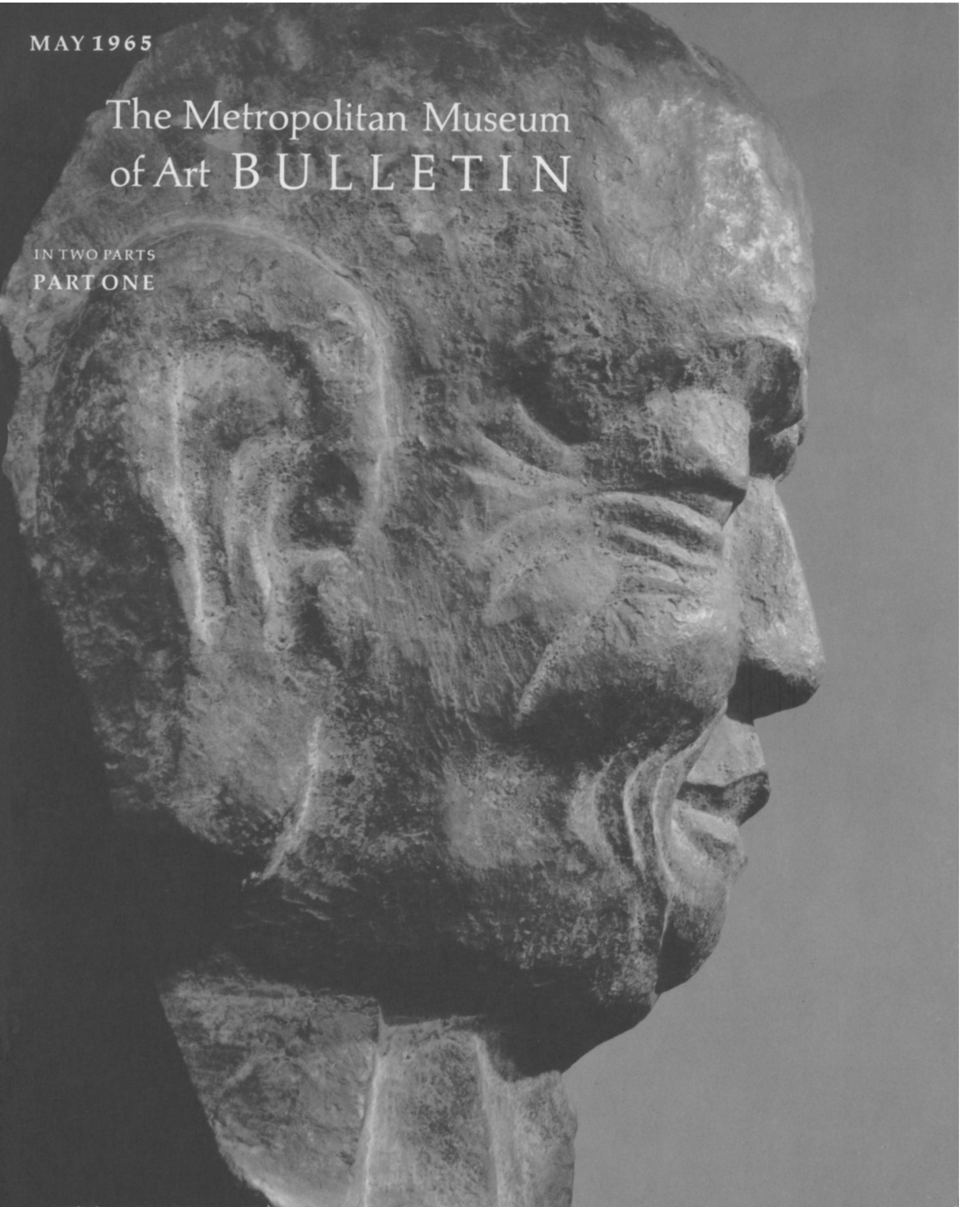
MAY 1965

The Metropolitan Museum of Art BULLETIN

IN TWO PARTS
PART ONE



Years of work have gone into the planning of the complete renovation of the Far Eastern galleries, two of which were opened in March. They are devoted to Chinese sculpture – said to be the most important collection under one roof in the Western world. The majority of these stone, bronze, and wooden pieces, including a number of monumental examples shown for the first time, are grouped chronologically: early sculptures, from the late Han to Sui dynasties (second to seventh centuries) are on the north side of the Main Balcony and in the large gallery beyond, while sculptures from T'ang to Yüan (seventh to fourteenth centuries) are displayed in the central gallery.

The Museum's present strength in Chinese sculpture, achieved by our Trustees and Staff in the relatively short time since its founding in 1870, has been immensely enhanced by loans, gifts, and bequests. The large sculpture hall has been named for Arthur M. Sackler, a collector of Oriental art, who is helping the Museum to develop the Oriental wing.

JAMES J. RORIMER *Director*

Chinese Buddhist Sculpture

FONG CHOW *Associate Curator of Far Eastern Art*

The effect of Buddhism on China accounts for some of the greatest religious sculpture in the world. Long before its arrival from India about the turn of this era, however, there was already a strong Chinese sculptural tradition. Only a few pieces have survived to give us an inkling of the very earliest styles. These sculptures are mostly animal representations in marble, bronze, and wood. One of the oldest works is a crouching marble tiger (Figure 1) from the Academia Sinica in Taiwan, now on exhibition in the Chinese pavilion at the New York World's Fair, which dates from the Shang dynasty of the late second millennium B.C. The carving of this massive creature, with its large head and semi-human body, follows the shape of the stone block; the shallow, incised, near-geometric design on the surface is typical of the bronze art of the period. A bronze water buffalo (Figure 2), of the middle Chou period (about the tenth century B.C.) in the Minneapolis museum, shows a better understanding of the animal form; its head is turned in quite a naturalistic manner. The surface decoration has become bolder, although remaining linear in quality.

A number of human figures from these early periods are known. Among them are wooden statuettes (Figure 3) of the late Chou period (about the sixth to third centuries B.C.) buried as *ming-ch'i*, or tomb objects, at the Ch'ang-sha site in south China. Like the rendition of the animals, the treatment of the forms is direct and geometric. Black, red, ocher, and white details were painted on to suggest the features of the face and the textile pattern of the costume.

Contents

FRONT COVER: *Detail of Figure 28*

BACK COVER: *Detail of the back of the Trübner stele (see Figure 19)*

FRONTISPIECE: *Maitreya. Wei dynasty, dated 477. Gilt-bronze. Height 55½ inches. Kennedy Fund, 26.123*

Chronological Table

SHANG	B.C. *c.* 1600-*c.* 1030
CHOU	*c. 1030*-256
CH'IN	221-206
HAN	B.C. 206-220 A.D.
THREE KINGDOMS	221-265
SIX DYNASTIES (South)	265-581
NORTHERN WEI (T'o-pa)	386-535
EASTERN WEI (T'o-pa)	534-550
WESTERN WEI (T'o-pa)	535-557
NORTHERN CH'I	550-577
NORTHERN CHOU (Hsien-pi)	557-581
SUI	581-618
T'ANG	618-906
FIVE DYNASTIES	907-960
SUNG	960-1279
Liao (Khitan Tartars)	907-1125
Chin (Jurchen Tartars)	1115-1234
YÜAN (Mongols)	1280-1368
MING	1368-1644
CH'ING (Manchus)	1644-1912
REPUBLIC	1912-

The great Han dynasty (206 B.C. — A.D. 220) produced not only sculpture in the round but carved tomb pillars and bas-reliefs, such as the Museum's fine stone relief (Figure 4) that was made about A.D. 114, the date inscribed on a companion piece now in the Rietberg Museum in Zurich. The reliefs once decorated the "spirit chamber" (the antechamber where the spirit of the deceased was supposed to dwell) of the tomb of the Tai family at Ching-p'ing-hsien in Shantung. The composition, framed by a wave pattern repeated in the balustrade and on the building, is formal and balanced. The subject is a blending of realistic (e.g. the typical Han architecture) and symbolic elements (e.g. the two large birds and the genie on the roof of the house, which probably represent mythological or Taoist guardian spirits). The carving, a combination of incised lines with varying degrees of low relief, is so linear that it may be called painting done with a chisel — a quality that continues to be a striking characteristic of Chinese sculpture.

During the Han dynasty the Chinese maintained a flourishing trade with the Roman Empire, the Near and Middle East, India, and southeast Asia; this intercourse with the outside world naturally exposed China to new ideas. In art, the most important single foreign influence was the introduction of Buddhism.

Although it is difficult to determine the exact date when Buddhism reached China, we know from the *Hou Han Shu*, or "History of Later Han," that the prince of Ch'u was a patron of the Buddhist colony in Kiangsu in A.D. 65, and that a provincial magistrate named Chai Jung erected a shrine with a gilt-bronze Buddha in about 190. The religion came to China from its native India partly through the ancient Central Asian trade routes, which had their western terminus outside northwest India near Bamiyan, and their Chinese terminus at Tun-huang in northwest China; partly through the Burma jungle and into Yünnan and Szechwan provinces; and partly by sea to Nan-hai, site of present-day Canton, and to the southeastern regions.

With the new religion came new art forms, for Indian missionaries and pilgrims brought with them not only Buddhist scriptures but Buddhist art canons and icons as well. China, one of the world's most individual cultures, assimilated the Indian Buddhist art forms and iconography, and in the course of several centuries evolved a style that is unmistakably Chinese.

There is much literary evidence of early Buddhist images made of gold, silver, and bronze as well as wood. Unfortunately, few of them have survived, for during periods

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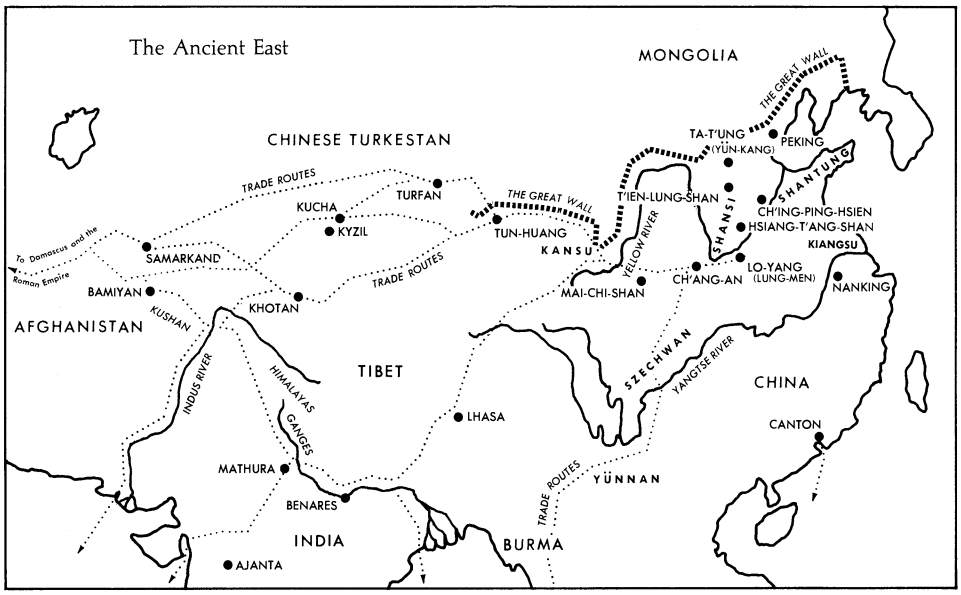


of persecution images of precious metal were melted down, and countless wood, lacquer, clay, and stone statues were destroyed. Modern Chinese and Japanese scholars seem to agree that the earliest Buddha images to have survived can be dated to the second and third centuries A.D. These include a stone relief of a seated Buddha at Lo-shan and a standing image of stucco at Peng-shan, both in Szechwan province.

Despite the ravages of violence and time, however, Buddhist works make up the vast majority of existing Chinese sculpture, if we exclude pottery tomb figures. The new religious art received a powerful impetus in China when the T'o-pas, a Turkish tribe, invaded north China and set up the dynasty called Wei (386-557), which became fiercely devoted to Buddhism. Under the Weis, and for centuries to come, Buddhism was made the state religion, in preference to the older traditions of Taoism and Confucianism, and except for intermittent persecution, it enjoyed imperial patronage.

About 460 the Wei emperor Weng-cheng-ti and his chief abbot T'an Yao initiated the colossal task of carving the cave temples of Yün-kang ("Cloud Hill"), near Ta-t'ung, the Wei capital. This concept of temples hewn out of the living rock, with images carved in varying degrees of relief and meant to be viewed from the front, is of Indian origin (Ajanta, etc.), and from there extended to Afghanistan (Bamiyan), Central Asia (Kyzil, Kucha, Khotan), and then to China (Tun-huang at the western border and Mai-chi-shan in eastern Kansu, where most of the sculpture is modeled stucco, because the sandy ridges in those areas are not suitable for carving).The idea was not completely new to China, however, for during the Han dynasty rock-cut tombs, a kind of ancestors' shrines, were constructed in Szechwan, and for centuries people had lived in cave dwellings along the Yellow River.

