

An Inscribed Bronze Sculpture of a Buddha in *bhadrāsana* at Museum Ranggawarsita in Semarang (Central Java, Indonesia)

Résumé

Une délicate sculpture de Buddha en bronze (ca. IX^e siècle), provenant de Rejoso, près du Candi Plaosan dans la province de Java Centre, fut récemment trouvée dans les réserves du musée Ranggawarsita à Semarang. Le Buddha est assis en *bhadrāsana*, la posture avec les deux jambes pendantes, et les deux mains en *dharmacakramudrā*, soit un type iconographique fréquent en Asie du Sud et à Java au cours de la deuxième moitié du premier millénaire. Ce bronze est surtout remarquable par le texte en sanskrit inscrit au dos, écrit dans un alphabet du Nord-Est de l'Inde. L'inscription cite la formule *ye dharmāḥ*, à laquelle s'ajoute de manière exceptionnelle le *mantra* essentiel (*hṛdayamantra*) *jinajik*. Notre étude s'attache d'abord à analyser le style et l'iconographie de ce Buddha en bronze. Nous examinons ensuite l'inscription et ses caractéristiques paléographiques. Nous étudions enfin les sources textuelles dans lesquelles ce *mantra* spécifique apparaît. Notre examen de l'œuvre et de son inscription tente de résoudre les questions de provenance et de datation, ainsi que celle, controversée, de l'identité du Buddha représenté. Nous proposons de voir dans cette sculpture en bronze une manifestation universelle et impériale de la bouddhité. Selon nous, cette pièce inscrite permet de mieux comprendre certains concepts de l'iconographie tantrique bouddhique à date ancienne, à Java et ailleurs.

概要

最近在三寶壟の阮伽瓦西他博物館存放庫發現了一尊精美的青銅佛像（大約公元九世紀左右），它出土於爪哇省中部靠近普勞散寺的惹喬索村。佛像呈賢坐姿勢，雙腿垂下，手結說法印，這種造型在公元500—1000年的南亞和爪哇常見到。這尊青銅佛像尤其引人注意的是背部刻有印度東北字體的梵文銘文。銘文中出現了常見的緣起法頌，它與爾那爾迦心呪組合在一起則洵為罕見。本文首先探討青銅佛像的藝術風格，對雕像進行解析。然後討論銘文及其古文字特徵，考察心咒的文獻出處。總的來說，本文的關注點是佛像的來源、斷代和聚訟紛紜的佛像身份問題。本文謹慎地提出這尊題銘的青銅像體現了普遍的、帝王式的佛陀狀態，同時強調它對我們理解古代爪哇及其它地方的早期密教圖像和觀念很有意義。

* The gist of this paper was delivered by the authors at the 14th Conference of the European Association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists in Dublin, on September 20, 2012. Martin Delhey, Emmanuel Francis, Rolf Giebel, Iain Sinclair, Peter Skilling and Péter-Dániel Szántó provided helpful comments on form and contents of an earlier draft.

Abstract

A fine bronze Buddha image (ca. 9th century), from Rejoso near Candi Plaosan in Central Java province, was recently found in storage at the Museum Ranggawarsita in Semarang. The Buddha is seated in *bhadrāsana*, the posture with two legs pendant, and with the hands in *dharmacakramudrā*, an iconographic type frequently found in South Asia and Java during the second half of the first millennium. This bronze is most remarkable for the Sanskrit inscription written on its back in a northeastern Indian script. The inscription cites the common *ye dharmāḥ* formula in unique combination with the heart *mantra jinajik*. Our study deals first with the artistic style and iconography of the bronze image. We then discuss the inscription and its paleographic features, and review the textual sources in which this special *mantra* occurs. Overall, we are concerned with questions of provenance, dating, and the controversial issue of the identification of the Buddha who is represented. We cautiously propose to consider the inscribed bronze sculpture as embedding a universal and imperial form of Buddhahood, and highlight its significance for our understanding of early tantric Buddhist iconography and concepts in ancient Java and beyond.

要約

中部ジャワ州、チャンディ・ブローサン近くに位置するルジョソから出土したブロンズの繊細な仏像（9世紀頃）が、最近スマランのランガワルシタ博物館の保管庫から改めて発見された。この仏像は、賢坐像（両足を垂らした座像）で、両手で法輪印を結んだ形であり、西暦5世紀から10世紀の間の南アジアおよびジャワ島によく見られる図像である。この仏像には、背面に東北インドの文字のサンスクリット碑文が刻まれており、とくに興味を引く。この碑文は、「縁起偈」と呼ばれる有名な偈（「諸法從縁生、云々」というもの）に、例外的に *jinajik* という真言を伴っている。われわれは、まずこの仏像の形式と図像を分析し、その碑文を、内容と文字の特徴という両面から検討する。さらに *jinajik* という真言が出現する各種の典拠を調査する。その上で、この仏像の来歴と成立年代を検討し、またそれが何の仏を表わしているかという困難な問題について考察する。この碑文を伴った仏像は、仏性の普遍的、かつ帝王的性格を表わしているものと思われる。そして、この仏像を研究することにより、ジャワ島および他の地域における仏教タントリズムのある種の古い図像的観念をより良く理解できるようになると考えられる。

