

is revealed the individual touch of a master, and the skill and taste of the craftsmen who reproduced his work make it easy for us to recognize the merits of the lost original.

The design in our hanging has been worked solid throughout in satin-stitch. The embroidery has been executed with admirable care and the silks used have remained clean and glossy.⁷² The ground is a coarse natural-coloured linen faced with light buff silk. This has mostly worn off in the interspaces of figures. Two of the figures, too, representing monkish disciples, having fallen along the line of folding, while the hanging was stored away and crushed for long centuries, have perished except for remains of the heads. Otherwise the picture is practically complete, and neither the effect of the whole nor that of characteristic features of treatment is impaired.

Śākyamuni stands facing the spectator with his feet on a lotus. His right arm hangs stiffly by his side with the fingers stretched downwards and the palm turned to the side. The arm wrapped in the folds of the glowing red mantle holds an 'ear' of it gathered at the breast. The mantle closely draped about the body falls in a point to below the knees and allows a light green under-robe to be seen thence to the ankles. The yellow lining of the mantle shows in a rippling edge along the outline of the left arm and down the body, a device which is familiar already to Gandhāra sculpture. The right shoulder and arm are left bare and are painted a deep golden yellow. The Buddha's face is shown in light buff and, curiously enough, the right forearm as well. This distinction is emphasized in the case of the latter by the work being executed in thin rows of chain-stitch and is obviously intentional. But its iconographic significance is for the present uncertain.⁷³ Behind the head, with its narrow, slightly slanting eyes and hair of very dark indigo, appears a nimbus in plain rings of variegated colours. A narrow halo shaped like a lotus petal, similarly coloured, surrounds the whole figure, and behind this again appears a border of rocks emblematic of the Vulture Peak.

By the side of the Buddha stand pairs of disciples and Bodhisattvas, both on lotuses. The latter, who may represent Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāma, turn three-fourths towards him; the one on the left with hands in adoration, the other with both arms slightly advanced from the elbows and the right hand held as if in the *vara-mudrā*. The dress and adornments of these figures conform to those of Bodhisattvas of the 'Indian' type as already noticed, but are drawn more trimly. A certain stiffness and simplicity in their design suggest close affinity to Indian models. But in the Bodhisattvas' faces we notice the influence of Chinese style, as also in the ornamental borders of their dress.

Of the disciples' figures in the background enough remains to show that their heads were shaven and haloed and their dress that of monks, with mantles barred with cross-stripes. The face of the one on the Buddha's left was lined and frowning, which suggests identity with Kāśyapa; the other with face plump and benign may represent Śāriputra. By the side of the small and somewhat stiff canopy above Śākyamuni's head are seen two graceful Apsaras floating down with outspread arms, borne up by fine cloud scrolls and their billowing stoles. Their resemblance to the Apsaras of Plates x and xi is striking.

Below the Buddha's feet there kneels on either side a small lion of conventional type with one forepaw lifted. Below them again is a panel for a dedication, which, however, has never been worked in. Of the narrow cartouches placed by each line of donors, only the two foremost on the men's side bear Chinese characters, now mostly illegible.

The groups of donors on either side of the panel, disposed in strict symmetry, present special interest by their life-like treatment and by their costumes. This is easily seen from Plate xxxv, which reproduces the group of the ladies on the more adequate scale of two-

⁷² Some idea of the labour implied by the execution of the embroidery may be formed from the fact that the careful remounting of the hanging on a fresh canvas backing, which became necessary at the British Museum for its preservation, kept the expert employed on this task, Miss E. A. Winter, of the Royal School of Needlework, occupied for over three months.

⁷³ Some connexion might perhaps be sought with an early legend relating to Śākyamuni's stay on Gr̥dhra-kūṭa. While engaged in meditation within a grotto, he was believed to have pushed his right arm through its rock-wall in order to reassure his disciple Ānanda, whom Māra, in the shape of a vulture, had frightened; cf. Foucher, *L'art gréco-bouddhique du Gandhāra*, i. p. 497.