Manpower for the carving of the Yün-kang caves was probably at least partly provided by the 35,000 families, among them sculptors and craftsmen, who, according to the *Wei Shu*, or "History of the Wei," had been transported from the western frontier

1. Crouching tiger. Shang dynasty, late 11 millennium B.C. Marble. Height about 15 inches. Academia Sinica, Taiwan. Photograph: Li Chi

2. *Water buffalo. Middle Chou dynasty, about X century B.C. Length 8¼ inches. The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Bequest of Alfred F. Pillsbury, 50.46.14*

3. *Tomb figure, from Ch'ang-sha. Late Chou dynasty, about VI – III centuries B.C. Wood. Height 23¼ inches. Gift of Mathias Konor, 48.182.1*

of Liang, where the famous, early cave temples of Tun-huang are located, to Ta-t'ung in 435. These people brought with them Buddhist images from the "western countries" (a collective name for the kingdoms of Central Asia and India), which were used as models for the sculpture at Yün-kang. There the Mathura and Gandhara Buddhist styles, modified by Central Asia, merged with Chinese elements to form the Wei style; the Buddha image became a symbolic representation of divinity — formal, grand, unrelated to human proportions. An awe-inspiring sense of hieratic solemnity is conveyed not only by the sheer size of the colossal Buddhas at Yün-kang — the tallest measuring seventy-five feet — but even more by the powerful rendering: the masklike face is sculptured with broad abstract modeling, and the heavyset, wide-shouldered body is covered by a garment reduced to a series of cascading bands barely defining the torso and limbs.

After the end of the Wei period, toward the end of the sixth century, the rich and elaborate Gupta art of India inspired a distinctive freestanding type of Buddhist image, best exemplified by the sculptures of Northern Ch'i (550-577), Northern Chou (557-581), and Sui (581-618). Although still severe and hieratic, the body is no longer two-dimensional but rounded and pillarlike. A smooth garment, sometimes relieved by a few ridges or incised lines, drapes the body without revealing the anatomy beneath. In contrast to the simply clothed images of Buddhas or monks, lesser deities tend to be richly attired and ornamented in a princely fashion, literally dripping with jewelry: crowns, necklaces, and chains, armlets and bracelets, as well as scarves and ribbons. The rich effect is sometimes, in later periods, heightened by brilliant polychrome and gilt. This type of sculpture has rightly been called the columnar style.

A new wave of Gupta influence coincided with the golden period of Chinese art, the great T'ang dynasty (618-906), when China was the most powerful country in the world. This was also the period during which Buddhism reached the peak of its power in China. The capital Ch'ang-an became a great Buddhist center, and more Buddhist images than ever were made during the decades following 645, when the famous pilgrim Hsüan-tsang returned after sixteen years of traveling in Central Asia and India, bringing back texts of scriptures and seven holy Gupta images. These served as models for T'ang sculptors, inspiring them to represent the body sensuously and in the full round. The more voluptuous treatment of facial expression, body movement, and drapery reveals a greater understanding of the human form. For the first time the bodies of religious personages are depicted half-nude or through transparent draperies. The modeling of the chest and abdomen becomes quite full and naturalistic, and there is a predilection for side-swaying hips, so typical of Indian figures. The contemporary ideal beauty of plump body and placid, full face with a small mouth is adopted in the Buddhist images of the T'ang period. There is a continued interest in ornamental

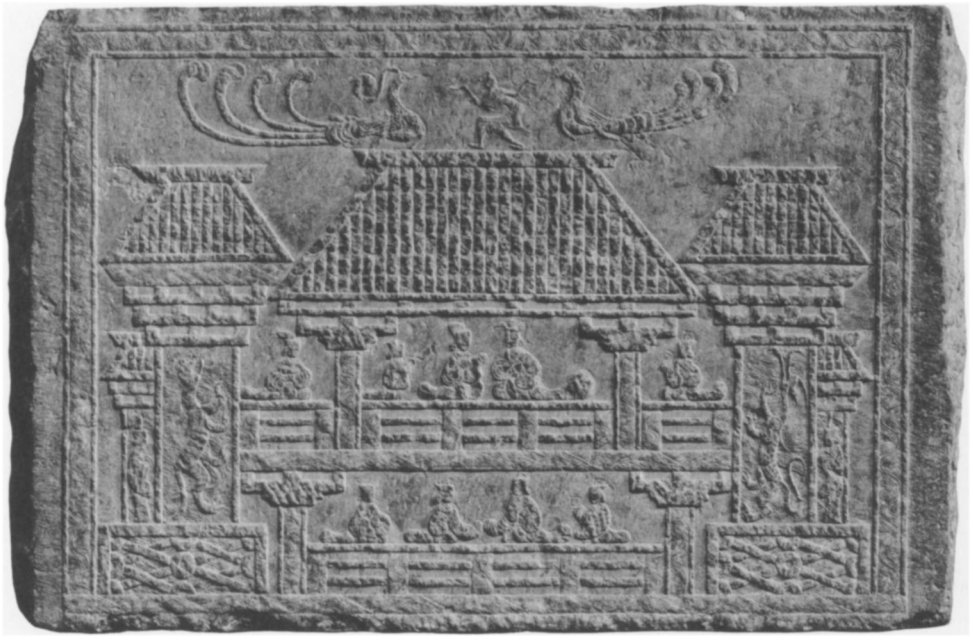
The evolution of Chinese style, as seen in the seated Buddha type: Yün-kang, Lung-men, Northern Ch'i and Northern Chou, Sui, T'ang, and Sung. (The first five drawings are after S. Mizuno, Chinese Stone Sculpture; the last is adapted from a statue in this museum, 32.148)

scarves and jewels. This style gives an impression of strength, grace, and exuberance.

Buddhist art production reached its peak in the eighth century but then, in 884, power was seized by a violently anti-Buddhist group, and 4,600 temples or monasteries and 40,000 lesser structures were ordered pulled down by imperial decree. All bronze objects were to be recast into coins, while iron images were to be remade into agricultural implements. Buddhist sculpture never quite recovered from this blow.

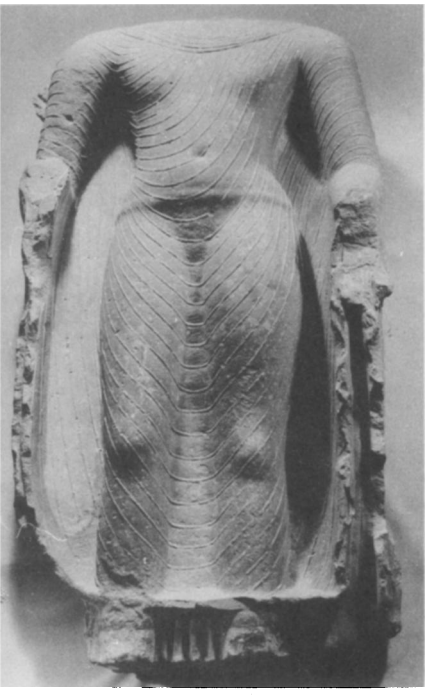
During the ninth century, too, the graceful, plastic style of the mature T'ang period began to lose power, developing into the heavier and more baroque style of late T'ang and Sung (960-1279). The marvelous painting of the Sung period influenced sculptors to emphasize linear surface decoration at the expense of sculptural form. This essentially pictorial concept spread all over north China by the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, though the images are more lifelike than in any other period before. There was a general preference for wooden sculpture, especially during the Liao-Chin dynasties (tenth to thirteenth centuries), which ruled most of north China, including Manchuria, and eventually forced the Sung dynasty to move south. Sculpture in wood reached its highest point of perfection in naturalistic form and coloring, and in suave, calligraphic rendering of drapery. Fluttering scarves and encircling ribbons contrast with stately poses that exude great inner calm.

After the Sung dynasty, the influence of other deep-rooted religious elements crept into and intermingled with Buddhist art in China. The strongest forces were, naturally, the age-old faiths of Taoism and Confucianism, while a third was Lamaism, or the Tibetan school of Buddhism. For political reasons the various imperial households patronized one or more of these doctrines, and there followed a growing confusion of style and iconography —a confusion that, in spite of the continuing tradition of superb craftsmanship, inevitably resulted in a decline in aesthetic quality.



4. Tomb relief. Han dynasty, about A.D. 114. Limestone. Height 31¼ inches. Rogers Fund, 20.99

5. *Buddha. Indian, Kushan period, III – IV centuries* A.D. *Bronze. Height 11½ inches. Edith Perry Chapman Fund, 48.66*



Wei

The largest and most important early Wei image that has survived is a gilt-bronze figure dated 477 (Frontispiece), which represents Mi-lo-fo (in Sanskrit, Maitreya), the Buddha of the Future, who will come on earth and lead humanity to salvation. In style the piece is close to Indian and Central Asian counterparts (Figures 5 and 6), especially in the schematic treatment of the clinging robe that subtly delineates the body: the V-shaped folds of the skirt turn into circular ones at the chest and neckline, then swirl around the shoulders like ever-widening ripples in a pool. The face, however, has many Wei characteristics: a broad forehead, sharply ridged brows, straight staring eyes, a wedge-shaped nose, and a mouth with the distinctive Wei smile, which has been compared to the Greek archaic smile.

A similar frontality and masklike treatment of the face can be seen in works from Yün-kang, which is without any doubt the most important site for early Wei sculpture. For more than fifty years thousands of laborers hollowed twenty major caves out of a sandstone mountain ridge, and countless craftsmen covered the inner walls with niches containing images of Buddhas, bodhisattvas (beings who delay their Buddhahood in order to help suffering mortals), flying apsaras (heavenly musicians), praying monks, and donors. Some of the figures are enormous, some lifesize, some only a foot or less high, all carved in a combination of low and high relief. The walls, ceilings, and many of the sculptures were polychromed, so that it is difficult to tell where sculpture ends and painting begins.

Several major pieces in the Yün-kang style are represented in the Museum's collection. One is a gray stone stele (Figure 7) standing eleven and a half feet high. The Buddhist stele, a votive monument or commemorative tablet, probably developed from the Han tomb pillar. There are two main types: the tablet form in low relief with niches, and the leaf-shaped type, like ours, with images in the half round. The leaf shape also served as a mandorla, or body halo, an inevitable appendage of the more important Buddhist divinities.

This stele is dated twice: on the side a previously undiscovered inscription states that the carving of the image began in 489 and was completed in 495; the back also bears the date 495, the "nineteenth year of Tai Ho." It is carved on all four sides, with the major figure on the front looming forward, and row upon row of small seated "thousand Buddhas" on the back, together with the names and representations of the Chao family, the donors of the monument. This piece can be compared to a cave temple in miniature.

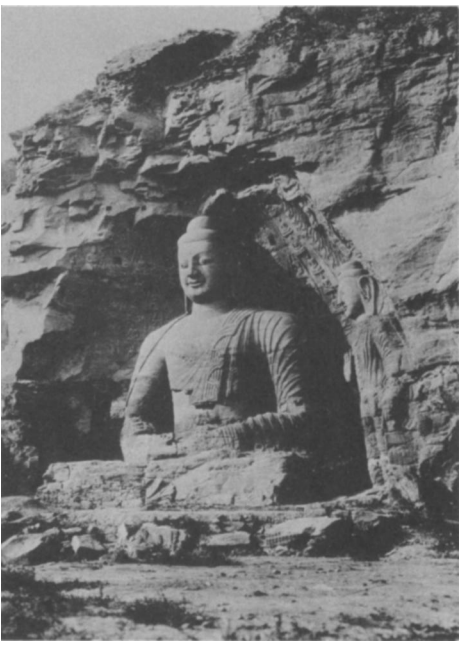
Our stele portrays the Buddha Maitreya surrounded by a mandorla symbolizing the celestial light that radiates from him; this form of peaked mandorla, as opposed to the Central Asian, double-circle kind shown in the Kushan bronze Buddha (Figure 5), is believed to be a purely Chinese invention. Maitreya's left hand holds a loop of garment, while his missing right hand was probably in the usual *abhaya mudra*, or "fear not" position. Around his halo are seated the Seven Buddhas of the Past, that is, the historical Buddha Shih-chia-mou-ni (Śakyamuni) and the six mortal incarnations who preceded him. The carving is in the typical Yün-kang style, the poses unsophisticated, stylized, formal, and the faces abstractly modeled.

6. *Torso of a standing Buddha. Indian, Gupta period, about V century. Sandstone. Height 38 9/16 inches. Mathura Museum. Photograph: M. Sakamoto*

OPPOSITE:

7. *Stele. Wei dynasty, Yün-kang style, dated 489-495. Stone. Height about 12 feet. Purchase, The Sackler Fund, 65.29.3*

8. *Seated Buddha outside Cave XX, Yün-kang. Wei dynasty, second half of the V century. Height 45 feet*



9. *Maitreya, from Yün-kang. Wei dynasty, second half of the V century. Sandstone. Height 51 inches. Gift of Robert Lehman, 48.162.2*

The early Wei style is epitomized by the colossal seated Buddha, about forty-five feet high, still *in situ* outside Cave XX (Figure 8), the best-known and best-preserved of the five early caves at Yün-kang. This figure probably represents Śakyamuni, the historical Buddha, who was particularly associated with the Hinayana doctrine (the "Lesser Vehicle"), which preached salvation through personal effort. This doctrine soon gave way in China to the more popular Mahayana ("Greater Vehicle"), which placed greater emphasis on salvation through Maitreya and through numerous bodhisattvas.

A comparison of the Buddha of Cave XX with two magnificent life-size Maitreyas from Yün-kang in our collection (Figures 9 and 10) shows clearly the transformation from a Central Asian type to an already well-assimilated Chinese one. The powerful head with its curious stare, the broad shoulders, and the stiff pose of the Buddha are refined in the two later figures. The gentler facial expression, with almond-shaped eyes and small mouth, the slighter, more elegant body and narrower shoulders, the garment that covers both shoulders and parts of the arms, and the coiffure and headdress all suggest true Chinese elements. The speed and completeness with which this transformation took place is not surprising, however. From the first the T'o-pa Weis adopted Chinese manners, customs, and even surnames, and in the 480s the Emperor Hsiao Wen issued an edict commanding all his subjects to assume the Chinese dress and language.

