former glory.

Plate 133
Head of a monk
Toqquz-Saraï (Tumshuq). "Small temple N". Sun-dried clay. H. 16 cm; W. 11 cm; D. 11 cm. EO.1079 (Pelliot 255). **JG**

This head is individual, like almost every one of the sun-dried clay heads from Toqquz-Saraï, despite the fact that they were all made using a moulding technique inherited from the Gandhāran North-West that became widespread in the Tarim Basin. This technique made possible a rapid production of replicas. This head is exceptional, especially in the treatment of the hair, and differs markedly from the rest of those known to us. Being unique, it shows – if we needed further evidence of this – that the art of the Tumshuq image-makers, that serial production serving religious, didactic or inspirational purposes, illustrating the life of the Buddha and his doctrine and incorporated into the iconography of the temples, is neither repetitive nor monotonous, at any rate not in the early works (that is, objects from temples I, J and this one), despite what one might expect given the method of production.

This head is one of the rare examples of sculpture in

the round using this material, along with some small images on a similar scale to this one and a few remains of monumental statues, such as the large Buddha head discovered in the first days of the excavation, known only from a photograph taken *in situ*. The head appears to have been completely free of the side of the altar or wall against which the rest of the statue – in high relief – presumably rested. The panels in relief from temple B (see below, pl. 137 *sq.*) show a similar technique.

The schematisation of a smooth oval dominates the expression of the features, the modelling of which seems to proceed directly from a sculptural technique quite different from that of the heads from temples I and J; this causes the arch of the eyebrows to merge into the forehead and reduces and softens the ridge of the nose. Other features, on the other hand, remain true to earlier formulae: the realistic rendering of the mouth with its curving lips, the flaring nostrils and the carefully sculpted eyelids, the shadows of which, in the absence of any iris, define the gaze. These features seem to have something in common with the aesthetic of the large head of a bodhisattva (pl. 140) from temple B, but in the present case they seem to show the premonition rather than the actual application of the 'formula' so characteristic of the creations of this slightly later temple. A work dating from the middle period of the stylistic chronology of Tumshuq, this head could just as well illustrate the period to which the "forward temple N" belongs. In it, we can recognise the basic premise of original Serindian art that is fully emancipated from its Gandhāran source, so that we would prefer to describe it by the generic term 'Kuchean' (see the discussion accompanying pl. 140).

The unusual iconography, with its ambiguity as between hair-style or cap, raises questions as to how this figure should be identified and where it would have fitted into an ensemble of sculptures. It is, in fact, one of the rare heads from Toqquz-Saraï that appears not to have been in common use in this form. Most of the other examples of these come from temple N (*cf.* fig. 80 and 81). But, as is shown by the majority of subjects depicted at Tumshuq, illustrative references and contexts may be found in Kuchean wall-painting, particularly in the paintings at Kyzyl in the case of the present head as well as a head with a curious hat with a hemmed edge reproduced in figure 80. The latter example, which is most unusual, can then be related to a figure identified as Vajrapāṇi, wearing a similar head-dress, depicted in a section of the vault in the 'Cave of the Sixteen Sword-bearers' (*Schwertträger Höhle*).[97]

As for the strange, smooth coiffure, indented at the forehead and forming a regular border around the facial oval, allowing it to be mistaken for some sort of cap, and the high cranial protruberance, the most likely identification is to be found among many similar figures in the paintings of Kyzyl, where they can be quite definitely identified as monks. They appear in one of the preaching scenes in the 'Cave of the painter' (*Maler Höhle*)[98] and in the 'Māyā cave, site II', in which two members of the monastic community precede the king and queen of Kucha in a row of donors.[99] There are many more examples in the paintings of different styles: those referred to belong to the first and second pictorial styles at Kyzyl respectively. We also refer the reader to the commentary upon the head of Mahākāśyapa, a fragment of wall-painting from Duldur-Āqur (pl. 159; EO.3674).

With this identification of the head there is an iconographic clue as to where the figure may have been placed in the sculptural programme of the temple of Toqquz-Saraï. Following the painted representations, there are two possibilities: the monk could have formed part of a large preaching scene, or could have been represented in the midst of a procession of donors and devotees in which, as in the painting of the 'Māyā cave', there mingle the representatives of the secular and religious worlds. The latter possibility would place the figure in a procession of statues standing on a ledge running along the side walls of the temple, like the statues discovered by Pelliot in temple I, or the painted frieze of kneeling monks discovered by von le Coq in the religious site called the "Eastern group" near the *Sockeltempel*, in the vicinity of Tumshuq-tāgh.[100]

Bibliography:

Mission Pelliot, I et II, Toumchouq, figs. 133, 134, pl. LIV, p. 360.

Plate 134

Figure wearing a cuirass

Toqquz-Saraï (Tumshuq). "Small temple D". 6th-early 7th century. Sun-dried clay. H. 16 cm; W. 21 cm; D. 5 cm. MG.17705 (Pelliot 324). **JG with KO**

Very different from the preceding work, this fragment of a statue wearing a cuirass is related to those war-like figures whose character and manifestations do indeed have a place in the Buddhist pantheon since they usually represent the *lokapāla*, the Heavenly Kings (*tianwang*). The carefully detailed armour, with a breastplate of scale-armour and shoulder-coverings ending in feline heads, attached by a set of perfectly-reproduced straps, makes this fragment an exceptional document – it is, in fact, the only one of this quality to be found at Toqquz-Saraï. We can imagine that it is a true reproduction of a kind of military dress worn in the area.

This relief seems to have been made using a single mould, which, if true, would explain how the torso is so well-preserved, while other parts that were separately modelled and then added on, such as the arms and head, came to be broken off and lost. The breaks in these places still show where one piece was stuck onto another with clay, while a cavity in the place of the neck must once have been used to fix the head onto the body.

The elements of the cuirass [101] consist of a breastplate formed by rows of linked lozenge-shaped scales, which is divided into two convex areas to fit the chest. The frontal relief, indicating that the figure stood against a wall, makes it impossible for us to see the armour's back-plate, which would have been attached to the cuirass by means of straps passing over the shoulders and round the sides of the body. The two shoulder-

guards are shaped like lions' heads, out of whose jaws the warrior's arms would have been seen to emerge. A set of straps, knotted together in front, reproduce the system of attaching the various parts of the armour together, and keep the collar a neck-guard(which has partly disappeared) fixed to the breastplate with a knot. The vertical double cord may have been intended to attach the lower section of the cuirass, but this part is not clearly indicated.

The elements described above show how faithfully this broken relief reproduced military costume of the time. The scale motif in the upper part of the cuirass corresponds to overlapping reinforced plates that were laced together, which were the basic part of battle armour. Traces of green (the only sign of the former polychromy) on these scales are similar to other examples found in Serindia, notably in a clay statue of Kuvera (Vaiśravaṇa) in military costume from Dandan-Oilik, now in the British Museum.[102] A question is posed by the use of iron-grey, which, according to Laufer,[103] could represent metal plates rather than leather ones that are sometimes even lacquered, like the actual pieces of armour discovered by Stein at Mirān.[104] The distinction between these materials is, of course, extremely important for dating the armour at Tumshuq. The use of lacquer would indicate an obviously Chinese influence, but this would not be an anachronism in relation to the date proposed for the site (it would, on the other hand, be anachronistic if the figures were Sinicised, something that happened in Central Asia only around the seventh and eighth centuries, and that does not appear at all in the art of Tumshuq). One could therefore argue, quite apart from other evidence, that the use of lacquer could be the result of a transmission of a skill and a technique of military art going back to the conquests made by Chinese armies in Central Asia – that is to say, to the time of the Han emperor Wudi (first century B.C.) and the expeditions of his generals, Zhang Qian, Huo Qubing and others into eastern Turkestan. This type of cuirass was the basic element of armour of the imperial troops, and, according to some archaeological research, may pre-date the Warring States period.[105]

Nevertheless, thanks to the elements discovered at Taxila and at Shaikhan-dheri, we know that Gandhāran armour was made out of cut-out leather plaques.[106] The oldest examples appear in schist reliefs illustrating scenes of the Great Departure and, above all, the Assault of Māra (Lahore Museum and Leiden Museum [107]). Albert von le Coq did not rule out that this form of armour may have originated in eastern Persia and then become known in Central Asia.[108]

Although this type of cuirass is well-known owing to the paintings at Kyzyl and Dunhuang, or to images in the round found at Shorchuk and Kum-Āriq (near Kucha) displaying the same constituent elements and the same system of bindings, these differ from the Tumshuq piece in the notable absence of the lion-headed shoulder-guards. On the other hand, this theme appears twice at Toqquz-Saraï, the second time on a fragment of a clay relief found in temple N.[109] A few rare exceptions in Central Asia, such as at Shorchuk,[110] allow us to trace this ornamental motif; but it is only in the latest works, which already bear the stamp of Chinese influence, that this motif acquires permanence, becoming almost an element in its own right in the iconography of images of the Heavenly Kings. Thus we find it in a painting from Bezeklik illustrating "a hunting-scene with garudas" (according to von le Coq)[111], and in the four wooden statues of the Guardian Kings from the Mogao caves of Dunhuang, to choose examples from the Pelliot collection (pls. 187-190).

Gandhāran material does not seem able to provide us with an exact rule or even a particular hierarchy associated with the identity of these armoured figures. Nevertheless, the military costumes worn by some figures in particular scenes (such as the assault of Māra) can also serve to distinguish venerated divinities in the Buddhist pantheon, emphasising their war-like nature and, more especially, their rôle of powerful demon-subduers. Examples of this are Vajrapāṇi, the Buddha's protector according to a Gandhāran legend that tells of the Blessed One's visit to the North-West (see the commentary to plate 174), and a rare statue of the mighty god Indra wearing a rigid cuirass formed of small plates (like the relief from Toqquz-Saraï) that came from the same region of the North-West and is now kept in the Museum of Peshawar (*cf.* the relief, pls. 137 and 139, for his supposed rôle).[112]

In Serindia, the repertoire of figures in such costume are generally associated with a few types of characters. Leaving aside Māra's demon henchmen, the most richly accoutred are, as this fragment shows, the *lokapāla*, the Heavenly Kings, guardians of the four directions. The frequent representation of these kings enables us to follow the progressive elaboration of their military attire, from the most ancient forms, illustrated at Tumshuq and in the paintings of Kyzyl, to the Sinicised appearance of the Guardian Kings at Dunhuang. The arrangement of figurative statuary at Dunhuang, in which the Heavenly Kings generally round off the groups of saintly figures assembled around the Buddha, does not, perhaps, correspond to the original form of the composition at Tumshuq. We should imagine them more in the manner of their depiction at Kyzyl – that is, participating in the assemblies represented in preaching or *praṇidhi* (*shiyuan*) scenes.

A single surviving fragment of one of these large painted compositions – one of very few pieces of evidence of this genre at Tumshuq itself – found during the German excavations of Tumshuq-tāgh, seems to provide an illustration of the relief [113]: in this, a crowned figure wearing armour depicted at the Buddha's feet appears, owing to the attribute he holds in his left hand, to be Vajrapāṇi. Apart from this adamantine thunderbolt, the *vajra*, which identifies him, nothing in his military costume distinguishes him from the Guardian King, praying prince or similar dignitary that appears similarly haloed in a fragment of an adjacent scene. The similarity of these figures shows that we need more than this partial relief to succeed in identifying the figure, even if we use the Gandhāran material that seems to have been of enduring influence in this western

Serindian site of Tumshuq.

Finally, we should reiterate the importance of this work: it is one of the oldest known instances of this type of armour with a lion motif, whose origin is by no means clear. The only example contemporary with this piece, perhaps even a little earlier, comes from an image of Brahmā sculpted on the wall of the one of the Longmen caves (Henan province), that dates to the end of the fifth or to the early sixth century.[114] Beyond Serindia and East Asia, and contrary to what Renaissance art might lead one to expect, no examples have been found in the classical Mediterranean world. The theme does, however, recur in Chinese art of the Tang dynasty (see pl. 198-190). The Tumshuq piece suggests, if not a Serindian, then perhaps an Iranian source (thus its expansion in Sogdiana: see a painting from Pendjikent, dating to the seventh-eighth century) for this heroic armour.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, I et II, Toumchouq, pl. XCIV, fig. 242, p. 380.
Denès F., 1976, p. 58.

Plate 135
Female bust
Toqquz-Saraï (Tumshuq). "Small temple I". 6th century. Sun-dried clay. H. 15 cm; W. 10 cm; D. 5 cm. MG.23690 (P.123). **JG**

Each fragment of the sculptural decor from temple I, destroyed at an early date like those of most of the religious buildings at Toqquz-Saraï, is extremely important. We are often forced to consider vestiges of what were once large figurative compositions in the temples, in the form of heads in high relief, found in great number, which all reveal to a greater or lesser degree the complex play of influences in the formation of the local art. It is more unusual, on the other hand, to find that the bodies of such statues have survived. The latter do, however, preserve features that provide us with significant artistic and iconographic evidence (see pls. 131 and 134).

This finely arrayed bust wears a costume with a low *décolleté* giving the work an incidental dimension of feminine beauty (accentuated by the fragmentary condition of the piece) in addition to such considerations. Anecdotal, it also appears to be secular and historical, if we are right in supposing that this sculpture is a true reflection of aristocratic dress of that time. In fact, other evidence in the painting and sculptured reliefs in various sites in the Tarim Basin, as well as from further west (from the Hindu-Kush to Ferghāna), confirms that this was indeed the dress worn by the lay communities of Serindia. More interesting still is the fact that, without excluding the possibility that it represents a donor, the bust could also have belonged to an image of a *devatā*, drawing on ancient Indian beliefs, or of the manifestation of a deity called upon to take part in a narrative scene of one of the Buddha's previous lives, taken from the *jātaka* or *avadāna* literature, as we see in the relief panels from temple B at Toqquz-Saraï (see the note to plate 139 for a more detailed discussion of these panels). These stories include different classes of historical and imaginary beings, often interchangeable, all of whom have their place in Buddhist iconography.

This fine piece of work, executed with the aid of moulds and then partially reworked, combines a simplicity in the modelling of the torso (which makes for a successful contrast between the corset and the flesh) with a separate embellishment which consists of moulded florets along the jewelled chain crossing over the waist in an 'X'. Although this arrangement is unusual, there is, it has to be admitted, no technical difference to distinguish this work from the rest of the Tumshuq reliefs, of whatever period.

The slender form narrows at the waist, which is enclosed in a smooth, fitted tunic that swells imperceptibly over the curves of the breasts. The decorated border adorns and, by contrast, emphasises the nakedness of the bosom, while the hollows of the modelling invite a play of shadows. While the square-patterned braid running along the edge of the tunic is clear, the zig-zag band passing around the neck is somewhat ambiguous: it may represent a necklace or, alternatively, the border of a chemise that covered the chest – the latter seems most likely, in view of other evidence in Central Asian sculpture and painting.

This bust, with its very particular characteristics, is unique amongst the objects recovered from Toqquz-Saraï. It is reasonable, nonetheless, to imagine that there were other similar female figures in the monumental relief to which this work once belonged, much like the types of figures we see repeated in the relief panels from temple B. On the other hand, the woman's dress, consisting of a tunic or corset with a deep *décolleté* attached to a long skirt, fits into a huge geographical and cultural context to which we have already referred. We find numerous representations of such female figures in the Tarim Basin, in the paintings of Kyzyl, Shorchuk,[115] and Turfan (Khocho [116] and Toyuq[117]); they appear as heavenly dancers in depictions of the Pure Land of the West in Dunhuang (see, for example, the large silk painting in the Pelliot collection, reproduced in vol. 1, pl. 116). We also see such figures amongst the clay or cob sculptures from Shorchuk and Kumtura. The first of these, in which the complex figurative scenes are preserved, show that this was a type of costume often worn by *devi*s (goddesses) in divine couples of secondary importance, and also by the flying *apsarasas*, as we see in paintings at Kyzyl. As for sculpture, very similar polychrome cob or clay images were found at Shorchuk in the 'Cave of the *nakṣatras*' ('Cave of the constellations'); these are now in the Berlin museum.[118] At Tumshuq itself, there are female figures in two princely couples represented on the panels of temple B (see plates 137 and 139), but their appearance seems to show a development in the history of this costume during the period of artistic activity at the site, with a clear indication of a pleated chemise worn over the bosom in a very fetching manner.

This quite striking fashion in feminine dress can also be traced in more distant regions west of the Pamirs, appearing there at a similar or even slightly later pe-

riod. Indeed, it was his observation about this fashion, which could match the bust from Toqquz-Saraï in every detail, that inspired J. Hackin to comment on the appearance of female dancers and musicians represented in a scene of music and dance depicted on one of the walls of Bāmiyān cave 1. [119]

By referring to these other works, we have intended to show the impossibility of making any precise identification of the Toqquz-Saraï bust on the grounds of its costume alone, owing to the fact that the latter adorns a variety of female beings: *devi*, figures drawn from the legend of the Buddha, perhaps even lay donors. The relief panels from temple B seem to indicate, for their part (see below), yet another category of figure, already linked to the world of bodhisattvas, but we know that these figures, belonging to the Mahāyāna pantheon, cannot be female.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, I et II, Toumchouq, pl. XLII, fig. 91 and p. 350.

Plate 136
Head of a bodhisattva
Toqquz-Saraï (Tumshuq). "Small temple D". 6th-early 7th century. Sun-dried clay. H. 24 cm; W. 11 cm; D. 18 cm. EO.1374(4) (Pelliot 356). **JG**

While the number of sculptures from temple D that survived the severe destruction of that site over time is regrettably low, nevertheless the disordered fragments found by Pelliot do display a great variety in expression and character: they include idealised heads of bodhisattvas and *devatās*, distorted faces of old women (the only such heads to be found at Toqquz-Saraï; see fig. 79), the head of a bearded man – which Pelliot was unable to fit into the stylistic periods he established for Tumshuq – and grotesque faces with protruding eyes belonging to *lokapāla* or spirits. These regretably few objects in fact display too many contrasts for us to be able to reconstitute a stylistic profile for the art of this temple. This bodhisattva head, the largest to have been found at the site, cannot be directly compared with the few other heads that are similar. This is not because the bodhisattva head shows any break in aesthetics, since we may easily find similar general characteristics amongst the heads mentioned above, such as a wide face and proportions and treatment of the hair belonging to an identifiable type, but rather, by virtue of the more convincing context of the pieces found in the large temple with bas-reliefs B. As regards the latter,[120] it has been said that their 'style' reflects renewed Indian influences (late Gupta, in fact) in relation to the works of the earlier phases illustrated by the figures discovered in the main monastery, such as those of temple I (see pl. 126 *sqq.*). Although this character remains to be established, we must make a distinction between the facial mask and the ornamented coiffure, as we have with most of the moulded images from Tumshuq. For discussion of the sculptural qualities of the face, the reader may turn to the commentary on the head of a great bodhisattva (EO.1059; pl. 140) from temple B, which presents many similarities to the present head, if only in shape: the almost circular oval of the face, the features arranged close to the ridge of the nose which extends in unbroken fashion into the curve of the eyebrows. The ecstatic half-smile, however, expressing the quietude of Enlightenment of exemplary beings, belongs to a formula common in Buddhist art from the earliest images. On the other hand, it is worth pausing to observe the freer and more changeable character apparent in the ornamented coiffures of these heads. The type illustrated here, known as the "bouffant hair-style with incurved locks"[121], is quite well described at Tumshuq. It corresponds to one of the decorative stylisations that evolved from the oldest Gandhāran Buddha heads (see the note to EO.1070; pl. 126), and which is encountered so often in the art of the oases of the Northern Route that we can take it as one of the components of the 'style' of Central Asia. The workmanship, more summary than that of the large bodhisattva heads from temple B, suggests that this figure was placed quite high up in the original high-relief composition so that the eye took in only the most striking features. Pelliot remarked upon this when considering what he called the "distortions" apparent in some images. If this was indeed the case, this head is a fine example of the skill of the Tumshuq sculptors.

The ornamental section of the tiara and diadem also belongs to the elements that are prone to great variation and innovation at the hands of the artists of the Tarim Basin and which, above all, preserve some securely-dated features of the influences from the North-West. It is, however, apparent in the local variation of the tall central motif – a fan-shaped plume flanked by two rosettes of stylised lotus blossoms and supported by a twisted circlet – that the art of Gandhāra predated that of Tumshuq. The motif can be traced in the later art of Central Asia, notably in the region of Turfan, at Bezeklik and Tchyqqan-köl [122]; at the period contemporary with the Tumshuq relief, the most convincing examples are supplied by the Kyzyl wall-paintings. As for the faces and hair-styles, the diadems of heads of medium size from temples D and B display a comparable harmonisation. The plume at the centre of the tiara bears comparison with a whole group of figures from late Gandhāran and North-Western art dating from the seventh-eighth centuries – for example, with a head of a *devatā* (Musée Guimet) from Fondukistān and at Akhnur in Kashmir.[123] The motif on the head from temple D is no more than a variation of the theme of the tripartite diadem that is so magnificently developed in the large head of a bodhisattva recovered from temple B.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, I et II, Toumchouq, vol. 1, pl. LXXXIX, fig. 225; vol. II, p. 377.

Plate 137
Illustration of the Viśvaṃtara-jātaka (Sudāna-jātaka)
Toqquz-Saraï (Tumshuq). "Large temple B". 6th-beginning of the 7th century. Sun-dried clay. H. 66cm; W. 84 cm. EO.1055 (Pelliot 171). **JG**

The composition consists of six figures, including two children crouching at the feet of the seated couple wearing princely dress and ornaments. Two 'character' figures, both bearded men with identically characterised features, complete the group: one appears on the far left, partly resting on a drum-shaped stool, and wearing on his chest a caste-mark, the brahmanical thread; the other figure is an ascetic who stands with his legs apart in a vivid attitude of impeded movement, dressed in a loincloth that reveals his deeply emaciated body.

We should add that the relief presented here does not correspond exactly with the archaeological reality of its discovery. In fact, the bust and head of the male princely figure belongs to the fragments of the fourth relief recognised by the expedition, but has been incorporated into this relief owing to the manifest similarity of the figures (*cf.* the photograph taken *in situ*).[124]

It appears to us that owing to their characters, these associated figures may illustrate the *jātaka* of Viśvaṃtara or Sudāna, the *Sudāna-jātaka*, one of the most famous works of Buddhist narrative literature belonging to the class of texts dealing with the Bodhisattva's previous lives (*jātaka*). This story, like hundreds of others before it, is concerned with the perfections or *pāramitās* practised by the Buddha in his previous existences, but is of particular importance owing to the fact that, in most compilations, it is the one that rounds off the cycle of countless successive incarnations prior to the his final rebirth as Śākyamuni.

The faces and postures of the two children are evocative of the suffering which is their fate in this story. The adult figures, including the princely couple – the bodhisattva and his wife who are the children's parents – each play a major rôle in the story.

Born the crown prince of Śibi, the bodhisattva gave away everything as alms in fulfillment of the perfection of giving, *dāna-pāramitā*, so much so that, having given away his father's favourite animal, a white elephant, the king banished him from the kingdom. The edifying story begins in earnest after this preamble: Sudāna, condemned to wander with his family in the forest, has his solemn vow tested when he gives away his son and daughter, Jāli and Kṛṣṇājina, to a beggar (or a wicked brahmin, according to some versions of the text) who asks him for them, and again when he gives his wife Madri (Maddi in the Pāli version) in response to a similar demand made by a brahmin who is none other than Śakra (Indra, the ruler of the gods), who manifested himself thus in order to test the bodhisattva's determination. The god's intercession enabled the bodhisattva to realise in that life the perfection of giving, as well as to hear the announcement of the cessation of the cycle of his transmigrations after one final rebirth.

This *jātaka* is one of those literary works that the Pāli, Sanskrit, Chinese and Tibetan sources have preserved in a remarkably constant form in the different Far-Eastern Buddhist traditions. The title, however, changes in different versions (the prince is named Vessantara in Pāli, Viśvaṃtara or Sudāna in Sanskrit; the *jātaka* appears under this last name, Sudāna, in the Chinese canon; among others, one sūtra is specially devoted to him, the *Sūtra of the crown prince Sudāna*, [*Taishō*, 171], translated by Shengjian between 388 and 407 AD, during the western Jin dynasty [125]). Each version is distinguished by variations and significant embellishments. The most remarkable in this respect are those which give two different endings: some are happy and worldly, lingering over the reunion of the prince with his family, others are briefer and metaphorical, and ignore this scene or merely hint at it. Nevertheless, no matter what the variations, the story does not end until the Bodhisattva has heard the prediction (*vyākaraṇa*) of his future Buddhahood.

The high relief at Tumshuq shows us an image that is strangely bereft of narrative details in a story so rich in repercussions. Yet the sparing narrative that it presents paradoxically introduces, in relation to the better known visual abbreviations of the story, a scene unusually peopled with several figures, including the princely pair. One would look in vain amongst the numerous illustrations of this "birth" story – numerous and diverse in origin, whether from the north of India (the *stūpas* of Bharhut and Sāñchi for sculpted images, Ajaṇṭa, cave XVII, for wall-painting) or from the south (Amarāvatī, Nāgārjunakoṇḍa) as well as Gandhāra [126], to Java (Boro-Budur)[127] – for the particular iconography of the Serindian relief, which associates the bodhisattva and his wife, both of whom appear to have regained their royal dignity, with the two children. At Tumshuq, these portrayals entail the depiction of the royal couple's rich and ornate costumes and accessories, drawing on local modes of dress; these costumes appear in an identical form and are worn by figures of similar rank in the bas-relief that follows illustrating the *Sujāti-jātaka* (EO.1056; pl. 139). While we must take account of the stylistic unity of these panels, and, to a certain extent, of the largely unvarying techniques of composition (which could justify the presence of similar figures in the second relief), it is nevertheless possible to base the image of the princely couple on one of the sources of the story – that is, the source, unusually preserved in the Pāli tradition that is so rarely met with in the art of high Asia, is probably based on an original version in a North-Western Prakrit (Gandhārī), and was known as the *Vessantara-jātaka*.[128]

We think that this panel is an illustration of a passage from this story in which the two children, still captives of the beggar Jūjaka, are bound by him and left exposed at nightfall to the dangers of the forest. At this point Indra, who had already tested the prince by claiming his wife before returning her to him, despatches other gods to appear to the children as their parents, Vessantara and Maddi, in all their princely grandeur.

The dénouement of this version, moreover, repeats this scene: the real couple appears in their rightful place,

beneath the canopy of justice of Sañjaya, the king of Śivi (or Śibi). If the Tumshuq artist did indeed base his work on a tradition of the story close to that preserved in Pāli, as seems probable, he could thus have chosen to use either of the two representations of the Bodhisattva.

Such a conflation of the story, represented by the 'portraits' of the protagonists only, resulted in the disappearance of the narrative framework that occurs in most of the illustrations mentioned earlier – for instance, the elephant, the forest and its dangers, the captive children led away by the beggar, *etc.*, all elements that appear in, amongst others, the Sāñchi relief, which provides us with one of the most complete representations in successive scenes. In comparison with the Sāñchi relief, the Tumshuq piece seems to represent the essence of the story rather than its literal illustration, all the more so since it is necessary to be know the story beforehand in order to grasp its meaning. This applies, as we shall see, to the two other high reliefs from the same site.

While we cannot affirm that the story was depicted in its entirety in this single panel (owing to the disappearance of the panel that preceded it), it is nonetheless possible to establish the archaeological truth by comparing this relief with similar works from Kyzyl, that is, paintings from caves 81 and 17,[129] despite the fact that the latter depict a different version of the story, in which, for example, the princely couple does not appear. This shows that the iconography of the 'late' phase at Tumshuq, illustrated by the reliefs of temple B, has a number of close similarities with the rock-cut art of Kucha, in terms of the literary sources that inspired the images, sculptural composition and even, occasionally, with the style.

This link appears very clearly when these examples are contrasted with the mural depicting the same story in Dunhuang cave 428,[130] contemporary with the Western Wei (*circa* 520-530 AD), where it is placed opposite an illustration of the *Vyāghrī-mahāsattva-jātaka* (*jātaka* of the hungry tigress). The composition here returns to the technique of successive narrative scenes arranged in three registers, teeming with anecdotal details, that is directly linked to the sources in the Indian sphere mentioned earlier (see also the similar comment on the *Sujāti-jātaka*; *cf. infra*).

The sculptural qualities of the figures, as well as the arrangement of the composition, are in all points comparable with those of the relief reproduced in plate 139 (EO.1056), and will be analysed in our comments on that work. As in all the high-reliefs that have survived from temple B, these figures have faces with stereotyped features in keeping with their characters. They are arranged here two by two, according to the principle of grouping already mentioned. If we are right in contending that the head of the second figure of the princely couple, which has disappeared, was in fact virtually identical with the person thought to represent the male character, as in plate 139, it is more significant and revealing that the beggar and the Brahmān-Indra, so different in character in the story, have the same features. The same is true for the two children. This rule confirms what has already become apparent with the single heads – that is, the use of a series of moulds. These were not used just for difficult parts such as the expressive facial features but also for the rendering of the bodies themselves and even for the ornaments, draperies and accessories. The frontality of the figures, the absence of a well-thought-out spatial composition, and, therefore, of relationships between the figures themselves, justify, it seems to us, these 'portraits' of types, masquerading as a more faithful narrative.

Bibiliography:
Mission Pelliot, I et II, Toumchouq, pl. LXIX, fig. 171 and p. 369.

Plate 138
Illustration of the Śaṅkhācaryā-avadāna (Sanjāli-avadāna)
Toqquz-Saraï (Tumshuq). "Large temple B". Sun-dried clay. 6th-early 7th century. H. 75 cm; W. 76 cm. EO.1057. **JG**

As is shown by the photograph taken at the time of the excavation (see the introductory essay "Central Asian sites and works of art..."), this high relief would formerly have been viewed by worshippers during their *pradakṣiṇā* around the 'cella-altar', after they had passed the preceding relief illustrating the *Viśvaṃtara-jātaka* (pl. 137). Another illustration was placed between these two panels, but this, unfortunately, is totally destroyed but for its decorated frame (*cf.* photograph taken *in situ*). In his diary of the 6th November, Pelliot described it succinctly as follows: "... A second bas-relief shows the Buddha seated, with two *devas* or *apsarasas* flying above his head...".

The composition contrasts with the two other surviving panels in its clear arrangement of the figures converging on the central representation of the bodhisattva, the hero of this *avadāna* or "exploit". Moreover, unlike the other high reliefs of temple B, these fragments have preserved a significant iconographic element, the bird's nest that crowns the central figure's head, which singles this work out unmistakably as an illustration of the legend of Śaṅkhācaryā and his goodness towards animals (this 'particular exploit' is also known as the *Sanjāli-avadāna*).

The literary memory of the tale has only been preserved, to our knowledge, in the Chinese Buddhist canon – that is, assuming that a Sanskrit version of the story ever existed. It is, in fact, quite likely, given the nature of the works which include it, that this tale belonged to a local tradition, orally transmitted, like many other stories and legends whose origin is attributed to Khotan. Two compilations which mention the tale, the *Treatise of the Great Perfection of Wisdom, Dazhidulun* (*Taishō*, 1509, p. 89b and 188) and the *Sengqieluochasuojijing* (*Taishō*, 194, p. 121a and b), agree on the core elements of the story, but differ in detail. The former work gives the hero's name as Śaṅkhācaryā, as well as a development of the philosophical implications of the legend, according to Mādhyamaka teaching.

In the past, Śākyamuni was a *ṛṣi*, an ascetic, named Śaṅkhācaryā, owing to his hair which he wore in a

characterstic chignon in the form of a conch (*Śaṅkha*). Each day he passed in the fourth ecstasy (*dhyāna*), interupting his breathing (*ānāpāna*). Seated at the foot of a tree, he remained so perfectly motionless that a bird, confused by his appearance, laid her eggs in his chignon. When he emerged from his meditation, the ascetic realised his mistake but did not want risk making the mother fly off by moving; he therefore resolved to prolong his absorption in the *dhyāna* until all the fledglings were old enough to fly away.

The relief shows the moment which immediately precedes his release from the vow of patience, or, rather, it shows the "fruit of patience", *kṣānti-phala* (*renguo*), just before the flight of the young birds. The meditating ascetic (we can take his cross-legged posture for granted) is represented as a bodhisattva, wearing the conventional attributes and adornments of such figures that we know from numerous fragments of reliefs uncovered in temples B and D. He wears a band of cloth around his upper body, probably a survival of the brahmanical thread, and a floating scarf is wound about his arms forming a sort of nimbus around him. The figure's appearance speaks of the artistic liberty allowed the sculptor, without, however, breaking the rules regarding the strict contents of the story. The figure's identity is made known through a few recognisable features – in particular by the bird's nest built by mistake on the ascetic's head. Moreover, the representation of Śaṅkhācaryā in terms of the timeless, physical perfection of a bodhisattva, whose body is unmarked by his ascetic privations, proceeds from a legitimate interpretation: if one takes the point of view of the Buddha's previous lives and their perspectives, in which – such is the Hinayāna view – he appears, ideally, as the Bodhisattva, that is to say "an enlightenment-being". To grasp the extent of the originality of the Tumshuq relief, we must refer to illustrations of the same legend from or in other sites (most especially at Kyzyl), which generally represent the hero as an ascetic, and thus conform better with the anecdotal era of the 'exploit'. The relief, which gives the appearance of a bodhisattva to the figure, is comparable to the two other reliefs from temple B. This fact seems to us to be of general significance and also of great interest, since it would appear to reveal some fundamental characteristic of the Buddhism practised in the monasteries of Toqquz-Saraï at the period when this particular temple was built.

No doubt the addition of the artist, the bodhisattva is flanked here by flying figures – indicative of celestial approval and acclaim – that converge symmetrically above his head in a highly decorative composition that calls to mind the glories crowning heroes in classical Greco-Roman tradition. But it is hardly necessary to evoke these, since the theme is so widely diffused in the Buddhist world of the first three centuries of the Christian era as to become an iconographical element in its own right, manifesting as adoring celestial figures. Many examples are found in the Kushan art of the North-West (*e.g.* the sermon of Maitreya from Shotorak, dating from the second to third century AD, in the Musée Guimet [131]) and in North India (*e.g.* a stele depicting the Buddha seated, second century AD, from Mathurā, now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta [132]), as well as in the Deccan during the Ikṣvāku dynasty (third century AD: the stele of "the adoration of the *stūpa*" of Nāgārjunikoṇḍa [133]). The ornamental motif of stylised clouds with scrolling volutes and peacock feathers comes from the same inspiration. The ensemble (consisting of the flying figures and this decoration) can also be interpreted as a distant recurrence of a female winged offering figure, emerging from foliage that covers the lower part of her body, found at Dharmarajika (Taxila) and dated to the first century AD – that is, the oldest phase of Gandhāran art.[134]

In sculptural terms, these three figures belong to the same aesthetic and the faces at least seem to have been taken from the same mould. These features, furthermore, are found in identical form in the idealised figures of the two other panels from temple B, as well as in other heads discovered at the same site.

Representations of this *avadāna* are extremely rare, even exceptional, in Central Asia. Elsewhere, however, in India and the Gandhāran North-West (despite the formal similarities mentioned above) and even more remarkably in the Chinese world, which, as in other domains, absorbed so much of the heritage of the oases of the Tarim Basin, the legend does not seem to have inspired illustrations at all. Once again, it is the old kingdom of Kucha – the pictorial art of Kyzyl and Kumtura – that provides us with other representations of the Tumshuq subject. The relationship between the two sites – that is, between Tumshuq and Kucha – already mentioned in conjunction with the *Viśvaṃtara-jātaka*, becomes yet closer owing to the fact that evidence for this *avadāna* is restricted to these places alone. Such links doubtless reveal the existence of a body of religious beliefs that formerly united the the western oases of the northern Tarim, and raise a further question: to what extent did the Buddhist communities founded at the foot of Toqquz-Saraï-tāgh once come within the sphere of influence of Kucha?

More frequently encountered at Kyzyl, in the decoration of the ceiling vaults of no less than six caves (8, 17, 38, 178, 184 and 205), than at Kumtura, where the story appears only once, in cave 63, the different images of the *avadāna* bear a number of iconographical similarities with the Tumshuq relief. But they also show, as a group, a greater fidelity to the contents of the story; in particular, Śaṅkhācaryā is represented as a *ṛṣi*, with the body of an ascetic. In this sense, the closest of these images is that in Kyzyl cave 38, known as the *Höhle mit dem Musikerchor* ('Cave of the musicians').[135] The painted representations do not, however, depict him in this fashion alone, for at Kumtura [136] as well as in Kyzyl cave 205 (the "Māyā" cave, site II [137]) he appears in a form very like the Tumshuq bodhisattva.

The comparison with Kuchean painting, and in particular with that of Kyzyl, also enables us to justify the flying figures and to complete the fragmentary relief. The figures appear in an almost identical manner in the frieze from a pedestal in cave 186, attributed to the seventh century, which illustrates, amongst others, the

Mahātyāgavān-jātaka, now kept in Berlin.[138] More complete, these figures perhaps describe the ribbons which they held over the head of the Tumshuq bodhisattva.

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L'Asie Centrale, fig. 136.

Plate 139
Illustration of the Sujāʾi-jātaka
Toqquz-Saraï (Tumshuq). "Large temple B". Sun-dried clay. H. 78 cm; W. 82 cm. EO.1056. **JG**

This relief (see also fig. 95), the third in the arrangement already discussed, followed the illustration of the *Śaṅkhācaryā-avadāna* (pl. 138; EO.1057), from which it was separated by an upright decorated with foliage (*cf.* fig. 92). It is difficult to identify owing to its poor condition and, above all, because of the freedom enjoyed by the Tumshuq artist in rendering these stories that we discussed in relation to the preceding panels (and which the technique of figures moulded separately and then assembled does not suffice to justify). This relief shows many strong similarities to the illustration of the *Sudāna-jātaka* (pl. 137; EO.1055).

Like the latter, the composition is conceived as a figurative decoration, in which appear four figures forming two distinct pairs, one seated, the other standing. A child wearing a loincloth can be seen kneeling at the feet of the standing figures. As in the relief of Sudāna, the couples display different psychological expressions, postures and costumes. The pair on the right is almost identical to the relief shown in plate 137, representing haloed figures of princely appearance; seated in the conventional posture of ease, theirs is an idealised dignity, remote and serene, which in Buddhism generally characterises the representations of bodhisattvas and some *devas*. The other two figures (replacing the brahmin and beggar representations of plate 137), are also haloed, but seem to be more firmly rooted in the story by means of the direct relationship they show with the child at their feet, and the torment and sheer despair etched by the deep furrows and expressive lines on their faces. That these figures are indeed of this-worldly reality is underlined by their clothes, especially in the case of the male figure: he wears a long, close-fitting tunic with a pearl border and a pleated edge that must reflect local habits of lay dress of that period. This costume also appears in Kuchean wall-painting (the Kyzyl and Kumtura caves), while variations upon it are found in several regions of high Asia and the Iranian plateau.[139] This style of dress contrasts significantly with that of the princely figure, who wears the timeless and conventionally 'Indian' rich costume of bodhisattvas. As Pelliot note in his diary of the 6th May 1906, the figure carries on his shoulder a barely visible burden, perhaps a traveller's water-skin. The female figures do not display any marked differences apart from their postures and psychological expressions. They both wear the characteristic Tumshuq tunic with a low *décolleté* and flounced sleeves, and a long under-garment with deep folds over the breasts. Hallade has shown how much this fashion that is local to the site – already apparent in the fragments of reliefs from the older temple I – also belongs to the great arc of Serindian civilisation that stretches from Sogdiana (the wall-paintings of Pendjikent) to the Turfan oasis (the Toyuq figurines[140]); the same costume is worn by the wooden statuette of a female musician playing a lute found by Pelliot at Duldur-Āqur (*cf.* pl. 179).

The identification of the story is, however, less certain than might appear, for there are, in fact, many tales borrowed from *jātaka* and *avadāna* literature in which children linked with a couple act as the protagonists. Furthermore, given the fragmentary condition of the relief, we cannot assert that the boy was alone, nor that the space left below the princely couple was not intended for another figure, as seems likely from the photograph taken *in situ*.[141]

The posture of boy, kneeling at the feet of the holy travellers, and the latter's grief-stricken faces, seem to indicate that the sacrifice is imminent if not already under way, or, which seems more plausible to us, they suggest the resolution of the boy's vow (*shiyuan*) to sacrifice himself. This interpretation of the image implies that in this case it is the boy who is the Bodhisattva rather than one of the two figures standing over him. Let us leave aside the princely couple, who would in this case represent the restoration of their former royal dignity to the actors at the story's end. The woman's tormented expression, which the artist has emphasised with the creases on the cheeks and forehead, made Pelliot (and other authors who came after him[142]) believe that it was the face of an old woman. We have searched in vain for texts that might illustrate such a group. Another possibility is suggested by the ambivalence of this face, which can also seem youthful (it is apparently taken from the same mould as the other three faces of this relief): it may in fact be a portrait of someone in an extreme emotional state. The corpus of literary sources contains a number of similar stories in which a young boy is the object of his parents' unnatural feelings – for example, the tale of the *Dharmapāla-avadāna* (*Avadāna-śataka*, 33[143]; *Taishō*, 200, 39). Queen Durmati, who was of irascible and violent temperament, demanded, in a fit of jealousy and madness, from her husband, Brahmadatta, the "just and virtuous" king of Benares, the blood of their own son to drink as a potion for quietening her rage. The child – none other than the Bodhisattva – was sacrificed. We mention this *avadāna* because it is in some respects matched by this relief, and because it inspired some ancient representations, an Indian example of which is found in the art of Amarāvati. Nonetheless, how do we then justify the halo surrounding the queen's head?

