

a small shaven disciple, of childlike appearance with hands in adoration. Above the heads of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas are seen canopies carried by pairs of trees and encircled by big flowers, and behind them appears the pavilion with boldly upturned eaves which represents the celestial mansion, the habitation of blessed souls. In the air above and carried on clouds float the small figures of four Buddhas amidst a sprinkling of orange flowers.

On the main terrace in front of the triad we see a dancer performing in spirited movement. Its rhythmic rapidity is happily conveyed by the graceful scroll-lines of the scarf she waves freely in her hands. On either side four Bodhisattvas occupy lotus seats with hands folded in adoration. Pairs of musicians sit in front of them, playing on a reed-organ, lute, psaltery, and clappers. Gangways lead down from the terrace to the lotus lake. Its bottom corners are occupied by Garuda figures, half human half bird, standing on rocks and displaying plummy semi-floral tails, with hands folded in adoration.

Most of the foreground is filled by a large isolated terrace carrying in the centre a subsidiary Buddha, an arrangement which is peculiar. On his right is seated a small Bodhisattva adoring, while to his left the corresponding place is taken by a haloed disciple with shaven head and hands in the same pose. He wears monkish robes with the addition of a necklace, and thus presents the appearance peculiar in our paintings to Kṣitigarbha, as seen in Plates xxv, xxxix, xl. This distinctly supports the view of M. Petrucci, who takes the group below for a repetition of the principal triad and accordingly identifies the Bodhisattva to the left with Ākāśagarbha and the Buddha with Śākyamuni. The appearance of the Buddha is very unusual; for the crimson robe lined with white, which covers him closely to the neck, shows the red disc of the Sun painted on the left shoulder, the white disc of the Moon (with the tree of immortality) on the right shoulder, and Mount Meru on the front of the body, flanked by a man's figure on either side.⁷

The marginal scenes of the painting, eleven in all, are taken, as mentioned above, from the legend of Kalyāṇaṃkara and Pāpaṃkara. Their detailed interpretations were to have been furnished in the volume which M. Chavannes was preparing on a selection of our paintings for publication in the *Mémoires concernant l'Asie orientale* with the help of materials left behind by M. Petrucci.⁸ In the absence of such guidance it must suffice here to point out the purely Chinese style of all details in these scenes, including the curving hill ranges and pine-clad cliffs which serve to separate them.

A broad band resembling a tessellated pavement divides the main picture and side scenes from a panel below, which shows the donors kneeling on either side of what was the space left for a dedicatory inscription completely effaced or, perhaps, never written. On the right kneels a row of six men wearing loose belted coats of different colours, while on the left we see in front a bald-headed aged figure which may be meant either for a monk or a nun; behind it a lady alone, and in the third rank three others of more youthful appearance. Behind these again are three boys with their hair done in round tufts above the temples.

Here, too, the costumes are of interest as affording indications as to the approximate date of the painting. Among the men's we may note that, whereas three wear black hats with wide side-flaps such as are found regularly on the heads of donors in our tenth-century pictures, the other three wear the black lobed and tailed caps which are common in the side scenes and the banners representing legendary incidents of Gautama Buddha's life (see Pls. xii, xiii, xxxvii). Of the costumes in these representations I have, as I believe, shown that they go back to a period distinctly earlier than the bulk of our pictures from the 'Thousand Buddhas'.⁹ The chronological observation regarding our painting (Ch. xxxviii. 004) is borne out still more clearly by the fashion which the donatrices display. The elaborate head-dress worn by the ladies in all tenth-century pictures is conspicuously absent, and the hair is done plain in a flat round topknot or in a large backward-waving crest just as in the donatrix figures of the picture dated A.D. 864 and reproduced in Plate xvi.

⁷ For an interpretation of the symbolic meaning of this representation, cf. M. Petrucci's 'Essai' (*Les Maṇḍalas*), *Serindia*, Appendix E, p. 1411.

⁸ See *Serindia*, p. 835.

⁹ Cf. *Serindia*, p. 850 sq.