



Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara (After Situ Panchen's (1700–1774) set of Eight Great Bodhisattvas)

Date

19th century

Medium

Pigments on cloth

Description

This depiction of the Bodhisattva of Compassion, Avalokiteshvara, does not follow the usual Indo-Tibetan textual descriptions of the deity, demonstrating a degree of artistic freedom in the representation. The figure is casually seated and meditatively gazing at the small red figure of Buddha Amitabha, his spiritual father, sitting on a lotus. The great Tibetan artist and patron Situ Panchen (1700–1774) set up a workshop of artists in 1732 to paint a set of the Eight Great Bodhisattvas, upon which this

painting is based. He had the artist Thrinlay Rabphel of Karsho, near Karma Monastery in Kham, trace and sketch older paintings by Konchok Phende, a prominent sixteenth-century court painter of the ninth Karmapa. Not only does this set indicate what kind of models Situ selected in his revival of the Encampment painting style, but it also bears witness to the existence of strong Chinese figural and compositional elements in earlier pre-Encampment style paintings from the court of the Ninth Karmapa in the sixteenth century.

Dimensions

39 1/2 × 20 3/4 × 1/2 in.