10. Maitreya, from Yün-kang. Wei dynasty, late V – early VI century. Sandstone. Height 57½ inches. Rogers Fund, 22.134

11. The cave temples at Lung-men

12. Head of a bodhisattva, from Lung-men. Wei dynasty, late V – early VI century. Limestone. Height 21 5/16 inches. Rogers Fund, 18.56.40

Even while work at Yün-kang continued, and before Emperor Hsiao Wen moved the capital from Ta-t'ung to Lo-yang in 495, a second series of cave temples was begun. These were at Lung-men ("Dragon Gate"), ten miles from the new capital, and the royal family and nobility left many dedicatory inscriptions here (Figure 11). Two caves in particular, Ku-yang-tung ("Ancient Sun Cave") and Pin-yang-tung ("Visiting Sun Cave"), are most famous for Northern Wei sculptures. The earliest inscription at this site is in Ku-yang-tung: recording the names of over 200 donors, it is dated 483 and marks the beginning of several important niches that were completed in 502, 503, and 504. As at Yün-kang, the inner walls of Lung-men are covered with niches of cross-legged Buddhas of the Past and cross-ankled Future Buddhas, together with attendants in jeweled canopies flanked by lions and dragons. Every available space is ornamented with smaller "thousand Buddha" niches. Donors in quiet procession and monks in adoration contrast with fluttering apsaras and soaring flames that issue from the great mandorlas behind the Buddhas.

A powerful head from Ku-yang-tung (Figure 12) shows an even more geometric rendering of details than sculpture from Yün-kang. The precision of the carving is emphasized by the fineness of the Lung-men stone. The sharp-ridged eyebrows meeting at the apex of the triangular nose, the contemplative almond eyes, the flat chin, the greatly simplified and elongated ears, the half-cylindrical neck – all are modeled with great economy of means.

ABOVE:

13. Altar shrine. Wei dynasty, first quarter of the VI century. Gilt-bronze. Height 23¼ inches. Rogers Fund, 38.158.2

BELOW:

14. Altar shrine. Wei dynasty, dated 524. Gilt-bronze. Height 30¼ inches. Rogers Fund, 38.158.1

The direct treatment of form reminds one of the much earlier tomb statuette (Figure 3). The crown is decorated with a small seated Buddha, which often occurs in early images of Maitreya and later also appears in the crowns of other bodhisattvas.

15. Detail of Figure 13

Two magnificent gilt-bronze altar shrines (Figures 13-15), of the first quarter of the sixth century, must be considered among the most glorious examples of mature Wei art in existence. The play of light on the golden openwork – especially on the halos and mandorlas – the tense, flickering draperies of the apsaras, pointing upward, the exquisite refinement of the figures communicate something beyond symbolic representation: they express intense religious emotion. As René Grousset has written: "It is a very high form of religious art . . . an art which can hold its own as equal and equivalent in universal aesthetic value to the best Romanesque of Western Europe and the finest Byzantine."

The slightly larger shrine (Figure 14) has an inscription identifying the central standing figure as Maitreya, and it is dated 524, one year after the completion of Pin-yang-tung. The smaller altarpiece (Figure 13) is not inscribed; its greater simplicity in design and detail suggests a slightly earlier date. The Buddha (Figure 15) is depicted with a bodhisattva on each side, and with the two favorite disciples usually associated with the Hinayana doctrine: the young A Nan (Ananda) and the old Chia Yeh (Kaśyapa).

The carving of Pin-yang-tung, according to the "History of the Wei," was started in 499 and completed in 523, using a total labor force of more than 80,000 persons. From this cave comes one of China's most renowned monuments, a near-life-size bas-relief of male donors (Figure 16) – the Emperor paying tribute to the Buddha, accompanied by his entourage wearing their official hats and costumes. A companion relief of female donors is in the Nelson-Atkins Gallery of Art, Kansas City.

Fragments from the relief, chipped out of the cave wall, appeared on the Peking market during 1933 and 1934; purchased by this museum, the pieces were assembled here with the help of photographs and rubbings taken *in situ*. In the cave, the last third of the procession followed a bend in the wall, but in our gallery it has been reconstructed as a flat panel.

This relief, like the earlier Han example (Figure 4), shows unmistakably a painter's approach to sculpture. (It was, indeed, originally painted, and traces of the polychrome are still visible.) Once again the body is suppressed beneath the flattened decorative pattern of the garments. The calligraphic lines of the fan-shaped standards and the schematic folds of the draperies are arranged like the vibrating strings of a musical instrument.

OPPOSITE:

16. The Emperor Paying Tribute to the Buddha. Relief from Lung-men. Wei dynasty, early VI century. Limestone. 82 x 155 inches. Fletcher Fund, 35.146

Another beautifully carved limestone relief (Figures 17 and 18) is dated 528, four years after the larger gilt-bronze altarpiece and about five years after the Emperor relief. It bears a second inscription with the date 743, which must have been added in the T'ang dynasty; the practice of using up every available space in a monument or cave temple was not uncommon. A similar stele in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts is dated 529 and must surely have come from the same workshop.

There are many elements in the Museum's stele that follow the Lung-men style; for instance, the six large donors on the back of the piece (Figure 17) closely resemble the figures in the Emperor relief. On the other hand, some of its details go back to an earlier tradition. The dragons and phoenixes ("vermilion birds," later called *feng-huang*), the lively acrobats and stags clearly show Han fantasy now intermixed with Buddhism. Six dragons, forming a remarkable entwining pattern, top the stele to protect not only the small Buddha niche but the whole monument as well. The use of dragons as guardians of sacred objects dates back at least to the Han period, and continues to be the standard way of decorating votive monuments down to the Ming (1368-1644) and Ch'ing (1644-1912) dynasties.

RIGHT:

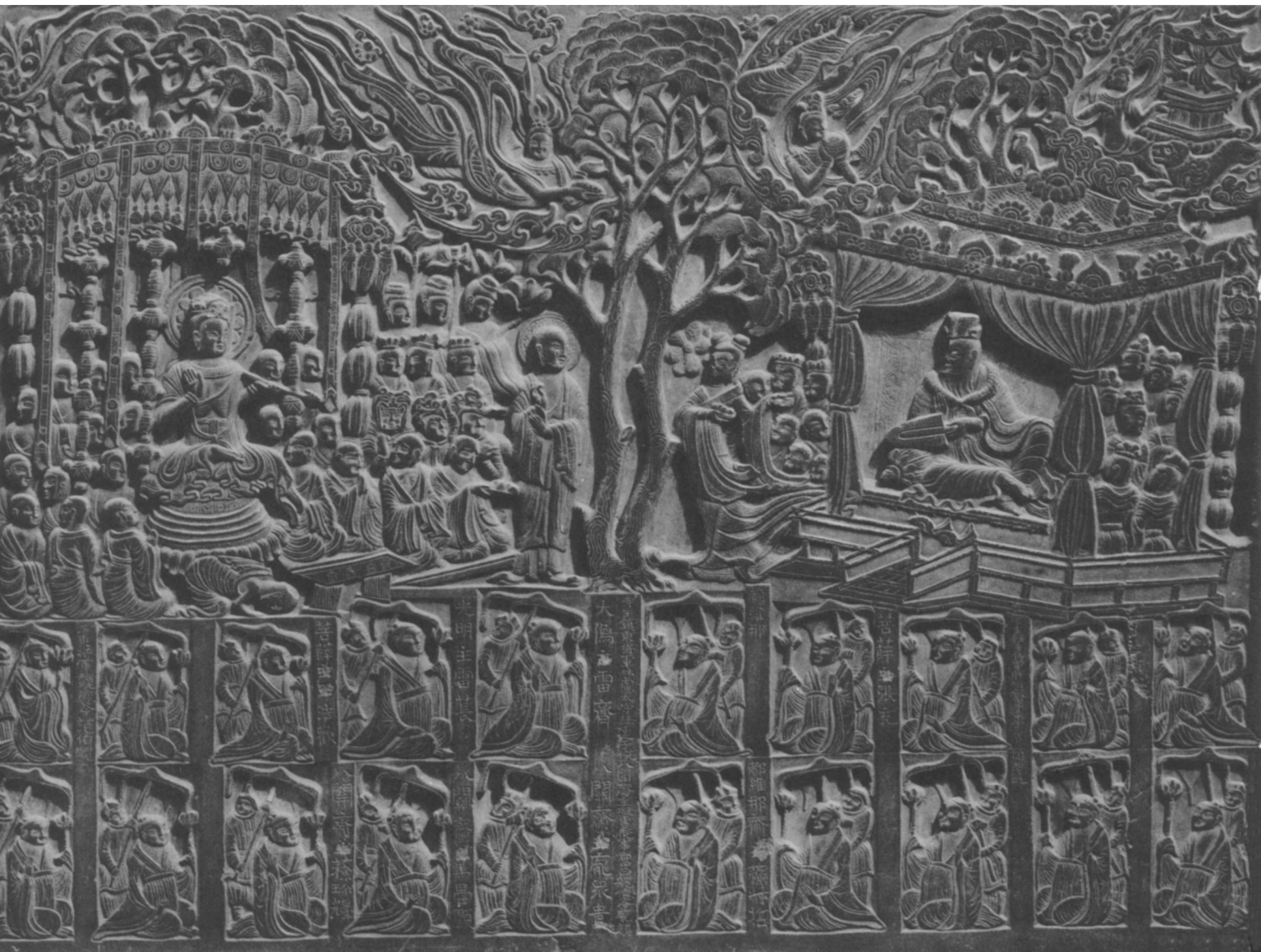
17. Stele. Wei dynasty, dated 528. Limestone. Height 7 feet 7 inches. Purchase, The Sackler Fund, 65.29.1

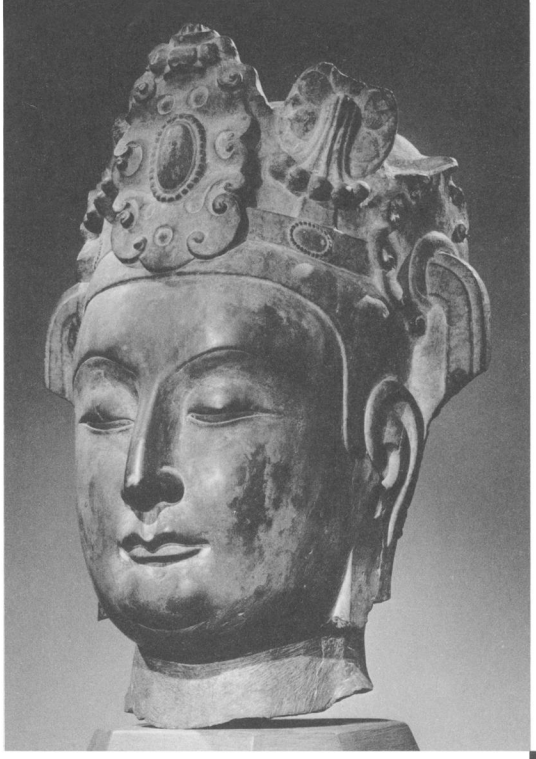
OPPOSITE:

18. Detail of Figure 17

The refinement of conception and execution of the famous Trübner stele, dated 543, makes it a landmark between the Wei and the Northern Ch'i styles. It is an elaborate composition whose central section (Figure 19) depicts a scene in Wei Mo Ch'i So Shuo Ching (Vimalakīrti Sūtra, one of the Buddhist scriptures) – the debate between the bodhisattva of wisdom Wen Shu (Manjuśri) and the ailing rich sage Wei-mo-chi (Vimalakīrti). This subject is represented in many carvings at Yün-kang and Lung-men and appears on numerous other steles of the sixth century. Nowhere, however, is it as elaborately conceived and finely carved as it is in our stele. The challenge of composing a scene with more than fifty figures is successfully met by the daring use of the divided tree in the center of the composition. The tree creates an upward movement counterbalanced by the downward swoop of two beautiful flying apsaras. The figures are executed in a curiously flat relief, with rounded edges sometimes deeply cut into the background. The folds of the garments are also distinctive, for they are represented as double lines not unlike railroad tracks.

