

Devadatta.⁶⁰ The position of this last scene suggests that Chinese pictorial convention did not necessarily connect the physical contests with the betrothal of the Prince, as apparently was customary in the school of Gandhāra.⁶¹ With the latter event, however, is undoubtedly linked the scene of the archery contest in Ch. xlix. 006; lvi. 0032. Though only fragmentary, it is made safely recognizable by the row of drums representing the target.⁶² This brings us direct to the Prince's marriage. Its sole representation among our paintings is provided by a panel of Ch. xlix. 005, which shows us Siddhārtha in the seraglio with Yaśodharā, attended by women dancing and playing music. It should be noted that the scene is treated with the same regard for decorum as in its Gandhāra counterpart.⁶³

We have now approached that period in Gautama's life which is to see the Bodhisattva transformed into the Buddha. Tradition knows of two external occasions which make the Prince realize his religious vocation. One is the First Meditation induced by a visit to his royal father's country estates; the other is furnished by the 'Four Encounters', which bring before his eyes the three evils of earthly life, old age, illness, and death, and the means to escape them. Whereas Gandhāra art has illustrated more than once the First Meditation with its incidents, it appears to have completely neglected the Four Encounters, inviting as they were for plastic representation.⁶⁴ In our paintings we find this exactly reversed, and the same is the case, too, as we have already observed, in the relievo cycle of Yün-kang.⁶⁵ The fact is certainly noteworthy and apt to strengthen the impression that the iconographic inspiration of the legendary scenes in the banners was not originally derived from the art of Gandhāra.

No scene
of First
Meditation.

We find the first three 'Encounters' condensed as it were into one scene in Ch. lv. 009 (Plate LXXIV). It shows us with much realism the old man being led, the sick man on his bedstead, and the putrefied corpse. From the last there rises a cloud carrying a small kneeling figure, which evidently is meant for the departing spirit. The figure is turned towards a palace-like structure raised on clouds in the distant background which represents an abode of the Blessed. That the figure of the Bodhisattva is absent from the scene may seem strange. But the omission of the monk's figure is perhaps less surprising. In the original legend he symbolizes the way of salvation, and that for Chinese eyes seems appropriately replaced by the vision of a heavenly abode promising continuance of mundane happiness. Our large paintings show us how completely the hope of Sukhāvātī, Amitābha's paradise, has effaced all desire of Nirvāṇa in the minds of the pious of Tun-huang. In lv. 0016 (*Thousand B.*, Plate XII) the encounters with the old man and the sick are vividly brought before us in separate scenes. The delicately painted banner is badly broken, but may well have comprised four panels in its complete state, if we judge from the size of the remaining part.

Scenes of
Four En-
counters.

The 'Sleep of the Women' is a scene which tradition brings into closest connexion with the Bodhisattva's resolve of Renunciation and his immediately following 'Flight from the Palace'. Just as Gandhāra sculptors usually place the two scenes side by side,⁶⁶ we find them combined in

Prince's
Flight from
the Palace.

⁶⁰ See Foucher, *ibid.*, i. pp. 330 sqq., Fig. 169.

⁶¹ Cf. the careful observations of M. Foucher, *L'art du Gandhāra*, i. pp. 326 sq., on the difficulty, due to varying tradition, of distinguishing between scenes of physical exercises and of sporting contests preceding the Prince's marriage.

⁶² See for the corresponding Gandhāra scene represented in a single relievo, Foucher, *ibid.*, i. pp. 332 sq., Fig. 170. The bad preservation of the scene in Ch. xlix. 006; lvi. 0032 is particularly regrettable, because it makes it impossible to

compare details with the relievo representation at Yün-kang; see Chavannes, *Mission archéol.*, Planches, I, No. 204.

⁶³ See Foucher, *loc. cit.*, i. pp. 337 sq., Fig. 178 a; for the same scene at Yün-Kang, following immediately after the Archery Contest, see Chavannes, *Mission archéol.*, Planches, I, No. 205.

⁶⁴ Cf. Foucher, *L'art du Gandhāra*, i. pp. 340 sqq., 348 sq.

⁶⁵ See above, pp. 849 sq.

⁶⁶ Cf. Foucher, *loc. cit.*, i. pp. 351 sqq., Figs. 180, 181.