

Scenes of
'Four
Encounters'
at Yün-
kang.

tions of the legendary Life of Śākyamuni and the series of Yün-kang reliefs. Of the 'Four Encounters' which precede the Bodhisattva's decision to renounce the world, and which are so familiar to Buddhist tradition, the many hundreds of Gandhāra reliefs so far found have failed to furnish a single illustration.¹⁹ Yet at Yün-kang we find them all represented in successive panels, while our banners actually reproduce three of them and are likely to have contained them all.²⁰ This fact, when compared with the apparently total neglect of these scenes in the old Buddhist art of India as a whole, not merely of Gandhāra,²¹ must have its significance and may yet help to throw light on the different influences which left their mark on the Ch'ien-fo-tung paintings. But here we touch upon questions which it remains for others and for future discoveries to clear up.

Hieratic
tradition
in divine
figures.

A second observation calling for notice here is that the 'translation' into Chinese forms characterizing the banners under discussion does not extend to those divine figures which stand outside as it were of what might be called the real life-story of the historical Gautama preceding his attainment of Buddhahood. For them the forms and garments, as fixed by hieratic tradition derived from Gandhāra art, are preserved with the same respect as is shown in all their other representations among our paintings.²² This point is clearly brought out by the figures of Dīpaṅkara Buddha and his divine attendants in Ch. lv. 009 (Plate LXXIV); the Buddha in Ch. xlix. 006 (*Portf.* Plate XII); the manifestations of a Buddha receiving worship in the as yet unidentified scenes of Ch. lv. 0022. The figures of the unborn Bodhisattva with his attendants seen in Māyā's dream (Ch. lv. 009, Plate LXXIV) and of the Bodhisattva practising austerities (Ch. xxvii. 001, Plate LXXVII) may well be classed as coming under the same head. The distinction thus regularly maintained by the painter in one and the same banner seems certainly to favour the assumption that the Chinese 'translation' of the quasi-secular figures was mainly prompted by the Chinese conception of things real.

Archaic
costume
of secular
figures.

A third observation to be noted offers a direct antiquarian interest. It concerns the character of the Chinese dress in which all lay actors of these scenes, including Gautama himself before his 'Bodhi', are presented. This dress can obviously not be meant to represent contemporary Chinese fashion; for both head-gear and robes markedly differ from those seen in the costumes which the figures of donors and donatrices exhibit in so many of our other paintings.²³ We are thus led to conclude that the Chinese dress reproduced in the scenes from Gautama's

¹⁹ Cf. Foucher, *L'art du Gandhāra*, i. pp. 348 sq.

²⁰ See Chavannes, *loc. cit.*, Nos. 207-10; i. p. 307. Among our banners we find the first three encounters with the old man, the sick man, and the corpse, illustrated in a single panel of Ch. lv. 009 (Pl. LXXIV), and the first and second by Ch. lv. 0016 (*Thousand B.*, Pl. XII). The latter banner is incomplete and may, from the size of the extant portion and that of its pendant, Ch. xlix. 006, well be assumed to have originally contained all four encounters.

²¹ See Foucher, *loc. cit.* It deserves to be noted, however, that certain of the 'Four Encounters' are represented among the sculptures of Boro-budur and in late Nepalese pictures.

²² It can scarcely be urged as an argument against the strength of this attachment to hieratic tradition that in two banners, Ch. 0071; xlix. 006 (both in *Thousand B.*, Pl. XII), we find the Buddha's *left* hand raised and his *left* shoulder covered by the under-robe, against the fixed iconographic pose. In the case of banners both sides of the silk gauze had to be painted (see above, p. 844). We have here obviously cases of a mistake made by the artist as to which side was to be treated as the one intended for contemplation and properly finished.

²³ In order to realize the difference it will suffice to com-

pare the head-gear and coats worn by ministers and other male figures respectively in the banners reproduced in Pl. LXXIV-LXXVI, also Plates XII, XIII of *Thousand B.*, with those of the male donors seen in Pl. LX, LXI, LXII, LXVI, LXVII, LXVIII, etc. In the case of ladies the difference is particularly striking in respect of the coiffure, as illustrated by the same plates, that of the donatrices being invariably of a far more elaborate type. Differences appear also in details of the robes and jackets which are easily made out in comparing, e.g., the ladies' dresses in Pl. LXXIV with those of the donatrices in Pl. LXI, LXII, LXVI, etc. For details see the descriptive entries in the List below.

The following is a list of all paintings bearing dates and showing donors, arranged in chronological order: A.D. 864, Ch. lv. 0023; A.D. 891, xx. 005; A.D. 897, liv. 007; A.D. 910, liv. 006; A.D. 922, 00167; A.D. 939, 00224; A.D. 952, xlv. 008; A.D. 955, 00184; A.D. 957, xlvi. 0013; A.D. 963, xxi. 001, lviii. 003; A.D. 983, lvii. 004. For reproductions see Pl. LXI, LXVI, LXVII, LXIX, LXXI. For the chronological evidence, furnished by peculiarities of dress, cf. also below, p. 885.