19. The Debate Between Wen Shu and Wei-mo-chi. Detail of the Trübner stele. Wei dynasty, dated 543. Limestone. Height of whole 119 inches. Rogers Fund, 29.72





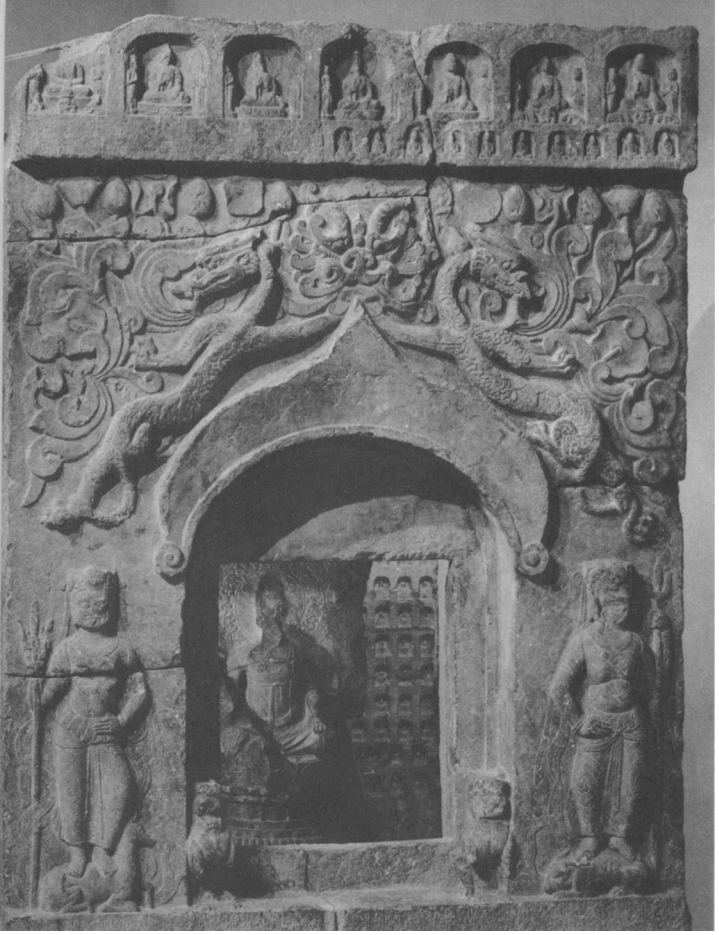
20. Head of a bodhisattva, from Hsiang-tang-shan. Northern Ch'i dynasty. Limestone. Height 15 inches. Rogers Fund, 14.50

21. Bodhisattva, from Shansi province. Northern Ch'i dynasty. Sandstone, with polychrome and gilt probably added in the XIV – XVI centuries. Height about 14 feet. Purchase, The Sackler Fund, 65.29.4

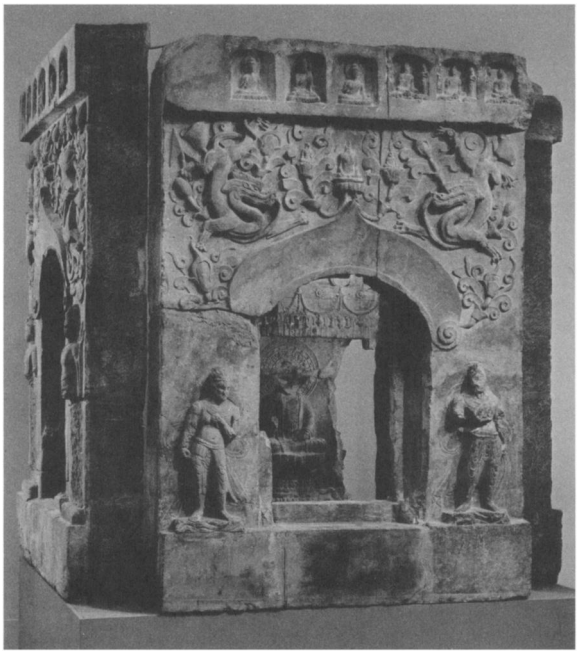
Northern Ch'i

A colossal bodhisattva (Figure 21), about fourteen feet tall, is a significant example of the monumental Northern Ch'i style. Said to have come from a ruined temple in Shansi province, the piece was first bought in 1922 by a dealer's agent from a town that needed funds to build a new school. The army of Shansi transported the sculpture to Peking, and from there it was shipped first to Paris, then to New York.

Ornamented in princely fashion and richly attired, the columnlike figure in brown sandstone exudes enormous ceremonial dignity. The crisp carving is typical of Northern Ch'i (550-577), when freestanding figures resembling oval pillars replaced the linear style of the Wei period. The formal, upright pose of the body, with no movement or shifting of weight on the legs, is relieved only by the wavy folds at the lower portion of the garment. This towering piece was probably designed to be viewed from below, as in a temple; hence the foreshortening, making the head oversize. The face can be compared with our beautiful limestone head (Figure 20) from the contemporary cave temple of Hsiang-tang-shan ("Resounding Hall Mountain"), which has the same haughty expression, though with still sharper contours, especially of the eyes and the mouth.



22. *East wall of the pagoda base*



24. *Pagoda base, possibly from the workshop of Hsiang-tang-shan. Northern Ch'i dynasty, about 570. Limestone. Height of walls about 8½ feet. Loan in memory of Jörg Trübner, L.50.23.1*

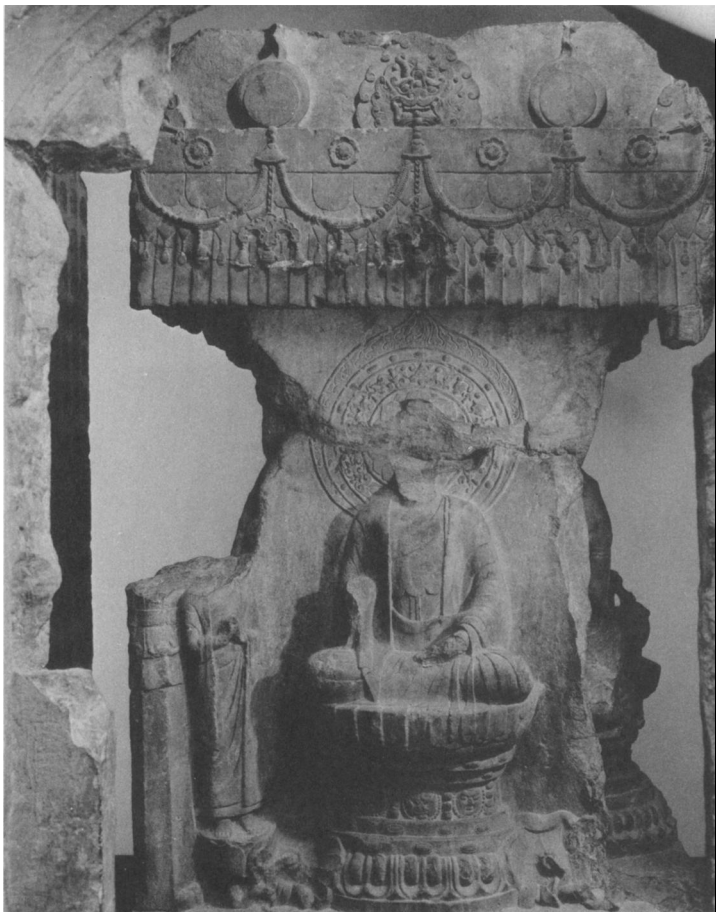
23. *West wall of the pagoda base*

25. Detail of the west wall of the pagoda base

A pagoda is the Chinese adaptation of the Indian stupa, or religious reliquary. In China it is used for Buddhist relics, as a shrine for images, and sometimes as a tomb. The early Chinese type usually consists of a square base and one or more roofed tiers, suggesting symbolic parasols, topped by a mast. The Museum is fortunate to have, as a long-term loan, the inner sanctuary and three of the four sides of a unique carved base of this type (Figures 22-26), which Osvald Sirén and Otto Kümmel consider to be the oldest and most important Chinese sculpture of its kind to be transported to the Western world. Both scholars attribute it to the workshop of the cave temple of north Hsiang-tang-shan and date it about 570, in the Northern Ch'i period.

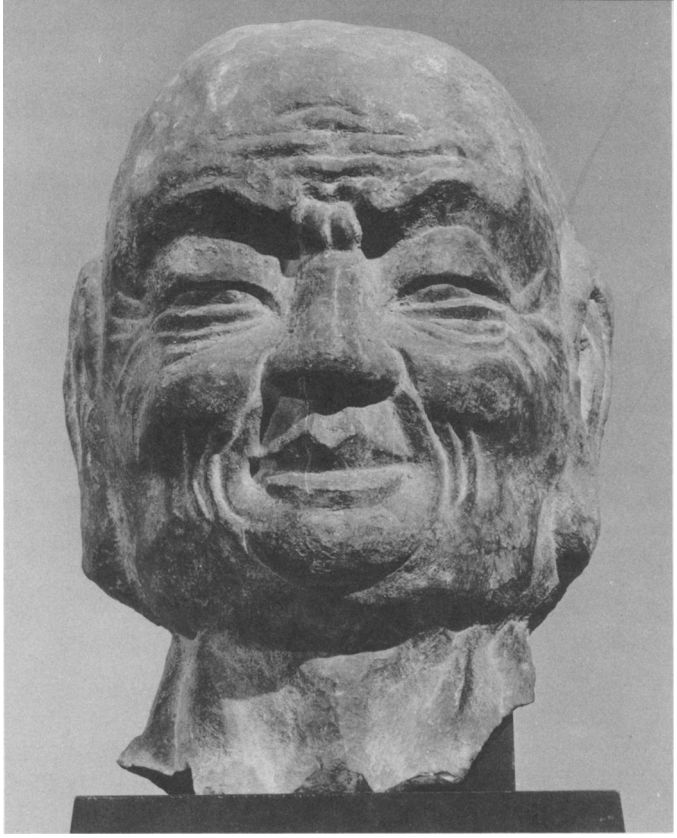
The many elements of the composition are so well spaced that they all seem to have room to breathe. The crisp carving of the fierce animal masks and the large dragons that swoop up and down lotus scrolls over the doorways is characteristic of the Northern Ch'i style. Also typical is the manner in which the figures flanking the door openings are conceived in three layers: high, rounded relief; medium, flat relief; and very low relief. These figures represent the Heavenly Kings of the four cardinal points (T'ien Wang; Sanskrit, Lokapala), holding tridents and standing on animals, and the thunderbolt-swinging guardian kings of the Buddha (Chin-kang-shou; Sanskrit, Vājrapāni), standing on rock bases. Their lively poses are very close to Indian types, while other figures, like the seated Buddhas and their attendants, are in the rigid, columnar style of the late sixth century.

The carving becomes even finer in the inner sanctuary (Figure 26). In the magnificent pleated canopy, decorated with jeweled chains held by unusual human and animal masks, and in the floral halos beneath the canopy, the stone is treated with loving care, as if it were ivory. The effect is delicate yet powerful.



26. The inner sanctuary of the pagoda

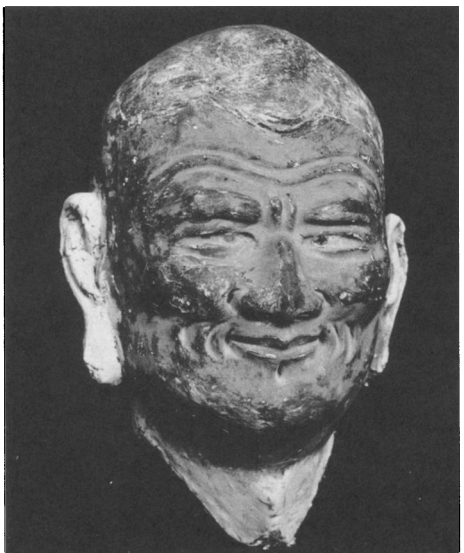
28. *Buddhist monk. Northern Ch'i dynasty. Bronze. Height 25¾ inches. Rogers Fund, 28.122.2*



27. *Head of the monk Kaśyapa, from Lung-men. Northern Ch'i dynasty, dated 575. Limestone. Height 21 inches. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 60.73.1*

One of the best examples of the starkly columnar Northern Ch'i style is a bronze figure of a Buddhist monk (Figure 28), now on exhibition in the New York City pavilion at the World's Fair. The lack of characterization that marks this statue was gradually replaced by a greater interest in naturalistic representation. Some of the later sculptures of monks and lohans (disciples of Buddha) are so lifelike that they must have had real people as models, a practice found the world over in religious art.

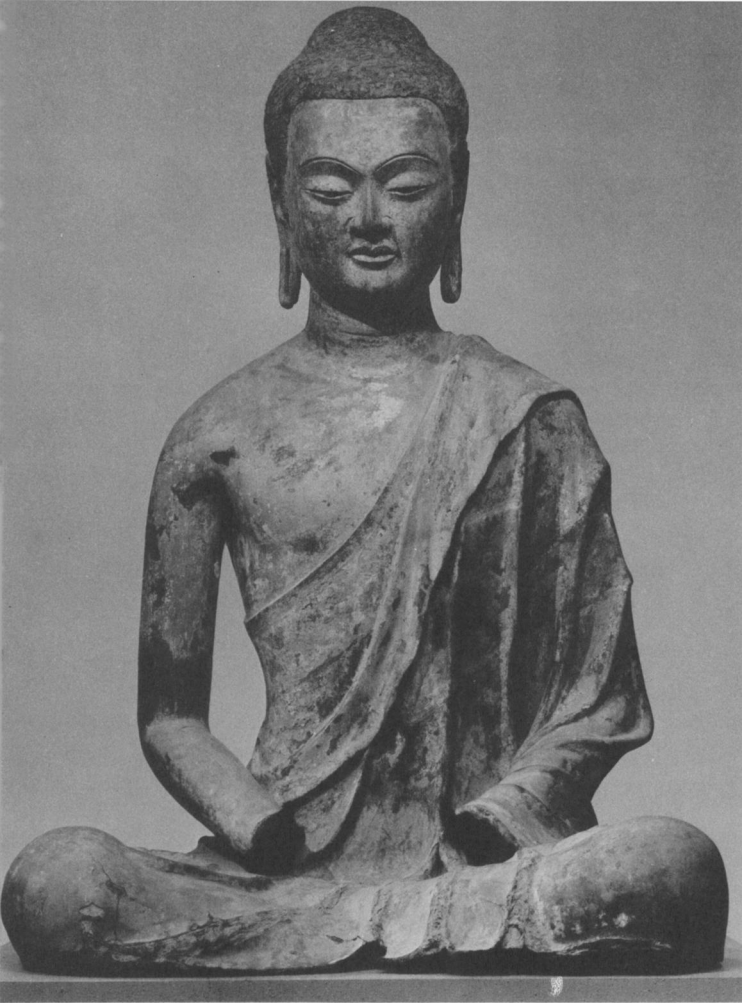
The beginnings of this tendency can be seen in a most powerful and expressive head from Yau-fang-tung ("Cave of the Prescriptions") at Lung-men (Cover and Figure 27). Dated by inscription 575, it is carved in the half-round. Early photographs of Yau-fang-tung show it *in situ*; it originally belonged to a figure standing at one side of a seated Buddha while a similar, though younger, figure stood at the other side. It thus can be identified as the old monk Kaśyapa.



