

The legendary scenes which appear on the side of the painting are preserved in a very fragmentary condition and still await interpretation. But that they are connected with a statue representing Śākyamuni on the Vulture Peak seems clear. In the background of the top scene there appears a statue of a Buddha in the same pose as the central figure, with the right arm stretched down stiffly. To the left, in front of a building (temple?), stands a shaven priest, pointing out the statue with his raised arm to passers-by below. In the foreground is seen a man in brown coat and top boots riding a mule with its legs hidden behind hilly ground. Behind him a white elephant, with a load of yellow objects, but rider or driver no longer visible, proceeds in the same direction to the left. On that side appear the roughly drawn figures of two men with black beards and shocks of black hair.

The next scene below is even more puzzling. In the middle are seen a pair of colossal hands rising from the ground and enclosing a human head in red. To the right four conical objects, suggesting tents and striped horizontally, form a row; a large vermilion pennon is shown above one of them. Behind them a man on a dark grey horse is seen riding rapidly. His right arm is raised as if to strike, and two mounted attendants follow him. The foreground to the left shows on a green slope a row of unexplained leaf-shaped objects, and above this two semi-naked figures incomplete.

Very curious is the bottom scene. The God of Thunder appears above on a cloud within a ring of drums which he beats in violent movement. In the centre, before a background of rocks, is shown a large Buddha statue within a scaffolding of vermilion poles. That the statue represents Śākyamuni on Gr̥dhra-kūṭa is made certain by the downstretched right arm and also by the characteristic pose of the left hand, which gathers up the drapery in an 'ear' at the breast, just as the figure in Plates XIV and XXXIV shows it. On either side of the scaffolding is perched a man, busy with his hands at the statue's head and steadying himself with one foot at its shoulder. At the back of a building on the left a man seems to give instructions to the workers, while at the foot of the statue there squats a small figure with arms and legs outspread like the Thunder-god's. The latter's figure in fury is shown again by a small detached fragment below.

For a conjectural explanation of the scaffolding, which might be connected with some miraculous translation of a sacred statue, reference to *Serindia* must suffice here.²⁸ But whatever the legend represented in our side scenes may prove to be, we cannot fail to note the striking contrast between the stiff hieratic image and the life and vigour in the rest of the picture.

PLATE XIV

IMAGES OF BUDDHAS AND BODHISATTVAS

THE large but unfortunately poorly preserved silk painting (Ch. xxii. 0023), of which this Plate reproduces remains of the left-side portion, on the scale of one-third, presents exceptional iconographic interest. It shows numerous Buddha and Bodhisattva images arranged in separate compartments and drawn in an Indian style which is unmistakably derived from the Graeco-Buddhist art of Gandhāra. As first recognized by M. Petrucci from the few Chinese inscriptions still legible in the cartouches,²⁹ the figures were intended to reproduce sculptured images worshipped at various sacred sites of India. Eleven of them appear in the portion of the painting as shown by the Plate, and seven more are traceable partly above this portion or in detached fragments.³⁰ In the case of six the characteristic poses or attributes enable us at present to identify with certainty the particular

²⁸ Cf. *Serindia*, p. 880.

²⁹ See Petrucci, *Annales du Musée Guimet*, xli. pp. 121 sqq.

³⁰ Plate LXX of *Serindia* shows the left half of the painting as originally opened out and mounted at the

British Museum. As regards certain slight modifications of the arrangement effected in the course of the final mounting and now seen in our Plate, the detailed description of the painting in *Serindia*, pp. 1024 sqq., may be referred to.