

all will provide many a crux for expert authorities on Buddhist iconography. But even before this detailed analysis is attempted it is easy to recognize three broad categories of the divine personages represented—Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and Lokapalas or 'Guardians of the Worlds.'

The very small number of pictures showing Gautama Buddha or corresponding epiphanies in earlier or future cycles cannot cause surprise; for from an early period other divine figures claimed far more attention in Buddhist worship, especially in the Mahayana system which prevailed from Gandhara right through Central Asia into China. Its favourite objects were the Bodhisattvas or 'Buddhas elect' in their inexhaustible multiplicity, and these we find abundantly represented on our banners. Rich adornment in dress and jewelry is common to all these princely incarnations of Buddhas past or future, with the single exception of Kshitigarbha, who curiously enough figures in the costume of a monk.

A certain number of the Bodhisattvas are presented in a style plainly Indian, and can on account of their characteristic emblems and distinctive colours be easily identified with the miniature figures in certain old Buddhist manuscripts from Nepal which M. Foucher first studied and published. Thus we meet repeatedly with Manjusri on his lion, Samantabhadra on the elephant, Vajrapani with the thunderbolt, Maitreya with the rosary, and other well-known creations of Buddhist imagery. Even more frequent are representations of Avalokitesvara, whom Chinese Buddhism has gradually transformed into Kuan-yin, its much-beloved 'Goddess of Mercy.' In all these the faithful adherence to the style in pose, features, and drapery, as originally fixed by Graeco-Buddhist art, is obvious. This tenacity of traditional type is a familiar feature in the iconography of all religions. All the more interesting are those numerous banners in which the representation of Bodhisattvas has undergone unmistakable adaptation to new standards developed in the later Buddhist art of Central Asia, or quite plainly to Chinese taste.

From the artistic point of view these latter pictures of Bodhisattvas are often distinctly superior in design and