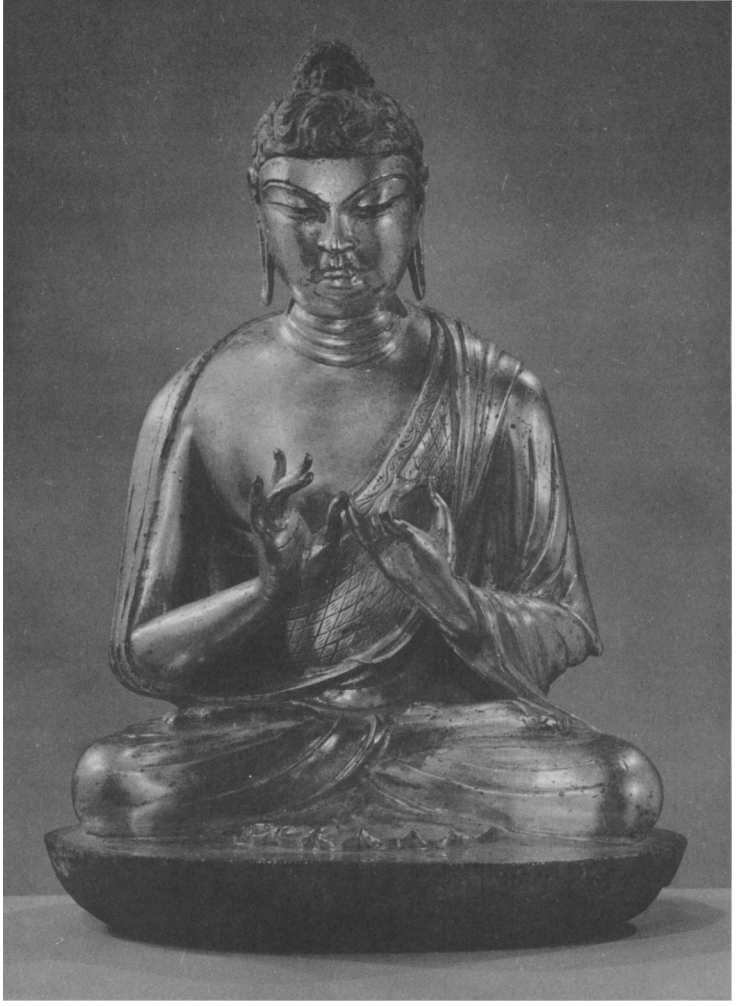
29. *Head of a monk, from Tun-huang. T'ang dynasty, IX century. Stucco. Height about 6 inches. Musée Guimet, Paris*

A comparison of this piece with a stucco head of a monk from ninth-century Tun-huang (Figure 29), now in the Musée Guimet, Paris, shows the transition from the sharply chiseled stone style into the softer modeling of the clay technique, and an even greater naturalism and refinement in detail. True portraits are achieved in the life-size, glazed-pottery lohans of the Liao-Chin dynasties (tenth to thirteenth centuries), of which we are fortunate to have two fine examples (Figure 30).

30. Lohan. Liao-Chin dynasties. Glazed pottery. Height 41¼ inches. Hewitt Fund, 21.76



31 Buddha. Sui or early T'ang dynasty. Dry lacquer. Height 38 inches. Rogers Fund, 19.186



32. Śakyamuni. T'ang dynasty, VIII century. Gilt-bronze. Height 8 inches. Rogers Fund, 43.24.3

T'ang

The severity of the Northern Ch'i style carried over into the succeeding Sui (581-618) and T'ang (618-906) dynasties. The simple, squared-off hairline and the incised, sharply defined eyebrows, eyes, nose, and mouth of the seated Buddha in Figure 31 are characteristic of the seventh century or slightly earlier. This figure is made of dry lacquer, one of the few such sculptures that have survived. The dry-lacquer technique calls for numerous layers of lacquer-soaked cloth, which are modeled over a wood armature into the desired thickness and form, then painted in gesso, polychrome, and gilt. The lightness of the medium makes it especially suitable for images to be carried in religious processions.

An example of the powerful and luxuriant art of the mature T'ang style is an eight-inch Śakyamuni in gilt-bronze (Figure 32), dating from the early eighth century. This golden Buddha has his hands in the *dharmacakra mudra* (or "turning the wheel of the law" gesture) symbolizing his first sermon, in the Deer Park at Benares. The sensitively modeled hands remind one of a heroic stone hand of Buddha (Figure 33), which comes from Lung-men, where work on the temples continued well into the T'ang period. On the whole, however, this small bronze is more akin in style to the plastically conceived sculptures from the cave temples of T'ien-lung shan ("Heavenly Dragon Mountain"), best known

33. Hand of a Buddha, from Lung-men. T'ang dynasty. Limestone. Height 20½ inches. Gift of C. T. Loo, 30.81

34. Head of a bodhisattva, from T'ien-lung shan. T'ang dynasty, VIII century. Sandstone. Height 15¾ inches. Gift of Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, 42.25.12

for eighth century T'ang sculptures, although some caves are filled with sculptures of the mid-sixth century, while others can be dated stylistically to the tenth to thirteenth centuries. The T'ien-lung shan style of the T'ang period is exemplified by a handsome gray sandstone head of a bodhisattva (Figure 34). It was during the T'ang dynasty that bodhisattvas, intermediaries for mankind, grew tremendously in popular religious importance. As heavenly beings, they were given the best features of both sexes. Here the idealized face of a full-blown T'ang beauty, with a small, slightly opened mouth, is so expressive that it seems as though he is about to speak.

LEFT:

35. *Stele. T'ang dynasty. Black marble. Height 64½ inches. Rogers Fund, 30.122*

RIGHT:

36. *Figure of a standing bodhisattva. T'ang dynasty. White marble. Height 81 inches. Nelson A. Rockefeller Collection*

Two of the most popular bodhisattvas, Ta-shih-chih (Mahāsthāmaprāpta) and Kuan Yin (Avalokiteśvara), adorn the front of our great T'ang black marble stele (Figure 35). Their majestic scale is emphasized by the row of tiny seated Buddhas above, which also serves to introduce the "thousand Buddha" niches on the sides and back of the stele. Again a full-blown T'ang beauty is idealized in this grand yet simple style. There is a more sensuous and naturalistic treatment of the body, notably in the modeling of the abdomen and chest. The architectural rigidity of the earlier Buddhist figures is now replaced by the subtle *tribhanga* ("three bends of the body"), a posture often found in Indian sculpture. The torso and legs are not only relaxed but give a definite sense of movement.

Probably the most famous example of *tribhanga* in Chinese sculpture is the life-size T'ang bodhisattva in the collection of Nelson A. Rockefeller (Figure 36), lent to the Museum for several months in 1963. The forward thrust of the left hip gives the figure a sinuous curve from the front and back as well as the sides, and the bold rendering of the body through the clinging garments and scarves adds much sensuous beauty to this glowing marble sculpture.

Sung

37. Bodhisattva, probably Kuan Yin. Sung dynasty. Wood, with traces of polychrome. Height 43 inches. Gift of Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, 42.25.5

From the T'ang dynasty on, the gracious bodhisattva Kuan Yin became the most worshiped figure in the Buddhist pantheon. More sculptures of Kuan Yin have been made in China than of any other religious personage, and often he occupies the position usually reserved for the Buddha himself. He is represented in a variety of ways, for he is believed to manifest himself in a variety of forms, including those of women, to perform his miracles. At times he is even portrayed with nine to eleven heads and a thousand arms. Later representations tend to depict Kuan Yin as feminine, and the deity is often called the Goddess of Mercy and the Protectress of Seafarers.

A wood statue of a seated bodhisattva (Figure 37) of the early Sung dynasty (960-1279) probably represents Kuan Yin. The figure, with downcast eyes, withdrawn in the serenity of contemplation, is a moving embodiment of a spiritual state. Just enough of its original paint — coral and blue — is left to add warmth to the mellowed wood.

Another Kuan Yin (Figure 38), of later in the same period, is a graceful example of the pose known as "royal ease" *(maharajalila):* the left leg flexed, the other raised at the knee, which supports the right arm. The full face and body suggest the softness and warmth of a living being. Elegance is imparted by the high, elaborate coiffure and crown and the rich necklace, while the long curve of the draperies and scarf over the shoulder gives an air of dignified calm.

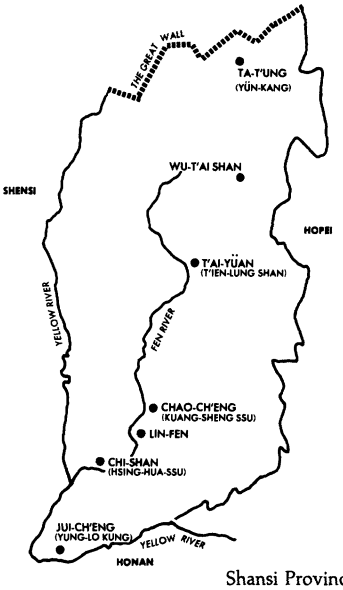
A comparison of the two statues makes clear the solidity and full treatment of form of the earlier, and the marked stylistic softening of the later: the face and ears have become elongated, almost mannered, and the tapered, regally posed hands suggest those of a woman. These pieces represent the acme of the Sung dynasty and are among the last great examples of Buddhist sculpture in China.

38. Kuan Yin. Sung dynasty. Wood. Height 46½ inches. Fletcher Fund, 28.56

Buddha and the Holy Multitude

ASCHWIN LIPPE *Research Curator of Far Eastern Art*

The province of Shansi in northern China is strategically located between Inner Mongolia and the capital province of Hopei. To the north it is bordered by the Great Wall; to the west and south the Yellow River forms a natural boundary. Down the middle cuts the Fen River, passing by the capital T'ai-yüan, and joining the Yellow River a little to the north of the great bend where the mighty river turns east to roll across the plains toward the sea. Shansi itself is largely an upland plateau, fertile and rich in minerals (particularly coal, which the Chinese were the first to mine and use), but so arid that it has never been as prosperous as some other parts of the country. Nonetheless, of all China it is the region most rich in monuments of Buddhist art. In the north, near the Great Wall, there are the famous Yün-kang caves of the fifth century A.D., and in the center of the province the cave temples of T'ien-lung shan, dating from the sixth to eighth centuries; the sculpture of both is represented by splendid examples in the Museum. Between these two sites rises the picturesque Wu-t'ai shan, crowned by temples and monasteries, one of the holy mountains of Chinese Buddhism. The hills and valleys throughout the province shelter many old temples, the earliest dating from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, a period of intense Buddhist activity in northern China supported by the foreign dynasties Liao and Chin. Those temples that escaped the ravages of floods and civil wars are the main source of the numerous sculptures in wood that have found their way to Europe and America – many outstanding ones, again, to this museum.



Shansi Province

As a result of studies and travels in Shansi, Laurence Sickman in 1937 established the existence of a distinctive school of wall painting, containing both Buddhist and Taoist examples, which flourished along the lower reaches of the Fen River in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. The Metropolitan, in conjunction with the rebuilding of its Far Eastern galleries, has just installed a monumental Buddhist mural (Figure 3) that epitomizes the mannered, elegant approach of the Fen River artists.

The source of this painting can be reconstructed from the researches of Sickman and other scholars working in Shansi during the thirties. In 1934 both Sickman and the Chinese architectural historian Liang Ssu-ch'eng paid visits to a rich repository of

1. *Lower Temple of the Kuang-sheng ssu in southwest Shansi province. Photograph: Laurence Sickman*

2. *Front hall of the Lower Temple. Photograph: Laurence Sickman*

Buddhist art in the southwest part of the province: the Kuang-sheng ssu, or "Monastery of Vast Triumph." It is divided into two compounds. One, at the top of a hill, consists of three halls surmounted by a handsome thirteen-story pagoda of glazed brick; the other (Figure 1) at the foot of the hill near a famous holy spring, has a front hall (Figure 2) and a main hall, together with some secondary structures. The main halls in both compounds contain fine sculpture (Figure 7), and that in the Lower Temple until recently possessed a rare edition of the Tripitaka, the Buddhist canon, printed during the Chin dynasty (1115-1234). Up until the 1920s the Lower Temple halls had also contained large mural paintings, but Liang and Sickman found only a few fragments and freshly plastered walls. Liang was told that the paintings had been sold to a dealer to pay for repairs, and that they had been sent to the United States. There is little doubt as to their present whereabouts: one pair of paintings (Figure 4) came into the possession of the University Museum, Philadelphia, between 1926 and 1929; another mural (Figure 5) entered the collection of the Nelson-Atkins Gallery of Art in Kansas City in 1932; and its mate is the painting now installed at this museum. In addition, there is a fragment in the Cincinnati Art Museum that Mr. Sickman has tentatively identified as coming from the same hall as the mural in Kansas City; it apparently occupied one of the two panels on either side of the entrance. In confirmation, when two Chinese students working for Bishop William C. White in 1938 showed photographs of the Philadelphia murals to the abbot of the monastery, he recognized them, and assured his visitors that they came from the Lower Temple.

