

agrees closely with the Paradise picture (Ch. xxxviii. 004), of which Plate VII shows a complete reproduction. To the latter, therefore, reference may be made as regards the general arrangement of the celestial scene with its central Buddha flanked by two principal Bodhisattvas, &c., and that of the marginal scenes, which in both paintings tell the story of Kalyāṇamkara and Pāpamkara, as contained in texts of the Chinese Tripitaka.

The portion of the painting actually shown in our Plate represents at the top the attendant host of Bodhisattvas, seated or kneeling by the side of the altar which occupies a central position on the terrace. A projecting part of this terrace serves as platform for the performance of the celestial dancer and carries at either front corner the figure of a Garuḍa playing on a musical instrument, apparently pipe and clappers. The whole of the terrace is clearly shown as of wooden construction and as raised on sloping piles above the waters of the lotus lake. An unusual feature is the grouping of the divine musicians on two separate terraces in the bottom corners. They are six on each side and play on harp, lute, syrinx and Chinese mouth-organ, whistle-pipe, and clappers. Behind the musicians are trees with pear-shaped leaves and groups of conventional pink and white flowers. From the lake rise reborn souls in the shape of infants carried on open lotuses. The face and gesture of the one seen on the left below the railing of the main terrace admirably express the awakening consciousness of the newly born soul.

Throughout the picture the workmanship is highly finished, and the delicacy of the drawing, especially in the features of the Bodhisattvas, deserves notice. The prevailing colours are, as usual, shades of crimson and dull green; but these are enlivened by the white of the flesh of all divine figures and the orange, pale blue, and purple used on stoles and haloes.

The legendary scenes on the sides which M. Chavannes first identified from the cartouches, here fortunately bearing Chinese inscriptions,³ display throughout purely Chinese style in the dress and attitudes of figures, &c. The figure of the kneeling lady in the left bottom compartment is the portrait of a donatrix and may claim special interest. Her costume and coiffure agree closely with those of the donatrices in two paintings bearing exact dates of the second half of the ninth century A.D.,⁴ while they show a marked difference from the far more elaborate fashion displayed by the ladies who appear in our numerous dated pictures of the tenth century. I have had occasion to call attention elsewhere to the very helpful *indicia* which changing fashions in the dress and coiffure of donatrices, and to a lesser extent in those of donor figures also, supply for the chronology of the Ch'ien-fo-tung pictures.⁵

PLATE VII

THE PARADISE OF ŚĀKYAMUNI

THIS painting (Ch. xxxviii. 004), reproduced here on the scale of two-sevenths, is practically complete and in a very fair state of preservation, still retaining its border of yellowish-green silk. As already mentioned in the description of the preceding Plate, it represents the Paradise of a Buddha in whom M. Petrucci recognizes Śākyamuni, the historical Buddha.⁶ The ordinance of the celestial assemblage is simple, though showing some peculiar features. The presiding Buddha, with legs interlocked and both hands in the *vitarka-mudrā*, occupies a lotus seat in the centre and faces the draped altar. By him we see seated two principal Bodhisattvas, alike in appearance and dress but with hands in different poses. According to M. Petrucci's view based on the inscriptions of a much-reduced presentation of the same Paradise (Ch. xxxiii. 001), we may identify the Bodhisattva on the left with Ākāśagarbha and the one on the right with Kṣitigarbha. Between them and the Buddha is shown on each side

³ See *Serindia*, Appendix A, pp. 1434 sqq.

⁴ See particularly the painting, Ch. lv. 0023, of A.D. 864 reproduced in Plate XVI.

⁵ Cf. *Serindia*, pp. 850, 885, 888.

⁶ See *Serindia*, p. 1410.