We are inclined to think that this panel from Tumshuq conforms to the 'narrative time' already dis-

cussed in relation to the two preceding panels from the same site. It parallels the technique illustrated in the *Sudāna-jātaka* (and we have already drawn attention to the many similarities of these two works): that is to say, the representation of the happy conclusion, shown by the rehabilitation of the victims to their former royal position, is depicted simultaneously with the principal subject – the test itself – which occurred earlier, captured at the very moment of the sacrifice. Even more explicit here than in the Sudāna relief, this narrative time is evoked by the couple who appear in two different guises. We can imagine that the same was true, *a fortiori*, for the young boy, especially since he is an incarnation of the Bodhisattva.

The essential part of this relief is, therefore, the left-hand group converging on the kneeling boy. The *Sujāti-jātaka* seems to us to match the character of the figures better, including the princely couple. It would seem that the first mention of the tale only appears in the Chinese *Tripitaka*. No less than three principal sūtras reproduce it, but these differ in their details and exactness: they are the *Zabaozangjing* (*Taishō*, 203, p. 447c-448b), the *Xianyujing* (*Sūtra of the Sage and the Madman*; *Taishō*, 202, p. 356a-357b), and the *Dafangbianfobaoenjing* (*Taishō*, 156, p. 127b-130b.). Below we give a comparative reading of the first two texts.[144]

According to the *Sūtra of the Sage and the Madman*, the king of Techashili (Taxila?) had ten sons (six according to the *Zabaoenjing*). He is killed together with nine of his sons by his minister Luo Hou. The tenth son, nicknamed "He who dwells in goodness", was warned of the danger that threatened him by a *yakṣa* who rose up out of the ground. This son fled away with his wife and seven-year-old son, Sujāti, known as "Born in goodness", but wandered off the path so that they all began to suffer from hunger. His wife offered her life, but his son forestalled her. Thus, every day, a quantity of flesh sufficient to keep the three travellers alive was cut off the boy. The time finally came, however, when nothing remained of the boy but three last strips of flesh. The father and mother each took their share, and then, exhausted, came within sight of a village – as for the child, they had to resign themselves to abandoning him at the side of the road. At that moment, Śakra Devendra (the god Indra) appeared as an animal – a lion or tiger according to the texts, or even a hungry wolf in the *Zaobaozangjing* – to demand his portion. The child gave it to him. Faced with such boundless generosity, Śakra takes on human form and asks him if he regrets sacrificing himself for his parents. Sujāti answers that he never harboured the slightest feeling of this kind, and that if his words are indeed true, then let his body become as before, healed. The miracle does, indeed, take place. The story ends, after many ups and downs, with the happy reunion of the family; they then return to their kingom with a great military escort, under the god's personal protection.

It would seem that the tale was not the subject of artistic representation, prior to these Serindian images, in either India or Gandhāra, and after fruitless research, we are inclined to think that it did not inspire the artists of East Asia. Yet again (*cf.* the high relief of the *Sanjāli-avadāna*), it appears that Serindia is the only region in which this tale became popular, as witnessed by its surviving illustrations. Apart from the Tumshuq piece, some rare but significant examples can be seen in the vast pictorial programmes in the caves of Kyzyl and Dunhuang. At Kyzyl, these form part of the decoration of the vaults, and were painted on the west side of cave 8 (*Schwertträgerhöhle*)[145] and on the east side of cave 38 (*Höhle mit der Musikerchor*)[146]; as regards the latter example, the fragment in which this *jātaka* is depicted is now in Berlin. At Dunhuang, we find an example in cave 296, in the form of a long register in the lower section of the north wall of the main chapel.[147] The Kyzyl illustrations differ considerably in terms of composition from the Dunhuang painting, the architectural setting being the determining factor. Owing to their being located in the vaults, the Kyzyl examples appear as vignettes, sometimes barely visible amongst a host of other stories. Each of these is depicted in a small lozenge-shaped area within the chequered divisions of the ceiling. An encylopædia of the narrative repertoire of the Buddha legend, these illustrations that dominate the cella mix together scenes from the life of the Buddha and from the two great literary cycles, the *jātaka* and *avadāna* stories. The need for economy in depicting these resulted in the painting of allegorical images that contain only those elements that are most eloquent of the story that is their inspiration. This feature also characterises the Tumshuq high reliefs. Nevertheless, the two Tarim sites do not show the same image of the *jātaka*: the Kyzyl paintings identify it rather better in dynamic scenes in which the father prepares to take up his sword (cave 37), or is seen already brandishing it over the head of the young boy, who is carried on his mother's shoulders (cave 8). The similarity of the two Kuchean representations suggests that the *Sujāti-jātaka* had its own iconographical tradition, though the artist had free rein as regards the details. There are many examples of stories developing a concise and evocative representation, like the tale of Sanjāli discussed above (pl. 138). The evidence from elsewhere indicates this is true only for the region of Kyzyl, for the Tumshuq high relief proves this, while even more convincing is the *jātaka* illustration at Dunhuang. Far from depicting a contraction of the story, the Dunhuang wall-painting takes the form of a long strip of succcessive scenes, a true sequential illustration of the literary narrative. This form goes back to the earliest Buddhist art in India (the Sāñchi *stūpa*), and is, in fact, more archaic than the other type, which consists of a considered synthesis of elements depicted in a single image. And it would appear that the sequential tradition was continued at Dunhuang, where a painting from the Stein collection (Stein painting 12), of the ninth century, illustrates the same story in scenes next to the paradise of Śākyamuni.

The iconography of the Tumshuq bas-relief becomes clear to us in the light of a particular scene in Dunhuang cave 296 (Northern Zhou dynasty, *ie.* second half of the sixth century AD), despite that fact in principle they are so different. This scene comes after the actual sacrifice

performed by the father (which, moreover, is identical with the subject of Kyzyl cave 8). Like the Tumshuq illustration, the Dunhuang painting shows the child sitting cross-legged on the ground, his hands in *añjali-mudrā*. Standing beside him and slightly leaning over him are his parents, their hands joined in the same gesture of religious devotion. As we find in the Tumshuq relief, the scene takes place against a background of trees, evocative of the forest.

By linking the illustrations of the Sujāti-jātaka at Tumshuq and Kyzyl – a link justified by the contrast furnished by the Dunhuang example – a broader field of cultural influences emerges than had hitherto been envisaged for the early history of Central Asia. The analysis of works of art sometimes reveals surprises which will, perhaps, be confirmed later by archaeology and epigraphy.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, I et II, Toumchouq, pl. LXVII, fig. 170 and pp. 367-368.
Seiiki bunka kenkyū (Monumenta serindica), p. 107.

Plate 140
Head of a bodhisattva
Toqquz-Saraï (Tumshuq). "Large temple with bas-reliefs B". Sun-dried clay (partially fired during the burning of the site). 6th-beginning 7th century. H. 36 cm; W. 25 cm; D. 18 cm. EO.1059 (Pelliot 40). **JG**

The characteristic morphology of this head, with its unbroken and almost circular facial oval, can be held as representative of the style of temple B, as does its size. We imagine that this large work was given particular attention, for it is more meticulously executed than the smaller figures in the narrative panels. We have discussed earlier the sculptural qualities of this type, when examining the heads with idealised expressions (showing the compassion and salvific powers of the bodhisattvas) found in temple I, interpreting it as an original formalism in which a number of older canons are combined. This is best defined by comparison with the preceding examples. Thus we note tendencies that were already observed in some heads from temple I (see, for instance, EO.1064; plate 128). It is this permanence that gives a recognisable 'style' to the whole of the art of Tumshuq – that is, the smooth appearance of the full, oval faces, which are much wider than the area given over to the features, and of which this head is a supreme example.

The stylisation of the works from temple B emphasises the spherical form of the face, though without altering its relationship with the features – indeed, these appear to be more finely worked than before, massed round the ridge of the nose which becomes more angular and prominent.Our immediate impression is of a mask applied to a volume that is much too broad, and which results in a 'moon-face'. Without breaking with earlier formulae, the features heighten the schematism mentioned earlier: the eye-balls project more, while the arch of the eyebrows merges more quickly into the forehead. The mouth is much reduced, to the point of appearing too small, but is, notwithstanding this, finely modelled. It preserves the ecstatic half-smile required by the figure's iconography. This new idiom (and we use this term quite deliberately, since it refers to a form that not only occurred at Toqquz-Saraï at this particular period but also became important elsewhere in Serindia) displays a lesser concern for anatomical resemblance than before and – which is not necessarily the corollary of stylisation – a lesser sense of sculptural modelling in favour of a plastic formalism that renders more expressively the idealised visage of a bodhisattva.

The coiffure and its large tiara obey stylistic tendencies that we have already referred to; they reflect better than do the smaller heads the features resulting from the technique of separately moulded sections. The hairstyle, with the hair divided at the forehead, is related to already recognised forms, but is distinguished from them by the 'decorative naturalism' of the curving locks. Both hair and tiara participate in the *'décor'* of the face. This appearance characterises only the large bodhisattva heads at Tumshuq, but is more common in the art of other Central Asian sites: at Murtuq (*cf. Mission Otani*, pl. 1) [148], at Idiqut-Shari (Khocho, Gaochang) as well as at Tchyqqan-Köl, where it acccompanies extremely rounded heads.[149]

The diadem is related to the general ornament and, in a broader sense, to a group of heads found at temples B and D which, owing to this, may be judged to be contemporary with this head. It shows a tripartite division consisting of three medallions with pearl borders. Each of the two side medallions bears a lotus blossom rosette, while the largest one (from which hangs some pleated material), found in the centre, is adorned with a floral decoration that brings to mind the motifs found in the haloes of Indian buddha images in the Gupta style. A similar tripartite composition occurs in the forerunners of Gandhāran art,[150] and continues in the later sites of Fondukistan and Akhnur where it enjoys a more imaginative arrangement and decoration. Hallade has aptly remarked that these diadems on heads uncovered at Tumshuq show quite different characters from those of the North-Western models, although they seem to be heirs to the latter.[151] It is only by comparison with the arts of the other oases of the Tarim Basin that a more convincing typology of this ornament can be established; such a comparison shows, yet again, the freedom of stylistic invention that flourished in the Serindian sites. To take the paintings of Kyzyl as an example, we find that in that vast repertoire of forms the most closely related ones are found, to use Grünwedel's nomenclature, in the *Hippokampenhöhle*,[152] the 'Cave of the ring-bearing doves'[153], the 'Cave of the washing of the feet',[154] *etc.* – in other words, in the caves that are generally said to belong to the 'second style', dating therefore to the first half of the seventh century AD.

In conclusion, this bodhisattva head, which must have belonged to a Buddha triad or to a group of larger cult figures set up in the cella of the temple (see the introductory essay, "Central Asian sites and works of art ..."), marks the final development in the evolution of

the figurative art of Tumshuq and in that of the reliefs from temple B. A lesser concern for anatomical accuracy – lesser, for example, than is shown by the heads from the earlier temples, from temple I and those of the transitional period known from the reliefs of temple N – seems to have been the price paid for the ideal form bestowed on beings by the alchemy of the Buddhist Law. This aesthetic of the Tumshuq reliefs is closely linked with the canon of figure-painting of the Kuchean school, especially in the Kyzyl caves. Furthermore, the large bodhisattva from temple B at Toqquz-Saraï echoes typologically the reliefs found at Gaochang (Turfan).[155] Lastly, the figure's iconography seems to be in keeping with that reserved for bodhisattvas, which in turn makes a strong case for the existence of Mahâyânist beliefs at Tumshuq.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, I et II, Toumchouq; vol. I, pl. LXII, fig. 158; vol. II, pp. 365-366.
Gime Tôyô Bijutsukan, pl. 79.
L'Asie Centrale, fig. 103.

Plates 141 and 142
Heads of devatās or bodhisattvas
Toqquz-Saraï (Tumshuq). Provenance unknown. 4th-5th century. Sun-dried clay (partially fired during the burning of the site). Plate 141: H. 16.5 cm; W. 10.9 cm; D. 10 cm. MG.23644. Plate 142: H. 14.3 cm; W. 8.6 cm; D. 7.4 cm. MG.23647. **JG**

The two heads are each marked with an incision on the forehead and wear the smiling, enraptured expression of the contemplation of Awakening that is generally characteristic of bodhisattvas. Their features resemble each other so closely that it would appear likely that the heads were produced using one and the same mould. The variations in their coiffures, however, show yet again the thematic enrichening of these stereotyped faces through the combination of motifs taken from other moulds which, in spite of the fragmentary state of preservation, we can recognise as belonging to certain 'types' of hair-style already met with at Tumshuq. The first, consisting of curved or crescent-shaped locks, is without doubt related to that of the head reproduced in plate 126 (EO.1070) from Temple I; this style, so often seen at Toqquz-Saraï, is known as the "bouffant style with central parting". The second, on the other hand, shows an arrangement of locks in a swag at the upper edge of the forehead, more often found on the heads of ascetics (*śramaṇa*) and brahmins than on those of *devatās* and bodhisattvas, as can be seen in the figure of Śakra (the god Indra), depicted as a member of the highest caste, which appears in the panel illustrating the *Viśvaṃtara-jâtaka* in Temple B (*cf.* pl. 137), as well as in other examples of statuary in polychrome cob from Kyzyl and Shorchuk (Berlin Museum), and which also appears occasionally in wall-painting (Kumtura, cave 2).

Nevertheless, here we will only pause to consider, from amongst these important features serving to distinguish the types or groups to which these heads belong (of little meaning to us today, in our ignorance of the original composition), those factors which relate to the sculpture of the faces, for, in these works of uncertain provenance, it is these that show that the relief belongs to an already recognised 'style'. In order to understand this, we must make comparisons and return to earlier examples.

The decisive elements involved in the attribution of a work to a particular style and period – considering all the finds, from the oldest pieces (for example, those of Temple I, mentioned above) to the most recent objects found in Temples B and D – are the relationship of the features within the facial oval, the sharpness of the formal rendition, the greater or lesser marking of incisions, and, lastly, the identification of particular sculptural formulae or techniques which can be more precisely dated. As regards the first of these elements, we can note the exact proportion common to all the heads belonging to the most ancient group and, to select but a single feature, the lengthening of the corners of the eye into the the curve of the temples. For the second, illustrated almost perfectly in this case, strongly stylised but nonetheless showing realistic movement: the lively ridge of the eyebrows in the form of arcs, springing like two spreading branches from the line of the nose and, in the same manner, the sharp rendition of the upper eyelids (whose shadows alone are enought to suggest the gaze even though the irises are not marked), as well as the expressively modelled lips and nose and, finally, the resolution of the preceding traits within the general articulation of smooth volumes, all these cause us to link these two faces with the sculptural canon also represented by the head of a *devatā* or bodhisattva from Temple I shown in plate 127 (EO.1074).

The similarities between these two pieces will appear even more convincingly when seen from another angle, in profile. The profile of each face is characterised by a significant recession of the chin in relation to the plane of the forehead and the bridge of the nose which prolongs it. In fact, the chin recedes much further than is anatomically likely. This feature may be explained in sculptural terms by the artist's wish to emphasise the projection of the lower lip, achieved by making a deep shadow beneath it. In this, as in other aspects of these faces, a Gandhâran antecedent is apparent. In particular, some stucco Buddha heads from Haḍḍa may well have already anticipated this expressive technique.[156] Though our observation of similarities of feature in these heads may be well-founded, the actual proportions of these features within the facial oval are quite different.

More subjective is our wonder at the idealised, half-smiling facial expressions, whose subtlety, refinement and changing appearance when seen from different angles distinguishes them from the rather rigid mask of the *devatā* shown in plate 127, in spite of the formal similarities which we have already noted, linking them rather with the head thought to be that of a bodhisattva reproduced in plate 126. From an objective point of view, a great distance is seen to lie between them, with on the

one hand a work which, with its clear re-working of the features, seems to have been re-modelled at the time of making (see the note to plate 126), and, on the other, these two heads, in which the initial impression of the mould seems to have been hardly modified. Nevertheless, the coherence of the features is so precise, the balance of the creasing of eyes and lips and the flaring nostrils in the articulation of the smile is so perfect, that the relief seems to escape the repetitive formula typical of faces obtained from a mould. The few furrows, made with the aid of a spatula, that appear here only serve to accentuate the impact of the moulded volumes, without creating new expression, as seems to have been the case in plate 126.

These two heads may be dated to the first phase in the art of Toqquz-Saraï, contemporary with the reliefs of Temple I. More precisely, and despite a few differences in the finishing of the coiffures, they appear to belong to the artistic domain of the workshop that produced the work to which they have been compared (see plate 126).

We must add, however, that these two heads do depart from the latter work in one respect, which calls for their comparison with other forms of cult images from Tumshuq, in that they show an aesthetic proper to very large, even monumental works (such as the discovery of a Buddha head early on in the excavation), as suggested by the fullness of their volumes and the clarity with which these are distinguished. The heirs to this formal canon can be retraced with a certain fidelity to some pieces from Shorchuk (a head of a buddha in sun-dried clay[157]), and, less clearly, in some rare examples from Murtuq (Turfan).[158]

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, I et II, Toumchouq, vol. I, pl. CVI and figs. 285-287; vol. II, p. 389.

Plate 143
Meditating buddha
Toqquz-Saraï, Tumshuq, "Central *stūpa*". Wood. 5th cent. H. 6cm; W. 3.5 cm; D. 1.5 cm. MG.21288 (Pelliot 283). **JG**

This is a cult image, by virtue of the representation of the Buddha himself seated in the posture of meditation, otherwise known as *saṃbodhi*. The work is so small that one imagines that it must once have belonged to a modest portable altar, also made of wood, which may have been carved in the shape of a niche into which the icon was placed. To this may have been added two side panels, thus forming a triptych illustrating a Buddha triad, or a larger assembly of holy figures, or even anecdotal scenes of the life of the Blessed One. Such are the visual complements inevitably evoked by an image of this kind, itself related to the more numerous wooden works found in the monastery of Duldur-Aqur at Kucha (see, for example, plates 175 and 174). The opening essay in this volume has already mentioned the particular circumstances which seem to have marked the final decline of the site and its ultimate desertion, documented in the ruins of Tumshuq in the traces of a fire, as a result of which (unlike the Kuchean religious complex mentioned above) only a few very rare examples of wooden sculpture have come down to us.

The figure clearly demands comparison with a sun-dried clay relief of a similar though fragmented image, found in Temple N and reproduced in plate 131 (MG.23691). The latter work is so close in iconography and style that it invites the same comments and a similar dating. As in the moulded relief, the seated pose and the "seal" or gesture of meditation (*dhyāna-mudrā*) bring about a perfect symmetry in the ordering of the folds of the *saṃghāṭī* which entirely covers the body. This is especially noticeable in the regular curves described by the fall of the material over the legs, as we find in Gandhāran buddhas.

The working of the draperies, here clearly transposed from the clay image, is sketchily effected by simple chiselled incisions into the robe as it falls over the body; the summary nature of this technique stems from the statuette's small size. The incisions are merely indicative, but in keeping with the formal canon adopted, and are sculpturally extremely faithful to the figure. We note that, in this form, these constitute the usual method adopted for other such small wooden icons, found in different parts of Serindia (see the statuettes discovered by the other archaeological expeditions contemporary with Pelliot's).[159]

This relief gives us the opportunity to consider the complete image of the Buddha, as preserved in this Gandhāran canon, with only slight variations, depending on differences of materials – we can fairly assume that such was the original form of the unfired clay work. Thus, the cult image juts out from a background consisting of a halo and nimbus, incised with radiating lines that display his luminous radiance. The head, inclined slightly forward, reflects the well-known posture of Gandhāra, used to illustrate the meditative introspection of the pose. The accentuation of the projecting upper eyelids beneath the shadow of the arching brows contribute, even in this miniature and damaged carving, to the rendering of a canonical expression faithful to a Western tradition. We are thus faced with an attention to detail similar to the model, but which, oddly enough, does not follow in the treatment of the coiffure, here schematically represented by a line curving around the forehead, the hair smooth, without locks, more like a skullcap, with a prominent *uṣṇiṣa*. A similar simplification is found in the sketched lotus throne, translated as a corolla of two diverging lines, each undivided, without any indication of petals, but which, despite its schematic appearance, leaves no doubt as to the meaning of the composition. Rather than noting a possible clumsiness in the workmanship, we admire this pared-down representation of the Buddha in the canonical posture, and the considerable care displayed in the arrangement of the pleats of the robe and in the radiating lines of the halo and nimbus.

Our knowledge of similar small, wooden icons found in Central Asia, despite the fact that these do not always display such stylised forms (see the elaborately

worked figures reproduced in plates 175 and 174 from Duldur-Aqur), allow us to associate this piece with creations from Kucha; more precisely, with the small images discovered at Kyzyl,[160] mostly dated to between the sixth and seventh centuries.

Nevertheless, and in spite of what one might think, the simplification of the hair-style, for example, is not a sketchy approximation for small carvings only. The highly-finished wooden statuette of a meditating buddha, discovered at Tumshuq-tāgh,[161] also displays this smooth yet expressive coiffure. We also mention, in this connection and without leaving Tumshuq, a small standing image of the Buddha kept in the Berlin Museum.[162] Despite their different poses, the latter object shows many similarities to the Pelliot work, which inclines us to give it a similar date, perhaps a little earlier than the Kyzyl pieces, owing to comparisons inspired by local statuary in sun-dried clay.

The emission of radiant light represented in the nimbus (discussed below – see our comments on the works from Duldur-Āqur; pl. 175 and 174) is an iconographical feature that is especially developed in Serindian images, for, although it may be traced to Gandhāran and even to some rare (and most unlikely) Indian sources, this theme would seem to belong to the local spirit of that region. Without wishing to burden this note with the comparisons we have made in the entries to those plates, we draw attention to the obvious similarity to an image of a buddha seated on a throne against a ground with two identically radiating circles, set within the arch of a niche, that was discovered by Stein at Qianfodong, the "Caves of the Thousand Buddhas" at Dunhuang.[163] Though this work displays certain elements in a rather Chinese style, closer to the creations of the Sui and the early Tang dynasties, we share Stein's opinion that this "... shows a Buddha of pure Gandhāran style..., and was evidently cast from a mould of early workmanship ...".[164] We believe that these early qualities are the same that may be seen in the present work from Toqquz-Saraï.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, I et II, Toumchouq, pl. CI, fig. 270 and pp. 385-386.

Plate 144
Head of a devatā (?)
Toqquz-Saraï (Tumshuq). Uncertain origin. 6th-beginning of the 7th century. Unfired clay. H. 14cm; W. 12 cm; D. 10.3 cm. EO.1083. **JG**

Also of uncertain origin, this head nevertheless shows striking similarities to the figures of the narrative cycle preserved in Temple B; and as these are clearly distinguishable from earlier works, we will emphasise the features they appear to have in common. Thus, as in the case of the large head of a bodhisattva (EO.1059; pl. 140), we observe smoother features and a more rounded modelling, evident in, for example, the arch of the eyebrows that quickly fade into the curve of the forehead, and which no longer play the part established by the Gandhāran models of articulating all the features around the ridge of the nose, emphasising the heavy eyelids by means of the shadow thereby produced. As a result, there appears to be a special phenomenon – common to the shapes of faces from the late structures, temples B and D – of a marked similarity of features in idealised figures, not greatly altered from the oldest images: in other words, the features which we can recognise in the 'classical' proportions in the art of Tumshuq, exemplified by the large head of a bodhisattva referred to above.

In detail and expression, however, the present head does not exactly fit in with the canon of characteristic 'moon-shaped' faces that we find elsewhere, which makes this rather original in the creations of Tumshuq, or at least marks it out by its individuality as a figure of the iconography. The expression is no longer the ecstatic, inward smile, typical of the important attendants of the Buddha, but is rather one produced by the rapture of concentrating on exterior things (the sight, one must assume, of the Buddha and his assembly). We offer this interpretation on due consideration of the open eyes and the rapt gaze of the well-defined iris. With little change to the other features in terms of the conventional canon, this single detail radically alters the character.

Should we distinguish this character as the chance result of the art of the these heads, or should we see in it the careful sign of a different aesthetic in the faces? Although with this we enter the sphere of intuition, we cannot fail to be struck by the similarities to Indian sculpture, especially to the traditional influence of the North-West: the disappearance of the morphological 'structure' of the face, the importance of the half-veiled gaze beneath the heavy eyelids, the elongation of the nose, the voluptuousness of the Indian canon (considered a sign of beauty) emphasised by the creases "of beauty" (*sandao*) on the neck, *etc.*. These, along with the arrangement and ornamentation of the coiffure and the rosette-shaped, pendant earrings, we recognise as marks of the link with unfired clay sculpture of the Gupta period, of which a few rare examples are preserved in the National Museum in Delhi.

In our opinion, the unusual appearance of the hair-style, which Hallade qualified as the "symmetrical type with S-shaped curls" [165], and which, according to her, is a variation of other coiffures found on some of the heads of temples B and D, is affected by this influence, too rarely attested, from the sculpture of the sub-continent. The rendering of the hair in this piece may be compared with that of the male figure in the royal couple seen in the fragments of wall-painting that Pelliot brought back from Duldur-Āqur (*cf.* pl. 164, EO.3665). From this piece of painted evidence from Kucha opens up a whole series of analogies, in which are assembled some rather stereotypical figures of this type from the Kyzyl caves (some of the more important of these are discussed in the note on these fragments). The peculiarity of these figures, found amongst the groups illustrating narrative or preaching scenes, lies partly in their all displaying this coiffure: whether in a portrait of King

Ajātaśatru's minister Varṣākāra, remarkable also for his dark complexion, or, in another painting, a *śramaṇa*, also of Indian origin, or a deity with angry features, who contrasts with a group of worshippers. The particular expression, already observed in this head from Toqquz-Saraï, can be matched in these examples of Kuchean painting.

This work certainly adds considerably to our appreciation of the art of Tumshuq, for these characterisics, apparently inherited from some other influence than that of the North-West, appear only after a thorough analysis. Not to be found in the original style at Tumshuq, as well as at Kucha, they could indicate a general avenue for the genesis of the local style of the figures from temples B and D, with which this solitary head must be linked.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, I et II, Toumchouq, pl. CIV, fig. 280 and p. 388-389.

Plate 145
Iridescent green-glazed jug
Toqquz-Saraï (Tumshuq). "Hall S, chamber containing a grave with urns". Ceramic. 6th-7th century. H. 33 cm; W. 19 cm. EO.1061 (Pelliot 243). **JG**

Pelliot noted the discovery of this jug in his diary on 13th November 1906: "... Beneath the small temple J at Toqquz-Saraï, chamber S partly collapsed, thereby revealing a lower chamber mainly filled with funerary urns filled with the ashes of bones. These urns were of various shapes. We removed a sort of pitcher, which had gone a rather beautiful green owing to the fire...". Thus he made clear the function of this artefact – a funerary deposit accompanying the urns.

There is no doubt that the general shape of the jug, as well as the treatment of the motifs in relief decorating the handle (the only ornate part), were inspired by metalwork, in particular Sasanian silver-smithing. It bears a close resemblance to the silver jug in the State Hermitage Museum.[166] The pear-shaped body of the vessel, although round, reproduces the same curve and seems to be similarly suspended between the tall, flaring foot and the elongated neck with its prominent spout, resulting in a lightness more typical of silver-smithing rather than of ceramic works. The handle has an open-mouthed animal head at either end, and, where it is attached to the side of the jug, has a large radiating palmette, veined with pearls.

Over and above this reference to the Sasanian world and its sphere of influence, the shape can be related distantly to Greek painted ceramic wine vessels, and, more directly, to the metal versions of the Roman era.[167]

The jug bears marks of the fire that destroyed the site. The irregular colouring of the glaze, with vitrified craquelures produced by intense heat, has preserved traces of a careful workmanship involving several different-coloured glazes on a slip which can still be seen on the foot. A spectrographic analysis [168] has shown that the jug has three opaque glazes, lead-based but also with a high content of tin: "... One of these was green, produced by copper oxide, the second was yellow, from antimony, the third violet-grey, which seems to have been produced by manganese ...". These results relate this piece to the *sancai* or 'three colours' pottery that is known in Chinese ceramic history as one of the great innovations of the Tang period. Paul David used these results to discuss the possible influences from both Iran and China and to indicate their limitations with respect to the problems posed by this jug.[169]

On the other hand, the finds of the Tarim Basin shed a little light on the synthesis which may have operated in the intermediary region of Central Asia, through fragments of ceramics with a similar lead glaze over a yellow slip, found in the region of Khotan,[170] which may indicate the existence of a highly-skilled ceramic expertise related to this unique find from Tumshuq.

Though influenced in its shape by Sasanian art, the jug appears to have been made locally, and bears witness, as do the paintings and sculptures of the region, to a creativity originating in the sites of the Tarim Basin. It raises an important question, in that the technical process appears to predate one that is usually thought to originate in China at the end of the seventh century, and, if this were indeed the case, it would provide some indication as to the historical path of its development while marking a stage of the same.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, I et II, Toumchouq, pl. CI, CXXII and figs. 300-301 and 305, p. 393.
L'Asie Centrale, fig. 84.
La Route de la Soie, Paris, 1976, no. 161.
Tōyō toji taikan, 8, pl. 9.

Plate 146
Fragment of a relief of a deva or bodhisattva
Kumtura (Kucha). 7th century. Polychrome cob. H. 35 cm; W. 22cm. MG.23760 (Pelliot 426 and 701). **JG**

The rare remains of statuary from Kumtura, now preserved in a number of museums,[171] bear witness to the fairly widespread use of cob as a plastic medium, in apparent preference to the practice of using clay to produce moulded reliefs, examples of which have been found at the other Kuchean sites, Duldur-Āqur (see MG.23757 and MG.323756; plates 177 and 176) and Kyzyl (most of the Kyzyl statuary was found in cave 77, appropriately named by Grünwedel *"Höhle der Statuen"*; these pieces are now in Berlin).

Most of the Kumtura works retain a rich polychromy that must once have characterised all the reliefs and statues in the round that formed part of the monumental decor of the temples (including the temples of Toqquz-Saraï, before the fire that deprived us of this expressive and essential component of the reliefs). One might expect this polychromy to be an extension of that of wall-painting, producing in three-dimensional form what the latter suggests on a flat surface. The relationship be-

tween these two arts is, in this respect, clearly shown by the general appearance of this figure, for instance in the brilliant colouring of the face and complexion. The details, however, reveal an originality proper to sculpture alone.

This originality is seen in the emphasis – purely pictorial – given to some of the facial features; despite these already being well-modelled, it seems that a need was felt to give these a stronger visual distinction, owing either to the aesthetic of the period (and therefore, characterising a whole group of works) or to the precise location of the statue in the decor of the cella – the figure may have been viewed from some distance, like those 'on the balcony' that appear high up in many caves. Thus we note the cinnabar red lines that outline the rosy face, emphasising the hair-line, and define the upper eyelids, the chin and the 'folds of beauty' around the neck, alongside the usual black lines that delineate the facial features, in particular the eyebrows, the eyes and the irises and the moustache.

These details which might seem incidental are actually of great stylistic importance, for, if we compare this work with two other Kumtura heads (plates 148 and 149) that are of somewhat later date and show a Chinese influence, we see that this pictorial quality has disappeared.

Visibly related to the sculptural quality of the figure (which, albeit evolved, still resembles the Tumshuq works), this quality is remarkable and significant for its longevity and its spread over a wide area; it comes, however, as no surprise, since it has been so often referred to in discussions of the reliefs of Toqquz-Saraï. We can, in fact, trace this quality of 'sculptural colouring' back to its Gandhāran source, and draw particular attention to a group of clay heads from Haḍḍa (third to fourth century AD) that were covered with stucco or plaster and then painted. Three of these, for example, discovered by the Barthoux expedition, retain a few light traces of paint, which, taken together, form the red outlines and facial colouring in perfect accord with that seen in the head from Kumtura.[172] There are also other works of the same origin that lend support to this proposed source.[173] Only a few years ago an exceptionally fine polychrome head of a bodhisattva or *deva* was published for the first time.[174]

Judging by extant polychrome figures, it would appear that this type of workmanship was very popular in Serindia and in the sites of the Northern Route – we refer the reader to another example of this genre, an especially fine statue of the Buddha, more or less complete, found at Shorchuk in the 'Cave of the Kirin'[175] – and endured, as is shown by a crowned bodhisattva from Murtuq,[176] right up until the predominance of the Sinicised style.

We have briefly alluded to the sculptural quality of the figure and its apparent correlation with the polychrome colouring of the carving; how does this work fit into the development of the Kumtura statuary? Is it in harmony with the pictorial tradition which places it within a long period of artistic activity in Serindia?

Several similarities unequivocally set the figure within this domain, the particular stage illustrated by other figures from Tumshuq that display the same qualities. The arrangement of the hair – an easily recognisable feature that is purely decorative and which preserves some stylistic flourishes – clearly belongs to the type "with incurved locks" already mentioned on several occasions, but shows an original variation in that the central egg-shaped motif has disappeared. The modelling of the face is comparable with the later style, apparent in heads from temple B at Toqquz-Saraï, though its rather pronounced anatomical modelling, emphasising the curving volumes of the cheeks, produces an effect suggestive of a facial mask applied onto a previously moulded sphere.

This type slots neatly into the Kuchean art of the Kyzyl (see above) and Kumtura reliefs. We are inclined, however, to place it in a stylistic phase post-dating the heads from the 'Cave of statues' (cave 77) of the former site, as well as those more specific to Kumtura, which are better known,[177] and have been dated to the sixth-seventh century. More precisely, this type must belong to a final and yet to be defined phase of this style, earlier or perhaps already contemporary with the Chinese-influenced style. This, then, would be a transitional work. If so, what are its stylistic characteristics?

We have underlined its traditional affiliation with Kuchean art and, through the latter, the persistence of features from a distant common heritage, including those from Gandhāra, that so often leave their mark. But it is sufficient to note the sculptural changes from the rather stereo-typed sculptural canon of the works from the two important sites, given as points of reference, which all preserve, to a greater or lesser extent, the natural or likely proportions of the facial features, whereas in this quite particular type greater liberties are taken with verisimilitude – thus the arched eyebrows that brush the surface of the carving without defining the lines of its plastic structure (see pl. 140), or, more anecdotally, the exaggeratedly small mouth, the inexpressive curve of the eyelids, *etc.*. All expression of the features is superficial to or even independent of the modelling from a structural point of view, rendered thus by their being marked out in paint either for chromatic effect (such as the red accents in the depiction of the flesh colour) or simply to emphasise the facial features (without any significant new additions).

The identification of this figure within the decorative programme of the rock-cut cella remains extremely problematic. Neither the accessories, conventional in representations of *deva*s and bodhisattvas, the nudity of the upper body which makes us expect an 'Indian' costume (a *dhoti* round the waist), nor the floating scarf, a few folds of which are still attached to the arm, allow us to attribute a particular character to this figure, other than the generic title indicated by these conventional elements. It is likely, however, that it belonged to one of the compositions attested to at Shorchuk (in the statuary) and at Kyzyl (in the wall-paintings) known as 'figures on the balcony', in which *gandharva*s and *devatā*s are found side by side.

Bibliography:
Gime tōyō Bijutsukan, pl. 69.
La Route de la Soie, Paris, 1976, no. 249.
L'Asie Centrale, fig. 151.

Plate 147
Kneeling youth
Kumtura (Kucha). "Great gorge". 7th-beginning of the 8th century AD
Polychrome cob. H 32 cm; W. 14.9 cm; D. 18.2 cm. MG.23759 (Pelliot 425 and 700). **JG**

The figure of a male worshipper, grave and attentive, wears an expression of intense absorption indicative of religious devotion. His status as a layman is confirmed by his long robe and his hair, which distinguish him from members of the monastic community. The arrangement of the hair, with a central parting and a loop of hair over each ear, makes this, in fact, the portrait of a young boy. He is seen making an offering, for he holds in both hands a wide, oblong object, apparently a tray, on which his particular gift must once have been placed but is today gone. These various characters extend from the general to the particular, and combine to produce a very individual image. The statue was executed in cob around a core of reed bundles (the structure was visible before restoration, for the image was previously in two pieces, the head and the body). A white skim-coat, acting as the base colour as well as the colour of the robe, is applied over the entire image. The polychromy is reserved for flesh-tones and the hair.

Buddhist iconography has produced, ever since its beginnings in India and the Gandhāran North-West and subsequently in the Tarim Basin, numerous such portraits of religious devotion. To these belong, in the first place, the representations of the great gods, Indra, Brahmā and, almost in the same rank but possibly a little later, those of the Heavenly Kings and their retinues of secondary *devas* (*tianbu*) – air-borne and music-making spirits, such as the *gandharvas* and their female counterparts, the *apsarasas*, *etc.*. The concept of the bodhisattva or "enlightenment being" pervades Mahāyāna, and it is through these ideal figures that the Buddhist perfections (*pāramitā*) are exemplified. The basis of the latter is, from one point of view, devotion (also synonymous with the fourth *pāramitā*, *virya*). Such figures are most commonly represented as worshipping attendants, to the point that it is often difficult, as may be observed in the wall-paintings at Kyzyl, to make out whether it is they or mere *devas* (*ie.* in a Hīnayāna context) that are depicted in the Buddha assemblies. Most of them are depicted standing. They are the most humble representatives of the celestial world: anonymous figures in attitudes of devotion, sometimes kneeling like this statue from Kumtura.

Nevertheless, some nameless bodhisattvas belonging to the emblematic multitude of "great beings of salvation" are qualified only with a generic title, "bodhisattvas of offering", *gongyang pusa*. Illustrated in different poses (see, for example, the bodhisattvas seated behind a balustrade in a fragment of a wall-painting illustrating a Pure Land, from Duldur-Āqur, pl. 165), they appear to be a prescribed part of scenes of the Buddha preaching to an assembly.

Besides these venerated beings of the pantheon, or to the lesser characters of the celestial world, themselves sometimes represented praying, the iconography adds portraits of monks and lay donors, who find themselves set apart from the others by compositional technique. The latter are depicted on the walls (entrance corridors or ambulatory passages) or on the lower parts of the large painted and sculpted compositions in a sort of lower register. Praying donors were already present at an early date in sculpture as well as in painting, as we find at Tumshuq in the sculptured fragments of figures arranged on a ledge running along the side walls of temple I at Toqquz-Saraï (*cf.* above), and a painted frieze of kneeling monks on the base of the wall of the "temple with a pedestal" (*Sockeltemple*) of the eastern group at Tumshuq-tāgh.[178]

Though these references attest to the antiquity and popularity of the theme, the Kumtura statue is more closely linked, in terms of its stylistic features, with the eastern section of the Tarim Basin, such as the religious complex of Turfan, and also to the northern Chinese provinces of Gansu and Shaanxi. The earliest images of kneeling worshippers, in an iconographical context that confirms their function, are found in north China; dating to the Northern Wei period (386-543 AD), they are contemporary with the oldest figures from Tumshuq. The praying youth, offering a lotus bud, that appears in a relief depicting an assembly around the bodhisattva Samantabhadra, carved on one of the walls of cave 165 at Qingyang (*circa* 510 AD [179]), is a good example, though, rather curiously, the youth as well as the bodhisattva is represented on the back of the elephant.

Little distinguishes this youth from the Kumtura figure, apart from the sculptural technique and the style, for the latter image draws upon the sculptural canon of the Tang period. But what appears to us to be more significant about this relationship is that both the characteristics indicative of the subject's youth and his representation in the midst of a cult image dominated by an important bodhisattva are combined in an original work of the earliest Buddhist art of China. In other words, the praying youth finds a place amongst the important figures of the pantheon, in a way that could not be perceived in the Serindian forms referred to earlier.

This is all the more interesting when we consider the iconography of some Tang dynasty paintings from Dunhuang, four or five centuries later, particularly those votive and portable works associated with the belief in salvation through the cult of Amitābha and his Pure Land and, by extension, through the bodhisattvas Guanyin and Dizang. The latter, acting as intercessors, are often depicted with youthful attendants, the two 'Boys of Good and Evil' (*shan'etongzi*), witnesses of the past actions of the deceased (*cf.* the paintings reproduced in plates 86 and 60 of volume one, EO.1147 and MG.17664).

We do not wish to push the comparison too far, for

in these paintings the boys are not strictly speaking worshippers. Nevertheless, if we compare this evidence with the older example of Qingyang, we may argue that the Kumtura figure could have been associated with the most important cult images – with, for instance, a representation of one of the great bodhisattva, among whom Guanyin comes first to mind, or even with a Buddha assembly (though no example of this is known in Central Asian sculpture as a whole or in the type site, Dunhuang).

As regards the style of the sculpture, we may confidently refer the reader to Tang dynasty works and to the votive paintings mentioned above, owing to the similarities between the figures, and to the strong Chinese influence apparent in the Kumtura piece. Like the painted figures, the sculpture shows ethnically characteristic features, while, as regards the figure type, the robe reflects a contemporary fashion of the Chinese empire and the arrangement of the hair is a convention emphasising the youth of praying attendants.

On the basis of these characteristics, we propose a date for this work that corresponds with the appearance of this style in Kucha; that is, the period extending between the second half of the seventh century and the middle of the eighth, thought to be the final phase of artistic activity at Kumtura.

This type of figure, displaying the characteristics described above, escaped the further stylistic development of the Tang dynasty that may be seen at Dunhuang in other figures, as if this iconography had already achieved, once and for all, the correct, classical formalism held to be ideal for this type of subject. The Kumtura image is reproduced, feature for feature, in the painting of the servant standing near a tree in the famous 'library cave' at Dunhuang, cave 17.[180] We do not, however, hold that the Kumtura figure should therefore be dated to the same period of the late Tang (second half of the ninth century).

Bibliography:
Gime tōyō Bijutsukan, pl. 70.
L'Asie Centrale, no. 109.
La Route de la Soie, Paris, 1976, no. 248.
Seiiki bunka kenkyū (Monumenta serindica), p. 129.

