

thirty feet above the ground, on a precipitous rock-face. It shows the figure of a colossal Buddha, about nine feet in height, carved in low relief within a shallow niche of trefoil shape (see Fig. 1).

Buddha is represented standing with the right hand and forearm raised across the breast, in the gesture which, in Buddhist convention, is known as the *abhayamudrā* ('the pose of assuring safety'), while the left hangs down grasping the edge of the robe. The robe is indicated only at the sides of the figure from the hip downwards, and leaves the limbs entirely bare, with the result that the statue at first sight recalls the representation of a naked Jina rather than a draped Buddha.

Yet, coarsely modelled and executed as the image is, examination of the photograph clearly shows that a fully-draped figure was intended. Broad pleats or bands appearing around the neck, and also over the right forearm, mark the folds which result from the classical draping of the robe, as invariably exhibited by Buddha statues in this posture both in Gandhāra and Khotan sculpture. The type which the Gilgit sculptor endeavoured to reproduce, with all the imperfections of his art, is unmistakably the same as appears in numerous stucco reliefs of Dandān-Uiliq, specimens of which may be seen on Plates LIV and LV. Earlier representations of it are to be found in numbers, both among Graeco-Buddhist sculptures from Gandhāra and the great stucco reliefs excavated by me at the Rawak Stūpa near Khotan<sup>2</sup>.

It is significant that nowhere among these early instances of the type do we find the right hand brought across the breast as in the Gilgit relief. While the outward turn of the palm, which is a characteristic feature of the *Abhayamudrā*, could be obtained in this position only by an artificial twisting of the forearm, it is a perfectly natural gesture when the forearm is extended forward, with more or less of an upward slant, as seen in the sculptures, of which illustrations are quoted in note 2. The same strained pose of the right arm and hand is found, however, in a small relief representation of Buddha which occurs as part of the stucco wall decoration in one of the Dandān-Uiliq shrines, and a specimen of which, D. I. 11, has been reproduced in Plate LV.

In either case the change in the position of the forearm is manifestly due to the artist's inability to show in low relief the natural pose of the original model. The Dandān-Uiliq stucco figure certainly belongs to the second half of the eighth century, and the resemblance between it and the Gilgit rock-carving, in the clumsy device just discussed, must warn us against seeing in the crude modelling of the latter a mark of special antiquity. The pointed form of the trefoil arch enclosing the image seems to me, in fact, distinct evidence of a later date, judging from what a close study of that architectural element in Kashmirian monuments has enabled me to ascertain as to the successive development of its forms. We have another sign of late workmanship in the exaggerated prominence which is given to the edges of the drapery, particularly that falling from the proper left arm. Its appearance there might easily mislead the untrained observer into a belief that the left hand, instead of supporting the robe (as clearly seen in the Dandān-Uiliq and Rawak reliefs), was holding 'a staff or some kind of weapon'<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Compare, e. g., Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art*, pp. 169, 170, 174 (with the interesting Chinese Buddha, in wood, p. 177, which is traditionally derived as a replica from Udayana's famous statue); for corresponding relief statues at Rawak, see Figs. 68, 69, Plate XIV, &c.

M. Foucher, who has lucidly discussed the *Abhayapāṇi-mudrā* in his *Iconographie bouddhique*, pp. 68 sq., points out its frequency both in the miniature representations of par-

ticular Buddha images, as contained in Nepalese MSS., and among extant Buddhist sculptures of Northern India; for illustrations comp. Pl. II and Figs. 7, 8.

<sup>3</sup> See Biddulph's description, *Hindoo Koosh*, p. 110. For similar exaggerated treatment of the drapery in imitation of ancient forms, comp. Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art*, p. 171 and Fig. 125.