The comparative sizes of the paintings provide even more precise evidence as to their location. Each of those in Philadelphia is about eighteen feet high and thirty feet long. Parts are missing, and it may be assumed that the original length was about thirty-two feet. The paintings at Kansas City and the Metropolitan are larger – almost twenty-five feet high and fifty feet long. Fortunately Liang made ground plans of the two buildings, showing the gable

3. *The Assembly of Śakyamuni, from the Kuang-sheng ssu. About the second quarter of the XIV century. Water-base pigments over clay ground with mud-and-straw foundation. 24 feet 8 inches x 49 feet 7 inches. Gift of Arthur M. Sackler in honor of his parents, Isaac and Sophie Sackler, 65.29.2*

Buddhist assemblies are arranged symmetrically about a large central image of the Buddha in one of his aspects or manifestations. This figure is flanked by two major bodhisattvas, and the triad is in turn surrounded by a host of other divine, mythological, or symbolic figures. In this composition, the following figures can be tentatively identified:

CENTRAL FIGURE
A. Buddha Śakyamuni

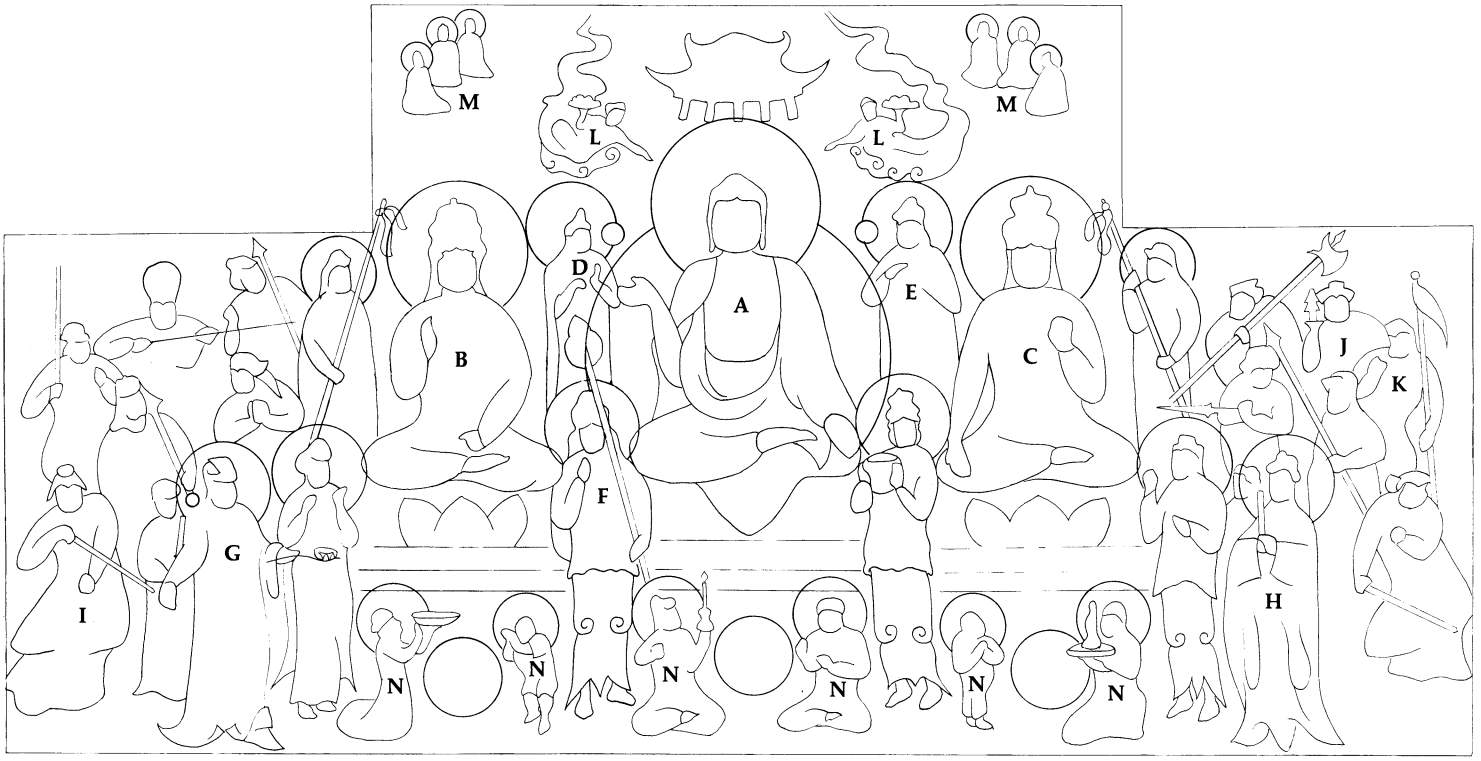
MAJOR BODHISATTVAS
B. Samantabhadra
C. Manjuśri

OTHER BODHISATTVAS
D. Sarvanivarana-Vishkambin
E. Akaśagarbha
F. Kshitigarbha

INDIAN GODS
G. Indra
H. Brahma

LOKAPALAS
I. Virudhaka
J. Vaiśravana
K. Virupaksha

OTHER FIGURES
L. Apsaras
M. Buddhas of the Past
N. Worshipers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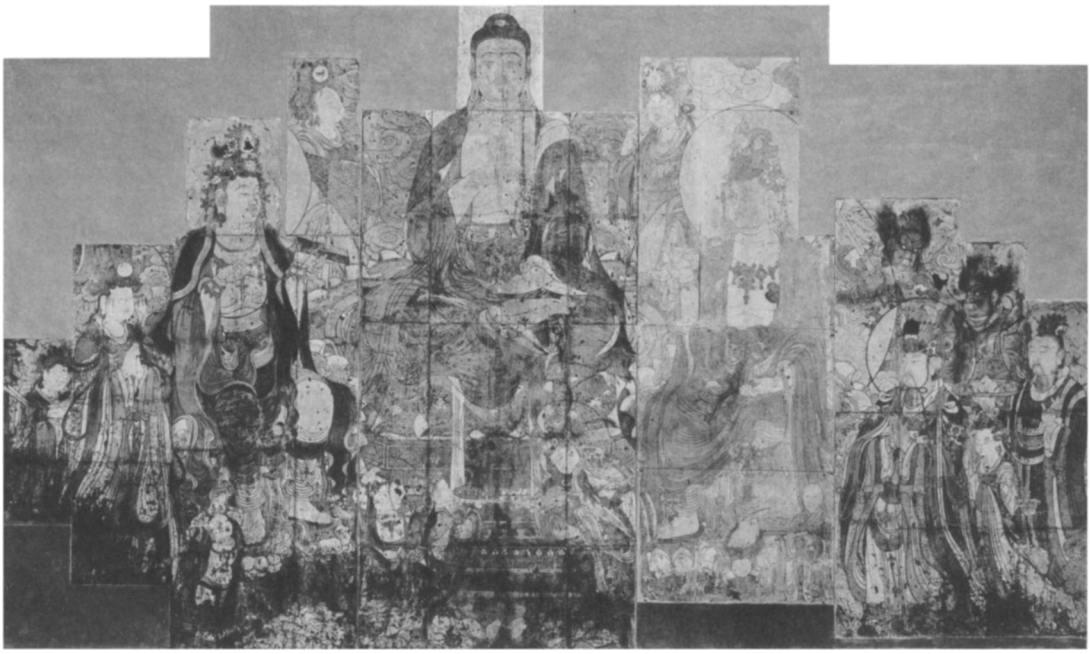
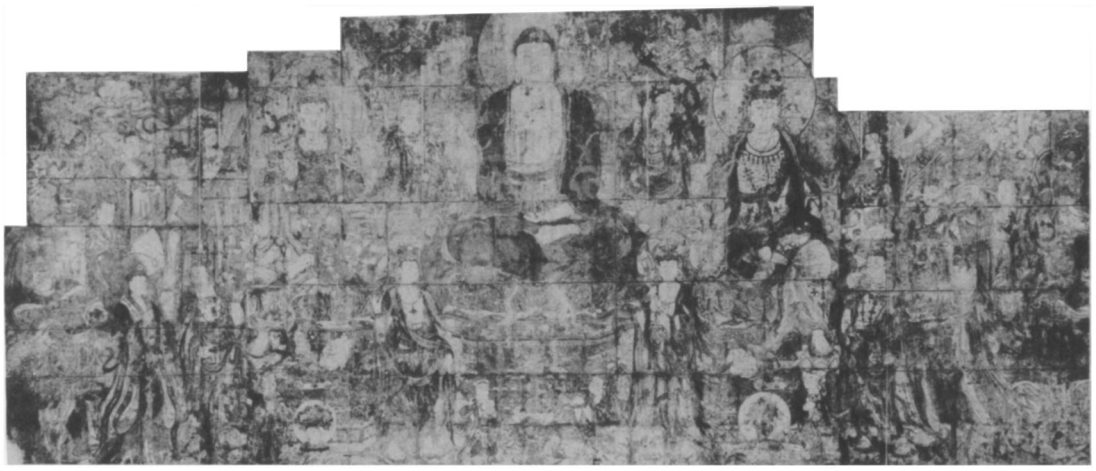


4. *The Assembly of Tejaprabha, from the Kuang-sheng ssu. About 18 x 30 feet. The University Museum, Philadelphia*



5. *The Assembly of Tejaprabha, from the Kuang-sheng ssu. About 25 x 50 feet. Nelson-Atkins Gallery of Art, Kansas City*

6. *The Assembly of Maitreya, from the Hsing-hua ssu in southwest Shansi. Dated 1298. 18 feet 11 inches x 38 feet 2½ inches. The Royal Ontario Museum, University of Toronto*

walls of the front hall (Figure 2) to be about ten meters, or not quite thirty-three feet long, and those in the main hall to be about fifteen meters, or almost fifty feet long. It thus seems safe to conclude that the Philadelphia paintings were located at either end of the front hall, and the others similarly placed in the main hall.

Knowing the source of these paintings makes it possible to date them accurately, or at least to establish a *terminus post quem*. When Mr. Sickman visited the Kuang-sheng ssu, he also explored a Taoist temple, the Hall of the Water Spirit, built near the same spring as the Lower Temple. Here he found a number of wall paintings still *in situ*, and three inscriptions giving the dates 1316 and 1324. He also found a stele dated 1319, recording extensive repairs to the hall as a result of a severe earthquake in 1303, which (according to the stele) left practically nothing in the area undamaged. It thus seems probable that the Buddhist paintings were done about the same time – or certainly after the destructive earthquake.

Even if this documentary evidence did not exist, it would be possible to place these murals in time by comparing them with others from the same region. There is, for example, a painting of a Buddhist assembly (Figure 6) now in the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto: it came from the Hsing-hua ssu, or "Monastery of the Joyful Conversion," in southwest Shansi, and an inscription, *in situ*, by the artists dates it 1298. In composition it is very much like those from the Kuang-sheng ssu, but varies slightly in style: the designs are a little simpler, the lines not quite so fluid or flamboyant. On stylistic grounds alone one would presume it to be earlier. On the other hand, there exist two sets of paintings in which the subjects are very different – they represent assemblies of Taoist divinities rather than Buddhist – but in which the same mannered kind of drawing appears. One set decorates the Yung-lo kung ("Temple of Eternal Joy") at Jui-ch'eng, and bears the dates 1325 and 1358. The other (Figure 8), now in Toronto, comes from Lin-fen; although it has been dated only within the Yüan dynasty (1260-1368), the first half of the fourteenth century seems more likely than the last half of the thirteenth. Unfortunately there is a long gap in time between all these paintings and the next dated group – that in the Fa-hai ssu, or "Monastery of the Ocean of Law," west of Peking. This series was executed from 1439 to 1443, and employs a markedly different style and technique, involving much raised and gilded gesso decoration.

From all the information available, we can assume that the four paintings from the Kuang-sheng ssu are of the first half of the fourteenth century, and probably of the second quarter. There is a slight possibility that they could have been done later in the fourteenth century, but little or no chance that they existed before the earthquake of 1303.

These murals were painted by craftsmen whose profession was hereditary. Genealogical lists of such craftsmen's families have been discovered, and a few of their works are even signed. The technique they used is not true fresco: that is, the ground was not wet plaster. Instead, the walls were built up with mud and chopped straw, and surfaced with a smoother coat of clay. The outlines of the designs were sketched in charcoal, and drawn over in thick black ink – a task probably carried out by the master. The colors were then filled in by apprentices, using mineral and vegetable pigments mixed with glue and water. The process is a rather simple one, vigorous rather than subtle, and relies for its effect on boldness of line and color.

These artisans specialized in religious art, and never aspired to equal the masterpieces of secular scroll painting of the same period, created by highly individualistic artists and scholars of the upper class who did not much care for popular religion. There are, as a matter of fact, a small number of Taoist murals that do reflect the influence of contemporary scroll painting. The series in the Hall of the Water Spirit belongs to this group. Such works are *narrative* in conception and show gods, demons, and men mingling in happy familiarity in three-dimensional settings. The Buddhist assemblies, by contrast, and the similar Taoist processions as well, are essentially *abstract*:

7. Samantabhadra, holding a book. Statue in the main hall of the Lower Temple at the Kuang-sheng ssu. XIV century. Clay. Photograph: Laurence Sickman

8. Detail of the Taoist Assembly of the Southern Dipper, from Lin-fen. XIV century. Dimensions of whole 10 feet 5 inches x 34 feet 1 inch. The Royal Ontario Museum, University of Toronto

9. *The bodhisattva Manjuśri, in the Metropolitan mural*

OPPOSITE:

10. *The central Buddha, Śakyamuni*

11. *The bodhisattva Samantabhadra*

complex, formal compositions of symbolic figures, all placed and posed according to their roles in the pantheon. In the Buddhist paintings, this is partly due to the nature of Mahayana Buddhism itself, which is complex, formal, and highly symbolic. These murals were intended to provide largely illiterate believers with a visual reflection of Mahayana metaphysics. But the specific function they served in the temple also affected their style. They were not, in this period, the principal objects of devotion, but were designed as a background for sculpture; they therefore tend to appear more decorative than illustrative.