Plates 148 and 149
Two heads from a group of cult statues
Kumtura (Kucha). End 7th-mid 8th century. Polychrome cob. *Plate 148: Head of a Buddha (?).* H. 14.2 cm; W. 10.2 cm; D. 9.6 cm. EO.3570 (Pelliot 424?). *Plate 149: Head of a monk.* H. 12.4 cm; W. 9.6 cm; D. 8.4 cm. MG.23761 (Pelliot 423). **JG**

Though iconographically different, these two heads both belong to the Kumtura sculptures showing Chinese influence, like the kneeling devotee of the preceding plate. It is difficult to conclude much from these heads, as is the case with so many of the statues from the Tarim temples, on account of their regrettably fragmentary condition – vestiges of whole figures and of the compositions in which they were set. This being the case, their well-proportioned ethnic features are even more important for judging them than those of earlier works, and seem to indicate a Far-Eastern origin for this new canon of form. It is for this reason that we examine these features before moving on to questions of style, the details of which nevertheless allow us to make clear distinctions between the two heads. We are not dealing merely with superficial traits: for example, the marked ethnicity of the almond-shaped eyes may be striking but is not the sole cause of this new appearance. A certain logic – a coherence in the particular modelling of the faces entirely in keeping with the typological reality – bestows a degree of originality upon these heads that is different from the rest of the Kumtura art. Moreover, they differ from earlier works in that they seem to be sculpted more fully in the round.

The sculptural form is subordinate to the morphological type adopted. Thus, the expressive use of shadows, a corollary of the architecture of the broad facial masses that earlier, in a distant 'classical' memory, characterised the forehead and ridge of the nose, and around which the imperceptible smile was drawn, now gives way to brief, fragmented accents in volumes of smoother appearance. This relationship between features and modelling is apparent in the rendering of the eyes: naturalistic observation makes the upper eyelid vanish into a wide, curved and slightly protruding volume, above which the arch of the eyebrows appears as a thin line, without casting the shadow so characteristic of Gandhāran heads and, subsequently, of heads belonging to the earlier styles of Tumshuq and Kucha.

The polychromy still adhering to these heads is thus in harmony with this ethnic appearance, being more naturalistic and true to life. At the same time it breaks with the outlining of features in red, inherited from Gandhāran tradition, that can still be seen in the figure reproduced in plate 146.

Though closely related in terms of plastic form, the two heads can be distinguished, as we have said, by their iconography. The head reproduced in plate 148 has a reddish (ochre) complexion, sports a moustache and an imperial that enhance the mouth, and wears a coiffure with some sort of protruberance at the top, now broken, which may either have been a chignon (common to standard images of *devatās* and bodhisattvas, though then we should perhaps imagine the addition of a tiara) or, as is more likely, a Budda's *uṣṇiṣa*. A very similar work representing a *tathāgata*, found by Stein at the Ming-Oï of Karashahr,[181] shows comparable plastic treatment, features and polychromy. This work is even more remarkable in that it preserves signs of an earlier technique, and seems therefore to indicate a transition between the 'classical' style of Kucha and Chinese workmanship.

As for the head reproduced in plate 149, this clearly represents a monk, recognisable by his shaved head and smooth jaw. This head appears more highly finished and more carefully made following the initial moulded impression, which seems to have been quite similar, apart from the added details, to the first. It is certainly more lively and realistic, despite the livid white complexion

(produced from calcium carbonate or white lead?) applied directly to the sun-dried clay and enlivened by skilful and sparing touches of colours to indicate the gaze, the irises appearing as black dots, and the lips, painted in a strong, contrasting red.

The Chinese influence exerted on the sculptural art of Kucha raises a basic question regarding when and in what particular and ascertainable circumstances this took place in the history of this Central-Asian kingdom. The phenomenon was apparently strong, since it imposed itself on arrival in all forms of religious art: thus it is also attested by the paintings of Kumtura and Duldur-Āqur (see plates 165 to 168). The 'style' of these works finds its origin in the aesthetic and formal canon of figures of the Tang era, from the seventh to the eighth century AD. This is, in fact, the first sculptural idiom of Far-Eastern Buddhism, the first original artistic contribution towards the spread of the doctrine in North Asia, quite unlike the Gandhāran and Indian traditions, which the 'art' of Kucha continued to reflect for a considerable period of time. These Kumtura figures should, therefore, correspond with the Chinese occupation of the kingdom and we shall ask how they should be dated.

We have mentioned that after some two decades (649-670 AD), the Chinese occupation became the target of Tibetan ambitions (*v.* the introduction to the Kumtura sculptures in "Central Asian sites and works of art ..."). Restored at the end of the seventh century, it did not continue long thereafter under the Tang dynasty, owing to the withdrawal of the garrisons from Hexi, signalled by the An Lushan rebellion (755 AD) and the subsequent deep political crisis in China. So the occupation is fragmented, and in any case covers only a few brief decades; it cannot be reckoned the sole cause of the 'Sinicised' style. On the other hand, the later paintings at Dunhuang (including the majority of known portable paintings) suggest that the works created during the period of Tibetan occupation also exhibit particular characteristics of this style.

Bibliography:
Previously unpublished.

Plate 150
Bodhisattva seated on a lotus
Kumtura (Kucha). End 7th-mid 8th century. Panel from a portable shrine, wood with traces of polychromy. H. 9.7 cm; W. 5.4 cm; D. 2.1 cm. EO.1354 (Pelliot 576). **JG**

Though badly damaged and worn, this statuette retains certain features that show that sculpturally it belonged to the Chinese or 'Sinicised' style. Since most of the sculptures in the round, hastily collected at Kumtura by the expedition, exhibit this style, we suggest that this work came from one of the temples contemporary with this style.

A work of the Sinicised style? If we consider but the full morphology and the facial features (or what is left of these), we notice that these show the same plastic characteristics seen with greater clarity in the two preceding heads: these characteristics are recognisable in the exaggerated relief of the upper eyelids – which, owing to the worn condition of the work, cannot be distinguished from the arch of the eyebrows and the forehead – and full cheeks. The corners of the lips are deeply incised, setting off the small neat and rounded mouth.

Aside from these facial features, nothing, in fact, sets this image apart from usual bodhisattva representations, nor from works pre-dating the period of Chinese stylistic influence at Kucha, whether in what we may guess of the workmanship of the body and its proportions; in the jewellery, including a tall tiara placed over the hair and a necklace with a centre-piece of lotus petals; in the summarily-executed but deeply incised *paridhāna* tightly wrapped around the legs and the scarf covering the shoulder; finally, in the treatment of the double row of petals that make up the lotus throne. Thus, in some ways, the work seems even more 'classical', in a Central-Asian sense, than the Buddha of Duldur-Āqur (EO.1107; pl. 175). But we must return to the stylistic indication provided by the head, and, on the basis of this, consider the ensemble of these features in the light of a probably Tang dynasty polychrome image.

The iconography of the figure, and in particular the position of his hands (as far as we can reconstitute this), gives us another avenue of analysis that may make this problem clearer. It is this that identifies a venerated being among the numerous figures of the Buddhist pantheon, and is just as important in the identification of a work as its attribution to a stylistic period when a particular type is revealed. The right hand raised to the chest is perhaps making *vitarka-mudrā*, the gesture of argument, represented in sculpture as well as in painting. The left hand has vanished totally, but seems to have rested in the lap. The shape left by the breaking of a projecting part makes us think that perhaps the hand once held a spherical object, probably the *cintāmaṇi* or wish-fulfilling jewel.

Leaving aside representations of Kṣitigarbha (recognisable by his monastic robe) and a few other who share this attribute, such as Akāśagarbha (Xukongzang), this iconography of a bodhisattva is quite rare, though it does appear in Serindia and even, for example, in the Kumtura wall-paintings. It does not appear in China after the Tang dynasty. The most convincing example is of two bodhisattvas, Avalokiteśvara (Guanyin) and Mahāsthāmaprāpta (Dashizhi), who form a triad with Amitābha preaching to an assembly, that is painted on the main wall of Kumtura cave 14.[182] This painting departs from the usual representation of these bodhisattvas, showing them in symmetrical poses and in exactly the form we have here: one hand raised in *vitarka-mudrā*, the other holding the jewel. In the absence of any clues, such as the motif in the bodhisattva's crown (in this case, this would be either Amitābha or the jar of ambrosia, *amṛta-kalaśa*), we cannot possibly say which of these two bodhisattvas is represented here.

These two bodhisattvas, painted in the Tang style, enable us make out some features of the relief that would otherwise be imperceptible – in particular, the figure's costume, consisting of a scarf that still retains some green

pigment and a robe that half-covers the upper body, bearing a few traces of cinnabar red.

These indications confirm the first impression suggested by the sculptural treatment of the face, and place this work in the domain of the great Tang style of Kumtura painting.

Bibliography:
Previously unpublished.

Plate 151
Vesica with aureole and halo
Kumtura (Kucha), "Great gorge". 6th-7th century. Poplar wood with traces of gilding. H. 19.8 cm; W. 14.3 cm; D. 2.4 cm. EO.1356 (Pelliot 577). **JG**

Pelliot noticed this work in a cave just before the 'third gorge', that is, in one of the cellas cut into the cliff south of the "gorge with inscriptions" (*v.* Pelliots's diary, 16th April 1907). Unique amongst the finds from Kumtura, it came with a small wooden figurine and a "quite damaged but very expressive" head in cob (not illustrated in the present work). Pelliot's note regarding this piece is very precise: "... An aureole and halo belonging to a Buddha, made out of wood and almost intact, very finely worked. Five subsidiary figures found in the aureole and halo are perhaps representations of the *dhyāni-buddhas*? ...".

This is, indeed, the complementary element of a portable cult statue. As for saying with certainty that the missing figure was a Buddha image, even if this interpretation is probably true, other examples of complete pieces force us to modify somewhat this affirmation. The five buddhas seated in meditation are remarkable in iconographic terms. The illustration is legitimate and canonical, representing the spiritual double radiance manifested by holy beings and, in particular, by the Buddha himself; as we have said before, and as such examples have been found elsewhere, it was possibly intended to complement an image of the one of the most important bodhisattvas, Maitreya or Avalokiteśvara. The fact that the buddha figures are grouped together seems more significant to the vanished cult image than their actual number.

A mystical radiance in which apparitional figures are manifested – such is the meaning of this complement to a statue. In order to express this, the artist has used one of several formal conventions: consisting of two fiery concentric circles, the stylised tongues of flame give a very decorative effect (in paintings of a similar date these effects are generally rendered by areas of contrasting colour).The images of the *tathāgatas* seated on lotus blossoms are seen emerging from the flames. The most common arrangement sets the images of the *dhyāni-buddhas* on a single plane within the concentric curve. The Seven Buddhas of the Past are often represented in identical form within such a radiance, and this type of image was one of the most successful in depicting the mystical and uninterrupted 'line of descent' that leads to the buddha of the present, Śākyamuni, and to Maitreya, the predestined buddha of the future.

The present arrangement departs somewhat from the 'historical' iconography in the introduction a triad in the halo. Such a configuration often signifies some sort of hierarchy, which is not appropriate here given the "sameness" (*sāmānya*) of all the buddhas. We should, perhaps, see this arrangement as something more prosaic, as the simple sculptural and ornamental solution to the problem of the group's symmetry. What can be said about these five images? Do they shed light on the main figure, now absent? Their number certainly brings to mind the *dhyāni-buddhas* (buddhas produced by meditation or transcendent buddhas [183]), but it seems out of the question that these are represented here (even if they do proceed directly from Śākyamuni, the historical buddha), especially since the series culminates in the absolute figure of Vairocana, the cosmic buddha who illuminates the universe. Their iconography belongs to the domain of esoteric (Vajrayāna) Buddhism, though in the latter their representation is generally more explicit and more prominent (see, for example, the painting of the *Five buddhas of the Vajra-dhātu*, vol. 1, pl. 46). We are left with the hypothesis of the Buddha Śākyamuni's lineage, the seven *tathāgatas* of the past and the one yet to come. In this field, there are numerous sculptural compositions, despite the absence of textual descriptions; usually appearing as ornaments within haloes and aureoles, this motif became widespread in the Far-East. One of the oldest examples available today, which may even, perhaps, be a source for the image under consideration here, is that discovered by Sven Hedin at Yotkan (Khotan), on the Southern Route. This is a small bronze (16 cm) dated to the third-fourth century AD: a votive plaque in relief, representing Śākyamuni seated in meditation against an aureole that quite clearly includes the seven buddhas.[184] Other prime instances of this iconography are known in the sites of the Southern Route and in the region of the ancient Khotanese kingdom, though these monumental reliefs are on quite a different scale to the Hedin and Pelliot pieces: for example, the stucco aureole of a large cult statue discovered by Stein at Farhad-Beg-Yailaki, attributed to the sixth century AD.[185] We know nothing of the Indian and Gandhāran antecedents of these images.

Once again, as in many other fields relating to Serindian and Far-Eastern Buddhist iconography, not to mention that of China, the kingdom of Khotan emerges as a region of great importance for a theme that recurs in other sites. Despite the comparative scarcity of examples in Central Asia, it would seem that full expression of this theme belonged to early Chinese Buddhism. It is constantly apparent, therefore, in the sculpture of the Northern Wei dynasty, from the end of the fifth to the beginning of the sixth century AD an on every scale: thus we find it accompanying the colossal statue in Yungang cave 20 (Shaanxi), and also in more modest steles,[186] one of which, showing the Buddha in meditation and dated 509 .AD, deserves special mention, and small images in gilded bronze.

None of these examples, however, resemble the fragment of a large mandorla, found by Stein at the Ming-

Oï near Shorchuk, attributed to the sixth-seventh century.[187] No doubt this piece falls within the bounds of this art (illustrated on a larger scale by another image of a *tathāgata* from a similar piece, found by Pelliot at western Subashi; see fig. 127), inasmuch as it displays similar buddha images against a radiant, flaming ground. As the resemblance between these two pieces is more than purely coincidental, we propose a similar date for this modest remnant of a cult image.

Bibliography:
Previously unpublished.

Plates 152 and 153
Fragments of Buddha images (preaching scenes, dharma-deśanā)
Duldur-Āqur (Kucha). "North-eastern temple". Early 6th century. Wall-painting. Plate 152: *a*) (eight fragments): H. 76 cm; W. 86 cm. EO.3676*a*. (two fragments): H. 20 cm; W. 26.2 cm. H. 10.5 cm; W. 11 cm. EO.3676*c*. Plate 153: *b*): H. 25.1 cm; W. 31.7 cm. EO3676*b*. (*brāhmī* inscription): H. 13.5 cm; W. 16.7 cm. EO.3677. **JG**

When reassembled, it becomes clear that these dozen or so fragments originally belonged to two representations of the Buddha seated on a bench covered with a patterned textile. He sits in a variation of the "lotus" pose (*padma-āsana*), with his legs crossed at the ankle, and makes gestures relating to the expounding of the doctrine. The reassembled painting *a*), which is the more complete of the two, enables us to infer the former appearance of painting *b*). The Buddha's gestures in the two paintings are slightly different: in painting *a*), we see the gesture of argument (*vitarka-mudrā*), described by the upturned right hand, bent back towards the forearm so that the palm is visible, while the left hand is similarly turned back, but simply holds a fold of the robe in a gesture that is common in Gupta Indian and Gandhāran tradition; in the fragment of painting *b*), we see a portion of the left arm, which is barely raised, moving instead in front of the body to form the gesture of preaching (*dharmacakra-mudrā*). The paintings are identical in their depiction of the Blessed One, dressed in the monastic cloak, and backed by a halo and aureole made up of concentric rings of contrasting colour.

In painting *a*), the burnt-ochre *saṃghāṭi* hangs over the upper body from the left shoulder in an elaborate series of folds that suggest both the natural fall of the heavy material and the part lifted upwards by the left hand. The edge of the robe describes a smooth curve across the naked chest and right arm and reappears over the right shoulder – this is significant for stylistic reasons. The monastic robe (*uttarāsaṅga*) is barely visible, but present nonetheless: a faded and transparent blue, it is emphasised beneath the armpit by a white line.

A slight movement in the arms suggests that the upper body departs from the strict frontality that is at first apparent, moving instead towards the right of the painting in accordance with the angle of the head. The central part of the head is missing, but some important characteristics may nonetheless be observed: the almost perfect oval of the face, drawn in a single brush-stroke, gives it a plump fullness that was required by the artistic canon of images of the Buddha in India and Gandhāra, and which becomes even more extreme here. From now on, what was to appear as a pictorial technique – recognised in the other fragments of heads from Duldur-Āqur (see below) – for rendering the foreshortening of the chin can be interpreted as the sign of a full form, with a pronounced plumpness. Though we cannot see in this a direct link, it anticipates a similar though even more extreme tendency in the figures, produced around the eighth century, that are influenced by the Tang aesthetic. This will be discussed further when we come to the fragments of wall-paintings belonging to the "second group" (*cf.* pls. 165-168). This face displays other quite particular features, such as the high, arching eyebrows, the foreshortened one of which extends into the ridge of the nose, and the unnaturally small mouth, the fleshy lips opening in a half-smile, and the corners of the mouth rather high up and somewhat exaggerated.

Only the curve of the left eye is preserved. Arched and emphasised, it reveals that characteristic so prevalent in Gandhāran sculpture – inward-looking gazes beneath heavy and protruding eyelids, inscribed within the crescent of the upper eyebrows. The treatment of the hair displays the same respect for a common model which was very important in the Buddhist art of the North-West; this, along with the protruberance of the *uṣṇīṣa*, is rendered very simply, without any indication of individual locks [188], using a flat, uniform application of blue, the colour of canonical convention. We could also speak of the adherence of the elongated, pierced ear-lobes to a standard model, prescribed by the canon, *etc.*. Here, then, we have a graphic expression of the iconographic characteristics of the manifested body of the Buddha. The drawing is appropriately refined and clear, and includes all essential iconographic elements (thus the appearance of the *ūrṇa* on the forehead, which also finds a parallel in the sculpture of the North-West).

Thus it is essentially the pictorial rendering which distinguishes this work, placing it in a group of fragments from Duldur-Āqur; by comparing this technique with the paintings of Kyzyl, we attribute it to a more precise artistic period in the art of Kucha. In this regard, we note the natural skin-tone, achieved with a variety of ochres (ranging from yellows and browns to reds) against the luminous, white ground, and also the transparent colours that model the anatomical masses and volumes. Such mastery reveals a deep knowledge of the different effects produced by layering paint – in other words, each stage of the painting's realisation, from the first application to the final touches, participates in the *expression*. The anatomical modelling is heightened by shadows that indicate the roundness of the shoulders, for example, or the structure of the torso rendered by the line of the sternum, the curves of the breasts and the indication of the collar-bones. It does not matter in the least that this type of modelling is but an approximation of the human body, for nonetheless it provides suf-

ficient verisimilitude. But we realise that this art is even more complex and well-considered, richer still with pictorial possibilities that have been thoroughly explored, by the broad areas of contrasting colours, generally using pure pigments, which lie alongside the chromatic modelling just mentioned (see, for example, the *saṃghāṭi*). To the virtuosity shown in the different pictorial registers must be added the qualities of the artist as draughtsman, as seen in the rendering of the drapery, and, beyond this anonymous figure, the qualities that should doubtless be recognised as the contemporary Kuchean 'school'.

Contrary to what we find in many Kuchean paintings, as well as in the rest of Serindian paintings, the representation of the drapery here escapes the formulae of random, stylised curves which characterise sculpture to an even greater extent, tending instead towards an increased naturalism. Some conventions do persist however – there is no break from the iconographic prescriptions relating to the representation of the Buddha – but they are enlivened in a capricious fashion like the effects of gravity. The fabric draped over the body is depicted in a realistic way, sometimes close-fitting, intimately following the contours of the body, at others loose and light. There is no accent in a lighter colour, no indication of the modelling, no indication of forms in the even application of ochre. This necessitates a final stage in which the drapery must be completely redrawn in, with no *pentimenti*; this is clearly shown by the cloth-covered left forearm.

This pictorial quality consisting of several techniques also characterises other fragments, which we identify as paintings belonging to 'group A' from Duldur-Āqur (*cf.* pl. 154-163). It is, however, very rarely found in other sites. The most convincing works that are comparable include an image of the Buddha, seated in an identical posture on a cuboid throne, in a preaching scene in Kyzyl cave 77 (*Höhle der Statuen*)[189] and, for purely pictorial similarities, a standing *bhikṣu* depicted on the ceiling of Kyzyl cave 118 (*Hippokampenhöhle*).[190] The comparison, which holds true also for the fragment reproduced as plate 163, is all the more convincing for the fact that the figures of Kyzyl and Duldur-Āqur both display a particular stylisation of the palm of the open hand, fragmented by a series of parallel, curving, ochre lines. This characteristic would not be worth noting were it not that it reappears – though still rarely – in painting I at Subashi (photographed *in situ* by the expedition).

Both Kyzyl caves 77 and 118, as well as the Kumtura caves (see a fragment depicting Vajrapāṇi, kept in the State Hermitage Museum), in which we find various characteristics of the image, display what we call the 'first pictorial style of Kzyzl', dating to around 500 AD (according to von le Coq and Waldschmidt), or a century earlier according to recent Chinese research (Professor Su Bai [191]).

The chronology of these works can be clarified by comparison with a group of votive tablets, each bearing the image of a standing buddha, found at Kyzyl and now in Berlin.[192] Dated around the seventh century, but in our opinion somewhat earlier, these images are in stylistic harmony with the wall-paintings already mentioned, particularly those of cave 77.

The Buddha's legs crossed at the ankle suggest *padma-āsana*, a posture more faithfully rendered in sculpture. Is this a pictorial feature or an archaic element, adopted in the face of the problems of foreshortening? This posture is, however, quite common in Serindia. Setting aside the Tumshuq reliefs (*cf.* the panels from temple B), this posture is found in conventional images of the Blessed One represented in various situations (preaching to a lay or ecclesiastical assembly, meditating, *etc.*), as may be seen in the small scenes painted on the vaulted ceilings of the Kyzyl caves. In cave 80 (*Höllentopfhöhle*)[193], for instance, we find this posture alternating with the more conventional form of the "lotus" *āsana* (in one of the scenes the *saṃghāṭi* is arranged as in the Tumshuq relief, pl. 131). On the basis of this evidence, we should interpret this as a pictorial variation without any important iconographic significance. On the other hand, the fact that these images are so similar justifies a general remark on the art of Kucha and Serindia of different periods; for they show that both the Indian and Gandhāran traditions, to which these forms are linked, were sufficiently well-known for the artists to be able to use either at will in their efforts to bring life to a series of buddha images. These traditions also appear in the arrangements of the robe, which is depicted in two ways according to whether they were inspired by Gandhāran or Indian models: thus we find the body entirely covered or, alternatively, a shoulder and part of the torso left bare.

Above the halo we see a ground decorated with flowers painted in bright, contrasting colours, probably representing the tree of Enlightenment (*bodhi-druma*). Lower down is a smaller figure with a section of an identical mandorla, though we cannot be certain that this fragment belonged to this composition, as it has at present been reconstructed. In all likelihood, this figure represents a member of the audience at the preaching. Nothing remains of him but his face, in profile against a background of geometric patterns (architectural element or some sort of furnishing?). The profile of this dark-skinned figure is unusual, quite different from those we find in other fragments of wall-paintings. This image is less surprising when we consider related pieces at Kyzyl for, though an extremely rare occurrence, the artists of Kucha did occasionally represent heads in profile, though a three-quarter view was generally the rule. Should we note for this exception the fact that these figures depicted in profile generally seem to be ethnically foreign? In this connection, we refer the reader to a fine 'portrait' of a donor, of western type, dressed in the tunic and boots typical of Sogdian custom, that may be seen in a vignette painted on the ceiling of cave 104.[194]

It is possible to reconstruct the original subjects on the basis of these fragments, for the few indications we have conform exactly to the well-known generic iconography of *deśanā* scenes (scenes of the Buddha preaching to an assembly) so abundant at Kyzyl and Kumtura. The place allotted them in the pictorial programme of Duldur-Āqur may have been comparable to that given

them in the rock-cut temples referred to above: that is, they may have belonged to large panels painted on the side walls of a cella, approaching in size those of Kyzyl cave 207 (*Höhle der Maler*)[195], which measure no less than 100 cm. in height and 140 cm. in width. The marked similarities in composition and style make us wonder whether these panels made up a vast mural comprising several *deśanā* scenes, juxtaposed along the walls in two or three registers and reaching up to the base of the ceiling vault, as in Kyzyl cave 207; in this case, the paintings would have covered almost all the available wall-surface, with a group of nine panels on each wall, just as we find them in the cella at Kyzyl.

The scenes in cave 207, like those in a more fragmentary state in cave 77, both of which belong to the 'first' pictorial style at Kyzyl, provide us with a probably image of what must have been the painted composition at Duldur-Āqur: an audience composed of different classes of beings – bodhisattvas, deities, monks and laymen – depicted at either side of the Buddha, who is seated beneath the tree of Enlightenment preaching the Law with expressive gestures (*mudrā*) that change from one representation to another.

Given their date, these compositions stand at the head of a long line of depictions of this subject, of which the monumental and rather emblematic works of Bezeklik, dating to the Uighur period, are late examples. These paintings also seem to be the origin of works belonging to quite another iconographic domain, that is to say of representations of Pure Lands (*jingtu*), which, around the seventh to eighth century, came to occupy the main sections of temple walls at Dunhuang.

These fragments of depictions of the Buddha from Duldur-Āqur seem to be of prime importance for the history of Kuchean painting, inasmuch as they constitute a rare insight into a built religious environment as distinct from the great rock-cut ensembles, but display many links with what is held to be the oldest phase at the latter sites. Considering the chronology that is nowadays accepted for Duldur-Āqur – which extended into the middle of the eighth century, into the decline of Kucha's prosperity – this point lends weight to the hypothesis of an early initial historical phase, at the very least least contemporary with the first iconic creations of the rock-cut temples of Kyzyl and Kumtura.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, III et IV, Koutcha, fig. 28, p. 181 *sq.*

Plate 154
Head of a brahmin
Duldur-Āqur (Kucha). "North-eastern temple". Early 6th century. Wall-painting. H. 17 cm; W. 24 cm. EO.3669(1). JG

This superb fragment is a exceptional example of the art of Duldur-Āqur, surpassing even the standard of pictorial excellence that characterises the whole group of fragments from that site that are classed as 'Group A' owing to their supposed antiquity – that is, the works that are held to be contemporary with the 'first' pictorial style at Kyzyl, and dating (if one accepts the generally-agreed chronology) to the beginning of the sixth century AD. The only surviving portrait in the real sense of the word, the painting balances a care for realism that verges upon the domain of psychological truth, with respect for the iconographic requirements of the representation of brahmins or of brahmanical ascetics, whose presence in the narrative cycle of the life of the Buddha is as necessary as that of disciples and monks of the Buddhist community. The representatives of the old Vedic beliefs, amongst whom were counted the most serious opponenents of the Buddha, their conversion to the true doctrine makes a powerful image of the superiority of Buddhism over the older tradition.

An old figurative convention, based on the brief and generic textual references, was established at an early date, as may be seen in Gandhāran reliefs. The 'typical portrait' of the heretic that is faithfully reproduced here shows an old man of a rather haughty beauty, with unshaven head, beard, and a vigorous if ascetic body (see the following plate). Their appearance generally expresses the physical and interior movement which animates them: initially contradictory, for they are known not to give up their arguments lightly, they are filled with a doubt when facing the Buddha that can only be removed by the exposition of the doctrine, becoming peaceful, with a 'unified' spirit, in an absolute adherence to the Buddhist truths.

The face here translates all these things, expressing something quite different from the spiritual plenitude that we recognise on the faces of the usual members of the audience in a preaching scene (monks – with the exception of the figure reproduced in plate 159 – *devatā*s and bodhisattvas): represented in three-quarter view against a contrasting blue background, scattered with flowers, the face is attentive, yet without appearing amenable, the scrutinising gaze levelled at the principal scene of the composition. The frown, in harmony with the puckered lips and nostrils, gives rise to a stylisation of the wrinkles, represented as wide curves creasing the anxious forehead. The whole is accentuated by the wavy lines of the beard and abundant hair, thrown back and falling onto the shoulders in decorative curves and counter-curves.

This typical physiognomy appears in a very similar form in the Kyzyl paintings, as well as at Dunhuang and Bezeklik, and, in a more general fashion, in the whole of Serindian art. What is exceptional about this portrait from Duldur-Āqur is the painterly technique. In this powerful image we find a balanced use of pigments and their chromatic harmonies, apparent in the red ochre complexion, the modelling achieved by coloured shadows and highlighting in white lead or white earth (?), and a fluid draughtsmanship in the depiction of the contours that also suggest the volumes, richly drawn in ink or red ochre. So elaborate and varying is the technique that its description could be endless – indeed, it seems to show a more free and intuitive manner than the application of a formula that characterises the technique of most other paintings. This could even be a portrait from life. There is no doubt that this is the

work of the highest quality by an accomplished artist, if not by a genius. It is for this reason difficult to find an equivalent painting, even amongst the numerous images of brahmanical ascetics depicted in the walls of the Kyzyl cellas with which this work is most naturally associated.

It is likely that such an expressive pictorial quality characterised the whole figure. The fragments reproduced in plate 155 suggest this same quality, although they would appear to belong to the representation of another brahmin, perhaps from the same group. Whatever the case may be, the body seen in plate 155 is representative of what must have been the posture and iconography of the present figure: seated on a drum-shaped stool in a dynamic posture, with the naked torso leaning forward, suggesting the animation of the future convert.

The fate of this character in Central Asian painting does not presuppose a uniformity in his depiction; indeed, only a few representations of this type can be linked specifically to this image. If we restrict ourselves to the expressive quality of the figure, this shows clear variations in form and sculptural treatment in different places and at different times while yet remaining basically the same. The examples closest to this image are, without a shadow of doubt, the representations of ascetics depicted at Kyzyl, found in the earliest paintings of the 'first style', in particular two figures in the *Schatzhöhle*, (cave 83 or 84[196]), which, although of a different type, display the same concern for individualisation, unlike the other more stereotyped images, and thus present the qualities of portraits.

We can thus trace, over a long period of time, the development of the character in painted representations in Central Asia. The figure is sometimes confused on account of his vehement expression with the conventional representation of other deities, notably of the Heavenly Kings (*lokapāla*), as may be seen in a painting dated 750 AD from Simsim.[197] Setting to one side this area of possible confusion, the most remarkable piece of evidence we have consists of a painted fragment from Khocho,[198] on which we see represented the head of a brahmin very like the one from Duldur-Āqur, closer even than the paintings mentioned earlier from Kyzyl. This is, however, an exception; most of the other depictions uncovered at the site follow the development referred to above.

We pass now to some final remarks on the depiction of such figures in preaching assemblies. Despite a number of disputes with brahmins, the Buddha had no particular battle with them *per se*, owing to the manifest spiritual superiority of his doctrine. We should note, moreover, that we find no pejorative value attached to the term "brahmin" in Buddhist texts – at least, it never denotes an enemy of the Buddha's cause. Were not the first two disciples, Śāriputra and Maudgalyayāna, from this very caste, along with Mahākāśyapa? Similarly, the last direct disciple to be ordained, Subhadra, who died just before the Buddha, was also a brahmin. We read in one text that the Buddha refers to a member of that caste as the "saintly brahmin". Admittedly, these figures generally evoke the doctrinal contests faced by the Buddha, as may be the case here – thus the encounter with a "brahmin of scornful attitude", with which the epic scene of the defeat of Māra opens.

Like others with the same origin, this fragment is probably a remnant of a preaching assembly (a *deśanā* scene, mentioned earlier in connection with plates 152 and 153). A rare iconography, depicted around the main image niches in Kyzyl caves 80 and 97,[199] illustrates an audience of six brahmanical ascetics, all in a state of agitation and each seated on an hourglass-shaped seat. Opposite them, to the right of the Buddha, appears an assembly of princely figures – *devatās*, including Vajrapāṇi, wearing a lion skin over his head (*v.* the Toqquz-Saraï relief reproduced in plate 129) – whose devotional postures contrast strongly with those of the brahmins. Without claiming that such was the original composition of the Duldur-Āqur painting, this example nevertheless informs us regarding the character attributed to the figure, and of the importance given the theme of the doctrinal and dialectical contests to which these representations of the Buddha's preaching may be linked.

Bibliography:
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La Route de la Soie, Paris, 1975, no. 211.

Plate 155
Body of a brahmanical ascetic
Duldur-Āqur (Kucha)
"North-east temple". Wall-painting. Beginning of the 6th century. *a*) (upper part of the body) H. 17 cm; W. 19 cm. *b*) (lower part of the body) H. 24 cm; W. 20 cm. EO.3671 (*a* and *b*). **JG**

These fragments belong to the type of figure reproduced in the preceding plate, the brahmanical ascetic. The appearance of this type is governed by an unchanging iconographical rule (*v.* the caption to plate 154 above). We merely note here the pictorial and formal similarities between these fragments and the representation of a brahman from the second *Kuppelhöhle* at Kumtura, attributed to around 500 AD (now in Berlin).[200] Though unrealistic in anatomical terms, the exaggerated modelling in both cases dramatically expresses asceticism and old-age, and hence corresponds with the idea of the type.

These figures are conventionally represented sitting on a drum-shaped seat, dressed in short loincloths and adorned with bracelets, arm-rings and long necklaces that hang down to their calves. The striped cloth visible on the right side corresponds with the fall of the scarf, which, in the preceding fragment, passes over the shoulder and down, rolling over the fore-arm.

The chromatic range and the range of bright-toned mineral pigments are much like those of the head of a brahmin (plate 154), while the posture and structure of the body also display similarities. It is, however, impossible to fit these three pieces together, and so the two

fragments here must belong to another figure of a comparable iconographic character that may have formed part of the same assembly or to another composition (*cf.* the preceding caption).

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, III et IV, Koutcha, pl. B, p. 352.

Plate 156
Fragment of the head of a supernatural being (yakṣa)
Duldur-Āqur (Kucha). "North-east temple". Wall-painting. Beginning of the 6th century. H. 13 cm; W. 10 cm. EO.3699(2). **JG**

This tiny remnant of a figure preserves an intensity of character that is to a high degree caricatural. A supernatural being of near-human appearance, the face wears an expression of extreme ire: the unnaturally high, creased forehead, crescent-shaped, lowering eyebrows above a piercing gaze, a rather non-human iris (malachite green dotted with a black pupil) directed downwards and to its left, the wavy locks of abundant hair, evocative of the lively movement that animates the figure. The dark complexion (produced by various ochre tones) contrasts with (and appears darker than) the luminous green background (malachite or atacamite?). The pictorial quality is similar to that of the fine head of a brahmin reproduced in plate 154, apparent in the studied chromatism visible in the representation of the volumes and shadows of the turbulent modelling, over which the features are carefully drawn in ink, animated by a few white highlights that complete the dynamic illusion of the face.

The fragment shows too little for us to do more than guess at the narrative and pictorial context within which this figure must have found a place. As with most of the heads depicted on the fragments of wall-paintings known as 'group A', we find that this fragment displays similarities with the figures at Kyzyl (for example, with a demon depicted in cave 175, *Versuchung-höhle*, the 'Cave of temptation'[201]), as well as with those at Kumtura (the fragment from cave 38, now in Berlin [202]).

As with a number of similar instances of demonic figures, one of the first interpretations to come to mind is that this figure belonged to Māra's infernal horde that so beset the Buddha. Without neglecting this possibility – of which this fragment would then be the sole witness in all the painting of Duldur-Āqur – we cannot, however, limit *a priori* the subject of the original composition to this episode alone. The 'Buddha legend' – since this could well furnish the wider context for this image – in no way restricts the manifestation of beings of demonic appearance to this one representational form. The same problem is posed by the fragment of a head of a monk (see the commentary to plate 159), for which we have suggested a number of possible contextual scenes, which might also be the case here.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, III et IV, Koutcha, pl. C, p. 353.

Plates 157 and 158
Fragments of figures from scenes of the Buddha preaching
Duldur-Āqur (Kucha). "North-east temple". Beginning of the 6th century. Wall-painting. Plate 157: H. 20 cm; W. 16 cm. EO.3673. Plate 158: H. 17 cm; W. 14 cm. MG.23800. **JG**

We can only approach these small fragments from a pictorial standpoint, noting their exceptionally fine execution, and comparing them with the figures reproduced in plates 161 to 163 that show the same qualities, and which also belong to the remains of the paintings from Duldur-Āqur known as 'group A'.

These minor fragments hint at various expressive gestures and postures that conform to a required and widely recognised iconography. They offer, moreover, glimpses of jewellery and ornate dress, in particular of swirling scarves draped around the forearms. These remarks alone suggest that these figures were probably members of the reverential audience in a representation of the Buddha preaching. We cannot make a more specific interpretation without a more exact knowledge of what Buddhist beliefs were in vogue at that time in Duldur-Āqur and Kucha. Is it possible that these fragments are the remains of representations of *devatās*, which may be found in many Hīnayāna images, or even of bodhisattvas, a term that must be used with greater care since this would add to the evidence for the existence of Mahāyāna influence? This is a question that remains unanswered. It is also possible that these were allegorical figures, like the *apsarasas*.

The postures adopted by the figures are quite explicit in both cases. In the first we see the forearms coming together, one hand outstretched, fingers extended, indicating the gesture of devotion, *añjali-mudrā*, in which the two palms are pressed together. In the second fragment, we see the left arm angled forward level with the waist, projecting towards the middle of the body. Here two interpretations of the pose are possible: firstly, if the right arm was symmetrical with the left, we are faced with *añjali-mudrā* once again, though represented from a different angle (frontally) – this form may be seen in the assembly depicted in the 'Peacock cave' (*Pfauenhöhle*), Kyzyl cave 76.[203] The second interpretation, if the arrangement of the arms was somewhat freer in this fragment than in the first, is that this might illustrate the gesture of argument (*vitarka-mudrā*), as shown in the same Kyzyl painting.

In each fragment, the limbs are drawn against a background of long curves of fluid lines and contrasting colours, representing the fall of a pink vermilion scarf, alongside which hangs a garland of flowers with lapis-blue petals arranged like an ear of corn – ornaments that we would expect to find in representations of adoring princely figures after the Indian manner. We are able to form a clearer idea of these elements from the fragments reproduced in plates 161 to 163, in which we see the scarf with its two ends falling freely from the tiara, as well as the long floral necklace. Other accessories, such as the finely-worked jewelry visible in plate 157 –

an oft-encountered theme – add to the rich appearance of the figures. In addition to the bracelets adorning each forearm, we note a curved fragment of what must be a torque, with cabochon and square motifs, comparable to those worn by some members of the assembly depicted in the 'Peacock cave' as well as by the central image of Maitreya.[204] Similarly, we catch a glimpse of a section of an earring, again of a recognisable type duplicated in the Kyzyl painting.

We thus seem to be faced with very fragmentary evidence for an iconography similar to that most commonly found in Kuchean painting, no matter of what period, within the stylistic chronology admitted for the Kyzyl paintings, and thus dating to the second half of the seventh century at the latest. Nevertheless, as with the other fragments of this group, they are characterised by their luminous pictorial quality, especially by the chromatic modelling technique visible in the differentiated skin-tones, as well as in the graded shades of vermilion used for the scarves, passing from deep red to pink and white, that describe the movement from shadow to light.

We have already emphasised the fact that this art is very closely related to the first pictorial style at Kyzyl. By extension, and in consideration of the features they have in common, we can naturally attribute it to the oldest art known phase of Duldur-Āqur, for this great art of colour seems to have been produced during a limited period only, to which all the fragments of group A bear witness. In this respect, we note firstly the luminosity of the palette and the use of pure mineral pigments selected for their intense colours (which, though not yet scientifically analysed, include lapis lazuli blue, cinnabar red and malachite green); and secondly, the quality of the drawing, of the carbon-black outline, particularly when it is used instead of colour in order to emphasise the skin-tones, or, as we have already observed in the image of the Buddha (pl. 152), to render the dynamic folds of the draperies.

Fragmentary thought these pieces are, these survivals may have originally formed part of large preaching scenes, comparable with those to which the fragments reproduced as plates 152 to 163 are thought to have belonged.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, III et IV, Koutcha, figs. 39, 40, pp. 359-360.

Plate 159
Head of a monk (Mahākāśyapa?), a fragment of a parinirvāṇa scene (?)
Duldur-Āqur (Kucha). "North-east temple". Beginning of the sixth century. Wall-painting. H. 27 cm; W. 19 cm. EO.3674. **JG**

Two figures survive in partial form on this fragment: enough remains of one to enable us to discern the features as well as indications of his physique and costume. Only the hair of the second figure can be seen; even so, showing certain charactistics well-recognised in Buddhist images, it makes the problem of identification of the scene rather more delicate.

It has been suggested that these figures belong to the demonic world, and more specifically, in view of the unkempt hair indicative of wild movement, that this fragment formed part of an illustration of the famous subjugation of Māra.[205] We are inclined to qualify this viewpoint, and even to propose a different interpretation (which will become clearer in the light of an analysis of literary and iconographic sources). Our difficulty in following the first identification arises from elements that contradict the customary representations of Māra's temptation in Kuchean painting. First of these elements is the fact that the figure preserved on this fragment is surely a monk (a figure that is, to the best of our knowledge, never depicted in this epic scene), no matter that his features wear an expression that is most unusual and contrary to that expected of a member of the monastic community, notably of the great disciples who incarnate the spirit of the *saṃgha* rather than more personal characteristics, and who, as Oldenburg has so rightly stated, share "the same ideal of perfect purity, perfect peace of mind and perfect devotion to the Buddha".[206] Secondly, we note the presence of flowers, scattered over the background, as well as the large rosette motifs (fruit or flowers) and leafy swags on the left-hand side, which may represent a flowering tree. This tree resembles another, whose branches can be seen crowning the Buddha's halo in plate 152. Given what we may observe in the fragment, would we not be overestimating the figure's unusual appearance if we counted this as a representation of a demonic being, and be then guilty of committing the error of identifying the original composition with the most famous scene in which such beings are found in all their outrageous appearance? And, furthermore, would we not thereby restrict the repertory of Buddhist images depicted at Kucha to a too narrow range of themes?

