

# On *Amida*-Buddha Statues in the Gandharan Sculpture

by Asao IWAMATSU

It has long been said (and generally accepted) that no traces of *Amida*-Buddha (*Amitāyus* or *Amitābha* in Sanskrit) belief or cult had not been found in India itself, in spite of the origination of this belief or cult in that country—especially in North-Western region including Gandhara (and Taxila)—being apparant. About ten or twenty years ago two Gandharan-styled statues were made public separately, one in 1973 by Dr. J.C.Harle and the other in 1982 by Prof. J.Brough. Each of them seems, at least to the present auther, to have much significance in the above-mentioned problem of the evidence of the *Amida*-Buddha belief or cult in India; for the former statue contains in it a Bodhisattva figure in whose turban-shaped crown is sitting a small Buddha in meditation or *dhyaṇa* pose (see fig.3), and the latter has in its pedestal an inscription in which is found the word '*amridaha*' as the name of the Buddha (as to the latter statue, see fig.4). With regard to these statues comments or mentions have been done by some scholars, yet any of them does not seem wholly satisfactory. Then, here the present auther tries some consideration to these two statues apart from such opinions; and through it he comes to a conclusion of his own, which supposes not only that either of these two was made as an *Amida*-Buddha triad (or quintet) but also that most of the similar-shaped statues which have been thought of by A.Foucher (and other scholars after him) as those of the 'Great Miracle at *Āṣṭvāstī*' might have been the same, that is, those of *Amida*-Buddha triad (or quintet, or of his paradise *Sukhāvatī*: for example, see fig.1). In addition to

this, he surmises consequently that this North-Western region—including Gandhara and Taxila—where flourished the so-called Gandharan Art for several centuries A.D. must have been the main center of the *Amida*-Buddha belief or cult in India until at the earliest fourth or fifth century A.D.