The most popular subjects for such Buddhist paintings were views of paradise, or of the Buddha in one of his numerous manifestations, accompanied by a host of attendant divinities and followers. Many murals must once have existed, but so few temples have escaped the ravages of violence, catastrophe, and time that today they are very rare. There are enough similarities in the surviving examples from the Fen River region, nevertheless, to suggest common sources: printed pattern books or some other widely circulated models. These patterns would have supplied the artists with much of the vocabulary for their compositions, from the correct placement of the figures right down to details of gesture and attribute.

It is not unlikely that the patterns influenced the distinctive style of painting as well. Most of the works of this period and area share a quality that recalls the Western term *baroque*. The drawing compensates for flatness and lack of depth with an exuberance of flowing line and rich ornament. The figure style is what is called in Chinese, very expressively, "scudding clouds and running water." The faces are round, the hands plump, the bodies tending toward obesity. The background is filled with billowing clouds that seem to have the consistency of dumplings. Garments are heavily bejeweled, and folds defined in sweeping, parallel curves of a type called "iron wire." About the knees these curves become an almost abstract pattern of concentric circles, and the ends of ties, sleeves, and scarves flutter nervously away from the body in a series of S-shaped curls. The luxuriance of the drawing is kept in check, however, by the symmetry and formality of the composition as a whole, giving the work a pleasing balance and grace. For all the dramatic qualities of line and color, the overall impression is of grandeur and serenity.

Stylistically, the four paintings from the Kuang-sheng ssu are so close to one another that many of their parts are virtually interchangeable (compare Figures 14 and 15). Each is composed in much the same way: on either side of the central Buddha sits a bodhisattva, or Buddha-to-be – one of the semi-divine beings who serve as intercessors and saviors to mankind. This triad is in turn surrounded by other bodhisattvas, divinities, spirits, and worshipers, according to the specific subject of the scene.

There are, in the Mahayana system, a number of different aspects and manifestations of the Buddha, of which the historical Buddha, called in Sanskrit Śakyamuni, is only one. (Throughout this article I shall use the Sanskrit forms only.) The assemblies in these paintings each illustrate one such aspect or manifestation (two of the four – one from each pair – appear to have the same subject, as will be explained later). Since the number, position, attributes, and even gestures of the figures all have symbolic meaning, a knowledge of this symbolism should make it possible to recognize them, and through them the scenes in which they appear. Unfortunately, however, the paintings are fragmentary and often ambiguous. In some cases, the lack of scriptural reference or pictorial tradition was perhaps responsible for this ambiguity, and left room for local variants or mistakes of interpretation by priests and artists. The fact that the murals were not the principal cult objects but rather the background for sculptural icons probably contributed to their occasional vagueness. The meaning of these works is a puzzle that can be solved only by eliminating unlikely or contradictory suppositions, and we are then usually left with the most probable of several possibilities.

In only one painting – one of the pair now in Philadelphia (Figure 4) – is there a clue so

13. The bodhisattva Akaśagarbha

12. The bodhisattva Kshitigarbha

definite as to leave no doubt about its significance. The bodhisattva on the Buddha's right holds a book, the title of which, though abbreviated, can be read as "Sutra Spoken by the Buddha, [giving] the Mantra of the Gold-Wheel Buddha-head of Great Virtue, Tejaprabha Tathagata, Which Dispels All Calamities." The central Buddha, holding the golden sun-chariot wheel that symbolizes universal sovereignty and the Law in action, can thus be identified as the Buddha Tejaprabha, whose prime function was to give protection against natural calamities, especially of celestial origin. He is called a "Buddha-head": that is, a mystical, universal aspect of absolute Buddhahood – an emanation of boundless light rather than a personal divinity such as the historical Buddha Śakyamuni or the savior Buddha Amitabha. In popular art he is shown presiding over the heavenly bodies, represented in anthropomorphic guise.

And so it is in this mural. In the foreground, near the sides, are two standing figures, one with a black (once probably red) disk in his crown, the other with a white one. They represent the sun and moon, respectively; the attendant of the latter, moreover, carries a rabbit, also associated with the moon. Beyond the sun and his attendant we recognize the planet Jupiter, bearing a plate with three peaches. Mercury stands on the Buddha's left, in his crown a star-shaped disk containing a monkey, in his left hand a scroll. On the other side is a female figure representing Venus, who carries a *p'i-pa*, or guitar. Above and behind the sun and Jupiter are two demonic creatures with green faces: they are the "dark stars" Rahu and Ketu, so called because they are invisible (they were thought to cause eclipses). At least two other figures – Mars and Saturn – are probably missing from the outer margin; they complete the group of divinities known as the Nine Seizers – the five known planets, the sun and moon, and the two "dark stars" – and are all recorded in the Tejaprabha sutra.

Identifying the two major bodhisattvas is more difficult, and demonstrates the problems of deciphering these murals. The symmetry of

14. The bodhisattva Sarvanivarana-Vishkambin

15. A bodhisattva. Detail of the second wall painting at Philadelphia

the assemblies demands two bodhisattvas, but the Tejaprabha sutra mentions only one: Manjuśri, the spiritual personification of wisdom, to whom the Buddha exposes the *mantra*, or magic spell. Since a book is one of the normal attributes of Manjuśri, we might suppose the bodhisattva with the book is he. Furthermore, the bodhisattva has in his crown a disk with a small seated figure of a Buddha in meditation; this identifies him as one of the *dhyani*, or meditation, bodhisattvas, and Manjuśri is one of this group. He often appears in a triad with the Buddha Śakyamuni and the dhyani bodhisattva Samantabhadra, embodiment of universal kindness; there are several sculptures of these figures in the Kuang-sheng ssu itself. However, Manjuśri is *never* shown at the Buddha's right; he always occupies the place of honor on the left. Consequently, although it appears likely that the two bodhisattvas are indeed Manjuśri and Samantabhadra, it seems most probable that the bodhisattva holding the book is Samantabhadra. It may not be mere coincidence that in one of the sculptural groups at the temple, roughly contemporary with the mural, Samantabhadra, riding his elephant, is also shown holding a book (Figure 7).

Perhaps there was no "classic" arrangement for Tejaprabha, a rather late arrival in the Buddhist pantheon (the earliest known Chinese representations are of the ninth century). The bodhisattvas in the Philadelphia mural are, as we have seen, borrowed from the assembly of Śakyamuni, and those in the large mural at Kansas City (Figure 5) are borrowed from a quite different composition. The subject is also Tejaprabha – the wheel in the Buddha's hand and the presence of the heavenly bodies (including all the Nine Seizers plus two other stellar deities) make it unmistakable. But on either side of the Buddha are the bodhisattvas Suryaprabha and Chandraprabha, the embodiments of sunlight and moonlight. They belong to the assembly of Bhaiśajyaguru (the Buddha of Healing) and may have been adopted here because of their relationship with celestial forces.

16. *The lokapala Virupaksha*

17. *The god Indra*

That two of the four murals – one from each pair – should show the Buddha Tejaprabha is probably not accidental. If, as seems likely, they were painted after the earthquake of 1303, the protector against natural calamities would have been an obvious subject. The others cannot be so readily recognized. We can be certain only that they do *not* represent Tejaprabha, since the same scene would not appear twice in one hall (just as, in Christian art, an altarpiece showing scenes of the Passion would not contain two Crucifixions). In fact, the second, rather fragmentary painting in Philadelphia is so tantalizingly obscure that no specific interpretation can be offered with any confidence whatever.

The subject of the mural at the Metropolitan can also only be guessed at, although the nature of some of its details make the guess seem a likely one. It is composed of the usual central group of a Buddha flanked by two main bodhisattvas. This triad is surrounded by eight standing bodhisattvas, two devas (gods) with attendants, twelve martial or demonic figures, six worshipers, and, in the "sky" overhead, two apsaras, or heavenly musicians (Figure 20), and six more Buddhas. It is these six hovering Buddhas (M in diagram) that give the strongest clue to the subject. Together with the central figure (Figure 10) they almost certainly represent the Seven Buddhas of the Past: that is, the historical Buddha Śakyamuni and the six "mortal" Buddhas that were supposed to have preceded him. The assembly would then be the one of Śakyamuni.

This hypothesis is of great assistance with interpreting the remaining figures. As was explained earlier, the Buddha Śakyamuni is regularly flanked by the dhyani bodhisattvas Manjuśri (on his left) and Samantabhadra (on his right). Here the bodhisattva on the Buddha's left (Figure 9) wears a dhyani Buddha in his crown – he is evidently Manjuśri – and the other bodhisattva (Figure 11) wears the *triratna*, or triple jewel, which is a common attribute of Samantabhadra. The jewel is surrounded by seven small Buddhas on lotus flowers, possibly a reference, again, to the Buddhas of the Past.

The eight smaller figures, interspersed in four double ranks among the central figures, are also dhyani bodhisattvas. Here the emphasis is placed on the complete group rather than upon individuals within it, and only three, in the ranks next to the Buddha, can be identified. To the Buddha's left is a bodhisattva (Figure 14) with a dhyani Buddha in his crown, holding over his shoulder a cloud-like lotus leaf on which is a red disk containing the sun bird; to his right the bodhisattva (Figure 13) has in his crown a golden *kundika*, or ambrosia flask, and holds over his shoulder the white disk of the moon. The sun and moon emblems, carried in this particular fashion, identify Akaśagarbha ("Essence of Void Space") and Sarvanivarana-vishkambhin ("Effacer of All Stains"). Below them, to the right of the Buddha's feet (Figure 12), is Kshitigarbha, or "Matrix of the Earth," who saves all creatures from purgatory; he carries over his shoulder a long-handled golden sistrum.

In the foreground, to the left and right of the bodhisattva group, stand two figures with rather different crowns and long, flowing robes. They are devas: the Indian gods Brahma, the creator, carrying a scepter; and Indra (Figure 17), king of heaven, holding a censer. Beyond and above them in turn are twelve martial spirits, four of which are Heavenly Kings, or lokapalas – guardians of the Buddha and his realm at the four cardinal points of the universe. Two, toward the upper right, can be interpreted as Vaiśravana and Virupaksha (Figure 16), guardians of the north and west. One holds a stupa, or reliquary; the other, a smoking jewel. In the lower left is presumably the eastern guardian, Virudhaka, brandishing his sword (Figure 18). Which of the figures is the guardian of the south, Dhrtarashtra, cannot be ascertained, as none of them bear his normal attribute: the *vina*, or lute. The remaining eight figures must be the fearsome Eight Classes of celestial beings, who also serve as guardians and are a standard part of the "holy multitude" or audience of Śakyamuni mentioned in the sutras. The painting is completed in the foreground by two monks and four worshipers (Figure 19) making offerings of coral and candle, flowers and fruit. Their

18. The lokapala Virudhaka

19. A worshiper

halos show they are deified, and they are perhaps meant to represent the Four Orders – monks and nuns, male and female devotees – also recorded in the sutras.

It is best not to be dogmatic about these identifications. While all the figures are especially appropriate to the Śakyamuni assembly, they appear in other scenes as well. Moreover, two important companions of Śakyamuni, his principal disciples Ananda and Kaśyapa, are not represented. The omission is perhaps intentional: it gives a more universal quality to the assembly, a quality shared by the Tejaprabha scene on the opposite wall. This universal aspect is also emphasized in the sculptures of the temple hall. Nonetheless, since so many details have been generalized, and since the hypothesis about the mural as a whole depends on the smallest figures in it (the six Buddhas in the upper corners), its interpretation must remain tentative.

It is perhaps less important to penetrate the complicated symbolism of these murals than to realize that they do have a profound meaning. In content, as in style, what might seem to the uninitiated eye free and inventive is in fact under the strict control of tradition. It is a tribute to the anonymous artists that the vigor of their work gives life to the dignity of its subject and transcends its formal conventions.

NOTES

The relevant data about the Fen River school can be found in articles by Laurence Sickman in *Revue des Arts Asiatiques* XI (June 1937) and *Parnassus* XI (April 1939); the latter illustrates parts of the Kansas City mural. Mr. Sickman kindly put his photographs of the Kuang-sheng ssu at our disposal. The report by Liang Ssu-ch'eng appears in *Chung-kuo ying-tsao hsüeh-she hui-k'an* V (March 1935). The murals in Toronto are illustrated and described in William Charles White's *Chinese Temple Frescoes* (Toronto, 1940) and in the *Bulletin of the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology* no. 12 (July 1937, revised August 1950). The Philadelphia murals were published by Helen C. Fernald in *The Museum Journal* XVII (September 1926), XIX (June 1928), XX (June 1929). The data on Tejaprabha are taken from an article by Alexander C. Soper in *Journal of the American Oriental Society* LXVIII (1948). The two existing Tejaprabha sutras are reprinted in numbers 963 and 964 in Volume 19 of the Japanese edition of the Tripitaka, *Taishō-Daizōkyō*. The murals of the Yung-lo kung were published in *Yung-lo kung pi-hua hsüan-chi* (Peking, 1958). A good modern survey of existing wall paintings is by Ch'in Ling-yün in *Chung-kuo pi-hua i-shu* (Peking, 1960).