The fragment presents us with a 'portrait' of a monk, unambiguous owing to the natural flesh-tones, his shaven head and beardless chin, and the monastic robe that passes over his left shoulder. Both posture and facial expression, directed towards the centre of the scene located to the figure's left and lower down, are striking in their intensity. The eyes are in a fixed gaze beneath the frowning brows and the mouth is half-open, as if the figure were speaking or making some exclamation of stupefaction. The unusual structure of the jaw and chin, drawn as a series of sections and folds and emphasised by the greenish hue of the growing beard, serves to heighten the apparently grimacing mouth. The structure of the upper body harmonises perfectly with the face, though it is quite wrong from an anatomical point of view. Its dappled appearance corresponds with the projecting bones or muscles that characterise the curious structure of the sternum, depicted as a series of rings. The gesture of the right hand, partly hidden by the hair of the second figure, is in keeping with the rest of the posture: the thumb and index finger open out from the closed fist in a lively gesture of surprise.

We must consider in greater depth the impression

produced by such an image in relation to what this fragment preserves of the original composition. We must study the face and its strange form with especial care. There is, in fact, one character in Buddhist iconography (of Central Asian origin most particularly, before being diffused into other parts of the Far-East) in whom one can recognise these features which most often identify him. Thus is depicted Mahākāśyapa, the eminent monk and one of the Buddha's chief disciples; his name continues to be linked with a moral authority and resolute character, qualities with which he assured the continuity of the religious community after the Buddha's death. An iconic convention sets him apart from the body of monks from that moment onwards and it is this precise form that we recognise in this fragment. His face is that of a man who is already old, deeply lined around the mouth and chin, with the lower part of the cheeks rather exaggerated. These features generally combine to give this disciple a sorrowful and rather hard expression that conforms to the idea that the Buddhists formed of this rigorous guardian of the *saṃgha* and of its monastic rules, the *vinaya*. Like the Duldur-Āqur painting, painters have usually depicted the anatomy of the neck and upper body as wiry and vigorous, sharing the same visual imagery for this person so renowned for ascetic discipline. There are many examples in other paintings in which these same characteristics come to the fore. We can make a legitimate comparison with a work from Kyzyl cave 60, "the largest cave" (*Grösste Höhle* [207]), in which the figure is painted with a similarly impressive intensity of expression against a background of scattered flowers in a scene thought to belong to a representation of the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa*. In another narrative context we recognise Kāśyapa with the same characteristics identifying him in the midst of an assembly of monks attending a preaching (cave 114, *Gebetmühlenhöhle*). [208]

It is worth noting that this figure most frequently appears in *parinirvāṇa* scenes, as seems to be the case with the Duldur-Āqur fragment. The background decorated with flowers mirrors the two *śāla* trees, near Kuśinagara, that miraculously flowered out of season and between which the Buddha lay down before he passed away.[209] We know that the most senior disciple was, in fact, absent at the the moment of the Buddha's death, and that the gathered monks waited for him to arrive before proceeding with the cremation. A great number of the Kyzyl wall-paintings contract these two episodes into a single illustration, juxtaposing the place of death, "the *śāla* grove", with the place of cremation in the "coronation-temple of the Malla princes" (*cf.* the caption to plate 171, fragments from Kyzyl-Qargha), where Mahā-kāśyapa was able to worship the feet of the Buddha that miraculously appeared out of the coffin, before lighting the funeral pyre (this is exactly what is depicted in a wall-painting in Kyzyl cave 107A, mentioned below).

While we may thus explain the figure depicted against a background of flowers that rain down from the sky and the spontaneous blossoming of the trees, we are still faced with the difficulty that the figure does not express suffering as we might expect, though, as in the portrait from Kyzyl cave 60 (see above), the expression derives as much from sorrow as from wrath. Moreover, we see a second figure in the Duldur-Āqur fragment, whose unkempt hair is generally the hallmark of demonic beings (*cf.* the sun-dried clay heads from Tumshuq), though it may possibly be intended to evoke the grief of those present at the funeral ceremony, their hair blowing in the wind; nevertheless, the placing of this figure between the chief disciple and the body of the spiritual master is highly unlikely, since Mahākāśyapa took precedence over all the other members of the monastic community.

We must, therefore, turn to other illustrations while excluding both assault of Māra and *parinirvāṇa* scenes: these, in fact, show great variety – thus the possibly insuperable difficulty in identifying the precise narrative context of this fragment. If we admit that the second figure may indeed have been a demon or spirit, then we have grounds to suppose that this figure belonged to a Buddha assembly of the sort represented in large *dharma-deśanā* compositions. Such preaching scenes are sometimes highly colourful (as we will see in the following plates); as may be seen in the wall-paintings of Kyzyl and Kumtura (the latter contemporary with cave 23, *i.e.* prior to the Chinese influence felt in the eighth century), we are dealing with the most common narrative form adopted by the artists to recount the events of the Buddha's life, which are indicated as such by portraits and the characteristic postures of certain figures. Thus, for example, according to Grünwedel's interpretation, we find Devadatta's crime illustrated in the margins of such a basically static *deśanā* depiction, in one of the panels from the "high cave" (*Hochliegende-Höhle*), cave 181 or 182 (?).[210]

We are inclined to think that the fragment must have belonged to this narrative genre, and that the event that caused this extreme expression to appear on the great disciple's face must have been of comparable dramatic intensity. As shown by the wall-paintings of Kyzyl, Serindian tradition regularly mixes beings of different classes in these 'narrative assemblies' – men and gods, great beings (should we already refer to these as "bodhisattvas"?) and conquered and converted *yakṣa*s; and, amongst the former, the monks of the community as well as laymen. That the disciple should be rendered in this manner is thus not in the least surprising.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, III et IV, Koutcha, fig. 30, p. 354.
Gime tōyō Bijutsukan, pl. 66.
Chūgoku bijūtsu, Kaiga, pl. 88.
La Route de la Soie, Paris, 1976, no. 219.

Plates 160 - 164
Group of fragments from various preaching scenes
Duldur-Āqur (Kucha). "North-east temple". Beginning of the 6th century. Wall-paintings. Plate 160: Two fragments of figures. *a*) H. 41 cm; W. 37 cm. *b*) H. 16 cm; W. 20 cm. EO.1122 (*a,b*) [P.963]. Plate 161: EO.1121 (*a, b*) and

EO.3666 (*a, b*) [see specific caption below]. Plate 162: EO.3666 (*a, b*) [see specific caption below]. Plate 163: Two fragments of figures. *a*) H. 27 cm; W. 27 cm. *b*) H. 21 cm; W. 16 cm. EO.1675 (*a,b*) [P.754]. Plate 164: EO.3665 (*a,b*) [see specific caption below]. **JG**

These five groups of fragments, depicting figures, are closely linked together in style, pictorial technique and, apparently, subject (we present them together in order to avoid repetition, with the exceptions of plates 161, 162 and 164, for which more precise iconographic interpretations can be offered). Nevertheless, it cannot be claimed that they all belonged to a single composition. Even if we merely note the distinctions in colours and background motifs, these suffice to prove that these pieces originated in different parts of the figurative decor of the cella. The postures of the figures, often extremely dynamic (as may be seen in the fragment reproduced in plate 162, in which a figure is seen offering a bowl), reflect the most common canonical gesture used to express the poses of worshippers, such as we have already recognised at Duldur-Āqur (see plates 157 and 158) and which may also be observed in the paintings of Kyzyl. These features are allied to the characters of the figures, who wear the princely accessories proper to *devatās* or to bodhisattvas (?). The figures are grouped closely together, to the point that they partially overlap in the vertical representation, suggesting at the same time their grouping and their spatial position in the receding perspective of several successive planes. All these characteristics suggest the depiction of members of the audience gathered around the preaching Buddha, a generic context already mentioned with regard to the preceding fragments from the same site.

The significance of most of these figures escapes us – that is to say, we cannot associate them with any single episode in the Buddha's life, contrary to what we were able to propose for the fragments reproduced in plates 154 to 156. Only two fragments (shown in plates 161 and 162) allow us to infer a precise narrative context; in the case of one of these, the figure presents an offering bowl, while the other piece illustrates a similar bowl, near the figure, but, contrary to what one might have expected from the preceding account, this has no visible means of support, apparently help up by thin air above the head of the figure (see our explanation below, caption to plates 161 and 162).

As for the other three fragments, all our attempts to recognise in them something more than the figures of an assembly appear to be vain, for the illustrations are bereft of any indications of particular postures or revealing details other than the conventional poses in the representation of divine, semi-divine or human figures that make up such an adoring, reverential audience.

Amongst these pieces we note four male heads of similar physique and pictorial technique, represented in three-quarter view; all have moustaches and display a full morphology characterised by a roundness of the chin, the pure facial oval, and the folds "of beauty" around the neck, in which we recognise the memory of the Indian canon as much as the legacy of Gandhāran sculpture (which, in our ignorance of painting in that region in the period under consideration, forces us to imagine their transposition in relief). The refined 'aristocratic' features, ideally proportioned and able to convey that singular expression of spiritual happiness, reproduce some stylistic constants common to the two sources invoked above: the wide, slit eyes, set wide apart, inscribed within the high and perfect arc of the eyebrows; the half-veiled gaze from beneath heavy upper lids, turned inward in contemplation rather than outward onto the world about; the mouth, close to the nostrils, turned up at the corners in an ecstatic half-smile – these are all characteristics of a drawing that still borrows its necessary schematism from the observation of a model, which resembles, in this respect, the head of the brahmin shown in plate 154. As we find in the latter example, but in a less exaggerated way, the pictorial modelling is suggested by the 'shaded' colouring of graded red ochre tones.

The typology of the Kyzyl wall-paintings, generally accepted after the initial studies by Grünwedel, von le Coq and Waldschmidt, distinguishes two 'styles', said to be 'Indian' and 'Indo-Iranian' respectively; chronologically, the second follows the first. Beyond the brief outline of these questionable terms, it is the observed eclecticism of the combination of elements of various origins which must be questioned in Kuchean painting. The Iranian part remains obscure (despite the appearance of identifiable motifs) in the general aesthetic of the figures and of the pictorial technique. But we have placed these fragments, belonging to 'group A' of the paintings from Duldur-Āqur, in the period which preceded this composite style, and, consequently, in the aesthetic that manifests – at Kyzyl at any rate – a less shared descent; that is to say, it is dominated by Indian tradition (according to the typology mentioned above). We need only refer back to the figures of cave 207, the 'Cave of the painter' (*Malerhöhle*) – of which a fine fragment of the face of a *deva-putra* (?), according to Grünwedel [211], brings to mind those of Duldur-Āqur – to the figures of the large Buddha assemblies from cave 118 (*Hippokampenhöhle*)[212], or to the figures originally painted in the cupola of cave 76, the 'Peacock cave'[213], to find, if not the inspiration of the aesthetic of the temple at Duldur-Āqur, at least confirmation of an artistic environment that allows this style to find its place in the chronology of Kuchean painting. Furthermore, the style seems to have left its impression beyond the pictorial sphere alone, for we observe its close transposition in the statuary in clay and polychrome cob that is surely contemporary with the wall-paintings (see the captions to plates 177 and 176).

This holds as true for the postures and gestures, anatomical form and details (ornamental motifs and jewelry) as it does for the faces. The variations in costume, as seen worn by the female figures depicted on three fragments (plates 160, 164 and 163), bear witness to the Indian mode of dress typical of *devas*, alongside a local influence that was, perhaps, a fashion of that time. Let us remember that the same worldly distinction between male and female figures appears in the represen-

tations of princely couples in the relief panels from Toqquz-Saraï (see above, pl. 137 and 139). One of the painted compositions in the 'Peacock cave' deserves particular mention, in view of the great similarities between two female figures, represented there in a scene showing the *śramaṇa* Gautama [214](Śākyamuni as an ascetic), and the deity depicted in plate 160. The resemblance lies not only in their similar modelling and postures, but also in the items of clothing and the head-dresses – indeed, the latter are almost identical to what we find in the image from Duldur-Āqur, as are the tunic, softly moulding the body, and the head-dress, consisting of a hair-net bound with a ribbon beaded with pearls, decorated with finely-worked, cabochon motifs and pendants.

Two figures stand out from these groups owing to their idiosyncratic features, though they do not in any way bend the rules of the established aesthetic canon. The first of these is female, and perhaps represents a *devi* (?) with a halo, who appears behind a richly-dressed male figure (plate 164). The identification of the second figure (pl. 160, lower right) is less certain: smaller-proportioned than the other attendants, this may be the face of a child or of a monk. Nevertheless, the folds of the robe, malachite green like Mahākāśyapa's (pl. 159), cover both shoulders. Quite unlike the mode of wearing the *saṃghāti*, this would appear to rule out the possibility of the second figure being a member of the religious community. We are inclined instead to recognise him as a youthful member of the assembly; his rare but far from exceptional presence gives the assembly a particular narrative meaning which we are unable to identify.

Most of the figures preserved on these fragments are depicted with haloes, the distinctive mark by which we recognise deities and great beings. In a few cases this distinctive mark is missing (pl. 161 and 162). The fact that the two female figures (pl. 160, 164) are haloed gives them a prominent position in the assembly; if this is not the edifying illustration of a particular story itself, the latter may be evoked here, in the hieratic and solemn preaching scene, by the presence of a figure from the story; so, at least, is represented the wife of Ajātaśatru in the illustration of the legend of this king, a devoted convert, painted in the 'Māyā cave, site II' (cave 205).[215] Such a figure appears elsewhere in the wall-paintings of Kyzyl: thus, in the 'narrative-assemblies' of cave 181, the "high cave" (*Hochliegende Höhle*), we find depictions of a haloed royal or princely couple, who turn out to be saintly figures, whether historical or legendary, uniformly represented on the same plane as the deities.[216]

As is shown by these wall-paintings from the rock-cut temples, the figures linked to the biography of the Buddha are most often illustrated in the foreground of an assembly. This means, according to the use of perspective in these assemblies, that the figures usually appear in the lower part of the compositions. We may have here an clue as to the original position of the fragments reproduced in plates 160 and 164. As for the youthful figure (whose reconstructed place, near the *devi*, is actually quite arbitrary), the narrative context that his presence would seem to indicate suggests that he was depicted in the foreground of the composition, at the foot of the Buddha's throne.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, III et IV, Koutcha, fig. 36 (EO.1122), fig. 35 (EO.3675); pp. 356, 357.
La Route de la Soie, Paris, 1976, no. 220.
L'Asie Centrale, fig. 157.

Plates 161 and 162
Fragment of a narrative assembly: the offering of bowls (?)
Duldur-Āqur (Kucha). "North-east temple". Wall-painting. Plate 161: *a*) H. 23.4 cm; W. 26.4 cm. *b*) H. 15.5 cm; W. 24.4 cm. EO.1121(*a,b*). Plate 162: *a,b*) H. 37 cm; W. 45 cm. EO.3666(*a,b*). **JG**

These two pairs of fragments (which are the only ones out of the five groups that we have been able to link together in view of their obvious relationship) chance to show us a significant element of a Buddhist legend. While this is explicit in plate 162, in which a figure raises an alms-bowl in his hands in offering, it is allusive in plate 161, appearing more indirectly and requiring extrapolation. In this fragment, we see a similar bowl, though differently coloured, represented alone above the head of a crowned worshipper, set against the same background of a frieze of large white discs that we find in the preceding fragment. The story thematically linked with these attributes that immediately springs to mind is the well-known tale of "The offering of the four alms-bowls". We should, however, be careful not to judge these small fragments too quickly, for there are quite a number of scenes of this type. The condition of these fragments and the absence of more precise indications notwithstanding, we think that it is useful to 'read' these incomplete testimonials in the light of this story, particularly since the latter was not only famous but also occupied a privileged position from the beginning of Buddhist iconography, and would therefore give us some idea of the original composition – similar in all respects to the preaching assemblies – to which these fragments may once have belonged. We would then also be able to locate the figure giving the bowls, as well as the symbolical manifestation of one or more bowls (for in plate 161, we see what might be a glimpse of a second bowl on the left).

The offering of the bowls takes place after the Enlightenment (*saṃbodhi*), in the very place of the Enlightenment, in the wood of Uruvilvā (or Uruvelā), south of Gayā, after Gautama had passed seven weeks fasting in the undivided bliss of Awakening. The first meal that the Buddha consents to take is offered by two merchants, Trapuṣa and Bhallika, counted thereafter as the first *upāsaka*, converted laymen. Like those that came before him, the Buddha cannot accept the offering (which varies from one text to another) unless it is proffered in a begging-bowl (*pātra*). The story that follows – the story of the bowls – describes the intervention of the four Guardian Kings (*lokapāla*), each of whom hurried from

his respective cardinal point bearing a golden bowl; these are refused by the Buddha, on the grounds that they are too precious for a religious man, so the Heavenly Kings offer vessels made of all different kinds of precious materials. All their attempts meet with the same refusal every time. Finally, the kings bring four stone bowls, more in keeping with the ascetic ideal. Careful to respect each king's gift, the Buddha accepts them and – "by the strength of his confidence", according to the *Lalita-vistara*, and "by pressing his thumb" according to the *Mahāvastu* – makes them one. It is the intervention of the four gods, that took place after the initial offering made by the merchants, that most often provides the title for the story in the Chinese sources – "The offering of the bowls by the Heavenly Kings"

There are a few problems with the hypothesis that these fragments are illustrations based on this story, particularly in view of the fact that the figure offering the bowl has no halo around his head, contrary to the iconographic requirements of the Heavenly Kings, who, after all, are central to the story. It is, moreover, impossible for the bowl-bearing figure to be interpreted as one or other of the merchants, since it was the very absence of an appropriate vessel that brought about the intervention of the divine kings. Furthermore, the manifestation of the bowls above the second figure, independent of the actions of the gods and men, does not fit in with the story. Despite the reservations expressed above, the arguments in favour of the interpretation suggested earlier appear to over-ride these objections, on account of a few illustrations of stories attested in the wall-paintings of Kyzyl. At least one of these clearly illustrates the offering of the bowls, while all of them are depicted in that particular form to which we have constantly referred when discussing these painted fragments – that of narrative Buddha assemblies (see the note to plate 159 for an explanation of this term).

As we have already seen, these assemblies satisfy the demands of different narratives with some degree of abbreviation or elliptical symbolism. In the light of this, the bowls (pl. 161) would not be so out of place. The story of the bowls appears in such a reduced format in a wall-painting in Kyzyl cave 182, the "high cave", identified as such by Grünwedel on the basis of the depiction of the bowls placed on a tray at the Buddha's feet, so that the Heavenly Kings in the assembly are no longer holding them.[217] Paradoxically, it is the more enigmatic representation of the two Duldur-Āqur fragments, that of the two bowls depicted against the decorative frieze, that we consider to provide the strongest link with the legend. This could be the symbolic representation of the kings' offering, much as we find it in the Kyzyl scene. An argument in favour of this interpretation seems to us to be based on the understanding of this 'frieze'; appearing in both fragments, it consists of large white circular motifs against a blue ground decorated with criss-crossing strings of pearls. The background, found in many other examples of Kuchean painting (from Kyzyl and Kumtura), corresponds with a theme of textile pattern that is encountered in the representation of palace wall-hangings (*cf.* the scene illustrating the legend of King Ajātaśatru in the 'Mâyâ cave', Kyzyl cave 205 [218]), and, even more frequently, in the fabrics spread over the Buddha's throne (see pl. 152)[219]. We believe that the motifs in the Duldur-Āqur fragments belong to such a throne covering.

What, then, should be made of the devotee offering the bowl, if we admit that he belongs to the same scene, as seems probable owing to the similarity of the decorative 'frieze'? We have already ruled out the possibility that this figure represents a *lokapāla*. On the basis of the large painted assemblies in Kyzyl cave 182, it seems quite possible that the figure represents a high-ranking layman of Kucha, of princely or even royal status, depicted in the guise of one of the first *upāsaka*. If, like Grünwedel, and on the basis of many indications such as those recognised in plate 164, we admit that these types of figures often appeared in the foreground of these assemblies, then we can legitimately propose that the donor without a halo is the 'portrait' of an enthusiastically-Buddhist ruler of Kucha, like the 'portraits' encountered in the Kyzyl wall-paintings.

The iconography of the offering of the four bowls is known in Gandhāran art, in which it appears occasionally in the cycle of representations (so common in this region) of the 'four great events' in the Buddha's life, as in the relief round the base of the *stūpa* in the Lahore Museum depicting the birth, the offering of the bowls, the first sermon and the death or *parinirvāṇa*.[220]

The story of the bowls is known at Kyzyl from the sole surviving composition of cave 110, the "Cave with steps" (*Treppen Höhle*).[221] This unique piece of evidence[222] is, nonetheless, one of the most illuminating for the study of the fragments under consideration here. Unlike the Gandhāran relief, the two merchants are depicted in the Buddha assembly, together with the four *lokapāla*; they are marked out by their costumes which resemble the 'Sogdian' tunics of the high reliefs from Tumshuq, and they appear without haloes, kneeling at either side of the Buddha's throne. The artist has not hesitated to facilitate the interpretation of the image by depicting them with their offerings – one holds a dish, while the other holds a jar, vessels which, in themselves, depart from the story, but which also respect the fact the necessary alms-bowl will be produced by some other means.

In conclusion, it seems to us that the original Duldur-Āqur composition can be closely linked with the Kyzyl paintings; to be more precise, it can be placed mid-way between the two depictions of the legend we have discussed – that in cave 110, with its explicit illustration of the offering of the bowls, and that of cave 182, rather more abbreviated, with the begging-bowls simply placed in front of the Buddha. As regards this arrangement, we might even go so far as to make an assumption relating to the former appearance of the Duldur-Āqur painting, concerning whether it would be necessary to represent the four Heavenly Kings each holding a bowl as seen in the mural of cave 110, which thereby remained faithful to Gandhāran reliefs. This would lead to a redundant element, which the artist of cave 182 has been careful to avoid, as seems to be the case here too.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, III et IV, Koutcha, fig. 37 (EO.1121), fig. 38 (EO.3666); pp. 358-9.

Plate 164
A princely or royal couple of Kucha
Duldur-Āqur (Kucha). "North-east temple". Beginning of the 6th century. Wall-painting. H. 34 cm; W. 45 cm. EO.3665. **JG**

We return now to a closer examination of this fragment, important for the individuality of the figures that it shows. We have here a princely or royal couple, rather than deities, who appear as members of the audience of a preaching scene, but who are also witnesses or even actors in the story illustrated by the Buddha assembly (*cf.* caption to the preceding plates). We have already noted in the previous entry the unusual appearance of the female figure on the left, whose expression and hieratic posture contrast with the customary smiles of spiritual rapture of the other figures, although the drawing is from the same stylistic canon. The differences can be observed in the details – as far as we can judge from the fragment – and, in particular, in the rectilinear cut of the hair, forming a shell-shape kept in place by a shawl, and framing the oval face in an unusually abrupt and schematic form. The scarf or hair-net is decorated with floral motifs and is surmounted by a tiara banded with pearls. This must surely reflect the local fashion of the time, and brings to mind the secular nature of the figures while here adding an individual note to the representation of the woman. This iconography is rare, but does occur, nonetheless, in Kuchean paintings of people of similar rank, in the assemblies of Kyzyl cave 206 (the "Foot-washing cave"; *Fusswaschungs Höhle*),[223] which is attributed to the 'second style' (600-650 AD), thus later than the Duldur-Āqur fragments.

Another original feature sets apart the male figure, whose physiognomy, unlike his companion's, otherwise reproduces the conventional style. The originality lies in the arrangement of his hair, coloured lapis lazuli blue, and falling in abundant, tight curls onto his shoulders (again, we are faced with distinctive signs that serve to individualise the figures, and which are certainly worth noting). Again, this is not in fact an isolated example of this iconography, for it is very like a coiffure worn by the minister Varṣākāra, represented twice in a painting in Kyzyl cave 205, the 'Māyā cave, site II', illustrating the legend of King Ajātaśatru, who was burdened with the task of announcing the Buddha's death to that devoted king.[224] Judging by other evidence drawn from the same cycle of wall-paintings, this is an 'expressive feature' shown by some figures, whose characters in some way distinguish them from the groups amidst whom they appear. Thus the distinctive appearance of a *śramaṇa* in the assembly of brahmanical ascetics in cave 80, the "hellish cauldron cave" (*Höllentopf Höhle*), or, as the opposite of this type, that of a wrathful deity depicted in a preaching scene in cave 189, "the second cave from the front" (*2 Höhle von vorn*).[225] These wall-paintings are held to date from the 'second style', and are therefore later than the Duldur-Āqur fragment, which would then be one of the possible sources for this iconography. The theme is, however, older still, appearing in Gandhāran heads carved in the round, in which this coiffure characterises the image of the prince Siddārtha when represented as a bodhisattva.[226] Some pieces from Tumshuq (see plate 144) are also faithful to this model, though with some variations.

However trivial and secondary these details may appear to be in relation to the iconography of the figures, they seem to us – as far as we may judge from these fragments – to provide convincing evidence for the incorporation or adoption in an idealised form of historical characters, even members of contemporary Kuchean society. They are, thus, elements intended to individulise the figures in the midst of the otherwise fairly undifferentiated groups that make up the Buddha assemblies.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, III et IV, Koutcha, fig. 33, pp. 355-6.
Gime tōyō Bijutsukan, pl. 65.
L'Asie Centrale, fig. 160.
Chūgoku bijūtsu, I, Kaiga, pl. 87.

Plate 165
Head of a devatā
Duldur-Āqur (Kucha). "North-east temple". First half of the 7th century. Wall-painting. H. 26 cm; W. 31 cm. EO.3670. **JG**

This rounded face contrasts with the preceding examples, not so much in pictorial technique as in a more extreme stylisation of the features. A great number of similar figures in the Kyzyl wall-paintings confirm that we are dealing here with a formula that pervaded a whole group of works attributed to the 'second pictorial style' (according to the generally-accepted chronology), that is to say, to the period extending from 600 to 650 AD.

The sole example of this genre from Duldur-Āqur, it is necessarily in comparison with the works of the great rock-cut temples on the upper course of the Mouzart, Kyzyl, that this face finds its place in the history of Kuchean painting. Indeed, if its archaeological origin were not certain, one might doubt that it even came from this constructed site.

A minute but fundamental variation sets the morphology of this face apart from those works considered to be earlier in date. We sense this subjectively through a quality of the expression that suggests a person who seems to be more involved in the scene to which he belongs. Conventionally idealised in feature as always, the half-smile conveys the serenity of Enlightenment, but the gaze, lost in interiorised contemplation, does not fix upon some improbable point outside the body in the way characteristic of the preceding fragments. From an objective standpoint, this distinction can be observed in the canon of form and proportion. It is noteworthy

that the features are relatively smaller in the facial oval and appear to be concentrated in the centre of the face, around the ridge of the nose. The eyes are not so wide and slit as they were in the earlier style, in which, as in Indian painting, the upper eyelid projects expressively when seen in semi-profile; instead, they are formed of short arcs. In the same way, and in a new proportion, the smaller mouth is now aligned with the curve of the chin, which has been brought closer. In other words, these are the signs of a stylisation that shows the predominance of the pure, abstract oval of the face over the placing of the features.

This description corresponds exactly with that of the large bodhisattva head from Tumshuq (see pl. 140). Such a resemblance between the two arts is surely not coincidental, neither a matter of chance nor of occasional analogy, since each of the two styles proceeds from an elaboration whose earlier stages can be relatively well followed, as much in the sculpture as in the painting of the two sites. In a more convincing fashion, the similarity lends credence to the idea of a common figurative canon, or even a style, in the full sense of the term; and, because it has no equivalent elsewhere, whether in Gandhāran or Indian sources or in their Central Asiatic developments during the period under consideration, of a style whose creation can be associated with the religious complexes of the north of the western Tarim, encompassing, at the very least, Kucha and Tumshuq. Finally, considering the importance of the first region in relation to the second, we would hazard that the origin of this style lies in the ancient kingdom of Kucha.

The pictorial rendering of this fragment further distinguishes the technique as being related to one of the styles at Kyzyl. Though we might note the pure, contrasting colours used in the depiction of the figure as much as in the concentric rings of the halo and the decorative band that framed the original scene, the most striking feature is the play of light against the darker ground of the complexion, achieved by white highlights applied to the more prominent features. Although unique at Duldur-Āqur, the head has exact counterparts in the groups of figures represented in the paintings of Kyzyl. We need only refer to the fragments of three figures from the 'Māyā cave, site III' (cave 224)[227], to realise the effect of such modelling, which is even more dramatic there. Only the dark complexion of some figures – doubtless intended to evoke persons of some other ethnic background, perhaps Indian, in relation to the illustration of the legend of King Ajātaśatru – invites this technique, as is proved in the group from cave 224 by the fair-skinned appearance of the third figure, in whose case the relief is obtained by deepening the shadows with ochre. There are numerous other similar examples, some also found in the painting of the other 'Māyā cave, site II', cave 205.

We see here a number of stylistic and iconographic traits related to the depiction of *devatās*, such as the coiffure crowned with a tiara made up of a pearl-covered band with a large, circular motif at its centre, the floating scarf framing the face, the jewels and ornaments set off by the dotted white highlights, even the halo of concentric rings and the geometric palmettes of the decorative border. All these traits recur in the paintings of the two caves previously mentioned, attributed to the 'second style'. The representation of a *deva* wearing a comparable diadem and offering a reliquary, taken from cave 224, closely resembles this head.[228]

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, III et IV, Koutcha, pl. A, pp. 351-2.

Plate 166
Fragment of a Pure Land
Duldur-Āqur (Kucha). "North-east temple". First half of the 8th century. Wall-painting. H. 29 cm; W. 22.7 cm. EO.1123B. **JG**

We have here a rare instance of the 'Sinicised' style at Duldur-Āqur, a fragment that quite clearly belonged to a painting of that genre expected in this period but so rarely attested in Kucha, illustrating the theme of a Buddha land, *buddha-kṣetra*. Obviously Mahāyānist, this genre reflects a popular piety very much in favour in Tang China. The numerous examples of this type of image in the Dunhuang caves allows us to estimate the size of the original composition, using these figures as a guide: the painting must have been imposing, even monumental, and probably measured about two metres in height.

The best-preserved figure is a haloed bodhisattva of offering, seated behind a balustrade. He offers a bowl in his left hand while making with his right the fluent gesture that in the iconography of buddhas indicates teaching, *vitarka-mudrā*, the gesture of argument. Here, performed by an "enlightenment being" and showing a slight variation (the middle finger, rather than the index finger, touches the thumb), the gesture might signify the repetition of the words of the teaching and its thorough understanding. The partial shape of another seated figure, depicted a little higher and further back, suggests that the figures formed part of an assembly or of a group of similar beings: this is a bodhisattva, dressed in the same way as the first, bare chest draped with a scarf and waist wrapped with a *dhoti*. The two figures make different gestures, the second displaying a rare *mudrā* with the hands joined together, not in the conventional pose of devotion, *añjali-mudrā*, but in a natural position, expressive and anecdotal, the fingers interlaced. This gesture suggests to us a serene detachment from what goes on about him. While the balustrade in the foreground, at the edge of a terrace on which the bodhisattvas are seated, evokes the splendid architecture of a celestial palace, below the peacock's tail and the outspread wing of a bird (probably a *kalaviṅka*) there appears a fragment of composition that would seem to have a more bucolic character.

As we have already mentioned, the iconography glimpsed through these incomplete elements is absolutely coherent with that of a Pure Land. Following this interpretation, the two figures formed part of a large assembly of pure bodhisattvas, the audience (accord-

ing to some exegeses) of the the Buddha's preaching; more precisely, they would have belonged to a group of bodhisattvas depicted on one of the forward terraces that overhangs the tank of rebirth, in which the deceased are reborn on lotus blossoms. This is borne out by the beautiful and mythical birds, the peacock and the *kalaviṅka, etc.*, which appear in and around the watery landscape in the many mural and portable paintings of Dunhuang (for the latter, *cf.* vol 1, pl. 16). If we follow the iconography of one of these Pure Lands, Sukhāvati, the domain of the Buddha Amitābha, we have here the group that was depicted in the foreground of the right side of the original composition. The paintings of the Mogao caves of Dunhuang enable us to propose that these bodhisattvas, seated on the terrace over the pool and turned towards the centre of the composition, belonged to one of the two secondary Buddha assemblies that are represented symmetrically at the right and left of the pool, like a two-fold reflection of the principal triad enthroned at the centre, in front of the celestial palace.

The fragment illustrates the Mahāyāna doctrine of these pure Buddha-fields, where, as the Buddha tells Maudgalyāyana, "... the ground, always radiant, is made of the seven jewls, and where the disciples are all bodhisattvas who cannot regress (*avaivartika*), who possess the magical charms (*dhāraṇi*) and the concentrations (*samādhi*) ...".[229] The fragment, then, possibly illustrates the Western Pure Land of Amitābha, the object of a salvationist belief that flourished during the Tang period, as shown by its frequent depiction in the Dunhuang caves.

The image of these transcendent lands, as portrayed by the Duldur-Āqur fragment, is not, however, necessarily that of Amitābha's realm. This is owing to a doctrinal reason, for these lands – fabrications of the Buddhas which they reveal to the pure in spirit – are in fact exactly the same, in each of the ten directions of space. Both in iconography and belief, their number is reduced to four, each then being assigned to one of the cardinal points. Of these, the Eastern Pure Land of the Buddha Bhaiṣajyaguru (Yaoshi rulai) was no less desirable than the Pure Land of the West during the period under consideration, and it could just as well be this one that is depicted on this fragment.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, III et IV, Koutcha, fig. 44, p. 361-2.
La Route de la Soie, Paris, 1976, no. 226.
L'Asie Centrale, fig. 58

Plate 167
Flying celestial (apsaras) on a cloud
Duldur-Āqur (Kucha). "North-east temple". First half of the 8th century. Wall-painting. H. 22.6 cm; W. 22.8 cm. EO.3667 (Pelliot 576). **JG**

The minor deities, benign spirits who announce or witness important events, often musicians such as the *gandharvas, kiṁnaras* and their female counterparts the *apsarasas* (amongst others), frequently appear in Central Asian art. Represented in cloud-borne flight, singly or in pairs (for decorative symmetry), they accompany the cult figures, buddhas or sometimes bodhisattvas, in painted compositions. The dynamic posture of the figure and the scrolling cloud that are depicted on this fragment suggest one of these celestial figures, moving at high speed towards the principal scene.

Her arm extended in front of her, in a pose often encountered in the Kyzyl paintings, suggests that she is scattering flowers which, perhaps, she carried in a dish in her other hand. Thus are represented the *apsarasas* on the ceilings of caves 196 and 1 (discovered by Chinese archaeologists)[230]; in cave 196, they are depicted on the zenithal strip of the cella vault, where they appear above the network of lozenge-shaped mountains with scenes taken from the previous lives of the Buddha; in cave 1, they appear on the ceiling of the corridor passing beind the *stūpa*-pillar, where, with other celestials, they scatter flowers above the monumental painting of the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa* that has now largely disappeared.

These works, though useful comparisons for understanding the incomplete figure on this fragment, are perhaps only distantly related to the context of the decor of the Duldur-Āqur shrine, which is of later date. It is most unlikely that the latter had a similar distribution of narrative scenes, particularly one like that found in cave 196. They do indeed conform to the Kyzyl iconography in terms of posture and, above all, in that the head of the flying deity, crowned with a tiara, has a halo. This element is rarely – one might say never – encountered in depictions of these figures in the Sinicised style. The representations of these beings, at least in the paintings of Dunhuang, seem regularly to show that their importance is, from now on, secondary and purely decorative.

Fortunately, we know of one truly comparable work that fits better with the period under consideration, one that comes, moreover, from a local Kuchean source: this is a painting of unique type from Kumtura cave 14.[231] In this we see *apsarasas* with haloes, like important deities – a status that logically they should never have lost from the earliest representations of Gandhāra and India. Significantly, the composition to which these figures belong is a large assembly illustrating the Enlightenment or a preaching scene (of the kind we have mentioned so often in relation to the fragments of wall-paintings belonging to the 'first style A' at Duldur-Āqur).The *apsarasas* can be seen swooping down from the sky towards the assembly and hovering above the Tree of Enlightenment and the canopy sheltering the Buddha.

The problem of the iconography of the flying figure combined with the Sinicised style is thus resolved. It remains for us to interpret the background of the fragment, painted an intense, sombre red ochre and decorated with scattered flowers (see the upper right corner of the fragment), which, owing to the presence of scrolling clouds, is held to represent the sky. If we compare the colour with the contemporary iconographies of Turfan and Dunhuang, we find that it is unusual from a stylistic point of view and for the period under consideration, for it has been established by numerous examples that, in the paintings of Kyzyl, predominantly red

backgrounds are of relatively early date, around 600 AD if not before.

Pelliot noted this in relation to some paintings he saw at the Ming-oï of Tadjik, in the region of Kucha, and especially to one of those caves that he termed "Cave with a predominantly red background". From the description of the subjects depicted there (regrettably, there are no photographic records), it emerges that there must have been a separate *parinirvāṇa* scene, with a scene opposite of the cremation; both were painted on the rear part of the circumambulatory corridor. His observation is important, and provides us with a possible contextual attribution for the fragment.

We tend, therefore, to see in this figure of an *apsaras* of clearly Sinicised workmanship an iconography that can be associated with the paintings of Kyzyl cave 1, mentioned earlier, at a time when *apsarasas* almost rivalled in size the great figures of the assemblies or of Buddhist legend in a composition. There, as in the large scene depicted on the *stūpa*-pillar of Kyzyl cave 227, known as the "third *preta* cave" (*Pretahöhle*), they swoop towards the top of the niche, represented against a sky of an as improbable colour as the red in the Duldur-Āqur fragment.[232] In cave 227, however, the subject represented is quite different from the *nirvāṇa* of the Buddha and is more like an assembly of worshippers, like the apotheosis of the cult image displayed in the niche.

In view of these few indications, the fragment from Duldur-Āqur seems to us to be the product of a synthesis proper to Kuchean painting, in which are combined the new pictorial style influenced by the Chinese aesthetic and an iconography faithful to local or Central Asian tradition. If we dare to put this development in a broader perspective (a perspective that has yet to be proved in detail), we would place earlier in the tradition the flying deities appearing in the *Śaṅkhācaryā-avadāna* relief panel from Tumshuq (pl. 138), together with the Kyzyl paintings, and, among those that are later, the image of a *gandharva* from Kumtura cave 16 ('Cave of the Kinnari')[233], which appears there without a halo, clearly in the secondary place assigned by the decorative conventions characteristic of eighth-century paintings. It is, finally, in this last form that we find the representations of *apsarasas* in the skies of Pure Land depictions at Dunhuang.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, III et IV, Koutcha, fig. 43, pp. 360-1.

Plate 168
Fragments of an assembly
Duldur-Āqur (Kucha). "North-east temple". First half of the 7th century. Wall-paintings (three fragments). *a*) above: head of a bodhisattva. H. 14 cm; W. 10 cm. *b*) right: bust of a worshipper. H. 12 cm; W. 17 cm. *c*) left: two partial figures of bodhisattvas. H. 21 cm; W. 25.5 cm. EO.1123 (*a,b,c*). **JG**

If these modest remains of a wall-painting are indeed from Duldur-Āqur (the inventory states that they are, though Pelliot made no such clear and definite statement in his notes), our interest in them increases dramatically, for, in that case, we have here extremely significant archaeological evidence. For the pictorial style of these fragments is most rare, and sheds a ray of light on an important phase in Kuchean art, providing evidence for the period of the 'Sinicised style', already illustrated by the two preceding fragments (pl. 165 and 167) but here with an extra nuance. One must be careful, however, not to confuse these pictorial techniques: the additional nuance we see here lies in a chromatic art, an expressive art of contrasting colours quite unlike the previous examples. As regards artistic expression, an element changes which transforms both the style and the spirit of the works. That these different techniques are used for the same iconographic ends and at approximately the same period makes their differences even more significant.

One should not trust the present arrangement of these fragments – while possible, it is far from giving any idea of the original composition. What, on the other hand, we can say about these figures is that they are bodhisattvas, who, judging by their postures and gestures, probably formed part of a buddha assembly. The gesture of devotion, *añjali-mudrā*, made by the figure on the right, of whom only the bust decorated with the accessories typical of bodhisattvas survives, is mirrored by one of the two figures opposite. The latter display the same iconographical traits, and we can clearly see their haloes and facial features. The face alone survives of a fourth figure, probably another bodhisattva, whose tiara and veil reveal what was probably worn by the other figures.

While it would be fruitless to attempt a reconstruction of the scene on the basis of these elements, it is likely that these fragments belonged to a composition that included many figures grouped around a central Buddha image, perhaps a scene of preaching (*dharma-deśanā*) or of vows (*praṇidhi*), or, more likely still, the synthesis of these subjects that we find in paintings of that period illustrating a Pure Land, like those themes most frequently depicted in the pictorial cycles of the temples of Turfan and Dunhuang. The best comparison we can offer in terms of postures and style is a rare painted fragment copied in outline by Grünwedel from one of the walls of Temple T at Gaochang,[234] in which we see, in almost identical postures and drawn in a very similar manner, two bodhisattvas seated behind the balustrade of what was probably the terrace of a palace from a conventionalised depictions of a Buddha-field, probably Amitābha'a Pure Land of the West. This interpretation is, however, uncertain, for it cannot be proved by these figures alone. A similar iconography is encountered at Dunhuang in the standardised depictions of the fields or mystical realms attributed to the other transcendent buddhas, and the idea and formalism of representations of such Pure Lands have been attributed also to Śākyamuni and Maitreya in his capacity as the future Buddha (see, for example, the Stein collection in the British Museum [235]).

