

Identifica-
tion of
Bodhi-
sattvas in
banners.

It is the uniformity resulting from this full development of the type which seems largely responsible for the difficulty experienced about determining the particular Bodhisattva intended in the case of the bulk of these banners. Leaving aside the representations of Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra, which their respective 'Vāhanas', the lion and elephant, render safely recognizable,¹⁵ and those showing Kṣitigarbha as a monk in his distinctive garb,¹⁶ only very few of the Bodhisattvas on these banners can at present be identified on the strength of characteristic emblems or of inscriptions. Even the latter where they are filled in do not always help us, though it is probable that appellations like the 'Bodhisattva who knows no obstacle' (Ch. iii. 002) or the 'Bodhisattva who joins the hands' (Ch. xxii. 003) are meant to refer to particular forms of Avalokiteśvara. From the great preponderance of Avalokiteśvara among Bodhisattva pictures other than banners it may, in fact, be safely concluded that most of the unidentified Bodhisattva figures in the banners also were intended for, or could be passed off as, representations of that popular divinity, the ever merciful Kuan-yin, in one form or another.¹⁷

Bodhisattva
banners of
artistic
merit.

I must leave it to the future researches of experts to ascertain what distinctions, if any, may be implied by such special features as the censer, glass bowl, or mantle carried by some of these figures, or by the different poses of the hands. Here it must suffice to single out for brief mention those banners which by their artistic merit or otherwise stand out from the rest. *Ch. 002 (Plate LXXXII) is a typical Bodhisattva banner of this class retaining all accessories and with its colours exceptionally fresh. Ch. 0025 (Plate LXXVII), a painting excellently preserved and of highly finished workmanship, is of interest on account of the unusual attitude, the figure being shown as walking away from the spectator.^{17a} Ch. i. 002 (Plate LXXVIII) is one of the most striking banners, remarkable for the skilful pose of the figure combining dignity with rapid movement, for the rich colour scheme of the garments, and for the pronounced and distinctly non-Chinese features shown by the Bodhisattva's face. Very fine in its glow of colours and delicate graceful drawing is also the banner Ch. iii. 002 of the 'Bodhisattva who knows no obstacles'. Faultless workmanship within the stereotyped conventions of the style, along with remarkably harmonious colouring, is shown also by Ch. i. 0013, xxiv. 006, both of which Plate LXXVIII successfully reproduces in colour. Ch. lviii. 004 (Plate LXXXI) is deserving of special notice on account of its fine decorative effect and the individual expression imparted to the face. That by the side of such well-characterized

¹⁵ *Mañjuśrī*, on his white lion, is found on Ch. 0023, 00465; xxii. 001. For *Samantabhadra*, seated on the white elephant, see Ch. xx. 001 (Pl. LXXXII); xxii. 0021; xlvi. 006.

¹⁶ *Kṣitigarbha*, seen in Ch. 00111; *i. 003 (Pl. LXXXIII); xxi. 0013; xxiv. 004; xl. 006; lxi. 004, is always clearly distinguished by the shaven head of the monk and the barred or mottled mantle, the mendicant's garment. Regarding this form of *Kṣitigarbha*, known also of the Japanese *Jizō*, cf. Petrucci, *Conférences au Musée Guimet*, 1914, p. 134. In xxi. 0013, lxi. 004 he carries with his left hand a flask; elsewhere he holds the more familiar emblem of the flaming jewel.

¹⁷ Silk banners showing Bodhisattvas which have not been definitely identified, are: *Ch. 001 (Pl. LXXIX), *002 (Pl. LXXXII), 003 (Pl. LXXVII), 009 (Pl. LXXIX), 0011, 0025 (Pl. LXXVII), 0081 (Pl. LXXXII), 0083, 0096, 00109, 00112-13, 00462-4. b, 00520; i. 002 (Pl. LXXVIII), 005, 008, 0010; iii. 001-002; xxii. 003, 0024; xxiv. 006 (Pl. LXXVIII); xxvi. a. 008, 009 (Pl. LXXXVII); xxvii. 003; xxx. 001; xl. 004; xlvi. 001-3, 0012; lv. 0013, 0019

(Pl. LXXXI), 0026, 0044; lviii. 004 (Pl. LXXXI), 005; lxi. 007.

In Ch. 0016; i. 0013 (Pl. LXXVIII); iii. 003; xxiv. 002. a, 003; xxxiv. 001, 003; lv. 0045, Avalokiteśvara is clearly indicated by distinctive emblems or the inscription. He is likely to be intended also in Ch. 0011, 0055; i. 0010; iii. 002; lv. 0019.

A small separate group is formed by the silk banners Ch. 00142 (Pl. LXXXI); xvii. 001 (Pl. LXXX); lv. 006 (Pl. LXXX), which show an unidentified Bodhisattva, in peculiar pose and costume including a large mantle.

Here may be mentioned also a silk banner of unusual sort, Ch. 00303, showing the figure of the 'Bodhisattva of the Sun' merely outlined in white on a blue silk ground. For the interesting stencilled design on the silk piece taking the place of the bottom streamers, see below, p. 987.

Linen banners of Bodhisattvas of 'Chinese' type are Ch. 0061, 00139-40; xxiii. 007; *liv. 008 (Pl. LXXXVIII). In Ch. xxvii. 004 the inscription indicates Avalokiteśvara.

^{17a} The same pose is found also in Ch. 00462.