20. *An apsaras*

MAY 1965

The Metropolitan Museum of Art BULLETIN

PART TWO

GIOVANNI BATTISTA TIEPOLO *(1696-1770). Madonna Enthroned, Attended by Three Male Saints. Pen and brown ink, brown wash, over black lead pencil. 14 x 10 3/16 inches. L. 65.14.9*

Tiepolo was the most brilliant and one of the most prolific Italian draughtsmen of the eighteenth century. Once he had received a pictorial commission he would turn out a whole series of preparatory drawings, and he kept most of these sketches in his studio where they formed a kind of reference library. The present fine example is not related to a surviving picture, but its style suggests a date around 1740.

Italian Drawings

From the Collection of Janos Scholz

Italian drawings lent by Janos Scholz, as well as prints and drawings that have passed from his collection to the Museum during three decades, will be shown from May 9 to September 12 in the Thomas J. Watson Library Galleries.

JANOS SCHOLZ is a distinguished musician, a cellist born in Hungary who became an American citizen in 1939. Traveling extensively here and abroad to fulfill his concert engagements, he has scoured the known and often the secret sources where Italian drawings, increasingly rare on the international market, can still be found. His eye was trained to retain the exact look of pages of music, and this visual ability has served him brilliantly in studying drawings. Nearly thirty years of this search and research, which is in itself a good part of the true collector's pleasure, has enabled him to build up a group of Italian drawings that is perhaps unique among private collections in its extent and variety. Mr. Scholz is partial to so many periods and schools of Italian draughtsmanship and has been so fortunate in his quarry that his collection offers a panorama of the complex history of drawing in Italy.

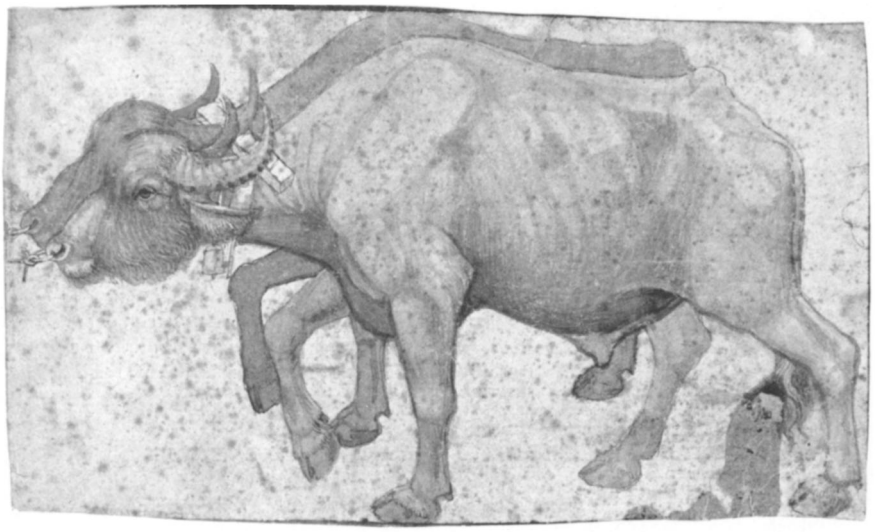
Certain groups of material merit special mention. Venice in the eighteenth century is represented in an unusually complete way. Fine examples by the dominating personalities are surrounded by significant works of lesser masters, chosen to reveal the interplay of stylistic currents in this felicitous period of Venetian art. Mr. Scholz has been a pioneer in the rediscovery of Italian Baroque draughtsmanship, and is the lucky possessor of beautiful examples illustrating the period. Not that the sixteenth century has been neglected; it suffices to mention that the collection contains drawings by Raphael, Correggio, Parmigianino, and a remarkable series of sheets by the Zuccaro brothers. The earliest drawing in the collection is dated 1321; this rare document heralds a considerable group of early drawings in which the Veronese school predominates.

Mr. Scholz, a graduate of the Royal Academy of Music in Budapest, made his first major concert appearance at Salzburg in 1929. An initial trip to America in 1933 as a member of the Roth String Quartet was followed by annual concert tours in this country, and by 1939 New York was his home. That this musician should be an ardent and inveterate collector is not surprising, for the passion was in the family. His maternal ancestors had formed a collection of musical manuscripts and books that became, in 1813, the nucleus of the library of the Vienna Society of the Friends of Music, and his grandfather was a universal collector, interested in pictures, sculpture, *objets d'art*. The collector's urge struck Mr. Scholz when he was very young. At the age of twelve he took a fancy to Roman coins, and as he grew older he turned to faience, porcelain, and books. By the 1930s prints began to claim his attention, and he developed as well a taste for oriental carpets that still haunts him. Then about 1937 he was smitten with a passion for Italian drawings, one that has gradually come to dominate all his activities as a collector.

The engaging variety of the collection is apparent in the selection illustrated here. Those who enjoy drawings – and they are more and more numerous these days – will be grateful to Mr. Scholz for lending so much and so generously to the Metropolitan Museum.

J. B.

(On the cover)
GIOVANNI FRANCESCO BARBIERI, CALLED GUERCINO *(1591-1666). Kneeling Saint Supported by Two Angels. Pen and brown ink, brown wash.* $9^{15}/_{16} \times 11^{7}/_{16}$ *inches.*
L.65.14.10



ANTONIO DI PUCCIO PISANO, CALLED PISANELLO *(about 1395-about 1455). A Team of Water Buffaloes. Pen and brown ink, brown wash. 4 9/16 x 7 3/4 inches. L.65.14.8*

In his pictures Pisanello portrayed a late Gothic world of fantastic pageantry, but as a draughtsman he was a man of the early Renaissance, concerned with the accurate observation of the world around him. Other versions of this fine study of two yoked water buffaloes are to be found in Rotterdam and in the Louvre.

VINCENZO CATENA *(about 1480-after 1531). Study of Drapery. Black chalk heightened with white gouache, on blue-green paper. 7 x 7 5/16 inches. L.65.14.2*

Catena, a Venetian artist of the Renaissance, made this elegant drapery study, in which every fold is finely modeled in white gouache, for the costume of the angel kneeling before the Virgin in an Annunciation that can be dated about 1515. The picture is now in the museum at Carpi.

ALESSANDRO MAGANZA
(1556-after 1630). Figure Studies. Pen and brown ink, brown wash, over black lead pencil. 10⅞ x 7½ inches. L.65.14.5

Following the lead of Jacopo Tintoretto, Venetian draughtsmanship took on increasing speed and brio as the sixteenth century advanced. Here Maganza, an artist who worked on into the next century, has dashed off with wonderful economy three different studies for a figure of the martyred St. Sebastian.

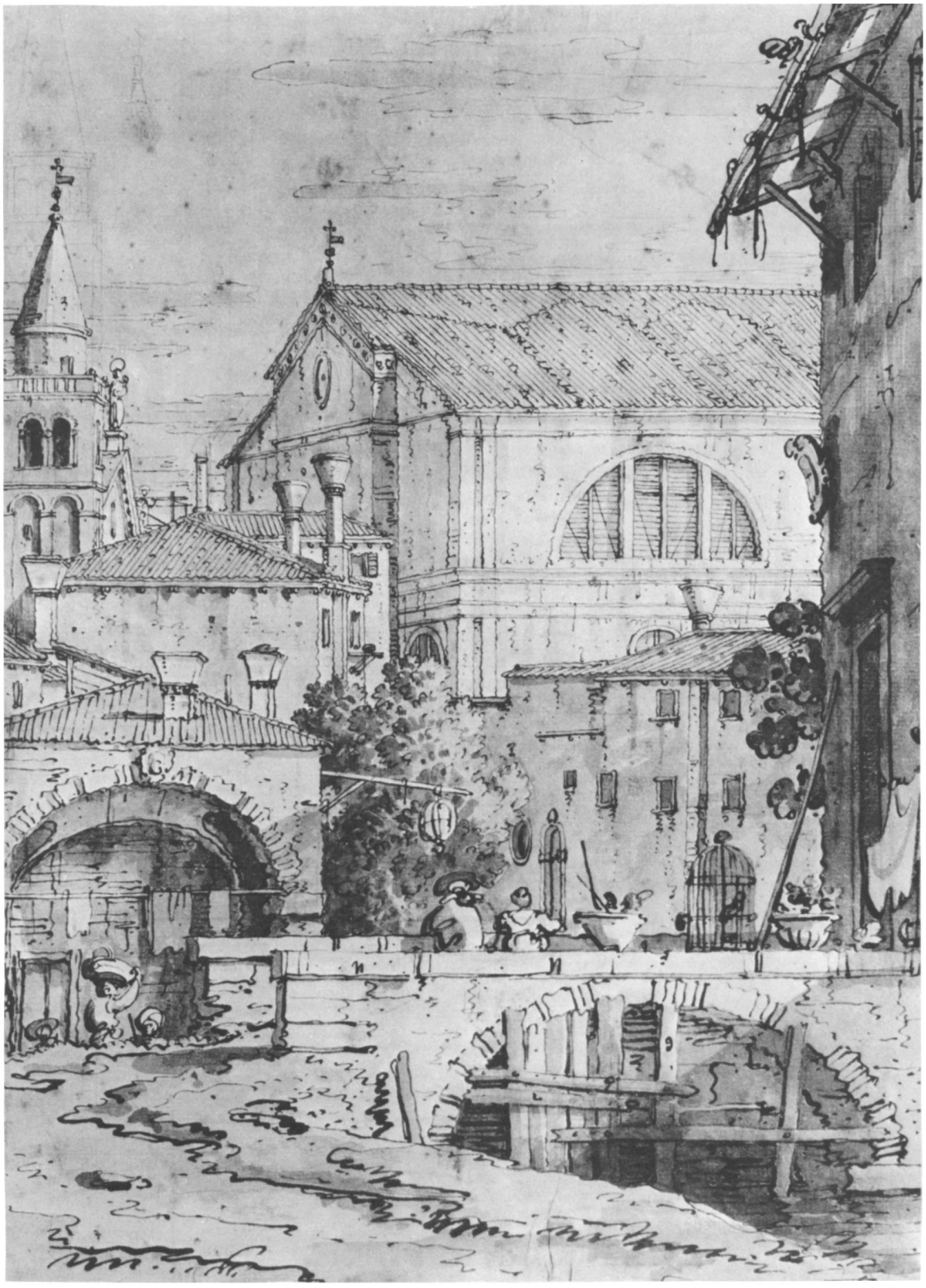
GIOVANNI FRANCESCO BARBIERI, CALLED GUERCINO *(1591-1666). (On the cover) Kneeling Saint Supported by Two Angels. Pen and brown ink, brown wash.* $9\frac{15}{16} \times 11\frac{7}{16}$ *inches. L.65.14.10. (Below) Landscape with a Volcano. Brush and brown wash on blue paper.* $9\frac{15}{16} \times 14\frac{3}{4}$ *inches. L.65.14.4*

Guercino as a painter and as a draughtsman was fascinated by dramatic contrasts of light and shadow. In the drawing on the cover he studied the placement and the lighting of two figures of angels who support the kneeling St. Philip Neri. The group was used in an altarpiece painted about 1646 for the church of S. Maria di Galliera in Bologna.

In Italy landscape came into its own as an independent subject in the seventeenth century, and was a favorite form of expression for Bolognese artists like Guercino. Here he has used brush and wash to conjure up an imaginary but perfectly convincing view of a volcano.

DOMENICO PIOLA *(1627-1703). Studies of Allegorical Figures: Time and a Woman Holding the Sun and the Moon. Brush and brown wash, over black lead pencil. 11⅝ x 16¾ inches. L.65.14.6*

Piola was a specialist in the frescoed decoration of palaces and churches. This suave and assured design with alternative solutions for an allegorical group in a roundel must have been drawn as a project for the ceiling decoration of some palace in Genoa.



(Opposite) ANTONIO CANAL, CALLED CANALETTO *(1697-1768). Architectural Capriccio. Pen and brown ink, gray and brown wash, over black crayon. 11¼ x 8 1/16 inches. L.65.14.1*

Canaletto in his views of Venice and Rome was sometimes tempted to group together monuments that were actually situated far from one another, or to add imaginary buildings to real cityscapes. These *capricci* were much to the taste of the time. Here he has given us a fairly accurate view of the Rio di Pietà in Venice with the apse of the church of S. Lorenzo at the right. But to the left he has added an imaginary *campanile* and closed the composition in the foreground with a non-existent bridge.

GIOVANNI BATTISTA PIRANESI *(1720-1778). Standing Male Figures. Pen and brown ink. 8⅞ x 5⅜ inches. L.65.14.7*

These gesticulating figures were studied by Piranesi, in an elegant, abbreviated pen style, for the spectators who stride about in his late engravings that represent real and fantastic monuments of classical antiquity.

PIER LEONE GHEZZI *(1674-1755). An Ecclesiastic Playing the Cello. Pen and brown ink. 9⅞ x 7¾ inches. L.65.14.3*

Ghezzi made a specialty of drawing caricatures of the celebrities and the hangers-on in Roman society of the first half of the eighteenth century. This cello-playing priest is identified only as *M. L'Abbé* in the inscription at the bottom of the sheet, but the artist has more fully described him on the reverse as *Il virtuoso del Sigr. De Bacqueville* and has dated the drawing March 1724.

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART