

in Plate xxvi. It appears also on the corslet, which is edged by bands of lacquered plate, while the forearm guards and what is visible of the greaves show oblong scales secured by transverse bands. The whole armour is gilded. Decorated flaps, probably of shaped leather, descend over the hips and are joined in front by a stomacher in the shape of a hawk or eagle mask. The shoulder-pieces end in a lion head, through the jaws of which the arm passes. Gilded shoes cover the feet.

The high three-leaved crown on Vaiśravaṇa's head, with the wing-shaped ornament at the top and the white streamers flying up at the sides, unmistakably recalls the royal head-dress of Sassanian times.⁹² The flames rising from his shoulders are an emblem also likely to have an Iranian origin.⁹³ Their flickering tongues, like the fluttering streamers and the freely floating stole, emphasize the Guardian-king's rapid movement.

The same curling maroon cloud on which Vaiśravaṇa advances carries also his retinue of varied aspects. Before him to the right we see the graceful figure of a nymph bowing and presenting a dish of flowers. Her identity is uncertain; in form and attire she resembles the 'Nymph of Virtue' we have already met in the paintings of the Thousand-armed Avalokiteśvara.⁹⁴ Of her rich attire may be specially noted the wide sleeves which almost sweep the ground, the acanthus-like leaves covering her shoulders, and the wreaths thrown over her arms.

The *cortège* behind the Lokapāla consists partly of demons, evidently representing the Yakṣas over whom he rules, and partly of figures purely human, which are clearly individualized but still await definite identification. Of the former, two in the background have the heads of monsters, with fiery hair and tusked jaws. One of them carries Vaiśravaṇa's flag of the same elaborate design we have noted in Plate xxvi. Another demon in front of the pair, with brown skin, hairy arms, and animal-like head wrapped in a scarlet hood, carries a large round jar covered at its mouth. A fourth in the foreground, with ferocious animal head and long upstanding hair, carries a club and wears a Lokapāla's armour over a richly embroidered scarlet coat.

Among the human attendants the most striking figure is that of a finely drawn aged man. He is clad only in a white skirt, with a scarf across the breast. His hair is tied in a topknot and is white, like his eyebrows and beard, all painted with minute care. His sunken features and the sidelong glance of his eyes are expressively rendered. In his right hand he carries a gilded cup (or Vajra?). Behind him we see a portly male figure with placid clean-shaven face and a high mitre-like head-dress from which drapery falls behind on the neck. He wears a green robe over what looks like a coat brocaded in a 'Sassanian' pattern and carries a flaming jewel on a gilded stand.

In the rear is a bearded muscular archer, preparing to shoot at a bat-like demon in the sky high up to the right. In the latter we can safely recognize a Garuḍa, the hunting of whom is a frequent motif in Turkeṣtān frescoes, and whose winged figure is well known to Graeco-Buddhist sculpture also.⁹⁵ The drawing of the archer's figure as he bends down to fit the arrow to the bow, while his gaze follows the flying Garuḍa, is remarkably firm and vigorous. On his head he carries a high conical cap of white, with metal boss at the top and wide upstanding brim. His dress comprises a blue tunic which leaves the right arm and breast bare, white breeches, and black top-boots. His purposeful figure in movement is cleverly set off by the serene appearance of a man standing in front with hands folded in adoration. He wears a full-sleeved maroon jacket over a flowing white under-robe and over his smooth black hair a gilded tiara of peculiar shape.

The special powers of Chinese pictorial art pervading the whole picture manifest themselves with particular clearness in the masterly spacing of the background. This shows the greenish-brown sea heaving in majestically rolling ridges of white-crested waves. Far away in admirably conveyed distance rises a range of blue and green mountains,

⁹² Cf. also above, p. 39.

⁹³ Cf. *Serindia*, p. 874.

⁹⁴ See Plates xvii, xlii.

⁹⁵ Cf. Grünwedel, *Alt buddhistische Kultstätten*, pp. 282, 351, Fig. 583; Foucher, *L'art gréco-bouddhique du Gandhāra*, ii. pp. 32 sqq.