Besides this matter of the actual subject of the origi-

nal composition, as may be deduced from the fragments, it is their pictorial technique that stands out, being without parallel amongst the remains of paintings from Kucha, save for a fragment in Berlin that came from Kumtura cave 12.[236] This fragment shows a bodhisattva making the gesture of devotion, *añjali-mudrā*, who stands at the side of an assembly. The resemblance between these pieces, separately obtained by the two expeditions, is so striking in terms of the style of the figures and of pictorial technique that it is tempting to propose that they share a common origin. In both cases we find the same colouring of contrasting pigments, a range that is amongst the brightest in the palette of Serindian painting, characterised by similar dark skin-tones and the same expressive importance of brushwork used to touch up the drawing after the application of the colours. Alongside the ink lines, we may observe the use of a reddish (red ochre) colour in the drawing of the flesh that draws upon a tradition of Indian painting preserved in the earlier styles of the Kuchean school (sixth-seventh century), and which was later used in Chinese Buddhist painting of the Sui (for instance, in cave 107) and Tang periods up to the the beginning of the eighth century and the Kaiyuan era. Despite these similarities, one would look in vain to find such stylistic traits in the paintings of Turfan and Dunhuang, though the 'spirit' of this technique does appear in the early and high Tang period at Dunhuang. This comparative evidence suggests that the stylistic ascendant of Tang art here seems to have encountered the developed local Kuchean tradition. It is this consideration that makes us set these fragments apart from the two preceding ones, which seem to be more directly indebted to a Chinese influence. We therefore propose dating the present paintings somewhat earlier than the two preceding ones, that is, to the beginning of the Tang dynasty.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, III et IV, Koutcha, pl. XXII, p. 360.

Plates 169 and 170
Two fragments of a parinirvāṇa or cremation scene
Kyzyl-Qargha (Kucha). First half of the 7th century. Wall-painting. Plate 169: Two crowned figures with haloes. H. 29 cm; W. 30 cm. MG.23743 (Pelliot 451). Plate 170: Head of the reclining Buddha. H. 31 cm; W. 29 cm. MG.17809 (Pelliot 452). **JG**

These two fragments of wall-painting – and perhaps also the three others brought back from this site by the Pelliot expedition – have, up till now, been neither identified nor even associated with each other.[237] We believe, however, that they belonged to one large composition. They reveal, both in style and through the theme which they depict, an intimate link with the paintings and the iconographic programme of some of the Kyzyl and Kumtura caves, into which domain the art of Kyzyl-Qargha therefore seems to fit.

Our reading of these incomplete images is based, in the first place, on consideration of the fragment reproduced in plate 170 and particularly of the gesture of the right hand, raised up to the ear. The gesture is that of a buddha, since the haloed figure is recognisable by a number of particular bodily features only displayed by those predestined to Buddhahood: the *ūrṇa* on the forehead, the tall coiffure corresponding to the *uṣṇiṣa*, and, finally, the webbed fingers – a characteristic rarely represented in painting. The gesture provides the key to identifying the original composition, though it has so far remained unexplained or been passed over as 'unusual' amongst the orthodox *mudrās*.[238] It regains its proper meaning if the figure is placed in an almost horizontal position; then, far from being assimilated to a canonical *mudrā*, it is seen to act simply as a support for the reclining Buddha's head.

Such an image invariably represents the *parinirvāṇa* of the *tathāgata*, his death or extinction (see also the commentary to plate 159). However, at Kyzyl, two different representations of the Buddha's end are often encountered, in accordance with iconographic stipulations that distinguish between the actual *parinirvāṇa*, set in the *śāla* wood where the Buddha passed away, and the cremation (or *jhāpita* [*tupi*], according to one of the Sanskrit terms), which took place seven days later in nearby Kuśinagara, in the temple of the Malla princes. As well as the sober depiction of the death, we find at Kyzyl a similar composition depicting the cremation; the latter, however, is enriched with the funeral pomp reserved for rulers, and shows the Buddha's body, wrapped in a shroud made of strips of cloth, placed in a sumptous coffin (this conforms to textual references, which mention five hundred pieces of cloth and several coffins, one inside the other, some made of gold or silver). The lid, alight from the flames of the funeral pyre, is held partly open by the foremost disciple, Kāśyapa, thus revealing the head of the *tathāgata*.

These two events are often the subject of monumental compositions that face each other at the rear of the circumambulatory corridor: one represented on the back of the *stūpa*-pillar, the other on the wall of the corridor. Occasionally, again in the Kyzyl caves, they are found combined in a single *parinirvāṇa* scene, metaphorical and grandiose, which, owing to the presence of Kāśyapa and an assembly of monks (the sole witnesses of the *nirvāṇa*) that also includes the Malla princes, one would try in vain to separate.

The Buddha is represented in identical fashion in both these types of scenes at Kyzyl: his head is in three-quarter pose, slightly raised in relation to the horizontal position of the body, and is supported by the right hand while at the same time resting on a bolster-like cushion. These are precisely the iconographic features that we find in the fragment from Kyzyl-Qargha. The single bodily detail that would indicate to which of the two compositions the fragment belonged is missing, for we cannot see whether the Buddha is wrapped in the monastic robe or in the cloth-strips of the shroud. Regarding these compositions, we note here the most complete examples known at Kyzyl: the *parinirvāṇa* from one (it is unclear which) of the four caves known as the *Casetten Höhle*, the 'Caves of the coffered ceiling', caves

165-168 (this work is, however, a little ambiguous, for, as well as the two *śāla* trees, we see both a semi-circular radiant, flaming mandorla and the great disciple Mahākāśyapa worshipping the feet of the Buddha); and the unequivocal cremation depiction from cave 205 (the 'Māyā cave, site II').[239] Both of these are now in Berlin.

While we do not wish to make any definite statement linking this too-incomplete fragment with one or other type of depiction, it does nevertheless display some signs indicating that it belonged to a cremation scene, very like that from the 'Māyā cave, site II'. It is for this reason that we associate the head of the reclining Buddha with the two figures depicted on the fragment reproduced as plate 169. The latter suggest a huge, complex composition, with numerous figures and an arrangement of parts, often with the inclusion of of architectural elements, in which, therefore, the image of the Buddha appears in a more reduced form than in the *nirvāṇa* scenes of that time.

In depictions of the *parinirvāṇa* itself, the artists of Kyzyl have, it seems, more willingly opted for the convention of a simple and monumental representation (covering the rear wall of the *pradakṣiṇā* corridor) of the Buddha lying full-length, surmounted by a mandorla in the form of an arc of concentric rings in contrasting colours. A few worshipping figures appear in a depiction of the same subject in cave 76, the 'Peacock cave',[240] but these leave the whole upper part of the wall free for the curve of the halo; sometimes, as in the latter example, a frieze of flying *haṃsa* (wild geese), which, according to Pelliot, represent the souls of the dead in search of their next reincarnation, adorns the top of the scene.

The pictorial technique of the figures depicted on these two fragments stand out from the rest of Kuchean painting in terms of the modelling, achieved by large areas of shaded red ochre that contrast rather abruptly with those parts of the figures that are represented in direct light. This is particularly noticeable in the chins (so dark that they appear to be bearded) and around the eyes, where the ochre gives the impression of deep sockets. The same technique emphasises the conventional 'folds of beauty' around the neck, as well as the modelling of the hands, and it is likely that the technique was used in the depiction of the rest of the anatomy. More remarkable still is the fact that it is employed indiscriminately for representing the Buddha and the two *devatās* (?),without any apparent regard for the differences of rank between them. The complexions of the two deities do, however, differ, one figure being dark-skinned and the other pale. These features that are so closely linked to the figurative canon are precisely those displayed by the 'second pictorial style' at Kyzyl, as we see in the 'Māyā cave' and in caves 178 (the 'Gorge cave', *Schlucht Höhle*), 175 (the 'Cave of the temptation', *Versuchungs Höhle*), *etc.*, as well as in the art of Kumtura (cave 63).

Judging by its combination of subject and pictorial technique, the cremation scene depicted in the 'Māyā cave' (of all known representations of this scene) provides the most likely solution for the fragments from Kyzyl-Qargha. Consequently, the head of the Buddha that we see here resting on a pillow of richly decorated cloth may represent the sight revealed by Mahākāśyapa when he held open the lid of the coffin. *Devatās*, come from all parts of heaven, are depicted above the great disciple against a background of scattered flowers. In plate 169, we can observe their sorrowful mien and the expressive way in which one of them raises his hand to his chest.

The upper part of the scene is better preserved in another, identical composition,[241] now also in Berlin but which formerly decorated the rear wall of the *stūpa*-pillar in cave 224 (the 'Māyā cave, site III'). Here the two figures may have been represented in a similar fashion, included in a series of portraits separated from the funeral pyre by an ornamental border and a stylised balustrade which indirectly allude to the 'coronation temple of the Malla princes' and of the grief-stricken assembly itself, in which the princes are represented mingling with the *devas*. The composition is crowned by flying *apsarasas*.

Historically, it would appear that this iconography, giving prominence to the Buddha lying full-length in the coffin and to the rôle of Kāśyapa, quickly gave way to the combined image, in which the cremation and *parinirvāṇa* merge, as seen in a painting of the *Casetten Höhle* , the 'Caves of the coffered ceiling' (see above). The two-fold depictions of the *parinirvāṇa/jhāpita*, painted in the Sinicised style of Kumtura (that is, of the later phase, dating to the eighth-early ninth century, unknown at Kyzyl) in cave 14 and in the 'Cave of the Kinnari' may be interpreted in this way.[242] In these works, the scene emphasises the ambiguity between the death and the funeral ceremony, according to the figurative mode already present in the painting of Kyzyl, adding only, above the mandorla, the figures of an assembly of *devatās* in cave 14 and an assembly of monks mixed with bodhisattvas in the 'Cave of the Kinnari'; this type of depiction is again encountered at Dunhuang, in, for example, cave 295, dating from the Sui dynasty, and elsewhere in China.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, VIII, "Sites divers de la région de Koutcha", pl. XIX, fig. 1, pp. 40-41.

Plate 171
Fragment of an aquatic scene
Kyzyl-Qargha (Kucha). First half of the 7th century. Wall-painting. H. 44 cm; W. 25 cm. MG.17808 (Pelliot 455 or 456). **JG**

Rather touching scenes of animal life appear as auxiliary elements in some narrative paintings, usually those illustrating the life of the Buddha or his previous existences, whether told in the form of tales (*jātaka*) or legendary exploits (*avadāna*). Such rustic scenes are, however, quite rare. In the absence of any indication of its former pictorial context, this fragment showing aquatic flora and fauna may appear more important than would be justified by its decorative rôle in the original composi-

tion. Nevertheless, its freshness bears witness to a concern for the natural world – and, above all, for the lives of sentient beings – that is central to Buddhist teaching. The theme here consists of a pair of duck and a moorhen, swimming amongst lotus blossoms and buds in a body of water represented by a large spiral motif.

The stylisation of the waves is the first aspect of the image to catch our attention; unlike the more naturalistic representation of the birds, it draws on an archaistic manner of suggesting volume more common in sculpture [243] for the depiction of natural phenomena of no fixed form (among which is another theme that is even more important in religious painting, and is necessarily stylised: the auspicious and mystical clouds which, for example, bear up the *apsarasas*). The style uses a simple and repetetive graphic formalism that could be said to resemble tapestrywork. Although this wave motif is achieved using various techniques in the few aquatic scenes painted on the walls of the Kyzyl caves, it has always remained very stylised and decorative (see, for instance, the fine example in cave 114, the 'Cave of the prayer-mill', *Höhle mit dem Gebetmühle*).[244]

Cutting diagonally across the left side of the fragment is a pyramidal mass consisting of overlapping scales. Resembling the well-known theme of stylised mountains so characteristic of Kuchean painting, this suggests the 'lozenge design' that decorates the barrel-vaults of the cella and circumambulatory corridor of the typical Kuchean temple. The regular piling-up of these 'scales' or peaks is, however, quite rare in the painting of Kyzyl and Kumtura, and seems in fact to be a local variation characteristic of Kyzyl-Qargha. Some examples are found at Kyzyl, but these appear in unfired clay reliefs such as the 'pastoral' decoration framing the principal niche of the *stūpa*-pillar in cave 171.[245] The same theme of stylised mountains appears on some small, portable, wooden images, generally decorating the pedestal of some buddha images, as on the niche from Duldur-Āqur (see fig. 107) where it appears beneath the image. Continuing a long tradition already found in this form in Gandhāra, the motif would seem to serve an iconographic function that sets it apart from the lozenge-shaped compartments painted on ceilings. It probably represents the Vulture Peak, Gṛdhrakūṭa, upon which the Buddha Śākyamuni is thought to be ceaselessly expounding the doctrine.

As for any attempt to reconstruct the narrative context of this fragment, the piece contains too few specific details while its possible locations within the decor of the cave are too numerous for us to be able to do more than make a few tentative suggestions inspired by comparison with some paintings still *in situ*. If we follow the example of the pictorial programmes of the Kyzyl caves, this glimpse of an aquatic and bucolic scene may have belonged to the decoration of the upper part of the walls and of the vaulted ceiling of the corridor (there are comparable scenes on the ceiling of the cella but those also contain figures). It would thus seem reasonable to imagine this fragment in the same space as the preceding fragments, that is to say, it may have belonged near (or even have been linked with) the *parinirvāṇa* (*cf.* pl. 169 and 170).

While admitting that this is a rather daring interpretation, we can offer evidence in its support. Most important is that provided by cave 17 of the rock-cut group known as Taitai'er, discovered north of Kyzyl by Chinese expeditions in the thirties.[246] This cave contains a very similar aquatic scene illustrating a pool with lotuses and birds, depicted above votive *stūpas* alternating with representations of saints (*arhant*) meditating within a landscape setting. These *stūpas* and saints (*arhants*) decorate the walls of the corridor as they do when the same theme is depicted at Kyzyl. There is a clear spatial relationship with the representation of total liberation, the *parinirvāṇa*, which one would expect to find depicted on the rear of the corridor, and this accords perfectly from both illustrative and religious points of view with the passage in the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śāstra* (*Dazhidulun, Taishō*, 1509, p. 67 *a-b*) describing the actions of the great *arhants* when the Buddha entered *nirvāna*: "... each to his liking, in mountains and forests, near water-courses and springs, in gorges and ravines, abandoned his body and entered *parinirvāṇa* ...".[247] The description is a fine pretext for such bucolic scenes – amongst other possible subjects – and is reproduced with great naturalism, in a spatial arrangement comparable with that in Kyzyl cave 58.[248]

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, VIII, "Sites divers de la région de Koutcha", pl. XX, fig. 2.
La Route de la Soie, Paris, 1976, no. 201.

Plate 172
Fragment of a frieze of donors
Kyzyl-Qargha (Kucha). Beginning of the 7th century. Wall-painting. H. 20 cm; W. 15 cm. MG.23799 (Pelliot 450). **JG**

Yet another faint glimpse of the vast pictorial programme that once adorned the cave temples of Kyzyl-Qargha, this fragment appears, at first sight, to offer even fewer clues to the original composition than the preceding examples, owing to the apparent disharmony between its two elements. The fragment preserves, on either side of a central strip, a booted foot in the upper register – all that is left of a standing figure – and, below, part of a head so finely executed that the damaged state of the piece is the cause of considerable regret. The pictorial rendering of the whole is characterised by the use of very bright pigments, and, in particular, of an ultramarine blue employed for the entire background that has the luminosity of lapis lazuli, that precious pigment so typical of Kuchean painting of the sixth to seventh century.

Though so very fragmentary, this piece is nonetheless highly suggestive of the theme illustrated, both in pictorial expression and in iconography, which clearly link the piece with compositions that are well-known in Kuchean painting, particularly in the Kyzyl and Kumtura caves: the representation of donors in long and impressive friezes that form part of the decoration of

the temples, either painted on the walls of the cella or on those of the corridor intended for ritual circumambulation (*pradakṣiṇā*), or on the walls of the narrow entrance corridor. These are, above all, 'portrait galleries' of high-ranking figures of the kingdom of Kucha, as is borne out by the inscriptions in Tokharian B – princes and nobles of the hereditary aristocracy, as well as the rulers themselves.[249] Though these persons were of sufficient local importance to be depicted in the liturgical space, their names and titles are generally missing in Kuchean painting. Such details are recorded at a later period, inscribed in cartouches, at Turfan and Dunhuang.

The foot shod in a riding-boot, with so pronounced a flexion that one imagines the owner curiously balanced on his toes, belongs to just such figure. The posture only appears strange or unusual when taken out of its context; in fact, this is a stylistic trait of Kuchean paintings of the seventh century that may be seen in a number of works at Kyzyl. Though found in all figure paintings, it appears most strongly in donor representations. This is not some kind of awkward solution to the problems of foreshortening but conveys instead the character of the donors, giving them an aristocratic elegance within the society of their day.

Could this stance be a way of displaying the worldly dignity of historical figures who were showing exemplary and humble devotion to the Buddha? A degree of formality in their appearance, contrasting with the natural, animated postures of the figures depicted within the religious compositions, usually constrains these portraits within a common formal convention, making them indistinguishable from each other. It is probable, of course, that we are ignorant of the precise meaning of variations in the adornment of costumes and, even more so, of the luxurious chivalric accoutrements of Kuchean society, such as the sword and the dagger that some figures carry at their sides. We will base our judgement on the evocative character of this simple fragment; it is even possible to be more precise.

By happy chance, the fragment includes two compositions, placed one above the other in registers separated by a wide white stripe outlined in red ochre. The partly visible figure in the lower register, depicted against a blue background scattered with lotus buds, identical with the ground in the upper section, informs us about two aspects of the original composition – its structure and also its location within the temple. The fragmentary face preserves a significant and impromptu detail in this otherwise stereotypical Kuchean portrait that displays the same formalism as contemporary paintings from Kyzyl and Kumtura. The face is a perfect oval, with the features shaped by the curve of the eyebrows, from the shadow of which emerge the half-closed lids suggestive of an inwardly-directed gaze; the coiffure is also conventional, being divided in a central parting with two locks of hair curling forward over the forehead. It has long been established that the latter stylistic feature occurs in other places,[250] more precisely in the sites located within the cultural arc of western Serindia, including, therefore, Khotan and the territories around it on the Southern Route; for our part, we have noted this feature in the figure of the bodhisattva Sujāti in the relief of the that name from Toqquz-Saraï (EO.1056; pl. 137). The almost imperceptible detail is the ornament in the coiffure, consisting of a cloth knotted at the back of the head; judging by paintings of this genre at Kyzyl, this may signify that the face depicted on the fragment is that of a female figure. This, then, would be evidence for the existence at Kyzyl-Qargha of rows of donors of both sexes, aristocratic couples united in the timeless votive image – a faithful echo of the paintings in the Kuchean cave temple complexes of Kumtura [251] and Kyzyl. But there is more: the composition of superimposed registers suggests that the fragment belonged to a large panel showing a procession of exemplary devotees, large enough for it to cover the whole wall. It cannot, therefore, be associated with the usual locations for donors at Kyzyl as seen in cave 189 [252](amongst others), where the frieze of the donors is depicted as a predella at the base of a depiction of the Buddha preaching to an assembly, nor in the *pradakṣiṇā* corridor; we propose that the procession decorated one of the walls of the corridor giving access to the cella, as in a very rare composition with registers of this type, found by von le Coq at Kyzyl, in which the procession of Kuchean nobility is depicted with the same importance as that accorded the monastic community that precedes it.

The presence of the portraits, bringing local history into the religious decor, and their arrangement are distant descendants of Gandhāran models that survive now only in reliefs. We catch another glimpse of this in the clay figures, arranged on a bench-like pedestal, uncovered by the Pelliot expedition in temple 1 at Toqquz-Saraï (see above). Their rendering in painted form allows for more flexible compositions. Kucha takes it further by mingling the portraits of its rulers and, following them, those of the nobility, with liturgical images. These interpolated portraits show, as in a number of the compositions that we have called 'narrative assemblies of the preaching Buddha' (*v.* the fragments of wall-paintings from Duldur-Āqur, EO.3665; pl. 164), how much these people aspired to be included in the sacred and liturgical acts of the Buddha, of the holy monks of the early community, of those mystical beings of salvation, the bodhisattvas, and of the gods.

Nonetheless, this royal aspiration always – in the paintings now extant – manifests a sense of religious proportion. When depicted in the holy assemblies, the royal couples are allotted the most humble position. As for the aristocracy, the processions in which they appear seem only to have been painted in order to exemplify lay devotion, as a vivid model for the whole people; this is lent further support by the fact that this art of Kucha (and here, perhaps, we have tangible evidence for the diffusion of Mahāyāna ideas) sometimes places these aristocratic portraits right next to representations of the monks of the religious community.

Bibliography:

Mission Pelliot, VIII, "Sites divers de la région de Koutcha", pl. XX, fig. 3, p. 40.

Plate 173
Bust of a devatā or a bodhisattva
Duldur-Āqur (Kucha). 6th-7th century. Repoussé copper. H. 16 cm; W. 10.3 cm. EO.1330 (Pelliot 619). **JG & KO**

The scarcity of similar pieces – this one is previously unpublished – found in Central Asia (there is another fragment, showing a clothed bust, in the Pelliot collection; see fig. 110) increases our interest in the important problem raised by Buddhist images in the form of repoussé metal plaques. The medium, in fact, is the most significant aspect of this incomplete representation of a figure with crown and halo produced by this technique. It is rarely so necessary as it is in this domain to refer to the tradition established in the Far-Eastern Buddhism of China and Japan, where, for a time, it seems the technique was particularly popular; and to appreciate this Central-Asian example on the basis of similarities with comparable pieces among the works of those two nations. This necessity will become apparent through the terminology in use.

Mentioned for the first time in Japan in a document dated 747 AD (in an inventory of religious objects in the Horyū-ji temple) under two names both related to the term *oshidashi-butsu*, "repoussé Buddhist image",[253] still in use, the technique was apparently not known by a fixed generic term in China, but was referred to by the descriptive terms *chuiye (fo) xiang*, "(Buddhist) image on beaten metal" and *jindie xiang*, "image on a gilded metal plaque", mentioned in connection with the biography of the monk Faxian (in *Gaosengzhuan, Lives of eminent monks, Taishō*, 2059, 13, p. 411c),[254] who, having left China in 475 AD for the western lands, returned with an image of this type, similar to those made at Kucha.[255]

The fact that this event merited a precise mention at all inclines us to believe this account, which thus identifies the direct origin of the use of the technique under the Northern Wei dynasty. The Pelliot piece is, consequently, of even greater importance since it comes from the exact historical source indicated in that account.

The figure is depicted on a cut-out plaque that follows the silhouette of the body and halo, though it seems to have been too small for the whole figure – the regular diagonal cut across the torso suggests to us that the whole repoussé was composed of similar plaques placed together. If we compare this piece with repoussé images found in China and Japan, its composite nature emphasises the local particularity of the piece while perhaps indicating the limitations of Kuchean metallurgy. We cannot, however, draw any serious conclusions regarding this industry in the Tarim Basin from these all too rare examples.

The iconography is that encountered in many representations of the Buddha's chief attendants. The figure's posture – head slightly bent and turned towards the left – suggests that it belonged to a group of figures arranged around a central image (of the *tathāgata*?) similar to those found in the wall-paintings of the Kyzyl caves. In fact, this figure becomes clearer through comparison with the latter, for in these we find the same plastic characteristics.

On this plaque we see, despite some corrosion of the copper which tends to obscure the details, the naked upper body of a figure who is richly adorned with a necklace, armlets and bracelets; his head is bound with a diadem (formed of a central medallion with a semicircle at either side) of a type well-known in the representations of Kyzyl and Kumtura (*cf.* EO.3670; pl. 165). These accessories belong, as has already been noted, to a long tradition that originated in Gandhāra and the North-West (Swāt [Butkara I] and Haḍḍa[257]), which uses pearled bands (barely visible here) – indicating a pleated ribbon – and a central floral rosette motif. With our knowledge of the Kyzyl paintings, it is then possible to imagine the arrangement of the soft, curling locks of hair drawn up towards the top of the skull in a chignon, and the ornament hanging from the ear (a beaded pendant). On the basis of these we can grasp the meaning of the posture and the formal features of the figure.

Two incised lines on the body describe the male anatomy, in a graphic style like that encountered in the paintings of Kyzyl cave 76, the 'Peacock cave', attributed to the first style, as well as in the paintings of cave 205, the 'Māyā cave, site II', which belongs to the second style.[258] As in these examples, the incised figure forms an expressive gesture often made by those listening to the Buddha's teachings: the arm is brought round in front of the chest, the hand is open with the fingers loosened as in their pictorial counterparts, while the flexed little finger accentuates the grace of the gesture. Though barely visible, the outlines suggest that the fingers of the other hand join this one, in which case we have here a representation of a figure forming the gesture of devotion, *añjali-mudrā*.

The piece clearly has to be placed within the artistic output of Kucha. However, the stylistic differences which, as we have noted for the pictorial art of Kyzyl, more than anywhere else, are the surest indication to distinguish different periods, are imperceptible in this transposition, dulled by the archaeological character of the piece; we suggest, supported by the preceding comparisons, that it could just have well belonged to the 'first style', *c.* 500 AD, as to the following ones of the seventh century.

On the other hand, the particular technique and the workmanship of the image inspire us to quite a different comment – indeed, we believe that we can confirm a Central Asian origin for this metal fragment.

Technically, this is a piece of repoussé work, an equivalent for the term *oshidashi* mentioned in the Horyū-ji document. Nevertheless, we are faced with two possible types of workmanship for the very slight relief of this piece, both of which produce very similar results. One corresponds to the direct beating-out of the figure from the back of the plaque, a technique that is linked with toreutics and, in particular, Sasanian metalwork which was copied throughout High Asia and even in Tang China. The other, better known in the tradition of Buddhist images made in China at the end of the sixth century during the Sui dynasty (these are the oldest known examples), used the technique of hammering

into a "primary matrix", *yuanxing*, of cast bronze. The latter is widely believed to have been employed for the piece depicting a Buddha preserved in the Shōsō-in.[259] Taking account of these various bits of evidence, it seems likely that the expression *chuiye fo xiang*, used in the *Lives of eminent monks*, refers to those Buddhist repoussé images that were obtained by the latter method.[260]

Examination of the badly-corroded copper of the back of the plaque seems to show the use of a matrix in obtaining the relief of the head, while the finesse of the incised lines on the obverse suggests that the design was reworked with an engraving tool. The Duldur-Āqur plaque thus corresponds, in terms of technique, with the oldest known repoussé images, made in China during the Sui period (illustrated by a square gilded plaque in the Hakutsuru Museum[261] and three similar pieces, all probably made using the same matrix).[262] These works differ, however, from the Kuchean repoussé example here in terms of the relief, in that they resemble cast pieces. They also bear witness to an already accomplished mastery of the technique, heralding the technical virtuosity of Tang works – the most recent examples of repoussé works in China – in which the impression of high relief is still strong.[263]

The Duldur-Āqur plaque may well be the forerunner of this technique, insofar as it preserves features very similar to the toreutics of High Asia, of the Oxus valley and of the old Kirghiz principalities of the Yenisey in Southern Siberia. The influence of Sasanian metalwork remains marked. There are strong grounds for proposing a Kuchean, if not more broadly a Serindian origin for the use of this technique in the production of Buddhist images in China. We argue, in fact, that we are ignorant of the technique before the date indicated in the *Lives of the eminent monks*, as is suggested by a gilded bronze, representing the Buddha surrounded by bodhisattvas and *apsarasas*, dated 460 AD, of the Northern Wei dynasty – which is the oldest example of this type preserved today.[264] If the square form and thinness of the plaque, mounted on a foot, resemble the appearance of the repoussé images, the technique, on the other hand, seems to be the lost wax method of casting. It is hard to imagine that such a piece (of which there is an almost perfect replica, dated 474 AD)[265] could have been produced without some vague knowledge of the repoussé models before these dates.

We must thus establish the supposed existence of such works in Central Asia. The archaeological harvest in this particular field has been poor but nonetheless revealing.

In this region, rare examples have been discovered at Turfan: one, found in the ruins of a *stūpa* west of Kundik, resembles the Duldur-Āqur figure.[266] It bears the image of a seated bodhisattva with his hands in *añjali-mudrā*, which, like our example, must have belonged to a cult image of the Buddha. The other, discovered at Khocho (Gaochang) by the same expedition, consists of a small disc (6.2 cm in diameter) on which is represented a Buddha triad of clearly Tang workmanship (seventh-eighth century).[267] These instances, especially the latter, demonstrate the extreme rarity of comparable works showing the Central Asian aesthetic, and only raise once more the question of what was really the story of these images in the older sites of the Tarim Basin.

This repoussé and chased work is, to all intents and purposes, the sole remaining piece of evidence of the repoussé technique combined with a figurative representation linked in terms of its form with the art of Kyzyl. Its documentary importance is therefore very great, insofar as it allows us, by the combination of features that it shows, to establish the accuracy of the description in the *Lives of eminent monks*, which gives Kucha as the source of one of the earliest Buddhist images of this kind, brought to China in the second half of the fifth century. The technique was then introduced into the Japanese archipelago in the seventh century, where it enjoyed a brilliant success during the Asuka and Tempyō periods and, perhaps, up to the end of the Nara period (see the Horyū-ji treasure).[268] It is curious that it subsequently disappeared, leaving no trace in the works of the Heian period; stranger still is the fact that disappearance of the technique also affected, at about the same time, the creation of similar cult images in China.

Bibliography:
Previously unpublished.

Plate 174
Illustration of the Sumati-jātaka (or Dipaṃkara-jātaka)
Panel from a portable altar. Duldur-Āqur (Kucha). End of the 6th-beginning of the 7th century. Wood with traces of gilding. H. 14 cm; W. 10 cm; D. 2 cm. EO.1096 (Pelliot 481). **JG and KO**

Like the meditating Buddha from the same site reproduced in the following plate (EO.1107; pl. 175), this work can be thought of as part of a portable shrine.

This fragment was a side panel of a triptych with a more elaborate iconographic programme, centred around the cult image which in this case must certainly have been a representation of the historical Buddha Śākyamuni. It shows a composition easily identified as of one of the most famous and inspiring events in the Buddha's previous lives: the *jātaka* or *avadāna* (the story appears in both literary genres) of the Buddha Dīpaṃkara's prediction to the young *brahmacārin* (brahmanical student) that he would in due course become a buddha. The youth bears different names – Sumati, Megha, *etc.* – according to the most widespread Sanskrit sources, the *Mahāvastu* and the *Divyāvadāna* respectively, not to mention various other names (Wugouguang, Shanhui, Miyu, *etc.*) in Chinese translations as well as the plain Chinese transcription of "Sumati".

Dīpaṃkara, the Buddha of the Past is represented frontally with his head bent slightly forwards, while his left hand makes the gesture of absence of fear, *abhaya-mudrā*, towards the *brahmacārin*. Sumati is of smaller size and is represented twice, standing and, below, crouching down in order to spread his hair beneath the feet of the *tathāgata*. Both figures, placed at Dīpaṃkara's right side, benefit directly from the calming gesture indicated

by the buddha's hand. The mandorla radiating out from the Buddha is the only indication of the space in which the figures are represented.

Faithful to the narrative, three successive moments of the legend, rather than two (as the double representation of Sumati might suggest) are depicted here. Each of the figures is linked with the prediction episode, in the following order: the *brahmacārin*'s prostration and vow to become a buddha, Dīpaṃkara's prediction and, lastly, the youth's subsequent blissful ascent into the sky. Nevertheless, the exact reconstruction of the standing figure must unfortunately remain a matter of interpretation, owing to the relief's decay and the loss of the gesture of the right hand. The conventional arrangement of Sumati in the full illustration (in Gandhāra, for example) can, in fact, just as well represent either the initial event: Sumati is seen throwing to the Buddha as an offering the five lotuses he had acquired from the girl Dārikā, in exchange for his promise that he would take her for his wife – lotus blossoms which miraculously remained suspended in mid-air above the head of the *tathāgata*; or the final, with his levitation into the sky and into a circle of light after the prediction that he was to become the Buddha Śākyamuni. Both interpretations are possible in this carving from Duldur-Āqur. Two recent works echo this opinion (see bibliography).

It is true that, historically, the scenes of Sumati throwing the flowers and his levitation have not been the objects of frequent and necessary representation, unlike the scene of Sumati prostrating and spreading out his hair. This figure alone, together with Dīpaṃkara, is enought to identify an illustration of the legend, as in the case of cave 5 in the northern Chinese site of Yungang.[269] However, the contraction of the story in this way sometimes leads to confusion with another scene which is similar in form, namely the illustration of the *jātaka* of the conversion of Aṅgulimāla, also popular in the Kushan art of North-Western India (Gandhāra and Kapiśa [Kohistān] and in Central Asia (for example, at Kyzyl).[270]

One of the sources of inspiration for the Duldur-Āqur panel may have been similar to the solution chosen by the sculptors of Haḍḍa, as can be seen in a relief in the Kabul Museum. Compared to representations of this legend in Gandhāran art, there is a gradual tendency for the composition to be ordered around the image of the Buddha only, which begins to dominate the other figures in size. At the same time, the story is abbreviated to the point at which it consists of nothing but the prediction – the representation of the town of Nagarahāra thus disappears.

The art of Haḍḍa can be seen as the source for the form adopted for the representation of the legend seen in Yungang cave 10, dating to the second half of the fifth century, as well as in the later caves 12 and 5, without invoking the powerful stylisation of the Shotorak steles (which merely retain from the story the supramundane form of the Buddha and break up the narrative thread by a number of repeated and unrelated images of the young man).

If we can thus trace the possible and distant influence of Kushan art as the source of the composition in the Duldur-Āqur panel, we should, on the other hand, appreciate the modelling and iconography of the figures in a very different way. In the first place, the Buddha clearly reflects an Indian influence, that of the Gupta canon of Sārnāth (last quarter of the fifth century), in which the shape of the body beneath the unpleated monastic robe (*saṃghāṭi*) is completely visible. As for Sumati, it is only in the case of the standing image that we can identify the barely visible characteristics of his dress. It is a tunic not unlike the Sogdian costume (see the captions of the high reliefs of Toqquz-Saraï, EO.1055 and EO.1056; pl. 139 and 137).

These borrowed iconographies should not, however, lead us to forget the creative originality of the art of the oases. The elongation of the figures and their graphic rather than modelled appearance links them with the 'second style' of the Kyzyl school of painting (for example, the wall-paintings of the 'Cave of the musicians'), corresponding with the years 600-650 AD. The radiating mandorla departs from the two sources of inspiration mentioned above (relating to composition and modelling respectively), bearing witness instead to a theme that is more specific to Central Asia. It is significant that the oldest known example was found at Yotkan (Sven Hedin's expedition): a small bronze representation of a meditating Buddha, dating from the fourth century,[272] which, some four centuries later, is echoed by the representations of Bezeklik and Sangym-aghyz (Turfan). Closer to the Duldur-Āqur panel in terms of date and iconography is a wooden sculpture, the central part of a triptych, brought back by von le Coq from Gaochang (Turfan) and now kept in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.[273] N. Kumagai agrees with the latter in attributing this to the workshops of Khotan.[274] We, on the other hand, believe that the piece fits perfectly into the stylistic evolution of the great centres along the Northern Route, and particularly well into the Kuchean style as reflected in the panel under consideration here. Finally, let us say that the radiant mandorla is most appropriate for the Buddha Dīpaṃkara, whose name means "lamp-light", Dengguang (fo). This, of course, is a common allegory in Buddhism for the inextinguishable light of wisdom, *prajñā* (*zhi*) which is so frequently used in the names of buddhas and bodhisattvas.

The story of Sumati drew its popularity from its direct link with the coming of the Buddha through the proclamation of the prediction, *vyākaraṇa* (*shouji*) – indeed, so popular was it that in order to explain its noteworthy absence from the earliest Buddhist art of India, Foucher [275] has underlined the fact that it required the depiction of Śākyamuni Buddha himself – something that was at that time proscribed. But, as regards the depiction of this story in Gandhāra, a decisive ethnological and regional aspect may perhaps come into play, for the legend belongs to the cyles of 'previous lives' for which Gandhāra claimed to be the cradle. This brings to mind the reference to the town, Nagarahāra – modern Jelâl-âbâd – where the holy event is supposed to have taken place.

Bibliography:
M. Maillard and R. Jéra-Bezard, 1976, p. 20, fig. 23.
Mission Pelliot, IV, Douldour-âqour et Soubachi, p. 370, fig. 59
L'Asie centrale, fig. 154.

Plate 175
Meditating Buddha
Panel of a portable altar. Duldur-Āqur (Kucha). End 6th-beginning 7th century. Wood with traces of polychromy.
H. 26 cm; W. 11 cm; D. 5 cm
EO.1107. **JG & KO**

This is a rare survivor of the wooden sculpture of Central Asia despite the fact that this material was widely used as a medium in the production of religious images as well as in architectural decoration (see the fragments elsewhere in the Pelliot collection). This relief from a shrine serving as a portable altar bears witness through its workmanship to the high artistic mastery of the Tarim Basin workshops. Since this was a movable cult object, we cannot say that the place of its discovery – the monastery of Duldur-Āqur, near door M, according to the expedition report – necessarily means that it was actually made there.

This panel is all that remains of a diptych or triptych that must have comprised two adjoining panels on which *jātaka* scenes or bodhisattvas were probably depicted. It shows the Buddha meditating under a canopy, seated on a lotus blossom with a halo round his head – the three conventional elements that appear in the most concise representations of the Buddha. The loss of the forearms, fragile owing to their high relief, deprive us of any indication of the former *mudrā*, always of great canonical importance and especially so here, this probably being an image of Śākyamuni, the historical buddha. It is possible, however, to guess on the basis of a hint of movement and the arrangement of the drapery that this image made the gesture representing the first sermon, *dharmacakra-mudrā*.

The composition takes up all the ogival panel: thus the remarkably simple treatment of the canopy which merges with upper curve. The economy with which the figure is carved out of the panel results in the impression of a niche rather like the architectural reliefs of Gandhāra containing Buddha images (for example, the *stūpa* at Sikri) as well as those of the rock-cut temples of Central Asia (Dunhuang) and northern China (Yungang). The back of the panel contrasts with the front in the coarseness of its workmanship, consisting of a roughly shaped tapering half-cylinder. A rectangular cavity appears to be a fixing point. It is easy to imagine that when the panels were shut the shrine looked like a *stūpa*.

There is a very small group of similar altars with curved panels, chiefly attested by some rare discoveries in Central Asia which are held to be the oldest forms of the portable shrine. Of these early examples, we note the panel illustrating the *Sumati-jātaka* from the Ming-Oï (Karashahr oasis), dating to the fifth-sixth century,[276] as well as the remarkable fragment of a side panel of what appears to have been a stone triptych, from Yotkan.[277] The ogival shrine is extremely rare outside Central Asia, and we must mention as an important reference a sandalwood triptych in the Kongōbu-ji temple of the Kōyasan, which is traditionally held to have been brought from China by Kūkai (Kōbō-daishi).[278] This is a quite exceptional example, attributed to the beginning of the eighth century, while its Buddha image shows the influence of the Indian style of Mathurā. The style and ogival shape are both features which link it with the Duldur-Āqur panel.

The workmanship of the latter work shows, however, a synthesis of various influences in so natural a form that the image appears to be an ideal representation of the Buddha. The impression of fine 'classical' balance gives way, however, on a detailed examination, which reveals an image that, in many respects, can be said to be an original Serindian creation.

The modelling of the body, visible even beneath the robe, and the treatment of the stylised curling locks of hair recall the Indian artistic canon of Mathurā. Nevertheless, the figure taken as a whole does not reveal the unity of the Indian style, despite the presence of features associated with the iconography of the Buddha when making the *mudrā* of preaching. We agree with J. van Lohuizen-De Leeuw [279] that, in the earliest Indian works, iconographic invention was accompanied by the robe leaving the right shoulder bare, as well as by bare feet (unlike the earlier, Gandhāran-influenced images). These characteristics, linked with the *mudrā* and seen in this image, did not appear in the art of north-west India until the Gupta period – that is to say, not until the beginning of the fourth century. Furthermore, this is one of canons of the 'ideal' image, which we can trace in the art of Central Asia and of the Far-East.

There are signs in, for instance, the rendering of the drapery and the radiating halo, that indicate other sources of inspiration. The folds, rather than the actual arrangement of the drapery, show a faint Gandhāran influence, differing from the Gupta stylisation (which results in raised lines) in their more natural treatment of flattened pleats. The originality of the workmanship lies, however, in the dramatic fall of the edge of the *saṃghāṭi*, forming a large decorative zig-zag. We must turn to northern China, during the period of the earliest Buddhist art, to find traces of comparable examples, and particularly to Yungang (caves 9 and 10) and the caves of Matisi and Jintasi (near modern Zhangye) in Gansu (then known as Hexi). The motif is so common in works produced between 460 and 490 AD (Northern Wei dynasty), in stone sculpture as well as in the gilt bronzes, that it becomes a national idiom, but is also so very stylised that verisimilitude is lost, as with the border of the colossal Buddha's robe in Yungang cave 20.

The origin of the Chinese idiom that we observe here thus poses a problem. We have been able to trace it by means of a few rare Gandhāran examples [280] that show an 'initial stage' of the folds, quite like what we find in the Duldur-Āqur panel. In the art of the oases of High Asia, some rare examples dating from between the sev-

enth and ninth centuries reveal a diffuse and apparently haphazard distribution of the theme and shed much light on the play of influences. Over and above some examples in both painting (Tumshuq and Kyzyl) and sculpture (Khocho, also known as Gaochang, in the Turfan oasis), the most relevant works for the Duldur-Āqur panel come from Dunhuang – the embroidered illustration of the preaching on Vulture Peak in the Stein collection[281] and the paintings of cave 332. No doubt we should include in this diffusion a unique piece of evidence recently discovered at Pendjikent in former Sogdiana, in a wall-painting in a reception room of a house dating to the first quarter of the eighth centuy, in which the Buddha wears similar drapery.[282]

Amongst the distinctive elements of this work (which are exceptional or, at least, only rarely seen elsewhere), we note the radiating halo with its central motif of an open lotus blossom, ringed with pearls. The representation of the radiance in the form of rays is, as we have already stated with regard to the panel of the other portable shrine also found at Duldur-Āqur (EO.1096; pl. 174), an unusual iconographic element – excepting some instances in Buddhist art beyond the confines of Central Asia. In the form seen here it appears to belong neither to the heritage of Gandhāra,[283] however convincing this might otherwise appear, nor to that of Gupta art, which seems to have little or only indirect influence in Central Asia, but which did develop, on the other hand, a floral ornament based on the lotus theme (we can hold this to be the origin of the central floral motif encircled by pearls). Similarly, it cannot be associated with the similar forms of the radiance that the earliest Chinese Buddhist art developed with the theme of flames.

This simple Buddha image, which appears to be of almost conventional classicism, in fact bears witness to the complex play of western and eastern influences that took place in Central Asia during the transitional years of the mid seventh century (for further discussion of this, *v.* "Central Asian sites and works of art...., the introduction to the paintings of Duldur-Āqur which reflect the spread of Sinicised Buddhist art).

Bibliography:
Gime Tōyō Bijutsukan, pl. 68.
F. Denès, 1976, p. 69-70.
La Route de la Soie, Paris, 1976, no. 347, p. 71.

Plates 176 and 177
Two heads of devatā wearing laurel wreaths
Duldur-Āqur (Kucha). "North-western *stūpa*". Beginning of the 6th century. Cob with traces of polychromy. Plate 176: H. 32 cm; W. 23 cm; D. 15 cm. MG.23756 (Pelliot 639). Plate 177: H. 24 cm; W. 19 cm; D. 12 cm. MG.23757 (Pelliot 706). **JG**

Though the polychromy of these heads (better preserved in the case of MG.23756) and the mark incised on the forehead of MG.23757 make them appear to differ, their many grounds for comparison have impelled us not only to give them similar dates, but to suggest that they came from the same workshop and even from the same facial mould. The obvious variations that we can see in the arrangement of the hair are the result of a certain freedom or independence in ornament, sometimes not without iconographic significance, that also characterises the heads from Tumshuq, in which, as here, we noted the use of different complementary moulds.

The heads are also related more locally to the high reliefs of similar size found at Kyzyl, in particular to those of cave 77, the 'Cave of statues' (*Höhle der Statuen*).[284] These strong similarities have made it possible to fit the rather meagre finds from Duldur-Āqur into the more general process of Kuchean style – as has already been established for the fragments of wall-paintings from the "north-east temple" (see above, pls. 152 *sqq.*). We should remember that this temple seems to have belonged to the same group of buildings as the second *stūpa* at the site, and indeed faced this, at the eastern end of the path (or "ramp", according to Pelliot).

In fact, the aesthetic of these sculpted heads encourages comparisons with the earliest paintings of the temple, the oldest attested at Duldur-Āqur, in the same way that the Kyzyl statues, referred to above, faithfully display in three-dimensional form the canon of the painted figures in the 'Cave of the statues' and of others dating to the 'first style' (cave 76, the 'Peacock cave', *Pfauenhöhle*; cave 207, the 'Cave of the painter', *Höhle mit der Maler, etc.*). We are inclined to date these to the same period as the Kyzyl style – that is, to the first decades of the sixth century – while also taking into account the development which can be seen in the painting of Duldur-Āqur itself, parallel with the pictorial creations of the rock-cut temples at Kyzyl and also of the built temple of Kyzyl-Qargha, if one accepts that the fragment reproduced in plate 165 did come from that site (see our comments on pl.165).

As regards the modelling, both heads consist of an elongated oval facial mask in which the precise and well-proportioned form appears to advantage. They show very little stylisation, unlike, for example, heads made later at Shorchuk, though it is present in the idealised form given these characters, in harmony with the Buddhist notion of the bliss produced by Enlightenment and conventionally translated by the half-smile and an otherwise semi-impassive expression, which is finely judged so that it does not match any particular or identifiable ordinary human emotion.

Unlike the heads produced in the oldest phase of activity at Tumshuq, from temples I and J, with which, however, the link is most convincing (in that they share features of an obviously 'classical' descent;[285] see, for example, our comments on pl. 126), these Kuchean heads show a contrast, for their upper part is not perfectly balanced with the lower. The arc of the eyebrows rising from the bridge of the nose and the eyes, with their accentuated upper eyelids giving the impression of a fixed and serious gaze, are very graphically rendered. Nonetheless, the pronounced nostrils flare, and the deep-cornered mouth is voluptuous, punctuated by two dim-

ples, one above and one below, adding further to the life-like quality. These structural features characterise all the heads from Duldur-Āqur and Kyzyl.

The final polychromy – better preserved in the head reproduced in plate 177 – seems to heighten the contrast just noted, particularly in respect to the iris, painted over the preparatory incision (pl. 176), which was already expressive enough in itself.

The convention here adds body to the neck so that it almost merges into the facial oval, making the face heavier and fixing it in an immutable frontality; at the same time, it emphasises the sharpness of the refined 'aristocratic' features in the smooth, full form, and develops the pinna of the ears – the lobes have gone (as is the case with the Kyzyl heads), but we can be sure that they were elongated, as in the paintings. We have seen in the paintings how similar faces can be differentiated by their hair and ornaments, and this is the case here also, the heads 'individualised' by these ornamental additions though both wear laurel wreaths. The theme clearly harks back to classical tradition, from which it moved into a Buddhist environment and into Gandhāran iconography.[286] Exactly the same decoration adorns the head of a *devatā*, carved in the round, from the 'Cave of the statues' at Kyzyl. The hair-styles, however, differ, bearing witness to the great inventiveness associated with this field, in which each is an example of the huge repertoire of ornament.[287] The stylised, ample locks that fall in large waves over the forehead of the *devatā* (pl. 176) contrast with the schematic rendering of the hair of the other figure (pl. 177), consisting of incised and radiating curves. Both forms are known in Gandhāran sculpture, and also appear in some works from Tumshuq, in particular those from temples I and J that are contemporary with – if not earlier than – these heads from Duldur-Āqur. Finally, they appear once again, though at a later date, at Shorchuk, before losing their specific character in later periods and in the more eastern sites such as Turfan.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, III et IV, Koutcha, pl. XXVII, fig. 48 (*a,b*), pl. XXV, fig. 46 and 46*bis*, p. 363.
Gime Tōyō Bijitsukan, pl. 80.
Seiiki bunka kenkyū (Monumenta Serindica), p. 106.

Plate 178
Figure wearing a loin-cloth (dancing devatā?)
Duldur-Āqur (Kucha). Beginning of the 6th cent. Polychromed wood. H. 25 cm; W. 7 cm; D. 4 cm. EO.1102. **JG**

Though damaged, this image of a richly adorned figure, dressed in a *dhoti* in the Indian manner, retains a considerable expressive force, the result of a combination of the dynamic posture suggested by the dancing movement of the legs, the sensitive modelling (at once stylised and naturalistic), and the rich, contrasting and still well-preserved polychromy. The work is also highly original, in relation to the majority of wooden figurines from Central Asia, in that the same degree of care in the carving has been given to the whole image, from whatever angle it is viewed.

Such a posture combined with the mundane or princely ornaments can equally well characterise a great number of figures in the pantheon, given that Buddhist iconography borrowed considerably from this sort of representation to depict both the 'powers' inherited from Indian tradition, those deities who regularly intervene in the story of the Buddha, and those beings who belong to the same class as the *devatās* but who enjoy a lesser prestige: for example, the male and female aerial spirits, *gandharvas* and *apsarasas*, whose depiction usually signifies the Buddhist apotheosis, that is, the manifestation of the Buddha. We do not believe that this image represents a bodhisattva, since the short loin-cloth that we see here is foreign to them in the most common conventions.

In its current condition, the statue retains too few specific iconographic features to allow us to identify it more precisely, since it would be risky to hazard a guess at the original composition, such as the group of figures to which this statue must have belonged. It is most likely that the statue came from a small altar or portable polyptych; it may even have formed part of a narrative tableau.

Only the torso and legs of the figure survive, carved from a single piece of wood. The fracture at the base of the neck shows that the head was also part of the same piece of wood, and, judging by the nature of the breaks at the shoulders, the same holds true for the arms and the openwork sections of the garland where it passes over the legs, and also for the arc-shaped motif preserved on the back which corresponds to the curve of the scarf. It is easy to deduce a formal coherence in the movement of the arms, whose widest extension could not have exceeded the width of the piece and which must have had some points of contact with the body for reasons of strength. The disappearance of the upper parts seems to indicate that the reliefs of the head and limbs, as well as of the flying curves of the scarf and the garland, were all in some way connected.

From the movement suggested by the figure, we can assume that the arms conveyed the movements and grace of the dance. This is suggested by the slight swaying and the upright posture of the torso. The skillful and anatomically accurate modelling sets this fragment apart from other Central Asian sculptures. The extension of the right pectoral muscles and the fracture located high up on the shoulder seem to indicate that this arm was raised, perhaps bent above the head; the other may have been lowered, the hand brought round level with the stomach, where the scar left by a fixing-point may still be seen. The sculpture may thus have represented a dancing figure rising and turning, supported on one leg while extending the other in a side-step and using the movements of the arms for balance. This animated figure recalls the divine musician, *nṛtya* (*jiyuetian*), depicted in one of the radial sections of the cupola in Kyzyl cave 135.[288] Hence we propose a similar identity for the Duldur-Āqur piece, and, on the basis of this resemblance, we can envisage that the scarf, of which

traces survive on the back of the figure, floated around the head like a nimbus.

Above all, the work derives its originality from its decoration, comprising the skilful drapery and distinctive shape of the short, deeply-incised loin-cloth, the hair falling in long, spiralling locks over much of the back, and, lastly, the accessories – necklaces and the garland mentioned above – hanging down in a series of crescent-shaped curves.

The combination of these elements, rendered with precision and in considerable detail, is unusual. The locks of hair are so stylised that they seem to be derived from a motif taken from the goldsmith's art or from an ornamental theme, and are in marked contrast with the naturalistic drapery of the loin-cloth which accurately renders the way in which a fabric might fall. However, none of these elements are consistent with the figure's dancing movement; the folds of the cloth and the locks of hair are static, carved in a harmonious arrangement governed by decorative symmetry.

There remains the question of the sources of this particular iconography, for comparable works in sculpture as well as in painting are rare, not to say exceptional, even within the confines of Central Asia.

The *dhoti* or the deeply-cut loin-cloth (to which the artist devoted much time and care) finds a precedent in a very few figure paintings at Kyzyl, in works of both the 'first' (*c.* 500 AD) and the 'second' (600-650 AD) styles. The earliest instance is that of a female figure, painted in the 'Peacock cave' (cave 76); this dancing *devi* wears a similar *dhoti* with three long ends, whose deep indentations reveal the inner thigh. She is, moreover, caught in a posture like that suggested by the carving under consideration here, with her right arm raised and bent, the left brought back towards the body with the hand resting on the hip.

One of the deities on the balcony originally depicted around the circumference of the cupola in of the same 'Peacock cave' (cave 76; *cf.* one of the interpretations suggested for the figure reproduced in plate 146) shows an interesting iconographic detail which allows us to interpret the fragment of the curved piece surviving on the back of the sculpture as an element of the long floating scarf; it is not, as was first thought, part of the figure's nimbus. We are now faced with the question of knowing whether a nimbus identified the figure as one of the holy figures, or whether, if there was none, if we should number it amongst the undifferentiated group of heavenly attendants, like the *devas* of the 'Peacock cave'. As we see in the paintings, the long scarf must have outlined the figure, with its ends wound around the arms.

More unusual is the arrangement and rendering of the hair, which has no parallel in the art of Kucha or anywhere else in Central Asia. The unique stylisation makes us posit, albeit with considerable hesitation, a remote link with the small ivory figurines found at Nimrod dating to the end of the Assyrian period, *i.e.* to the eighth century BC.[289] This resemblance may, however, bear witness in a wider sense to an 'Iranian' influence, insofar as it is nowadays admitted that the Sasanian civilisation and its art represent the last phase of early oriental art. We can at least establish the likely form of the coiffure, which must have been consistent with other works produced locally in the Tarim Basin – amongst examples drawn from statuary, we note a cob image from Kyzyl now in Berlin,[290] and in painting, the figures depicted in the 'Peacock cave',[291] in which we note the arrangement of the hair, drawn up into a chignon, and the naturalistic fall of the locks onto the shoulders. Nevertheless, the actual 'motif' adopted for the wooden statuette has no local parallel. On the other hand, the Sasanian source referred to above strongly suggests, in the absence of comparisons elsewhere, a relationship exemplified by a fine piece of metal-work, namely the famous silver-gilt jug in the Teheran Museum, with its four female dancers under arches, which this small wooden image recalls, if only in its rendering.

The figure discovered at Duldur-Āqur is a further case (over and above those already mentioned in relation to these Central Asian works) of the convergence of influences and borrowings. Nonetheless, we should also give credit to Central Asian or, more precisely, to Kuchean invention, if only by virtue of the synthesis of these themes that are here combined in a harmonious image in which the expression of the lively modelling of the body is evidence of a local genius, as much in painting as in sculpture. For these reasons we attribute it to a phase contemporary with the painted figures of the 'Peacock cave' at Kyzyl, that is, to the beginning of the sixth century AD.

Bibliography:
Gime tōyō Bijutsukan, pl. 67.

Plate 179
Heavenly musician
Duldur-Āqur (Kucha). "Building A". 6th-beginning 7th century. Wooden with traces of polychromy. H. 12.3 cm; W. 4.6 cm; D. 2.6 cm. EO.1098 [292] (Pelliot 481). **JG**

This graceful female figurine supports our interpretation of the character of the broken statuette reproduced in the preceding plate, in that these two small images would appear to illustrate on the one hand, dance, and on the other, music. They belong to that particular area of Buddhist iconography which, without any contradiction, juxtaposes entertainment – in the sense of diversion or spectacle – as a personification of the bliss of the state of Enlightenment with the canonical and often hieratic representations of cult groups of venerated beings, dominated by the image of the Buddha. This figure was found in the "library" together with two other damaged wooden statuettes (diary of the 25th April, 1907).

As exemplifed in the paintings decorating the sides of the vault in Kyzyl cave 76, the 'Peacock cave' (see the references given in the commentary to the preceding plate), the representations of such figures – even when sculpted in the round – suggest a figurative complement that must have included other heavenly musicians, for we cannot imagine that such a figure could have

appeared on its own. Indeed, this seems to be borne out by the discovery of two figures at Kyzyl (now in Berlin), one of whom plays a harp and the other a drum; their postures are accurate and expresssive, as in the case of the small wooden figure under consideration here.[293] There are many more such examples in the better-preserved field of painting, particularly amongst the so-called 'balcony' figures or deities who, in Kucha and Shorchuk (where they are seen in reliefs) especially, and, in a more general way, in the art of the Tarim Basin as a whole, were part of the figurative decor of the shrines.

The form suggested by this image as a transposition from monumental iconography is that of a portable polyptych, like those already mentioned in the commentaries on plates 175 and 174. Here, then, we have a female musician, carved in the round out of a single piece of wood, but, unlike those, movable and occupying some sort of niche in one of the side panels. The fragment of background behind her head is too damaged for us to be able to identify it exactly, but it may have been either part of the disc of a halo or the back of the panel of the portable altar.

Touching in the gracefulness of posture and features, the figurine is raised to the level of great sculptural art in that it captures the charming and life-like moment of a musician tuning her instrument: the lute held upside down, the neck resting on the knee of the slightly raised left leg, in order to adjust the keys, with the right hand plucking the strings. Exceptional in its realism, this is a unique example of such a genre scene, apart from some rare figures depicted in scenes of music-making (see below). Every detail of the image is eloquent of the fleeting moment immediately preceding the heavenly music. The very posture of the musician, balanced on one leg, is momentary, while on the slightly tilted face we note the half-smile of interiorised and thoughtful concentration that anticipates, while tuning the chords, the music yet to come. As Hallade has remarked, the same careful and exact observation characterises the shape of the lute, which resembles the type that appears "in Sasanian metal-work and Gandhāran bas-reliefs as well as in the wall-paintings of Pendjikent and Kyzyl".[294] The only obvious artifice consists in the wide folds of the robe which flare out to meet the pedestal, thus ensuring the stability of the piece.

The figure's iconography, in particular the costume consisting of a short tunic covering the robe, resembles, for example, the reliefs of temple B, Toqquz-Saraï, and is continued for a time in some paintings found at Kyzyl and Kumtura. This is the 'Sogdian' or 'Tokharian' tunic, typical of local lay fashion of the period, smoothly fitting the body, without pleats, and fringed at the lower edge. Similarly, comparable examples may be found for the form and features of the face, as well as for the arrangement of hair, with central parting, crowned with a twisted band and a barely visible tiara. As is usual, the costume is worn with a long scarf, which appears to emerge from the back of the crown before decoratively draping the shoulders. It reappears, broken, at the sides of the figure. In this respect there is nothing unusual about the figure, in contrast to the rarer arrangements that made the preceding statuette seem at first glance to be a difficult work. On the contrary, this work clearly belongs to the classical Kuchean tradition and, in a wider sense, to Central Asian tradition, as documented by numerous examples, especially of painting – indeed, the polychromy surviving on the tunic and the robe – lapis lazuli (?) and green (malachite or atacamite?) respectively – resembles the colouring of the wall-paintings.

The originality and inventiveness of the work is thus wholly contained in the anecdotal quality of the musician preparing to play, in the careful realism of the posture which almost enters the realm of intention, if not of psychology. The artists of Kucha (as far as may be judged from the paintings of Kyzyl and Kumtura, better preserved and more numerous than elsewhere), have always explored this domain to a greater or lesser extent, as may be seen if we turn to the fragments reproduced in the preceding plates (pls. 154-163). The best comparison with the lute-player is once again provided by the wall-paintings in Kyzyl cave 76, in which are depicted the musicians of a heavenly orchestra, some of whom are represented in unusual and lively postures – for instance, the figure playing the Pan-pipes, depicted waiting to perform his part, the instrument held near his mouth, and watching a singing *devi*, alert to the rhythm she has set.[295] On the grounds of this tenuous but significant verist argument, based on the work's expressive quality typical of Kuchean painting contemporary with the first style at Kyzyl, we propose to date this figurine to the early period of artistic activity at this site, without ruling out the possibility that it was executed later, during the sixth or early seventh century.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, III et IV, Koutcha, fig. 70, p. 373.
La Route de la Soie, Paris, 1976, no. 209.
L'Asie Centrale, fig. 42.

Plate 180
Figure wearing a loin-cloth (bodhisattva?)
Duldur-Āqur (Kucha). 6th-7th century. Wood with traces of polychromy. H. 8.2 cm; W. 2 cm; D. 1.3 cm. MG.23755 (Pelliot 480). **JG**

Pelliot mentions the discovery of this little statuette in his diary of 26th April 1907, and states that it was found during the excavation of the building "next to the library", *i.e.* in the south-west corner of the great court of the monastery.

An attention to anecdotal detail characterises this condensed narrative form, setting off the particular features of a figure. It produces, as we have observed in the case of the lute-player above, an expressive quality that some of these small wooden images share with both the monumental clay and cob sculptures and the large pictorial programmes at Kucha. It may be that these small images, whether from small private altars or portable shrines, have an even greater evocative power since this quality is so unexpected in miniature objects. Although generally less fragmentary than the examples

of clay statuary, of which all too frequently only the heads survive, these statuettes, like the fragments of wall-paintings, also require a knowledge of the compositions to which they once belonged if they are to be interpreted correctly.

The evocation of the figurative context, the absence of which has already been lamented in the case of the lute-player and the dancing deity (pl. 179 and 178), is even more vital for an understanding of this figurine that wears only a loin-cloth and a necklace. The photographic enlargement shown in the plate fails to do justice to the piece, giving instead a false impression of coarseness as if it were but a rough preliminary work. In all likelihood it formed part of a larger and probably narrative composition, possibly a scene from one of the Buddha's previous lives (as shown by other examples, such as that reproduced in plate 174), as is suggested by the figure's youthful appearance and simple garment, indicative of the most humble of lay backgrounds. The range of narratives drawing on the two literary forms, *jātaka* and *avadāna*, that could have given rise to this representation is extremely wide, as we have already seen in the reliefs from Toqquz-Saraï. The illustration of the *Sujāti-jātaka* (pl. 139) in particular inclines us to consider this a representation of the Bodhisattva, since in it we see the kneeling figure of a similarly young man, wearing only a scanty cloth. Considering, however, the condition of the piece, this identification is reckless, and we will do no more than mention it as a mere hypothesis based on the above comparison.

Though seemingly rough, the workmanship is nonetheless precise, showing a care for small details that is apparent, for example, in the face: in the working of the slit eyelids, outlined and enhanced by the chamfered carving of the arching eyebrows, and in the mouth, with its curling, life-like lips. The same care is taken with the figure's iconography, visible in the arrangement of the hair (where some black paint still survives) as well as in the folds of the loin-cloth, closely tied around the waist and forming a complex pattern of barely-stylised pleats. An attempt to represent the anatomy of the body can be seen in the accentuation of the form of the torso – particularly marked in the high, narrow waist – and in the modelling of the pectoral muscles, so pronounced that they could be taken for breasts.

Not many comparable works have been found in Central Asia, but the few that are known to us indicate a wide area of distribution. Unsurprisingly, the most important of these similar pieces are the cob reliefs of Karashahr (Ming-Oï),[296] which are as clearly related to the *Sujāti-jātaka* illustration from Toqquz-Saraï as they are to this figure. With regard to the distribution of this 'theme', we note a wooden statuette from Dunhuang, carved in the same schematic manner and depicting a person similarly dressed, though in a different posture.[297] More enigmatic than the Karashahr examples, the latter figure, with its right arm raised and legs bent, seems to belong to an entirely different illustration, being more reminiscent of the atlantids that appear on the pedestals of statues.

Two details distinguish the Duldur-Āqur figurine and allow for its integration into the body of Kuchean images taken as a whole. First of these is the hair-style, in which two short locks are raised above the forehead like wings, a characteristic type frequently encountered in the portraits of donors in the Kyzyl wall-paintings (for instance, in cave 205,[298] the 'Māyā cave, site II') and also at Kumtura (in the procession of lay figures depicted in cave 23 [299]). It would, therefore, suggest a contemporary style, and lends credibility to the idea that the Duldur-Āqur figurine may in fact represent an actual 'historical' person. It is interesting to note that this coiffure is very nearly the same as that of the young Sujāti from Tumshuq, reproduced in plate 139 (the coiffure did not reach the Musée Guimet but does appear in a photograph taken *in situ* [300]); this figure wears, moreover, a pleated loin-cloth – the second significant detail of the Duldur-Āqur statuette. Common to a whole group of portraits of ascetics, this garment is, in the Kyzyl paintings, characteristic of the iconography of figures from the previous lives of the Buddha, as in the above-mentioned *jātaka* from Toqquz-Saraï, as well as of some brahmin heretics. This rudimentary costume indicates the humble condition to which the Bodhisattva was reduced in the past (for instance, the *Viśvaṃtara-jātaka*; see the note to plate 137), or to which, according to legend, he was brought, through the ordeal or examplary sacrifice that required the prince or king to lay aside all worldly attributes in order to attain a particular perfection (*pāramitā*). Thus, in Kyzyl cave 17, we find a depiction of Prince Dharmakāma, half-naked and wearing but a loin-cloth, who, according to his *jātaka*, did not hesitate to descend into a flaming pit which, no sooner had he entered it, changed into a field of flowers (*Xianyujing* [*Sūtra of the Wise Man and the Fool*], *Taishō*, 202, ch. 1). The same applies to numerous others of the Buddha's previous incarnations, as, for example, in the *jātaka* of King Kāñcanasara. In truth, there are many such stories, especially in the narrative paintings in the caves ascribed to the second pictorial style at Kyzyl.

In addition to these similarities, on which we have based a likely identification of the figure as forming part of a narrative representation of the previous lives of the Buddha, we must draw attention to another important piece, namely the wooden panel of a polyptych found by Stein at the Ming-Oï (Karashahr), depicting, amongst other scenes, the *jātaka* of Dīpaṃkara.[301] This sixth-seventh century work is surprising, in that, contrary to iconographic custom, it is the Buddha of the Past, rather than the young *brahmacārin* (see pl. 174), who is portrayed wearing nothing but a loin-cloth, very similar to the one worn by the statuette from Duldur-Āqur.

The above observations and consequent comparisons with works from other sites falling within the Kuchean sphere of influence (Kyzyl, Tumshuq, Karashahr) allow us to establish, beyond question, that the Duldur-Āqur figurine belongs to that same cultural area and that, furthermore, it may be a representation of the Bodhisattva (Śākyamuni in one of his previous incarnations). Its dating remains, however, problematic – all we can do is to suggest that it may correspond with Kuchean art of the sixth-seventh century.

Bibliography:
Mission Pelliot, III et IV, Koutcha, fig. 62, p. 371.

Plate 181
Funerary box decorated with putti, dancers and musicians
West Subashi (Kucha). "Central monastery", necropolis at the foot of the *stūpa*. 6th-7th century. Painted wood. H. 15 cm; Diameter 24.5 cm. EO.1094 (Pelliot 781). TA

Located about twenty kilometres north-east of the village of Kucha, where the Kucha river leaves the mountains for the plain, the ruins of Subashi, which include a large number of small temples scattered on both eastern and western banks, give an idea of the grandiose sight that the region once offered. These temples are those of which Xuanzang wrote with admiration in his *Da Tang xiyuji*, saying "the statues of Buddha there are of such an impressive beauty that one hardly recognises in them the hand of man". In the course of his researches at Kucha, Pelliot stayed at Subashi from the 10th June to the 24th July 1907, and undertook excavations there.[302] Among the objects he discovered are four wooden funerary boxes that will be discussed below (for convenience, we designate the box reproduced in plate 181 as "A", 182 as "B", 183 as "C" and 184 as "D" [303]).

These objects were discovered in numerous small cemeteries located between the great central *stūpa* and the wall of the monastery compound on the west bank. This funerary box was found inside an urn, completely wrapped in a sheepskin, which explains its near perfect condition, and the fact that it has retained its original sumptuous decoration.

The box and the conical lid were made from a single piece of wood, carefully turned so that the heart of the wood coincides with the centre of the object. These features resemble those of the other boxes,[304] while similar ones may be seen in the wall-paintings of Kyzyl and Kumtura.[305]

According to the report from the Laboratoire des Musées de France, Box A is completely covered with a preparatory layer of mixed gypsum and yellow ochre pigments, with a protein-based binding agent, over which a glaze of organic red colourant has been applied. Small naked angels and palmettes are represented in yellow and green on this ground, using a fine brush. The entire surface of the box was protected by a translucent oily film; this has darkened to brown with the passage of time, giving the whole a somewhat sombre appearance. This surface film has added to the difficulty in identifying with the naked eye the original colouring of the box, in particular the types of pigment. Scientific analysis [306] has allowed us to establish that the second layer, which appears in its original red colour where the oil-based preparation has disappeared, consists of a mixture of the same pigments as used in the first one, with, in addition, a red organic colourant. The research undertaken by the Laboratory has revealed, moreover, that the yellow used for the lines and curves was orpiment (arsenic sulphide), and that the green used for the little angels, birds and arabesques, as well as for the inner edges of the borders, is produced by a mixture of orpiment and indigo blue. Microphotographs have, furthermore, allowed us to confirm the presence of thin leaves of tin, which were applied to the inside of the triangles of the toothed friezes decorating the border of the medallions on the lid as well as of the top and bottom of the box. Furthermore, its surface fluoresce lemon-yellow under ultra-violet light, from which we can deduce that the object is covered with a vegetable oil.

The join and the insides of the lid and box are bare wood, though the bottom is covered with a thin layer of white clay (composed of gypsum, feldspar and quartz), over which has been applied a light-brown layer containing a small quantity of orpiment.

The ornamentation is especially interesting. The top of the lid is surrounded with a medallion composed of two concentric circles, with six other medallions of roughly equal size arranged around it, each similarly formed of two concentric rings. A radiating saw-toothed motif makes up the decoration of the borders and is also found on the rim of the lid. The medallion at the top contains eight small leaves drawn from the central circle, between each of which are depicted curving, hook-shaped motifs. Yellow orpiment has been used in drawing the lines and shapes, while the leaves are alternately painted green or covered with a sliver of tin as in the toothed frieze.

Most interesting of all, however, are the naked angels depicted in the six medallions. The form of their heads, shaven but for a top-knot on the top of the skull, belongs to the same stylistic family as the winged figures at Mirān or on the funerary box brought back by the Otani expedition; the hair growing on the temples forms curling side-burns. What appear behind them, floating in the wind, are not wings but cloaks, drawn in yellow.

All six turn their faces towards the right, while their bodies are sometimes turned towards the right (the first four figures), sometimes to the left (the remaining two). The two first figures (*v.* fig. 181-1, lower part) dance with their arms wide apart, the next one has an oblong drum which he beats with both hands, the fourth joyfully plays a harp. We draw attention to the Persian form of the instrument, which incorporates a sounding-box in its upper part. The next figure is depicted with his back to the latter, with his hands joined together as if clapping the rhythm. The sixth and last figure carries over his left shoulder something resembling two large tambourines joined together by a ring, while holding in his hand a stick with a flat, curved end-piece.[307] All six figures show a great suppleness in their movements; the fact that their hands and feet break into the circular frames clearly demonstrates a gracefulness and freedom in the painting.

Between each medallion and near the edge of the lid is depicted a web-footed bird with its neck turn backwards. Each bird has received the same graphic treatment; the fleshy protruberance at the base of the beak suggests that they may be representations of *haṃsa* (geese) of Indian origin. The lid of the box displays yet

another motif of small green leaves outlined in yellow, in lively contrast with the red ground, around the central ornament.

The decoration of the border of the lid is fairly simple. The central part consists of two horizontal lines representing a stem, along which ten fully-open chrysanthemum flowers are depicted at regular intervals. The centre of the flowers and their petals are freely outlined in yellow, and the stem and the inner part of the petals are painted green. The body of the box is ringed at the top and bottom by a toothed motif very like that which adorns the rim of the lid. This motif is made up of a succession of triangles, outlined in bright yellow and each filled in with piece of tin leaf. These last decorative elements have, however, not survived, and in many places we can see the scarlet preparatory layer. The principal frieze consists of a wave-shaped arabesque from which emerge half-palmettes alternately pointing upwards and downwards. The stems and the silhouettes of the leaves and palmettes are outlined in yellow, while their inner parts are painted green. The brushwork is vigorous and skilful, and the movement of the arching palmettes is pronounced. The latter are represented with fine yellow veins. A motif of three small buds can be seen where the stems and leaves meet, while short yellow strokes enliven the spaces at the tips of the palmettes. In comparison with the fine workmanship of the lid, the lines and colouring of the body of the box are without any great interest, although it could be said that the regular and precise depiction of the arabesque skillfully sets off the ornamentation of the lid.

Lastly, we must note the small hole at the very top of the lid, through which passed a fine leather cord (cut from a sheepskin) that was knotted inside the lid. The body of the box is pierced with four other holes with identical ties. This arrangement seems to have been intended to keep the lid of the box tightly shut.

Plate 182
Funerary box decorated with birds
West Subashi (Kucha). "Central monastery", necropolis at the foot of the *stūpa*. 6th-7th century. Painted wood. H. 22 cm; D: 20.5 cm. EO.1092 (Pelliot 780). **TA**

This box, known as "B", is one of the cylindrical funeral urns with conical lids shaped like hat-boxes that Pelliot discovered in one of the small cemeteries located between the south side of the outer compound and the *stūpa* on the 12th December, the day after he began the excavations at Subashi. According to the notes in his diary, it was placed inside two clay jars which had been joined together at the mouth and then sealed with mud, which explains the relatively well-preserved state of the colours and motifs. Pelliot adds that it contained "a little bag enclosing fragments of bone and teeth, scraps of silk, several pieces of gold leaf and four coins".

Despite the satisfactory condition of the piece, the execution of the decoration appears quite clumsy compared with that of box A. As regards the shape of box B, we note that its base is larger than that of the preceding example, and that the curve of the slightly projecting lid (which is one centimetre wider in diameter in the upper part) is almost a straight line, hence less pleasing than in A. The analysis of the Laboratoire de Recherche des Musées de France has brought to light the composition of the preparatory coat, which consists of a red organic pigment blended with gypsum. Thinner than in the case of A, this layer has flaked away more readily, and has indeed disappeared in many places. It is covered with a thin layer (5-10 microns) of a red substance, which strengthens the first coat (also red). As for the decoration, yellow orpiment has been used (arsenic sulphide) to outline the shapes, while the palmettes and the birds are painted with a dark-blue organic substance, perhaps indigo. Although today the colours have almost completely disappeared, leaving the base coat visible, X-ray fluorescence has proved the presence of thin gold leaves decorating the interior of the triangles of the toothed motif. Moreover, we know now, thanks to ultra-violet fluorescence, that the box was entirely coated with a natural resin.

Around a central medallion adorned with arabesques that occupies the top are arranged five identical medallions, each of which contains a bird, while a sinuous wavy line runs right around the rim of the lid. The bird medallions, which are the distinguishing feature of this funerary box, deserve explanation. The birds are contained within two concentric rings, drawn in yellow. The wide border of each medallion is decorated with a toothed motif, of which only the yellow shapes of eight or nine triangles remain. As already noted, scientific analysis has shown that gold leaves were originally affixed within the triangles. Each medallion is adorned with a bird represented looking backwards; apparently identical, the detail is in fact quite freely represented. The form of their beaks and tails evokes pigeons rather than *haṃsa*, although it is as *haṃsa* that they symbolise rebirth.[308]

The medallion at the top of the lid consists of fern-shaped half-palmettes which uncurl from the centre in three directions, interspersed with fully-open flowers. The latter are each formed of three long thin petals and a star-shaped centre. Round-ended stamens emerge from between the petals. An identical floral motif, but without stamens, may be seen between the bird medallions. Triangles fill the spaces between these elements and the central medallion. Ultra-violet fluorescence has revealed that these floral motifs, as well as these triangles, were originally covered with tin leaf. In contrast, the demi-palmettes and the heart of the flowers in the central medallion are deep blue in colour.

The outside of the box is decorated with five different motifs, arranged in registers. In the upper register (in fact, on the vertical part of the lid), two arabesques crossing at regular intervals enclose a stellar floral motif. The lines are drawn in orpiment on a red ground, like the rest of lid, while the lower and upper borders and the flowers are painted in a deep blue organic pigment – indigo perhaps. The other motifs use these same colours. The next register is narrow, consisting of a simple yellow wavy line. Below, on the wide frieze which

dominates the decoration of the box, half-palmettes, alternately pointing upwards and downwards, open up at the ends of curving stems. Here too it seems that the stems and the leaves were initially drawn in dark blue and subsequently rather carelessly overpainted with fine yellow lines; in some places the lines overlap, and the whole gives an impression of life-like grace. Unlike box A, the areas of the red under-coat are decorated with neither motifs nor vegetation, and the drawing seems clumsy. The frieze is marked off above and below by blue borders edged in yellow.

Long spirals, rolling towards the left, decorate the lower section. Here again the pattern was sketched in blue and then outlined in yellow. The two small circles projecting on either side of each spiral, together with the short yellow curves that extend out of one of them towards the tail of each spiral, are a rare motif.

Plate 183
Funerary box decorated with arabesques
West Subashi (Kucha). "Central monastery", necropolis at the foot of the *stūpa*. 6th-early 7th century. Painted wood. H. 24 cm; D: 34 cm. MG.17697 (Pelliot 782). **TA**

This funerary box belongs to the group of objects, including the boxes reproduced in plates 182 and 184, discovered near the *stūpa* of the central monastery. It is by far the smallest of these boxes. Although the whole of the decoration of the lid has survived and the colours have lost none of their brilliance, the pictorial layers are so badly damaged, however, that in many places the wood shows through, and only a very few motifs remain undamaged. This is, perhaps, the piece that Pelliot catalogued as number 782 in the inventory of the collection, with the words, "it was found half-sunk in an urn".

The ornamental principle that dominates the decoration of the lid is markedly different from that of the other three examples, with generous volutes in the place of the circular medallions. The logic of the decoration becomes clear when the colour plate is compared with the infra-red photograph (fig. 121). Firstly, two concentric rings were drawn around the top of the lid. A star-shaped motif composed of five leaves with flowering stems between them radiates from the centre, extending as far as the first circle. Inside the perimeter are drawn separate arcs, intended to enclose the flowers and filled with a net pattern. Small and slender leaves can be seen on either side at the base of the leaves of the central motif. The outer edge of the circle is decorated with a toothed, triangular motif, interspersed with small circles. An identical motif runs around the edge of the lid, with, however, an additional element; these are the smaller triangles pointing between the larger ones towards the centre. The wide band between these two friezes is filled with a series of leafy arabesques like branching bracken, depicted in two alternating colours (nine of one colour and nine of another). The outer edge of the leaves has small, semi-circular excrescences, while the inner edge forms a large 'V'shape; this is extended below by a finer line that describes a triangle decorated with small circles. The results of the analysis carried out by the Laboratoire de Recherche des Musées de France have identified the pigments used as well as the nature of the preparatory coat, the under-coat and the coloured coat.[309] The circular lines would have retained their pale yellow colouring (orpiment blended with white lead) if the layer of varnish covering the box had not turned a red-brown, causing the yellow to become stronger. The red-brown areas that border these lines, the flowers of the central motif and leafy arabesques have taken on the colour of the varnish, but were once, in fact, painted a bright vermilion (obtained by mixing a small amount of white lead with gypsum and an organic pigment).The other decorative elements – circles, small leaves, and the little triangles appearing between the larger ones – are all the same colour. Examination of a sample section using a scanning electron microscope has revealed that those arabesques which appear dark were, in fact, painted an organic blue, perhaps indigo. The analysis has also confirmed the presence of tin leaf within the triangles of the friezes, as is also the case with the other funerary boxes.

The colours stood out well on the black under-coat. Scientific analysis of a fragment has in fact revealed the presence of a preparatory ground on the wooden support, made of white clay, quartz and a protein-based binding agent like glue, over which has been applied lamp-black.

As mentioned above, the sides of the box (not illustrated) are very badly damaged. On the part adjoining the lid, we note on the black ground curving lines that form a wave pattern and the interior coloured red-brown. The upper and lower borders are filled with a toothed frieze whose triangles point downwards and upwards respectively in a reciprocal composition; small circles are painted on the black ground between the triangles. A wide red band runs above and below the upper frieze, but it is impossible to reconstruct its former rather large decoration. To judge from the few fragments that survive, this consisted of a succession of powerfully undulating waves, which must have been painted in red and blue; the distribution of these two colours is, however, difficult to establish.

The ornamentation of this box, especially the arabesques of vegetable motifs on the lid, stands out amongst the corpus of decorations associated with the region of Kucha, and suggests a link with the cultures further to the west. The distribution of red and blue on the black ground is also noteworthy. We must, however, rely on future research to shed light upon the origin of these decorative elements.

Plate 184
Funerary box decorated with masked musicians
West Subashi (Kucha). "Central monastery", necropolis near the *stūpa*. 6th-7th century. Painted wood. H. 24 cm; Diameter 34 cm. MG.17697 (Pelliot 782). **TA**

This badly damaged box, rather larger than preceding one, was published for the first time on the occasion of

an exhibition held in 1956 at the Musée Guimet, dedicated to unpublished works of the Pelliot collection.[310] It is remarkable for its outstanding decoration of masked musicians which evokes on many points that of the box brought back by the Otani expedition. While the decorative elements remained difficult to make out with the naked eye, the Laboratoire de Recherche des Musées de France took a number of infra-red photographs and X-ray radiographies in 1959, which allowed the details of the object to be revealed.[311] A recent scientific analysis has identified the species of wood.

The surface of the box is completely covered with a white preparatory coat of gypsum mixed with a protein-based glue; over this a layer of organic red-brown has been applied, on which the drawing is made in Chinese ink. Though the colours have faded considerably, it is possible to identify their components thanks to observation of the layers and to microphotography; blue, for example, is produced by a mixture of gypsum and an organic pigment, possibly indigo.

The decoration of the sides of the box consists of various motifs arranged in a regular order. Four medallions of similar size are painted at the cardinal points round the box; between them we see three-branched trees represented with bold lines. Their boles form triangles, while their forks are decorated with ribbons. The circles drawn at the ends of the branches are in fact three protruberances, inside which is a decoration of a white net of diagonal mesh. The branches are covered with rounded leaves. S. Gaulier has interpreted these highly stylised trees as pomegranates, symbols of fertility and rebirth.[312] Birds with long tails like those of peacocks are depicted at either side beneath the foliage. Another and rather more complex motif is worthy of our attention – specifically, the ovoid shapes, diminishing at the bottom, which represent the pomegranate fruit. They each have a ribbon tied round their base, and rise from nesting triangles forming little mountains, just as is the case with the trees. The fruits enclose small seeds outlined in white – these have been interpreted by Gaulier as the stage of life before germination.

The figures seated at either side, apparently framing the pomegranate fruits and all facing outwards, wear animal masks. The figure on the viewer's right in plate 184-2 plays a stringed instrument; the musician in fig. 125 holds a round instrument resembling an oriental lute; in fig. 123, the figure holds a long, narrow instrument rather like a lute, with a curving neck as in the preceding example. We can quite clearly make out the form and the motifs of the closely fitting clothing worn by the figure in fig. 125, as well as the details of his mask; the representation bears a definite resemblance to the masked dancers depicted on the funerary box brought to Japan by the Otani expedition. The figure on the left of the pomegranate tree also wears a mask, and his garments are like those worn by the figure on the right; however, his left hand rests on his knees, and, in his right, he holds a ribbon or a cord, just like those on the Tokyo box.

The figures represented within the four medallions are barely discernible, partly because of their small size. We note their short-sleeved, open-necked tunics. The figures are seated cross-legged, so that the tails of their tunics are hidden from view, tucked under their skirts. One of the figures, shown in fig. 124, is making an offering, one hand on his knee and the other raised; another, in fig. 123, seems to hold a bunch of flowers. The surround of the medallions is formed by a motif of double semi-circles, which occasionally break through the perimeter.

Two parallel lines run along the upper edge of the box, between which have been painted a row of horizontally-aligned ellipses. The frieze is completed by a motif of white dots placed above and below, between each ellipse. The lower border is decorated with a succession of widely-spaced triangles, which do not, in this case, show any traces of tin leaf.

