

Tantric monstrosities cherished by Tibetan Buddhism is unmistakable. In the tank between this pair there rise two armour-clad Nagas, divinities of the water, upholding Avalokitesvara's disc.

We find this scheme of the Thousand-armed Avalokitesvara and the divinities constituting his 'Mandala' or assemblage treated still more elaborately and with a glorious richness of colour in another large and fortunately fairly well preserved painting (Fig. 105). It measures fully seven by five and a half feet. I cannot go here into all the details of this very sumptuous composition. To the divinities depicted in the preceding picture there are added here more Bodhisattvas in symmetrically arranged groups, the gods Indra and Brahman of Hindu mythology, besides monstrous divinities of distinctly Sivaitic character. The bottom corners are occupied by larger groups of divinities, with a female deity in each. Below these again are shown pairs of gorgeously attired Regents of the Quarters. Here, too, the lower edge of the painting shows demonic figures straddling against a background of flames. The skill in the ordinance of the whole is great, and the wealth of colour treatment equals it in effect.

Compared with these sumptuous Avalokitesvara pictures, a large painting (Fig. 104) showing four forms of that Bodhisattva in a row above and the Bodhisattvas Samantabhadra on his white elephant and Manjusri on his lion below, looks rather stiff and plain. But it has an interest of its own; for it is the oldest exactly dated painting, the dedicatory inscription indicating the year A.D. 864. A quasi-antiquarian interest is imparted to the picture by the bottom panel showing the donors and their ladies, two of them