It is not easy to identify the decoration of the lid, which is badly damaged (fig. 126). A double decorative band forms the border: the first motif consists of a row of triangles, interspersed with dotted circles, while the second is identical with the upper border of the sides of the box. The complexity of the composition of the principal section is compounded by the poor condition of the lid; it has, however, been the object of a detailed reconstruction by Gaulier.[313] Her research tells us that a medallion of three concentric circles occupies the top of the lid. Moving outwards from the inner edge are a floral decoration of spheres placed one above the other, a toothed motif and, lastly, segments of circles. A succession of elongated ellipses like those around the top of the side walls decorate the outer edge. Four further medallions, formed of two concentric rings and each containing a figure, are drawn between this central medallion and the edge of the lid. As far as we can tell, they are dressed in the open-necked tunics met with earlier, wear their hair knotted low down on the back of the neck, and are making offerings. Two facing birds make up the rest of the decoration, on one side and the other, along with boldly-drawn cross-legged figures. The latter also wear round-necked tunics, tightly-fitting trousers and scarves, the ends of which split in two. The figures were, moreover, probably masked.

Like the box in the Tokyo National Museum (Otani expedition), funerary box D presents a finely-detailed representation of the world of musicians and dancers of the region of Kucha. Its unusual decoration can perhaps be linked with cultures further to the west. It stands out among the comparable boxes brought by Pelliot as a document of the greatest importance – indeed, it is of unique value – which makes its poor condition an even greater cause for regret. We look forward to the results of future research and scientific examination. The piece appears, from the point of view of technique, to be somewhat earlier than the box brought back by the Otani expedition.

As is the case with the preceding examples, the box is pierced with four small, round holes, through which would have passed the sheep-leather tie that formerly held the lid firmly onto the body of the box.

Plate 185
Head of Mahākāśyapa
Mogao caves (Dunhuang), cave 120 (Pelliot 34). 7th-early 8th century. Painted clay. H. 27 cm; W. 14.4 cm; D. 14.4 cm. MG.16594 (Pelliot 933). **JG**

This expressive, deeply-lined head of a monk – recognisable as such by its being shaven – conveys both the marks of old age and an ecstatic smile like that associated with the rapture that we see imprinted on the faces of the great bodhisattvas and also on those of the most humble witnesses, the listeners and attendants on the Buddha in his preaching assemblies. All evidence suggests that this is the context in which the figure must have belonged. We can, indeed, be certain of this, in view of the numerous examples, still *in situ* in some of the Dunhuang caves, of the holy group in high relief, housed in a niche designed for this purpose, which comprised the principal icon of veneration in these rock-cut shrines. In the earliest representations at the site, dating from the Northern Wei period, the group, dominated by the Buddha Śākyamuni, already includes the images of the two great disciples, Ānanda and Kāśyapa. The latter are generally the figures closest to the Buddha and in some cases, as in cave 439,[314] they may be his sole attendants in a triad. Pursuing the same iconographic reasoning put forward on the subject of the fragment of a wall-painting from Duldur-Āqur (*cf.* pl. 159), we propose that this portrait is of the type associated with evocations of Mahākāśyapa.

Contrary to the treatment of the other members of the cult group, on whom the 'realism' of Tang sculpture impressed its originality – apparent even in the idealised faces of the bodhisattvas – the representations of the two great monks, with their contrasting ages and temperaments, have, from the outset (in Gandhāra), come close to the art of portraiture from life, even if the result leans towards a caricatural formalism. This was the price paid for making these figures iconographically recognisable. It is avowedly difficult, however, to distinguish between the creations at Dunhuang of the Sui and Tang periods respectively, and, in the case of the later dynasty, to isolate those works that belong to each of the generally-accepted important stylistic phases: Early, High and Middle Tang, leaving aside the more easily recognisable Late Tang style. The plastic art of the Sui period, for example, insofar as it introduced and brought to fruition a 'naturalistic' aesthetic to the canon of figurative representation, to which Tang art did no more than add movement and realistic animation of the postures, is in no way inferior, as far as the portraits of the great disciples are concerned, to the later images of the Tang period (at least, up until the middle of the eighth century) in its rendering of individual character traits. We need only mention in support of this assertion the statue of Kāśyapa in cave 244,[315] attributed variously to late Sui or early Tang, solely on the basis of the sculptural qualities of the adjacent figures and on the date of the cave. The same aesthetic stamps the painted representations, as may be seen in the depiction of the great disciple represented beside the bodhisattva Guanyin "with the willow spray" in cave 276, dating from the Sui period;[316] this is all the more thought-provoking owing to the similarity of the features, for here we encounter the very same rendering of the furrows on the forehead and around the mouth, as well as of the same general structure of the head. Indeed, if we only consider the representations of Kāśyapa, those of the 'High' Tang style (712-781 AD) appear indistinguishable from the earlier, seventh-century ones, as is demonstrated by the statue in cave 45.[317]

To date this head correctly, we lack any indication of the body and, above all, of how the head was placed – whether it was held straight and stiffly or gently inclined in relation to the torso. We need to know, in other words, whether the image was of hieratic appearance like a 'pillar-statue', or whether it was already more animated, these being characteristics of the expressive techniques whereby the two great styles, Tang and Sui, can be differentiated. Yet even these indications would not be altogether conclusive, owing to the fact that iconographic convention imposed upon these figures the humble immobility of the disciple, the body entirely draped in the *kāṣāya* (monastic robe), which always makes their silhouette more or less resemble the above-mentioned pillar-like form. One will agree, then, that what is more important for dating this head, but is lacking here, is a knowledge of some other figure from the same sacred group that would be more representative of its style such as, for example, a bodhisattva, or, in this case even better, a *lokapāla*. These are the figures we expect to find beside the two great monks, all arranged round a central Buddha image according to an order of precedence that places the bodhisattvas immediately after them, followed by the Heavenly Kings (*v.* pl. 187-190) who complete the assembly.

Is this a consequence of the 'caricatural realism' of the figure? We see that the portrait-sculptures of the great disciples in fact reveal a considerable freedom of expression which, throughout the time-scale envisaged here, individualises each work; as, for example, and in contrast to the piece under consideration here, the striking image of Kāśyapa in cave 328, marked by an almost painful look of concentration, attributed to the eighth century. On the other hand, as we have already seen, some painted representations of Kāśyapa are very similar to this piece of sculpture. We mentioned earlier the painting in cave 276, dating to the Sui period; we must also refer the reader to an Early Tang (618-712 AD) example, painted on the wall of the niche in cave 217.[318] The latter reveals an even closer affinity with our piece, for here we encounter again the dark 'Indian' complexion of red ochre and the intense expression of the features combined with a faint smile of spiritual ecstasy (quite unlike the majority of images of the disciple). The painting also echoes some iconographical details, namely, some of the features of the sculpted head, such as the protruberance at the top of the forehead – a feature that is simultaneously realistic and symbolic, but which is rarely emphasised in the Dunhuang paintings. Painters such as the Song master Li Gonglin (eleventh

century), and generations of artists after him, liked to include this bump in their portraits of Buddhist saints (*arhat, luohan*), in order to stress their venerable age and exceptional longevity. This correlation between age and saintliness was foreign to India, and demonstrates the syncretism that took place in China with certain traditional Taoist concepts.

Bibliography:
La Route de la Soie, Paris, 1976, no. 269.
Chūgoku bijutsu, Chōso, pl. 70

Plate 186
Head of a worshipper or bodhisattva
Mogao caves (Dunhuang). Mid 8th-early 9th century. Painted cob. H. 18 cm; W. 14 cm; W. 19 cm. MG.23077 (Pelliot 935?). **JG**

This face, with its highly individualised features, is animated by a rapt concentration that is at the same time interiorised and directed outwards towards the wondrous manifestation that is the object of such veneration. The gaze focussed on a point opposite and the half-open mouth, revealing the teeth, contribute to an expression of fleeting surprise and speechless amazement. This image, as complex as the many emotions it conveys, bears witness to the appearance in Buddhist sculpture of a very carefully observed realism in the depiction of 'transports of the soul'. While not denying that sensitivity in this domain had, to a certain extent, already been known in the art of Central Asia – specifically, in the figures of Tumshuq and Kucha, as is shown by some of the works in the Pelliot collection, already commented on – the embodiment of the idealised image of devotion combined with the life-like features of a credible personality is a characteristic that we would more readily ascribe to the sculptural genius of Chinese-influenced Buddhist art during the Tang period.

If these qualities enable us to guess the stylistic period to which this head of a relatively large statue found at Dunhuang may belong, its strangely rounded form is most unusual, even for the period under consideration. The Tang sculptural canon of religious images is distinctive for investing such figures with a more earthy physical presence than is manifested in earlier images; as we have already indicated, this is not only because it tended towards a greater realism, but also because it took for its model a fuller anatomy, accentuating the curves and voluptuous dimensions deriving from the type of secular 'beauty' favoured at the time, of which the best and most faithful examples are the works of the masters of the eighth-century manner who worked at the imperial court, such as Zhang Xuan and Zhou Fang. This physical fullness is a characteristic of Tang images of members of the Buddhist pantheon; it fills out the cheeks and emphasises the plumpness of the chin and neck, resulting in the production of bodhisattva figures associated with the High Tang style (705-780 AD) exemplified by the group of images in cave 194.[319] This head, on the other hand, is rather unusual, for generally this Tang morphology does not display such eminently realistic features as the large, slightly hooked nose that lends the profile the look of a face that is all nose, all the more so for the forehead being proportionately low and receding.

It is for this reason, and, most convincingly of all, on the basis of the distinctive facial expression, that we rule out the possibility that this was the head of a bodhisattva image, so that we must now consider instead some other likely identity for the head. As we have already observed, contemplative emotion enlivens the mobile mouth and the devoted gaze fixed upon an exterior point, slightly higher and to the figure's right; this emotion seems far removed from the lofty and introspective self-possession commonly seen on the faces of bodhisattvas. This life-like animation, which is nevertheless seemingly free from all worldly attachment and thus well within the spiritual bounds of the Mahāyāna, is generally reserved for secondary figures in postures of supplication or worship, or for *devatās*, whose representations require expressive personalities and movements as established by convention – thus, for example, the lively images of Heavenly Kings. Curiously enough, it is some 'portraits' of the latter, such as the king in the same group in cave 194,[320] that this head, with its similar expression on an equally individualised face, most closely resembles.

The same realism characterises the coiffure, in this case clearly cut short near the top of the head (where there is a visible break, as well as a deep mortise for a tenon), from which must have risen a chignon or other arrangement. This coiffure stands out from those of other Dunhuang statues owing to the presence of an accurately-reproduced piece of fabric, painted carmine red (some traces of paint still survive) and held in place by a cord tied around the head in much the same way as a diadem; as in the case of the crowned heads of bodhisattvas, this retains the bouffant hair drawn back into a chignon. Apart from the singularity of the piece of cloth, there are many instances of hair-styles comparable to this 'model' in both sculpture (*v.* the bodhisattva of the cult group in Dunhuang cave 197, dating to the mid Tang period, *ie.* late eighth-mid ninth century)[321] and painting (*v.* the bodhisattva of offering in an eighth-century illustration of the *Guanjing*, the *Sūtra of the contemplation of the Buddha Amitāyus*, depicted on the north wall of Dunhuang cave 172).[322] Furthermore, the latter example bears witness to a form of coiffure represented in the present head – indeed, one that is rarely encountered elsewhere – that is characterised by the appearance of longer, likewise bouffant locks at the back of the head similar to those around the sides. As for the cloth itself, the variations illustrated in the wall-paintings – like the one seen in cave 172 – are enough to make us include this among the ornaments which, being realistic, can be considered in agreement with the Tang period suggested here.

We cannot rule out, however, the possibility that this head belonged to a later period, namely to the Five Dynasties or Song eras, for the individualised features of this head express an anecdotal verisimilitude that is

sometimes also found in 'portrait' images of certain secondary figures produced in these later periods, and also, in contrast, in the idealised faces of bodhisattvas.[323] The very brief mention in the Pelliot expedition's inventory, according to which this fragment of a statue could have come from cave 117 *ter* (a cave not precisely identified in the numbering of the Dunhuang Institute), raises the problem of giving the piece a date consistent with that assigned to the sculptures in these temples. Though there are grounds to suggest that cave 117 *ter* may perhaps correspond with caves 265, according to the Chinese numbering, we find that the sculptures in the latter were restored in the Xi Xia period (1036-1265 AD [324]) – this, of course, is a most unlikely dating in the light of all the evidence set out above, and it will suffice to turn to the material preserved *in situ* to recognise this.[325]

Bibliography:
Previously unpublished.

Plate 187 and 188
Two lokapāla (tianwang)
Mogao caves (Dunhuang). 7th-early 8th century. Painted wood with traces of gilding. Plate 187: H. 79 cm; W. 34. 9 cm; D. 27 cm. MG.15143. Plate 188: H. 81 cm; W. 32.9 cm; D. 27.9 cm. MG.15142. **JG**

(In order to avoid repetition, the following entry deals only briefly with the style of the figures and with their military dress, and in respect of these subjects may therefore be supplemented by reading the notes to plates 189 and 190).

These two images of *lokapāla* – Heavenly Kings – offer us a rare insight into the wooden statuary of Dunhuang which must have rivalled, if on a less monumental scale, the great cult groups of clay or cob statues. They are brought together here for the obvious reason of their similarity. They are almost identical in stature, in the war-like character of their dress – the same armour as previously seen on the torso found at Tumshuq, *v.* pl. 134 – in their stance and the stiff modelling, and lastly, in the well-preserved painted decoration that can be seen on their cuirasses. There is, however, a significant difference in their respective gestures and in the position of their shoulders that, in a very slight *contraposto* with respect to the frontality of the legs, suggests that these statues were formerly placed on an altar in such a way as to face each other in a roughly symmetrical fashion.

The iconography of the Heavenly Kings, rulers of the cardinal points, assigns one to each of the four directions of space over which they are supposed to watch; it is for this reason that they are generally referred to by the generic title *cāturmahārājika-devaḥ* (*sitianwang*), the "four Heavenly Kings". Regarding the place of these two statues, it is important for us to ascertain, therefore, whether they are but the survivors of the canonical series in its entirety, or whether they are sufficient in themselves for the needs of a particular representation.

Their martial appearance as armoured generals seems to be linked with their protective rôle, though we should not infer from this type of depiction that this was always so. The earliest images of Indian tradition show them as *devas*, virtually indistinguishable from other heavenly divinities and, later, from bodhisattvas depicted in princely attire. The protective and warrior characteristics that we observe in these two figures first appeared in Gandhāra, and subsequently became prominent in representations in western Central Asia (particularly Khotan) and China. They are characterised by the most prestigious and highly ornate armour, always exactly rendered, that was worn by generals. These images from Dunhuang illustrate the cuirass of the Chinese armies, that consisted mainly of a breast-plate covering the upper part of the body, a neck-piece and monster-headed shoulder-guards (for further discussion of these elements, *v.* the entries for plates 189 and 190).

Altlhough the attributes they once grasped have disappeared, the positions of their now empty hands allow us to suppose that, in accordance with the known iconography, each figure formerly held two specific objects that determined its identity.

Plate 188 (MG.15142):
The right hand, held out in front of the body, unequivocally suggests that it used to hold an attribute. This must have been the *stūpa* – "the visible sign of the Buddha's presence [...], the sight of which, more than any other, puts an end to the disorders of the world"[326] – which is the distinctive sign of the Guardian King of the north, Vaiśravaṇa. The left hand, also extended forwards, grasps an object which, according to iconographical norms, is a weapon; in most of the depictions in Dunhuang this is a spear, while in other parts of China and in Japan it is a club or staff with the wish-fulfilling jewel, the *cintāmaṇi*, as finial (in Dunhuang at least, this seems to have been held in either hand).

From the outset, Vaiśravaṇa was treated as the most important member of the group; it seems that he served as the model, if not for the original concept of the other Heavenly Kings, then at least for the manner of their representation and worship. At Dunhuang – from whence this image has come – the god is represented alone both in paintings and on banners, appearing in two recognised canonical forms that chiefly affect the support for the god's feet, without otherwise appreciably altering his appearance. The first form, though not the earlier, emphasises his power to subjugate lesser deities or grotesque appearance: the *yakṣas*, those fearsome spirits whose obedience he secures.[327] The second form, worshipped at Khotan, illustrates a particular manifestation that is characterised by the presence of the tutelary earth-goddess Pṛthivi, who carries the feet of the god on her uplifted hands, in place of the subjugated spirit. In the latter type of representation, the Heavenly King is represented in strict frontality and invariably wears a polygonal crown, known from other pictorial sources in Central Asia, and a warrior's long mail-coat, formed of small scales in the Sasanian manner,[328] that also appears in the Kyzyl wall-paintings.

The iconography of the present carving excludes the

second type; but neither does it confirm the first type, unless such an image is part of a group representation – *ie.* an assembly – in which it is paired with another king.

Such a pair is probably furnished by the statue reproduced in plate 187 (MG.15143). Here too the position of the empty hands again suggest the vanished attributes; but, contrary to the invariable *stūpa* that identifies the Guardian King of the north, the list of those assigned to the other rulers of the directions was not drawn up with the same canonical precision; or, if it was, as there is some reason to believe, the images of the Tang period frequently display a degree of uncertainty or indecision in this respect – thus the exchanges of attributes that are subject to so much variation in different sites and at different periods. The clenched right hand could thus have held a bow or a sword, while the left, raised shoulder-high, may suggest either the holding of an object such as an arrow or simply a gesture.

The absence of such distinguishing marks is all the more regrettable in that it deprives us of one of the rare opportunities of discovering amongst the sculpture of the period a three-dimensional equivalent of the only document to have been found at Dunhuang that depicts the complete series of four kings, together with their attributes in which each king is identified by an inscribed cartouche: this is an ink drawing, highlighted with colours, on two double sheets of paper from an album dated 890 AD (Stein collection, New Delhi; *cf.* note 329). This iconography being far from precisely fixed[329] (except in the case of Vaiśravaṇa), there is a considerable risk, for example, without the aid of cartouches inscribed beside them, of confusing the kings of the south and the west, Virūḍhaka and Virūpākṣa respectively, each of whom brandishes a sword; only Dhṛtarāṣṭra, guardian of the east, armed with a bow and arrow, can be distinguished from the others. Furthermore, no canonical rule seems to specify which of the other kings should make his appearance opposite Vaiśravaṇa. There are examples in both painting and sculpture at Dunhuang and in northern China in which a king and his attribute are represented, without our being able to identify which of the guardians of the cardinal points is the subject. An example of this phenomenon are the two kings carved in relief on the walls of the Jingshansi cave at Longmen, each of whom carries a sword as his sole attribute, thus making it impossible to identify them.[330] However, we should, perhaps, see in this a deliberate imprecision.

We propose justifying this imprecision in the case of these two figures and of the two that follow (pls. 189 and 190), by taking into account the context of the cult groups to which we may assume that they belonged. The two kings undoubtedly constituted a pair that was complete and sufficient in itself to represent the full set of four gods – an elliptical form, so to speak, of the whole series – in a composition that included many other statues, and which they rounded off in keeping with their rôle of protective deities.

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O. Siren, 1926, IV, pl. 553.
F. Denès, 1976, pp. 44-49.
La Route de la Soie, Paris, 1976, no. 345.

Plates 189 and 190
Two lokapāla (tian wang)
Mogao caves (Dunhuang). 8th century. Painted wood with traces of gilding. Plate 189: H. 99 cm; W. 75 cm; D. 32.2 cm. MG.17761. Plate 190: H. 95.5 cm; W. 48.2 cm; D. 33.5 cm. MG.17762. **JG**

These two deities belong to the same group of venerated beings as the figures shown in the two preceding plates, *ie.* the four Heavenly Kings, the *Cāturmahārājikadevā* (*Sitianwang*), but differ from the above-mentioned pair in the animation of their dynamic postures. Their precarious stance on one leg gives these sculptures an uncertain balance. These figures may be distinguished from the preceding pair by the fact that they reflect a different sculptural canon, one that is freed from any hieratic stiffness and that is capable of manifesting the expressive impact of these guardians of the cardinal directions to the point of caricature – a thematic variation inspired by the ideas current at the time regarding their character and by belief in their powers.

Art history has used such similar works as the basis for the theory of 'evolutionist' intuition. When faced with two undated and aesthetically-different representations of the human body, this intuition tends to select as the more recent the more animated form which reflects both a greater awareness of anatomy and proportion and also, in particular, a harmony between gesture and the impression expected from the character attributed to the figure – one might almost say, a 'psychological' reality. This judgement is quite legitimately based on the view that the work considered as the later is also that which shows the greater knowledge and skill, of which the earlier stages are illustrated in the more hieratic form.

Thus, though without being able to offer any further justification, we are inclined to assign these Heavenly Kings to a date in the Tang period somewhat later than that attributed to the two figures discussed above (pls. 187-188). In fact, the criteria that serve to distinguish them are neither based on their iconography nor on their character. Apart from some variations, such as the higher collar and, at the waist, the turned-down flap of the skirt in ogee-bracketed form, their armour is very similar, displaying the same cuirasses with dragon-head shoulder-plates and the same polychrome finish of rich and intricate decorations borrowed from Tang figure painting. Nor are the criteria based on the characters of the divinities themselves, whose faces all express the same holy wrath, nor on any other elements that are sometimes revealing (as in the case of some sculptures in the round from Tumshuq) such as their hair-styles; on the contrary, these appear to be of little importance here. The expressive postures of these figures are, on the other hand, of considerable interest.

The animation of the figures, translated not only by their demonstrative postures and gravity-defying bal-

ance but also, intrinsically, by the tension that runs through the limbs with their exaggerated musculature, that swells the chest beneath the cuirass and heightens the facial features into a caricatural, grimacing mask, appears in the sculptures dating from the second stylistic period of the Tang dynasty at Dunhuang, namely the 'High Tang' (712-781 AD). In terms of local history, this period began with the accession of the emperor Xuanzong and ended just before the Tibetan occupation of the region of Shazhou in 787 AD. We need only compare the images of Heavenly Kings in cave 427 [331] contemporary with the Sui dynasty, powerful and monumental but static nevertheless, or those in cave 322, attributed to the 'Early Tang' period (618-712 AD [332]), with more human proportions and some degree of animation while yet displaying a residual stiffness, to perceive the sculptural evolution of these figures which are amongst the most extremely expressive in the Buddhist pantheon.

We can, however, even in the midst of the more restrained stylistic phase, make out the stages of development through the increasing expressionism displayed by these figures as the century progresses. It is in consideration of the latter that we propose to date these two works towards the end of the period, that is, to the second half of the eighth century. The evolution between these two poles is illustrated, on the one hand, by the statues of cave 45[333] and, on the other, by those of cave 194[334]: the first ones, in an almost imperceptible shift from their former hieratic immobility, suggest a living and animated interior tension beneath the fabric and cuirass, while the second, raised on one leg, give full expression to their wrath, carried away in life-like movement. But it is also true that both these types of images display the difference between restrained but immense sacred power and anecdotal physical strength, as if the deity had become human. These two Heavenly Kings resemble those of cave 194 more than the first, as is revealed by their caricatural facial features with jutting lower jaws – an exaggeration that is paralleled by the extreme musculature of the arms, like that generally associated with representations of *dvārapāla* (door guardians) who seem to have provided the model for the animation of the Heavenly Kings. The same transformation seems to have been at work in a comparable way in the representation of another figure, namely Vajrapāṇi, but this is more legitimate in consideration of his exploits; as he appears in a bas-relief dating to the Northern Wei period in the Longmen caves (Henan),[335] this deity would be indistinguishable from a *dvārapāla* but for the indication of his attribute, the thunderbolt.

Unlike their forms which differ according to the periods of their creation, the original rich polychromy we see here links these kings with the two preceding ones (pls. 187-188). Similarly, we note that in a more general way this, like that found in the large-scale clay statuary, uses the same chromatic range encountered in wall-paintings of this period; it thus participates in the artistic unity – a creation of a 'total art' of the caves – that we see at Dunhuang from the beginning under the Wei and which continues throughout the ensuing stylistic periods, their differing aesthetics notwithstanding. Besides the colouring of different parts of the armour, in which is distinguished the coat of mail, made of juxtaposed scales and small rectangles (*cf.* the piece from Toqquz-Saraï, pl. 124), worn over a sort of short skirt, a large floral decoration adorns the cuirass. Better preserved on the back of each statue, corresponding to the back-plate and back-piece, its theme of intertwining rinceaux bears witness to its relation to the decorative Tang idiom of the seventh and eighth centuries, which we also find in varying form in textiles (*cf.* the textile section in this volume), in metalwork, in monumental art (lintels and friezes) and in cult images, where the motif is used to decorate the nimbus of many Buddha images.[336] Finally, we draw attention to the formal and chromatic link between this theme and that of the triangular head-piece of the banner reproduced in plate 13 (of the present volume; EO.1399 [P.149]), remarkable for the consummate art of contrasting colours and for the same expressive use of a violet lake (*v.* "The pictorial language of Dunhuang..." for further discussion of this subject).

The two statues constitute the original and complete iconography of the group, these two images being sufficient in themselves to evoke in an ellipticalway the series of four kings. Their postural and gestural symmetry confirm that they used to face one another. As is generally the case with the large clay images set up on the altar in the caves, the two kings here do not appear to have held particular attributes that would enable us to identify them individually, such as the *stūpa* associated with Vaiśravaṇa that is thought to have been held by the king reproduced in plate 188. They seem instead to have each carried a lance, their other hand remaining empty but making a gesture expressive of might and wrath.

The fact that it is impossible to identify either of these kings suggests that, even more than with the preceding pair, we should consider them as the emblematic representation of the complete series. Once again, the examples offered by the cult images in the caves support the meaning we propose here. The function of the latter underlines the law of symmetry required by the arrangement of venerated beings of an assembly; this takes a hierarchical form consisting of two wings, starting at either side of the Buddha and set out in such a way that the half-circle thus formed faces the cella. The Heavenly Kings are placed at the ends of these wings and thus round off the group, which otherwise consists only of a pair of great bodhisattvas that face each other.

It appears that it is only in the case of the quite exceptional example provided by the monumental statues of cave 427 (see above), dating to the Sui period, attesting to one of the oldest architectural arrangements of the genre at Dunhuang, that the complete set of four gods is found to be actually represented. Grasping their individual attributes and standing on subjugated grotesque spirits (see our comments on the preceding places) and associated, moreover, with two representations of *dvārapāla* that guard the cave entrance, they are located in the antechamber of the cave, and accordingly all the evidence indicates that their representation had

some quite different liturgical function.

Bibliography;
O. Siren, 1926, IV, pls. 550-551.
F. Denès, 1976, pp. 50-61.

Plate 191
Standing buddha
Mogao caves (Dunhuang). First half of the 8th century. Painted wood. H. 31 cm; W. 12 cm; D. 4 cm. EO.1103. **JG**

This image of the Buddha is immediately striking owing to its strange porportions: the over-large head and, as we shall show in our analysis, the stylistic dichotomy between the treatment of the latter and of the body. The loss of the limbs deprives us of the knowledge of what *mūdra* the figure originally made, so that we cannot be quite certain when we identify the figure as Śākyamuni Buddha rather than simply as one of the 'transcendent' buddhas. On the other hand, the standing posture somewhat compensates for the loss and inclines us to identify the image as the historical buddha with a greater degree of confidence.

The first impression that the image produces is that of a composite work, rather than a synthesis, one that reflects two sculptural traditions whose distinctive qualities persist independently from one another – indeed, this quality is the focus of our discussion here. In its general appearance, the figure is on the one hand heavy and thick-set, a characteristic that is particularly pronounced in the proportion of the head set on a large and almost non-existent neck. When we come to consider the body, our appreciation necessarily alters: here, on the contrary, it is the elongation of the body, subtly animated by an imperceptible swaying to the side and with its verticality heightened by the soft and natural fall of the folds of the *saṃghāṭi* in conformity with a long Gandhāran tradition continued subsequently in Central Asia, that we would note first of all.

We must now consider this mixed quality that bears witness not only to two styles but, more essentially, to the juxtaposition of two distinct and identifiable canons of form associated with the image of the Buddha, which are combined here in a clumsy fashion: at least, the way in which the artist has tried to subsume these two in the production of a unified image is not very convincing. This stylistic disagreement between the parts, each drawn from its own tradition, and the fact that one of them harks back to an older model drawn from the earliest Buddhist art, while, conversely, the other can be linked with models belonging to a later period, incline us to date this work to a transitional period.

The sculptural treatment of the face displays characteristics of the Sinicised style, the principal elements of which we enumerated briefly in our discussion of the heads found at Kumtura (pls. 148-149). It was originally richly painted, though nothing remains of this now but the blue or black hair contrasting with the vermilion outline of the complexion. The face is wide and full, its surface enlivened by a very slight relief; the wide, slit eyes, emerging until almost flush with the plane of the forehead, are set beside the ridge of the nose which merges into the arch of the eyebrows, while above the brief chin the small mouth, no wider than the nostrils, is skilfully modelled with deep hollows at the corners of the lips.

The face is, in fact, the only indication of the Sinicised style. The hair, drawn up into a bun over the *uṣṇiṣa*, follows (like the draped body) Gandhāran models of hair rendered by means of regular wavy lines such as the buddha image from Mardan (now in the Peshawar museum), showing a stylised interpretation in the form of a wave-pattern, after the precedent of Sahri-Bahlol and transmitted into the art of the sculptors of Haḍḍa.[337] And we need only consider some buddha heads from Tumshuq (Toqquz-Saraï; see figs. 69 and 70) and evidence from Kucha (Kyzyl; particularly the wooden seated buddha image now in Berlin [338]) to ascertain that the decorative stylisation visible here, so untrue to life, finds an echo in the Serindian tradition.

Further evidence of the enduring fidelity to the canon of form of Gandhāra and Central Asia is the body draped in the heavy robe that covers both shoulders. The iconographic source can be traced to a whole group of standing buddha images in schist from Sahri-Bahlol and Mardan. The stylisation of the folds into regular bands, describing the central fall of the fabric from the shoulders, corresponds to an evolution that had already taken place in the North-West in a later phase of Gandhāran art, and which is better attested in the Afghan provinces – for instance, some of the reliefs from Païtava.[339] The borrowing has preserved the anatomical clarity and coherence of its models and in its naturalism is half-way between the early Gandhāran works and those of Kapiśa (Shotorak and Pāitāvā) – the piece in fact resembles these so closely that it remains practically unique amongst the finds of Central Asia, along with a small wooden statuette of the standing Buddha (H. 22 cm) – of less fine workmanship – discovered at Tumshuq-tāgh and attributed to the early phase of artistic activity there, that is, to the fifth-sixth century AD.[340]

The majority of examples of small wooden carvings that have survived from that region, whether from Kucha (chiefly from Kyzyl) or from more southern sites such as Khadalik,[341]bear witness to treatments which differ considerably from each other, but all of which are founded on the same sources in Gandhāra or India (Mathurā and Sārnāth), as we have seen to be the case with the works shown in plates 175 and 174.

The loss of the arms deprives us of the gestures that are of such importance in buddha images. We can however expect, on the basis of the standing posture and the arrangement of the folds of the robe, that the raised right hand was in *abhaya-mudrā*, the gesture of fearlessness (this seems to be confirmed by the uplifted fold, draped over the arm, which reveals the livelier folds of the under-garment), while his other hand was lowered possibly in the gesture of the giving of the vow, *varada-mudrā*, or more likely, simply grasped a part of the robe. This very form is typical of the Gandhāran examples mentioned earlier and is also traditionally held to have

been that of the celebrated image said to have belonged to Udayana, the king of Kauśambi, which, according to legend, was the first image of all and an actual likeness of Gautama, carved from life by the king.

The way in which the carving, which is essentially frontal, is resolved on the back and sides of the piece tells us much about how it was made. Unlike the sinuous incisions representing the hair which extend round the back of the head, the drapery of the robe all but vanishes in the parts of the image not visible from the front, leaving only a few chisel marks in preparation for the modelling of the roughly indicated folds. Traces of paint are still preserved on the smooth back of the statue, chiefly in red, criss-crossed with black lines which evidently represent the patches of the *kāṣāya*. More curious still than the sketchiness of the relief is the composite structure of the wood, apparent from the back. All the left part, from the shoulder to the base of the statuette, seems to have been added. It is hard to explain why this was necessary in an image of such modest size, unless it was an ancient repair – this of course would justify the presence of the hole with blackened edges (burnt wood – the result of an accident?) that can be seen at waist-level on the front of the piece. If this is indeed the case, we have here a rare example of the restoration of a partially damaged cult image which must have been of considerable importance to merit such attention.

As we have already indicated, this is, in terms of style, one of the most complex of the wooden images carved in the round discovered in Central Asia. While we may date the aesthetic of the head to the Early or High Tang periods, *ie.* between the seventh and eighth centuries, we need only consider the images of that time to see that such a treatment of the body, showing quite independent and contradictory style and workmanship, is most unusual and that a more uniform sculptural style normally corresponds to the later formal canon. We know of only one other Central-Asian piece – a small image of a standing buddha from Kyzyl [342]– that fortunately displays in a very similar fashion this apparent duality and thus bears witness to the importance of the phenomenon of stylistic assimilation.

But is not what we see in these two works precisely what we expect of Serindian creations: to be concrete evidence of the meeting of different influences, realising in some way, before our very eyes, the eclectic nature of the cultures of that region? Nevertheless, one might still ask why this phenomenon only appeared with such force in connection with the spread of the Sinicised Buddhist art of the Tang period.

Bibliography:
La Route de la Soie, Paris, 1976, no. 350.
F. Denès, 1976, pp. 15-17.

Plate 192
Devatā or bodhisattva (?)
Mogao caves (Dunhuang). Late 6th-early 7th century. Painted wood with traces of gilding. H. 20 cm; W. 4 cm; D. 3 cm. EO.1115. **JG**

This representation of a praying figure, perhaps a bodhisattva or a *devatā*, with his hands joined in front of the chest in *añjali-mudrā* and the head surrounded by a radiant halo, is carved from a single piece of wood whose primitive shape affects the compact appearance of the sculpture, a 'column' or 'shaft' which, in terms of style and general appearance, seems to be of early date. This archaic form is, in fact, well-known in sculptures from other sites executed in various media (sun-dried clay and, above all, cob and stone). We must, however, draw attention to the small dimensions of this image, which may have come from a panel of a portable shrine, and also to the figure's iconography, since it is likely that the statue represented a minor figure in a group – at the very least a triad – dominated by a buddha image. The central motif of the worn and damaged crown seems to be a decorative floral theme, but otherwise contains no indication that would enables us to identify the figure as any particular bodhisattva. We therefore suggest that this isolated image has only a subsidiary character: this applies to the seemingly crude workmanship, as if the piece were unfinished, as much as to its putative rôle in a group of cult images.

An example of the figure's ambiguity is provided by the apparent movement of the bust in relation to the legs which may be appreciated as an attempt to convey expression and animation like the swaying or "flexion" (*bhaṇga*) adopted from Indian tradition, or quite simply as the effect produced by the original shape of the wood from which the piece was carved, and which just happened to be retained by the sculptor in order to obtain just such an expression.

The carving is essentially frontal. As in the preceding piece (pl. 191), the back of the image is only roughly worked. The head, however, is again fully modelled from all visible angles. As in numerous other examples of small wooden statues, particularly those from Kucha (Kyzyl, Kum-Āriq [343]), the face is better finished than the body; its proportions are also rather larger than life. We should note that it is these features, characteristic of small images carved directly from the wood such as those from Duldur-Āqur reproduced in plates 179 and 180, that distinguish the latter from the generally better-proportioned reliefs in stone and cob. Despite the objective remark that the body and limbs are too small for the head, the general effect is one of expressive harmony, in keeping with the 'archaic flavour' mentioned earlier that is conveyed by a certain technical clumsiness in the modelling whose corollary is the accuracy of the direct carving and the anecdotal details: the rendering of the drapery of the *dhoti*, the jewelry, the hair and, even, of the crown, which are essential iconographic elements in the representation of the haloed "great being". An illustration of this phenomenon is the exact rendering of each bead in the two strands of the necklace and of the folds of the drapery falling in zigzags, *etc.*, which contrast with the summary execution of the anatomy of the naked torso.

The wear to the face makes it impossible to make out either the eyebrows or the ridge of the nose, fea-

tures that are so essential in differentiating between the Central Asian canon and the more Sinicised form. Given the apparent fullness of the face and the proportions of the features (*cf.* pl. 191), it would seem that the figure belonged to the second type. This suggestion is supported by the image viewed as a whole, though it does not show the same Tang plastic qualities as the preceding work, being linked instead to the stylistic period of the earliest Buddhist art at Dunhuang, that of the Northern and Western Wei (fifth-mid sixth centuries). We reach this conclusion owing to the figure's compact and static appearance and its extreme stylisation, particularly marked in the folds of the drapery, which is very like what we encounter in clay sculpture of that time. This impression could, however, be merely an 'effect' of sculpting in wood, the result of the inherent qualities of the medium and of carving with a chisel. It is, therefore, by means of iconographic and stylistic signs that we can support the origin proposed above.

The luxuriant details of the garment – the conventional Indian *dhoti* worn by *deva*s and bodhisattvas – enable us to see how a twisted sash holds it around the waist and how the turn-down of the fabric produces two successive falls of large pleats. The latter cover the front of the skirt, whose fringes half-cover the feet, and form an important decoration dominated by the rhythms of the deeply and geometrically incised folds. This arrangement, especially the complicated drapery, reveals if not an actual misunderstanding of the Indian garment, then at least an interpretation of it, combined with borrowings from several sources. The rendering of the folds in this stylised and abstract form has already been the subject of a historical remark (see the commentary to pl. 175; EO.1107). The first hints of this theme appeared in late Gandhāran art and may correspond to a graphic transposition of Romano-Hellenistic naturalism; it became more definite in the earliest sculptures from Mathurā and is also seen in Gupta images, in the two great eponymous 'styles' of Mathurā [344] and Sārnāth,[345] before spreading throughout the Tarim Basin. Examples of this theme in Central Asia include the monumental statues of the Rawak *stūpa* on the Southern Silk Road; similar sculptures from Duldur-Āqur (*v.* pl. 177 and 176; MG.23757 and MG.23756); the unique example of an equally colossal figure from a cella in Khocho (Turfan [346]); the clay statuettes from Tumshuq (*cf.* fig. 87, EO.1080, from temple I and the high reliefs of temple B from Toqquz-Saraï shown in plate 137); and the cob bust of a woman from Karashahr.[347] We also refer the reader to the paintings of Kyzyl, Tumshuq, *etc.*, but it is in the earliest Chinese Buddhist art that we find that this ornament becomes an essential part of the sculptural language. In the temples of western Gansu, the important works are contemporary with the Sixteen Kingdoms (the Liang dynasties) and the Northern Wei: at Dunhuang, for example, the sculptures of caves 275 and 439; and, in other sites of Hexi, the images attributed to the Northern Liang (397-439 AD) in the rock-cut temples of Jintasi and Matisi (neighbouring sites in the region of Zhangye in central Gansu [348]). Furthermore, other details of the statuette, such as the complexity of the arrangement of the *dhoti* and the particular type of coiffure, arranged so as to cover the ears, can be linked to this artistic and iconographic context.

We cannot, however, limit this work to these comparisons alone, which though significant are nonetheless partial. While the period we have proposed for the image does seem to be the most likely, and while the same may true for the influences which situate it legitimately where it was found – that is to say at Dunhuang or in the immediate sphere of the Gansu temple-complexes – other quite particular traits raise further questions. What, in fact, can be said regarding the theme of the radiant nimbus which derives from a distant Central Asian tradition (see our comments on pls. 175 and 174; EO.1107 and EO.1096), or of the heavy fabric decorated with a fringed border, visible beneath the *dhoti*, which is said to be of Sogdian and subsequently Kuchean 'descent'? This is a complex work in which, as in the preceding image, elements borrowed from all the contemporary sources, both regional and from Buddhist north China, are brought together.

NOTES TO PART TWO

For the Abbreviations and Bibliography, please refer to *Les Arts de L'Asie Centrale* Vol. II

Central Asian Sites and Works of Art

1 *Mission Paul Pelliot*, II, *Toumchouq*, p. 86.
2 *Ibid.*, p. 47, 97.
3 *Mission Paul Pelliot*, II, *Toumchouq*, p. 169.
4 Grünwedel, 1912, fig. 1, p. 7. This plan was established in 1906, during the third German expedition.
5 This discovery was made in 1984 during restoration work. *Cf.* Chao Huashan, "Kumutora sekkutsu gaisetsu", in *Kumutora sekkutsu*, 1985, p. 215 and 216.
6 Beckwith, 1987, p. 46, note 47.
7 Unlike Dunhuang, where we have suggested that changes in the pallette are an important key to changes in style; *v.* "The Pictorial Language of Dunhuang" in vol 1.
8 *Mission Pelliot*, VIII, pl. 11.
9 *Ibid.*, p. 12.
10 *Ibid.*, G. Pinault, p. 132-133.
11 *Mission Pelliot*, *Koutcha*, VIII, figs. 4 and 5.
12 *Mission Paul Pelliot*, I, *Toumchouq*, fig. 19.
13 Stein, 1907, pl. XIV-XVIII.
14 *Mission Pelliot*, XI, 1-6, *Touen-houang; Carnet de notes de Paul Pelliot*, 1981-1992.
15 Pelliot P., 1920-1924.
16 *Mssion Pelliot*, XI, 1-6, *op. cit.*

The Silks of Dunhuang

1 Mission Paul Pelliot, XIII, *Tissus*.
2 *Serindia*, I-V; *Art of Central Asia*, III.
3 *Cf.* the lecture entitled "The collection of Dunhuang manuscripts and textiles in the Hermitage" given by E. I. LuboLesnichenko of the State Hermitage Museum, May 13th 1975.The expedition, led by S. F. Oldenbourg, discovered among other materials some thirty fragments of patterned silk at Dunhuang, that I was able to study at the Hermitage with Dr. Lubo-Lesnichenko. Many of them are of the same types as those in the Pelliot collection and in the two Stein collections in London and New Delhi. Quite recently, three of the pieces brought from Dunhuang by Oldenbourg have been reproduced in colour in the exhibition catalogue, *Weibrauch und Seide*, Wien 1996, pp.350-352, nos. 213-215.
4 R. H. van Gulik, 1958, pp.115sqq. ; P.Polony, 1970, pp.85-106 (this article discussss patterned textiles used in Ming sutra-wrappers.
5 *Mission Pelliot*, XIII, *Tissus*, 1970: EO1199 (pl.39); EO.1200 (pl.1); EO.1208 (pl.3); EO.1209/1 (pl.4); EO.1207 (pl.43); EO.3660 (pl.11); EO.3663 (pls.44, 45); EO.3664 (pl.12); MG.23082/83 (pl.87) and the labels: bn.4634/16 (pl.102); bn.5013 (pl.103).
6 K. Kinhatta, 1983, p.74, pl.9 (p.15).
7 *Serindia*, II, p.954; R. Whitfield, *op.cit.*, 1985, vol.III, pl.7 (MAS 859 (Ch.xx.006). Stein mentions finding another sutra-wrapper in bamboo and silk in Cave 17, Ch.iii.012 a-b, cf. *Serindia*, II, p.1014.
8 Y. Maeda, 1983, pl.9.
9 *Shōsō-in*, Nara, 1979, fi.g4 (same as Stein and Pelliot). There is an ivory label with an inscription in Chinese characters written in ink, stating "tenth wrapper of various Hinayana sutras" (*Shoso-in* , Nara, 1979, pl.77, p.116); Nara, 1985, figu. 77 (entirely covered by the warp); K.Matsumoto, *Shoso-in*, 1984, pl.35 (the best example entirely covered by the warp,); pp. 211 and 213-214
10 For Stein's find at Kara-Khoja, see *Innermost Asia*, II, p.597 and III, pl.LXXXVII.
11 For this find, see *Wenwu cankao ziliao*, 1957, no.11, pp.38-48, fig.10. According to the authors, several sutra-wrappers, as well as textiles and caskets to contain sutras, all dating from the Song period, were discovered.
12 T.H.Tsien, 1962, pp.153-155.
13 K. Riboud and G. Vial, 1981, pp.129-154.
14 J.P. Dubosc, 1948; S.Cammann, 1948, pp.90-110; E.I. Lubo-Lesnichenko, 1975, pp.52-60.
15 *Kegon-kyōron chitsu*, *Shōsō-in*, Nara 1979, fig.5, p.6; its measurements are: h.58c m, w.30 cm; the measurements of EO.1207 are: h: 53-55 cm, w. 27.5 cm.
16 K.Matsumoto, 1984, pp.209-210.
17 *Hōbōgirin*, fasc.1, p.50; R. Jéra-Bezard and M. Maillard, 1985, pp.83-91.
18 *Mission Pelliot*, XIV-XV, *Touen-houang*, vol.I, p.53, vol.II, pl.26.
19 K. Kinhata, 1983, fig.8, p.14.
20 E. I. Lubo-Lesnichenko, 1971, pp. 75-92; A. Bühler and E. Fischer, 1977.
21 These technical explanations have been made in collaboration with Mr. Gabriel Vial, technical secretary of the CIETA, Lyon.

Captions to Colour Plates: Volume II

1 *Cf.* B. Frank, Le Panthéon bouddhique au Japon. Collection d'Emile Guimet, Paris, 1991, p. 125.
2 *Cf.* the explanation of this process given by K. Riboud and G. Vial in *Tissus de Touen-houang*, Paris, 1970, p. Xxvii.
3 *Chūgoku sekkutsu*, *Ansei Yurin kutsu*, Tokyo 1990, pls. 40, 41.
4 *Cf.* R. Schneider, "Un moine indien au Wou-t'ai chan" (an Indian monk at Wutaishan), *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie*, 3, 1987, p. 27-40, especially p. 35.
5 We emphasise this point, since, in the Japanese edition, Akiyama refuses to admit what seems to us to be a simple matter of fact. Thus he dates the banner in Plate 51 to the 9th century, which is reasonable enough, and this work to the 10th century.
6 *Arts asiatiques*, no. 40, 1985, pp. 88-90; *cf.* also *arts Asiatiques*, no. 44, 1989, pp. 57-67.
7 *Cf.* K. Riboud and G. Vial, *Tissus de Touen-houang*, Paris, 1970, p. 323.
8 *Chungang Asia Misul*, Seoul, 1986, pl. 23.
9 *The Art of Central Asia*, vol. 2, pl. 33; *cf.* also A. Soper, *Literary Evidence for early Buddhist art in China*, Ascona, 1959, p. 171.
10 *Cf.* the translations of Śrimitra (4th century; *Taishō*, no. 1331, p. 535b), Dharmagupta (died 619 AD; *Taishō*, no. 449, p. 404a), Xuanzang (602-664 AD; *Taishō*, no. 450, p. 407c) and Yijing (635-713 AD; *Taishō*, 451, p. 415a).
11 *Cf.* K. Riboud and G. Vial, *Tissus de Touen-houang*, Paris, 1970, p. 323.
12 *Cf.* M.-T. de Mallman, *Introduction à l'iconographie du tântrisme bouddhique*, Paris, 1975, p. 397.
13 According to B. Frank, his name may be translated as "He who carries [within himself] the virtues of the Earth"; *Le Panthéon bouddhique au Japon-Collections d'Emile Guimet*, Paris, 1991, p. 134.
14 *Cf.* K. Riboud and G. Vial, *op. cit.*, p. 355-362.
15 *Cf.* E. Chavannes, *Mission archéologique dans la Chine septentrionale*, Paris, 1913, pl. CXCVII, no. 323.
16 *Cf.* Françoise Wang-Toutain, *Kṣitigarbha en Chine du VIe au XIIIe siècle. Genèse d'un culte populaire*, section 2, chapter 1; this work is due to be published by the Ecole Francaise d'Extrême Orient in 1996.
17 See a wall-painting in Yulin cave 15, dating to the period of Tibetan occupation (?); *cf. Chūgoku sekkutsu*, *Ansei Yurin kutsu*, Tokyo, 1990, pl. 7.
18 See the illustrated scrolls Pelliot chinois 2003 and 4523, also S.3961 (reproduced in *The Art of Central Asia*, 2, pl. 64); the frontispieces belong to P.4523 and Stein painting 78 (*The Art of Central Asia*, 2, pl. 62).
19 *Cf.* M. Soymié, "Notes d'iconographie chinoise: les acolytes de Ti-tsang (1)", *Arts asiatiques*, no. 14, 1966, p. 48.
20 Moriyasu Takao, *Tonkō kogo bunken (Kōza Tonkō, 6)*, Tokyo, 1985, p. 8, with incorrect registration number MG.17795.
21 The character *yong* ("in perpetuity") should probably have ap-

peared in front of the character *chong*.

22 For a translation of the manuscript and a study of this person, *cf.* M. Soymié, "Notes d'iconographie chinoise: les acolytes de Ti-tsang (II)", *Arts asiatiques*, no. 14, 1967, pp. 141-170.

23 According to the official calendar, the first day of the eleventh month was not *guichou* (no. 50) but *renzi* (no. 49). The fourteenth day was thus *yichou* and not *bingyin*. We have given the date of the day *bingyin*. Small calendrical errors were frequent at this period.

24 The short version is kept in the Museum of Calligraphy in Tokyo; *cf.* Ogawa Kanichi, "Jūō jōshichi kyō sanzu no kōzō", in *Saiiki bunka kenkyū*, vol. 5, Kyoto, 1962, pp. 257-273. Similar notes – perhaps rough notes for cartouches – appear in the manuscript P.3304; *cf.* M. Soymié, "Un recueil d'inscriptions sur peintures", in *Nouvelles contributions aux études de Touen-houang*, Geneva, 1981, p. 170.

25 *Cf.* K. Riboud and G. Vial, *op. cit.*, pp. 351-353.

26 F. Grenet, "Vaiśravaṇa in Sogdiana: about the origins of Bishamon-ten", forthcoming in *Silk Road Art and Archaeology*, no. 5, 1995.

27 *Cf.* M. Lalou, "Mythologie indienne et peintures de Haute Asie: 1. Le dieu bouddhique de la fortune", *Artibus Asiae*, no. 9, 1946, pp. 97-111.

28 "A special iconography of Śrī Devī in Central Asia", *South Asian Archaeology*, 1989, p. 387.

29 Further to the references given in the note to plate 78 in volume 1, we would like to add a wall-painting of Yulin cave 15, from the Tang dynasty, in which the king carrying a bow is depicted on the south wall of the antichamber, opposite Vaiśravaṇa, god of the North, represented on the north wall; *cf. Chūgoku sekkutsu, Anse Yurin kutsu*, Tokyo, 1990, pl.5.

30 *cf.* Vaiśravaṇa in cave 254, dating to the period of Tibetan occupation; *Bakkō*, 4, pl. 99.

31 *cf.* a very similar helmet in Yulin cave 25, dating to the same period; *Chūgoku sekkutsu, Ansei Yurin kutsu*, Tokyo, 1990, pl. 21.

32 *Cf.* K. Riboud and G. Vial, *op. cit.*, p. 303-304 for a schema of the banner and a detailed description of the cloths.

33 *Cf.* Nagahiro Toshio, "On a silk banner representing Vajrapani from the Stein collection" (in Japanese), *Tōhō gakuhō*, Kyoto, no. 35, 1964, pp. 551-558.

34 *Molizhu tian jing, Taishō*, 1255b, p. 261b; *Molizhu tipohuaman jing, Taishō*, 1254, p. 258c.

35 *Tuoluoni ji jing, Taishō*, 901, p. 870b.

36 "Appendice sur Damoduoluo", in *Peintures monochromes de Dunhuang*, 1978, fasc. 1, pp. 43-49; *The Art of Central Asia*, vol. 2, note to Stein painting 168, p. 336-337.

37 "The origins of an iconographical form of the pilgrim Hsüan-Tsang", *Tang Studies*, no. 4, 1986, p. 29-41.

38 A similar eulogy, which seems hardly appropriate, appears in the inscription of painting 14 of volume one. A text praising the deceased was perhaps read during the ceremony.

39 R. H. van Gulik, *Chinese pictorial art as viewed by the connoisseur*, Rome, 1958, pp. 319-321.

40 The illustrated scroll has been reproduced *in extenso*, with an introduction, by Nicole Nicolas-Vandier in a work entitled *Śāriputra et les six maîtres d'erreur*, Paris, 1954. For further details, *cf.* the relevant note in *Catalogue des manuscrits chinois de Touen-houang, fonds Pelliot chinois*, vol. 5, Paris, 1995.

41 Pelliot tibétain has been the subject of a quite detailed study under its old registration number, P.4021, in the catalogue referred to in the preceding footnote.

42 Matsumoto Eiichi, "Tonkōbon zuiei zukan", *Bijutsu kenkyū*, no. 184, 1956, pp. 113-130.

43 Fujieda Akira, "An illustrated manuscript in booklet form of the *Kuan-yin ching*", *Bokubi*, no. 177, 1968, pp. 1-46.

44 In Chinese, *mingming* or *gongming*. These birds are described in the *Amitābha-sutra* (*Taishō*, 366, p. 347*a*) and in its numerous commentaries.

45 *Cf.* K. Riboud and G. Vial, *op. cit.*, p. 285.

46 *Cf.* also R. Jéra-Bezard, "Six triangles de tête inédits de la collection Pelliot", *La Revue du Louvre*, no. 3, 1978, p. 171-178.

47 *Mission Paul Pelliot*, XIII, *Tissus*, p. xxvii; *cf.* A. Bühler and E. Fischer, 1977.

48 *Mission Paul Pelliot*, XIII, *Tissus*, Introduction, p. xxvii.

49 D. De Jonghe, 1989, p. 294.

50 K. Matsumoto, 1984, pl. 28.

51 *Ibid.*, p. 40, pl. 28.

52 *Ibid.*, p. 76, pl. 56.

53 *Ibid.*, pl. 1.

54 *Ibid.*, pls. 10 & 79..

55 *Ibid.*, p. 126, fig. 103.

56 *Ibid.*, p. 126, fig. 104.

57 S. V. Cammann, 1948. pp. 90-110.

58 *Museum of Sinkiang*, 1975, no. 7, p. 17, pl. V, fig. 1.

59 *Mission Pelliot*, XIII, *Tissus*, p. xxvii.

60 We refer, as is now customary, to the art of Gandhāra, in preference to the out-dated term "Greco-Buddhist style" used by Pelliot. Most of the Gandhāran sculptures date back to the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD, and their chief characteristics derive from imperial Roman art (*cf.* J. C. Harle, 1986, p. 83).

61 H. Ingholt and L. Lyons, 1957, p. 273.

62 J. Meunié, 1942, pl. XXVII, fig. 81.

63 J. Meunié, *op. cit.*, pl. XXVIII, fig. 86.

64 *Mission Pelliot*, II, *Toumchouq*, pp. 161 *sq.*

65 *Ibid.*, figs. D.8 and D.13.

66 Barger E. and Wright P., 1941, pl. V, fig. 2.

67 *Bilderatlas*, fig. 181 to 184, p. 89.

68 *Mission Pelliot*, II, *Toumchouq*, p. 165.

69 Oldenburg, S., 1914, pls. III and V.

70 *Bilderatlas*, fig. 80, p. 62.

71 Esrasme, "Les Adages" (266), in *Oeuvres choisies*, Paris, 1991, pp. 352-54.

72 Foucher, A., *op. cit.*, II, fig. 317, p. 31.

73 Santoro, A., 1991, fig. 5 and fig. 2.

74 *Mission Pelliot*, II, *Toumchouq*, 1964, pl. D.50, p. 172.

75 Foucher, A., *op. cit.* I, fig. 141, p. 279.

76 *Spätantike*, VI, pl. 12 and pp. 76-77.

77 *Altbuddhistische*, p. 183, fig. 423.

78 Pelliot, P., 1920-1924, pl. CCXCVIII.

79 Foucher, A., 1905, fig. 246 and 247.

80 de Mallman, M. T., 1986, p. 170.

81 Lamotte, E., 1944, I, p. 609.

82 *Nara rokudaiji taikan, Kōfukuji I*, vol. 7, Tokyo, 1969, p. 93.

83 Frank, B., 1991, p. 182.

84 Hallade, M., *Mission Paul Pelliot*, II, *Toumchouq*, 1964, p. 174.

85 *Cf.* J. E. van Lohuizen de Leeuw, 1949, pp. 110 *sq.* and J. W. Williams, 1982.

86 Lohuizen de Leeuw, *op. cit.*, fig. 2, pl. II.

87 *Ibid.*, fig. 3, pl. III.

88 *Ibid.*, figs. 5 and 6, pl. VI. See also *Gandhāran Art*, 1957, fig. 522.

89 *Ibid.*, p.110 and fig. 33, pl. XXI.

90 *Mission Paul Pelliot*, II, *Toumchouq*, p. 358.

91 Durt., H., Riboud, K., and Lai, T., "À propos de *stūpa* miniatures votifs du Ve siècle découverts à Tourfan et au Gansu", *Arts asiatiques*, vol. XL, Paris, 1985, pp. 92-106.

92 Snellgrove, D. L., *et al.*, 1978, pl. 136, p. 186.

93 The works that made up this gift appeared, together with photographs, in *Museum*, no. 78, September 1957, "Gime hakubutsukan no kizōhin"; for further information regarding this exchange and its historical significance, the reader is referred to our article "Gime hakubutsukan no kizōhin – nichifutsu-kōkoshiryō no kōkan", in *Geijutsu Shinchō*, no. 8-9, 1957.

94 Examination of the damaged area of the head shows that the statue is made of coarse clay mixed with vegetable fibres, covered with a fine-grain, high quality skim coat. The details of expression were sculpted and colours added. The surface elements probably became detached owing to the fire that consumed the temple.

95 *Spätantike*, I (1922). Also in her commentary in *Mission Pelliot*, II, *Toumchouq*, M. Hallade cites a statue from Tumshuq with a simi-

lar hairstyle to this one.

96 *Cf.* M. Bussagli, 1963, p. 70.

97 *Altbuddhistische*, fig. 104, p. 54.

98 *Ibid.*, fig. 351 (drawing), p. 153.

99 *Alt Kutscha*, pl. XLVIII.

100 *Spätantike*, V, 1926, pls. E, fig. 4 and 5.

101 See also the notes to plates 189 and 190, statues of the Heavenly Kings from Dunhuang.

102 *Ancient Khotan*, I, p. 252.

103 Laufer, B., *Chinese Clay Figures, Prolegomena to the History of Defensive Armour*, Chicago, 1914.

104 *Art of Central Asia*, III, pl. 49.

105 "Leather armour found in a tomb in Changsha (Hunan), dating from the 5th-3rd century BC", *Kaogu*, 1957, no. 1, quoted by Denès F., 1976, p. 59, note 2.

106 Tissot, F., 1985, p. 69.

107 *Bilderatlas*, fig. 46; Tissot, F., *op. cit.*, p. 75.

108 *Bilderatlas*, p. 11.

109 *Mission Pelliot*, I, *Toumchouq*, fig. 149-151.

110 *Ibid.*, fig. 436 and pl. T.32.

111 *Chotscho*, pl. 33.

112 Tissot, F., *op. cit.*, fig. 135.

113 *Spätantike*, V, pl. F.

114 *Ryūmon sekkutsu*, I, pl. 29 and 30. This image is noted as one of the most ancient in China by S. Matsuda "Tepyō jinshō-zō no kōsei: sono reiritsu to tenkai" (Forms of armour in the Guardian Kings of the Tenpyo period: origin and development), paper given at a conference, Tokyo, June 1991.

115 *Serindia*, pl. CXXXIII.

116 *Idykutschari*, pl. 111, fig. 1.

117 *Altbuddhistische*, fig. 654: a pair of lay figures in the Mucilinda cave.

118 *Central Asian Art*, Tokyo, 1991, pl. 81. Note in regard to this piece the same lack of definition in the carving of the veil over the chest, which seems better defined in the Shorchuk figurine through the preservation of the colouring.

119 Hackin, J., 1933, p. 12 and pl. XIV, fig. 17.

120 *Mission Pelliot*, II, *Toumchouq*, p. 141.

121 *Ibid.*, p. 165.

122 *Chotscho*, pl. 54.

123 *Mission Pelliot*, I, *Toumchouq*, fig. 388.

124 *Cf.* Photograph taken *in situ*, in *Mission Pelliot*, I, *Toumchouq*, pl X, fig. 5.

125 Chavannes, 1934, no. 500

126 Foucher, A., 1905, fig. 144.

127 Leemans, C. *Bōrō-Boudour dans l'Ile de Java*, Leyde (s.d.) pl. CXLIII.

128 *Jātaka*, VI, no. 547.

129 *Kijiru sekkutsu*, I, pl. 33 and pl. 60.

130 *Tonkō Makkokutsu*, I, pl. 166.

131 *The Oasis and Steppe Routes*, Nara, 1988, pl. 123.

132 *The Route of Buddhist Art*, Nara, 1988, pl. 1.

133 *Ibid.*, pl. 11.

134 *Gandhāran Art*, p. 175.

135 *Kijiru sekkutsu*, I, pl. 139.

136 *Kumutora sekkutsu*, pl. 160.

137 *Kijiru sekkutsu*, III, pl. 116.

138 *Along the Ancient Silk Routes*, New York, 1982, pl. 36, p. 104.

139 *Misison Pelliot*, I et II, *Toumchouq*, p. 182-186 and 368.

140 *Ibid.*, pp. 186-192.

141 *Mission Pelliot*, I, *Toumchouq* pl. LXVII.

142 *Cf.* Hallade; *Mission Pelliot*, I, *Toumchouq*, p. 367.

143 Feer, L., 1891.

144 *Cf.* for the first, Chavannes E., 1934, vol. III, no. 2.

145 *Kijiru sekkutsu*, I, Tokyo, 1983, pl. 37.

146 *Altbuddhistische*, fig. 138, p. 69.

147 *Tonkō Makkōkutsu*, I, pl. 194.

148 *Mission Pelliot*, I, *Toumchouq*, pl. 141, fig. 406.

149 *Idykutschari*, pl. XIX, 2; *Chotscho*, pl. 54, m and o.

150 *Gandharan Art*, pls. 316, 319 and 324; *Haḍḍa*, III, pl. 76c, 77, and 78.

151 *Mission Pelliot*, II, *Toumchouq*, p. 218.

152 *Altbuddhistische*, figs. 228 and 244.

153 *Ibid.*, figs. 262-265.

154 *Ibid.*, fig. 361.

155 *Bilderatlas*, figs. 181-184, p. 89.

156 *Mission Pelliot*, I, *Toumchouq*, pl. CXXXIV, fig. 370.

157 *Ibid.*, pl. CXXXIV, fig. 372.

158 Head of a bodhisattva; *cf. ibid.*, pl. CXLI, fig. 406.

159 For example, only to mention the German expeditions, see *Along the Ancient Silk Routes*, New York, 1982, pls. 52 to 54.

160 *Spätantike*, I, pl. 43c and e; Bhattacharya, 1977, nos. 23, 29 *etc.*.

161 *Spätantike*, I, pl. 42 c.

162 *Central Asian Art*, Tokyo, 1991, pl. 2.

163 A moulded polychrome terracotta plaque, now kept in New Delhi; *Serindia*, pl. CXXXIX, Ch.LV.I0012.

164 *Ibid.*, p. 894, 1075.

165 *Mission Pelliot*, I, *Toumchouq*, pp. 168 *sq.*.

166 Orbeli J. and Trever C., 1935, pl. 49.

167 For example, a bronze jug dating from the 1st century AD, discovered in Kent, England, *v. Master Bronzes from the Classical World*, the Fogg Art Musuem, Cambridge, Mass., 1968, no. 308.

168 Laboratory report from the Musées de France, 1963.

169 For example, the fact that the use of manganese is attested in Iran from the ninth century onwards, but does not appear in China until a later date. On the other hand, as regards the mastery of the glazes, the ceramic art of Iran and its eastern neighbour Bactria does use monochrome glazes, but these are applied directly without any underglaze. *Cf. Mission Pelliot, Toumchouq*, II, p. 333.

170 Ancient Khotan, II, pl. XLII (from Moji).

171 These institutions, among others, include the museums of Berlin, Tokyo, London and St. Petersburg.

172 Now in the collection of the Musée Guimet, these are a fragment of a Buddha head (MG.17228), a male donor's head (MG.171165) and a female head, from Tapa-i-Kafariha (MG.17382).

173 See, for example, the highly expressive colouring of a stucco Buddha head now in the British Museum: *v. Buddhism, Art and Faith*, London, 1985, pl. 126.

174 *Cf. Bosatsu*, Nara, 1987, pl. 21.

175 *Spätantike*. I, pl. 40.

176 *Ibid.*, pl. 20b.

177 For instance, the heads brought back by the Otani expedition; *v. Seiiki kōko zufu*, Tokyo, 1915, vol. 1, pls. 5 and 6 (1).

178 *Spätantike*, V, pl. E, fig. 4 and 5.

179 *Qingyang beishikusi*, Peking, 1985, pl. XV, fig. 2.

180 *Tonkō Makkōkutsu*, IV, pl. 127.

181 *Serindia*, IV, pl. CXXXI, Mi. XVIII.0010.

182 *Kumotura sekkutsu*, pls. 23, 25 and 29.

183 *v.* Paul Mus, 1935, pp. 577 *sq.*

184 Folkens Museum Etnografiska, Stockholm; published in G. Montell, 1938, pl. 1 *a-c*.

185 *Art of Central Asia*, vol. III, fig. 59.

186 For example, the seated buddha appearing in a stele dated 509 AD, in *The Route of Buddhist Art*, Nara, 1988, no. 72.

187 *The Art of Central Asia*, *op. cit.*, 1985, vol. III, pl. 115.

188 The arrangement of locks of hair is an important feature in sculpture, and may be of Gandhāran inspiration, showing moulded wavy strands or a decorative motif of "wave" patterns developed from this model, or may derive from the Gupta Indian tradition of tight, spiral curls.

189 *Spätantike*,VI, pl. 3a (fig. 1).

190 *Kijiru sekkutsu*, II, pl. 152.

191 Su Bai, 1983, pp. 162-178.

192 *Spätantike*, V, pl. 7a, p. 10; *v*, also *Along the Ancient Silk Routes*, pl. 39 and *Central Asian Art*, pls. 38-45.

193 *Kijiru sekkutsu*, pl. 56.

194 *Ibid.*, II, pl. 102, lower group on the left.

195 *Ibid.*, II, pl. 216.

196 *Alt Kutscha*, pls. XXXII-XXXIII.

197 *Spätantike*, VII, pl. 18.

198 *Chotscho*, pl. 39d; A. Foucher, II, 1905, fig. 533.
199 *Kijiru sekkutsu*, II, pls. 46 and 80.
200 *Spätantike*, VII, pl. V and p. 35f; also *Along the Ancient Silk Routes*, New York, 1982, pl. 18.
201 *Kijiru sekkutsu*, III, pl. 24.
202 *Kumotura sekkutsu*, pl. 197.
203 *Alt Kutscha*, pls. XI-XII, fig. 2.
204 *Ibid.*, pls. XI-XII, fig. 1.
205 *Mission Pelliot*, IV, *Koutcha*, (Hallade), p. 354.
206 Oldenberg, H., 1934, p. 176.
207 *Central Asian Art*, Tokyo, 1991, from the Museum für Indische Kunst, Berlin, SMPK, pl. 33.
208 *Spätantike*, VII, pls. 8 and 9, *etc.*.
209 *Mahā-parinirvāṇa-sūtra*, a Sanskrit text discovered in Central Asia (*cf.* E. Waldschmidt, 1948; A. Bareau, 1970).
210 After Grünwedel, *Alt Kutscha*, pl. XXV, fig. 1; and commentary, pp. II, 47.
211 *Central Asian Art*, Tokyo, 1991, pl. 8.
212 *Spätantike*, VII, pls. II and IV, pl. 19 and 21.
213 *Alt Kutscha*, pls. I to XII.
214 *Ibid.*, pls. III, IV, fig. 1/5.
215 *Ibid.*, pp. II, 104, pl. XLII-XLIII.
216 *Ibid.*, pl. XXV-XXVIII and commentary, pp. II, 63 *sq.*, "The story of Dhurta, the cobbler".
217 *Alt Kutscha*, pl. XXIV-XXV, fig. 3.
218 *Ibid.*, pl. XLII-XLIII.
219 See also a sketch of the typology of throne rugs based on Kuchean examples in *Spätantike*, VI, 1928, p. 32.
220 A. Foucher, 1905, vol. 1, fig. 208, p. 412.
221 *Kijiru sekkutsu*, II, pl. 116.
222 See the table of themes depicted in the caves: Ding Mingyi and Ma Shichang, "Kijiru sekkutsu no butsuden hekiga", "Illustrations of the life of the Buddha on wall-paintings at the Kizil grottoes", *Kijiru sekkutsu*, III, p. 200.
223 *Alt Kutscha*, pl. XXVIII.
224 *Ibid.*, pls. XLII-XLIII and p. II, 104.
225 *Xinjiang shiku yishu* (The art of the Xinjiang caves), The Xinjiang Photographic Art Publishing House, 1989, pl. 73; and *Kijiru sekkutsu*, III, pl. 70.
226 *Gandhāran Art of Pakistan*, pp. 282 and 544.
227 *Spätantike*, VI, pl. 16; *Central Asian Art*, Tokyo, 1991, no. 27.
228 *Spätantike*, VII, pl. 20.
229 *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śāstra*, *Taishō*, XXV, no. 1509, p. 302 *b,c*.
230 Cave 196: *v. Quici yeuwu bihua* (Music and dance in the wall-paintings of Kucha), Xinjiang People's Publishing House, 1986, pl. 48; cave 1: *Kijiru sekkutsu*, III, pl. 171.
231 *Kumotura sekkutsu*, pl. 26 and 28.
232 *Kijiru sekkutsu*, III, pl. 163.
233 *Along the Ancient Silk Routes*, New York 1982, pl. 59.
234 *Idykutshari*, fig. 35.
235 *Art of Central Asia*, I, pl. 11, and II, pl. 12.
236 M. Bussagli, 1963, illustrated page 91.
237 *Mission Pelliot*, VIII, *Sites divers de la région de Koutcha*, pp. 30, 40-41.
238 *Ibid.*, p. 32.
239 *Spätantike*, VI, pl. 11; *Alt Kutscha*, pls. XLIV-XLV.
240 *Altbuddhistische*, fig. 201, p. 89.
241 *Spätantike*, VI, pl. 15; *Kijiru sekkutsu*, III, pl. 224.
242 *Spätantike*, III, pl. 12; *ibid.*, VII, pl. 30.
243 See, for example, the narrative reliefs of Gandhāra and India, such as the east gate of the Sāñci *stūpa*, showing the conversion of the Kāśyapas, B. Rowland, 1977, pl. 47, p. 103.
244 *Kijiru sekkutsu*, II, pl. 145.
245 *Ibid.*, III, pl. 2.
246 *Ibid.*, I, pl. 179.
247 E. Lamotte, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse*, Louvain, 1944, vol. I, p. 89.
248 *Kijiru sekkutsu*, I, pl. 161-162.
249 G. J. Pinault, 1991, pp. 227-251.
250 *Bilderatlas*, pp. 39-44.
251 *Ibid.*, fig. 11.
252 *Kijiru sekkutsu*, III, pls. 75-76.
253 Both these terms encountered in the Hōryū-ji inventary are descriptive: *oshidashi dōzō* ("image in repoussé bronze") and *oshidashi sen-butsu* ("repoussé image of the thousand Buddhas"); *cf.* amongst other works on this subject, which are generally based on the same historical information: the exhibition catalogue, *Oshidashi-butsu to butsu-zō no kata*, Nara, 1983, p. 3.
254 See also S. Omura, 1915, p. 146.
255 Faxian [not the monk of the same name who travelled to India in 399.] did not actually visit Kucha.
256 This is confirmed by the presence of holes corresponding to the rivets used for fixing on a rigid support (probably a wooden panel?): one of these is found at the edge of the halo, a second at the left shoulder, a third, which retains the head of the nail, is visible at the wrist.
257 *Gandhāran Art*, fig. 324 (Lahore Museum); *Haḍḍa*, III, fig. 76*c*.
258 *Ibid.*, pl. XLIV-XLV.
259 The generic term qualifying these matrices is *butsuzō no kata*, mentioned in a59ocument from the Shōsō-in in Nara; *cf. Shōsō-in hōmotsu, nansō* (*Treasures of Shōsō-in, the southern section*), Tokyo, 1961, pl. 109, p. 34.
260 The technique usually requires finishing with a chisel to accentuate and enliven the lines of the design, and thus shows the link with gold-smithery.
261 *Oshidashi-butsu*, exhibition catalogue, Nara, 1983, pl. 37.
262 S. Matsubara, 1966: pl. 216b (private collection), pl. 217a (MOA Museum, Atami) and pl. 217b (private collection).
263 See, for example, the gilded plaque depicting a triad in the Nezu Museum; in *Shin Seizanshō seishō: Nezu Bijutsukan meihin shūsei, Kanshō-hen*, Tokyo, Nezu Bijutsukan, 1987, p. 66, pl. 291.
264 In the collection of the Asian Art Museum, San Francisco; S. Matsubara, *op. cit.*, pl. 29a; see also A. Soper, *Chinese, Korean and Japanese Sculptures in the Avery Brundage Collection*, Asian Art Museum, San Francisco, 1974, p. 22.
265 *Chūgoku bukkyō chōzō*, exhibition catalogue, Osaka, 1984, Osaka Municipal Museum, pl. 155.
266 *Kotscho*, III, pl. 58-4.
267 *Central Asian Art*, Tokyo, 1991, pl. 145.
268 *Oshidashi-butsu (Hōryū-ji kennō hōmotsu tokubetsu chōsa gaihō)*, Tokyo Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan (Tokyo National Museum), 1984.
269 H. Yasuda, 1981, pp. 30-48.
270 *Cf. Alt Kutscha*, pl. XXXV.
271 H. Motamedi, 1978, no. 117, pl. 4.
272 N. Kumagai, 1962, vol. V, pl. CXX, p. 75.
273 A. Priest, 1944, pl. LXXX.
274 N. Kumagai, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-7.
275 A.Foucher, I, p. 273.
276 *Art of Central Asia*, III, pl. 117, pp. 336-337.
277 *Ancient Khotan*, I, p. 207; II, pl. XLVII.
278 E. Matsumoto, "Kongōbu-ji makurahonzo setsu" (The Makura-Honzon of the Kongōbu-ji), *Kokka*, no. 489, 1931, p. 249.
279 *Scythian Period*, Leiden, 1949, pp. 126 *et sq.*.
280 Preaching Buddha in the Gai collection, Peshawar. Late Gandhāran art, around the 4th century; *v. Gandhāran Art*, fig. 345.
281 *The Art of Central Asia, op.cit.*, vol. III, pl. 1, pp. 281-284.
282 B. I. Marshak, and V. I. Raspopova, 1988, 2, p. 142, fig. 3; *id.*, 1990, fig. 3.
283 As felt in certain elements in the images from this region: cf. C. Bautze-Picron, 1990, p. 83, n.34.
284 *Spätantike*, 1922, I, pl. 20a and 22. Also *Along the Ancient Silk Routes*, New York, 1982, pl. 11 (h. 38 cm); *Kijiru sekkutsu*, III, pl. 192 (h. 32 cm).
285 Already noted by Hallade, in *Mission Pelliot*, IV, p. 224.
286 Thus, for example, a schist head of Hārīti from Sahri-Bahlol, in *Gandhāran Art*, p. 342; and the famous smiling bodhisattva, also carved in schist, in the Musée Guimet (MG.18915), in I. Kurita, *Gandhāra bijutsu, II, The World of the Buddha*, Tokyo, 1990, fig. 181.
287 *Spätantike*, I, pl. 19, fig. *a*.
288 *Kijiru sekkutsu*, II, pl. 166 and sketch, fig. 43*p*, p. 245.

289 *The Oasis and Steppe Routes*, Nara, 1988, pl. 34.
290 *Central Asian Art*, Tokyo, 1991, pl. 60.
291 *Alt Kutscha*, pls. I-XII.
292 The number EO.1198 has been erroneously given this work in the title to this plate.
293 *Kijiru sekkutsu*, III, pls. 227-228.
294 *Mission Pelliot*, IV, *Koutcha*, p. 235.
295 *Alt Kutscha*, pls. VII and VIII.
296 *Serindia*, IV, pls. CXXXV, Mi.xii.007, Mi.xii.003 et Mi.x.0012.
297 *Ibid.*, pl. XLVII, ch.006.
298 *Alt Kutscha*, pl. XLVIII.
299 *Altbuddhistische*, fig. 51, p. 24.
300 *Mission Pelliot*, I, *Toumchouq*, pl. LXVII, fig. 169.
301 *Serindia*, IV, pls. CXXVII, Mi.ix.001; and *Art of Central Asia*, III, pl. 117.
302 Pelliot, in his diary of the 7th June, tells that just when he was on the point of ending the excavation of the great monastery, he discovered "a funerary box in perfect condition, wrapped in an animal hide" in a grave located between the compound wall and the large *stūpa*.
303 Akiyama, T., 1957, in which pieces A, B, & D are presented; *Mission Pelliot*, III et IV, *Koutcha*; we must also draw attention to the research undertaken by S. Gaulier on the four models of relic-boxes.
304 We draw particular attention to one of these funerary boxes, unusually large (overall height 31 cm; diameter 38 cm), which was brought to Japan by the Otani expedition and is now housed in the Tokyo National Museum.
The first Otani expedition (Tetsunobu Watanabe) discovered an identical box decorated with silver leaf in the ruins of Subashi in 1903, *i.e.* prior to Pelliot's visit. The *Shinsaiikiki* gives, however, no more detailed provenance for this box, about which one can only say that it must have come from the region of Kucha. At the time of its discovery, it was covered with a layer of orange and grey pigments, added with the apparent intention of making the box fit for re-use; only the border was decorated with silver leaf. Little attention was paid the box in this condition, until 1955, when its original colours and decoration were discovered. The surface layer was removed during painstaking restoration work, to reveal its remarkable decoration. The lid consists of four medallions, each surrounded by a ring of pearls, in which are depicted naked and winged angel-musicians, while eleven brightly-coloured figures are painted dancing and making music around the body of the box (*cf.* N. Kumagai, 1957).
305 Such funerary boxes are offered by bodhisattvas in the depictions of the sharing-out of the relics found in the 'Māyā cave, site III' and in the 'Cave of the sixteen sword-bearers' at Kyzyl, and also in the north cave of the third gorge at Kumtura.
306 As regards the results of this type of research, we refer the reader to an article by Madeleine Hours, then director of the L.R.M.F., published in 1959 in the *Annales du Laboratoire*, on the study of boxes C and D (pl. 183 and 184) using infra-red and X-ray techniques. Two members of the Laboratory, Sylvie Colinart and Myriam Eveno, studied minute samples from all four boxes using ultra-violet light, infra-red reflectography and scanning electron microscopy. We are extremely grateful to the Laboratory for giving us access to the detailed reports of this study and numerous photographs, between June 1992 and January 1993. We have relied on the skill of Kazuo Yamazaki for the translation of technical terms used in the presentation of the principal results that we include in this commentary.
307 According to historians of Far-Eastern music, no other example of such a flattened drum, carried on the shoulder in this way, is known. It would therefore be natural to think – and the shape of the stick that the figure holds in his right hand lends weight to this idea – that this is an error in the drawing, which in fact represents the two ends of a single drum that is usually held in the arms.
308 *Cf.* S. Gaulier's interpretation, and the commentary on the funerary box A, note 1, *Mission Pelliot*, III et IV, *Koutcha*.
309 *Cf.* note 4, plate 181.
310 The exhibition was entitled "Pièces inédites de la mission Pelliot: Sculptures et peintures d'Asie Centrale" ("Unpublished pieces from the Pelliot Collection: Sculptures and Paintings from Central Asia"); *cf.* T. Akiyama, 1957, in which I cited the dimensions from the catalogue as 14 x 20.5 cm. Following the examination of the box undertaken last year, it appears that the dimensions should be those of box D (pl. 184).
311 M. Hours, 1959. These infra-red photographs were included in the plates in the *Bulletin du groupe de recherche sur Pelliot* ("Perio chōsadan hōkoku"), 1961 (*cf.* note 1 of the commentary on funerary box A); the pictorial reconstruction established by S. Gaulier appears in *Mission Pelliot, IV, Koutcha*, 1982.
312 *Mission Paul Pelliot, IV, Douldour-âqour et Soubachi*, text (1982), chap. VI, "Les boîtes funéraires de Soubachi", pp. 336-339.
313 *Ibid*, p. 434, fig. Y4.
314 *Dunhuang de yishu baozang*, Beijing, Hong-Kong, 1980, "Sculptures", pl. 15.
315 *Tonkō Makkōkutsu*, II, pl. 172.
316 *Ibid.*, II, pl. 125.
317 *Ibid.*, III, pl. 128.
318 *Ibid.*, III, pl. 96.
319 *Ibid.*, IV, pl. 44.
320 *Ibid.*, IV, pl. 43.
321 *Ibid.*, IV, pl. 52.
322 *Ibid.*, IV, pl. 12.
323 For instance, a monumental polychrome wooden statue of Guanyin in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts has a similarly prominent nose, large in proportion to the forehead, and a full face with rapidly receding volumes; *cf.* O. Siren, *La sculpture chinoise du Ve au XIe siècle*, vol. IV, Paris and Brussels, 1926, pl. 591.
324 *Tonkō Makkōkutsu, op. cit.*, vol. V (supplementary volume), pp. 75-76.
325 Op. cit., Vol. V, pl. cxiv (for cave 265) and pl. cxx (for cave 263).
326 B. Frank, 1991, p. 184.
327 Such a scene is expressively illustrated in an ink drawing on paper, kept in New Delhi; *Serindia*, fig. XCII, and also E. Matsumoto, 1937, pl. CXXII, p. 123.
328 *Bilderatlas*, p. 10, fig. 74.
329 We need only refer to the later Japanese images of the *Butsuzō zui* to see that a relative freedom qualifies the attributes ascribed to the kings.
330 *Ryūmon sekkutsu*, II, pls. 42, 43.
331 *Tonkō Makkōkutsu*, II, pl. 46.
332 *Ibid.*, III, pl. 17.
333 *Ibid.*, III, pl. 127.
334 *Ibid.*, IV, pl. 47.
335 Cave Longxiangjiangjun dong, in *Ryūmon sekkutsu*, pl. 200.
336 We follow here the excellent links identified by F. Denès, 1976, p. 55.
337 These three stages are illustrated by I. Kurita in *Gandhāra bijutsu* II: *Budda no sekai (Gandhāran Art* II: *"The world of the Buddha")*, pls. 219, 195 and 330.
338 *Along the Ancient Silk Route*, New York, 1985, pl. 152.
339 According to D. Seckel, 1980, p. 163-164, this could be the product of an influence of Indian art from Mathurā. For an illustration of these reliefs of Païtava, the reader is referred to a stele illustrating the great miracle at Srāvasti in B. Rowland, 1977, pl. 68.
340 *Along the Ancient Silk Routes*, New York, 1985, pl. 49.
341 *Serindia*, pl. XIV; Kha, vi. 6.
342 *Central Asian Art*, Tokyo, 1991, pl. 55.
343 *Spätantike*, vol. I, pls. 42 and 43.
344 J.-C. Harle, 1986, pl. 77.
345 *Ibid.*, pl. 84.
346 *Spätantike*, vol. I, pl. 38.
347 *Serindia*, pl. CXXXIV, Mi.xi.0021.
348 *Hexi shiku*, 1987, pls. 56 and 121.