An important discovery

On 19 November 1997 a group of brick makers (...) working on the property of Mr. Jakiyo Sonto Sarjono in the village Rejoso, district Jogonalan, regency Klaten, were forced to stop their activities because the hoe of Mr. Sarwono had hit on a jar that was buried in the ground. After this jar, which was shattered as a result of being hit by the hoe, had been lifted, it turned out that below it were two more jars, lying flat and facing in opposite directions: the face of one oriented towards the East, that of the other to the West. Furthermore, between the two jars facing in opposite directions were also found a bronze vessel and a bronze platter with a *vajra* and a bell on top of it. Regarding the position of the platter, it was found lying below the bronze vessel. After it had been determined that the broken jars were empty, the other two were opened and turned out to be empty too. By contrast, in the bronze vessel, which was damaged, several bronze artefacts were found, the most interesting among them being fifteen bronze sculptures.¹

The discovery was reported to competent authorities, and research was undertaken by staff of the Conservation Office (Kantor Suaka Peninggalan Sejarah dan Purbakala) of Central Java province together with staff of the Department of Archaeology of Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta. Research focused on the iconographic identification of the sculptures, and led to the conclusion that these finds were of great importance and needed to be protected. It resulted in the compilation of the catalogue, so far unpublished, on which we base these introductory statements.

This catalogue comprises images and identifications of fifteen Buddhist sculptures, fourteen of which belong to a very common small size-category (ranging between 9 and 15 cm in height), while there is one sculpture of exceptional size, measuring 25 cm in height (**fig. 1**). It is this sculpture alone, and the inscription on its back, that will concern us here since technical and stylistic differences make it unlikely that it originally belonged with the other images in the Rejoso cache or that it came from the same workshop.² The authors of the report identify the sculpture (their item 15) as a “Dhyani Buddha Wairocana,” as for the inscription, it is stated that it is in “Pre-Nagari letters and Sanskrit language” and “may possibly be a Buddhist *mantra* connected with the text *Sang Hyang Kamahayanikan*.”³ In 1998, the collection of finds had entered the collection of the Conservation

Office.⁴ Shortly thereafter, they must have been moved from there to the provincial Museum Ranggawarsita in Semarang, which immediately produced a catalogue of its bronze collection, now significantly enriched by the Rejoso finds. This catalogue was published (although not made widely available) in the year 2000.⁵ Its entry for the same sculpture (cat. no. 26, p. 22; reg. no. 04.2321, acc. no. R. 1578) provides the identification “Dhyani Budha Vajrasattwa (*sic*),” and mentions the inscription only in passing. No reference is made to the earlier catalogue by Nugrahani *et al.*, and no justification is given for the altogether surprising iconographic identification. A few years later, Jeffrey Sundberg (referring only to the catalogue by Nugrahani *et al.*), mentioned the sculpture and its inscription from the point of view of his interest in Siddhamāṭṛkā (*alias* Siddham) inscriptions and the history of tantric Buddhism in ancient Java, especially the heuristic value of Sino-Japanese sources:

We are justified in using T’ang esoteric texts and Shingon iconographical commentaries to explicate Javanese Buddhist temple architecture; in fact, we would be foolish to ignore them. Let us examine two facets of this freedom to select from tantric material in contemporary Sino-Japanese catalogues. The first topic at hand is another Siddham inscription, found on the back of a metal statue of an enthroned Vairocana, unearthed with a hoard of other metal Mahāyāna deities from the fields around Rejoso village to the east of Candi Plaosan (see Nugrahani 1998 for a complete description and identification of the finds). On the back of this Vairocana statue are three lines of Siddham inscription, consisting of the words *jina jik* and then a bilinear inscription of the well-known Buddhist Mahāyāna credo which begins *ye dharma hetu prabhava*. The slogan *jina jik* on the Rejoso Vairocana is explained by noting its frequent occurrence in tantric texts which treat Vairocana, and thus indicates the worship of this particular form of the deity during the Central Javanese period.⁶

Couched as a peripheral remark in a study on the religious history of Java, Sundberg’s observations on this sculpture were perhaps not the appropriate occasion to underpin all the elements of his interpretation, and were certainly destined to escape the attention of most art-historians. Our interpretation of the basic art-historical facts is different from that of Sundberg. Moreover, the importance of the piece justifies a more thorough investigation, and this is what we propose to offer here. Our study of this bronze first deals with the art style and iconography of the image. We then discuss the inscription, its paleographic features,

1. NUGRAHANI *et al.* 1998, p. 1. All citations from Indonesian sources appear here in our English translations. As for the jars mentioned in this citation, they were of the Tang style/period (see NUGRAHANI *et al.* 1998, photos 17 and 18).

2. Unlike the Surocolo bronze hoard of twenty-two statuettes discovered in 1976 similarly interred within an earthen jar (FONTEIN 1990, pp. 223–230, cat. no. 66). For a recent iconographic reappraisal concerning seven of these bronzes, see SHARMA 2011.

3. NUGRAHANI *et al.* 1998, p. 14. As will become clear below, this supposition that the *mantra* is connected with the mentioned text is unfounded.

4. NUGRAHANI *et al.* 1998, pp. 1 and 7.

5. HERMAWATI and KUSSUNARTINI 1998–1999.

6. SUNDBERG 2004, pp. 117–118.



Figure 1. —
Enthroned Buddha in
dharmacakramudrā, late
8th–mid 9th century, Rejoso.
Bronze, H. ca. 25 cm.
Museum Ranggawarsita,
Semarang, Central Java,
reg. no. 04.2321;
acc. no. R. 1578, front view.
Photograph by Nicolas
Revire.

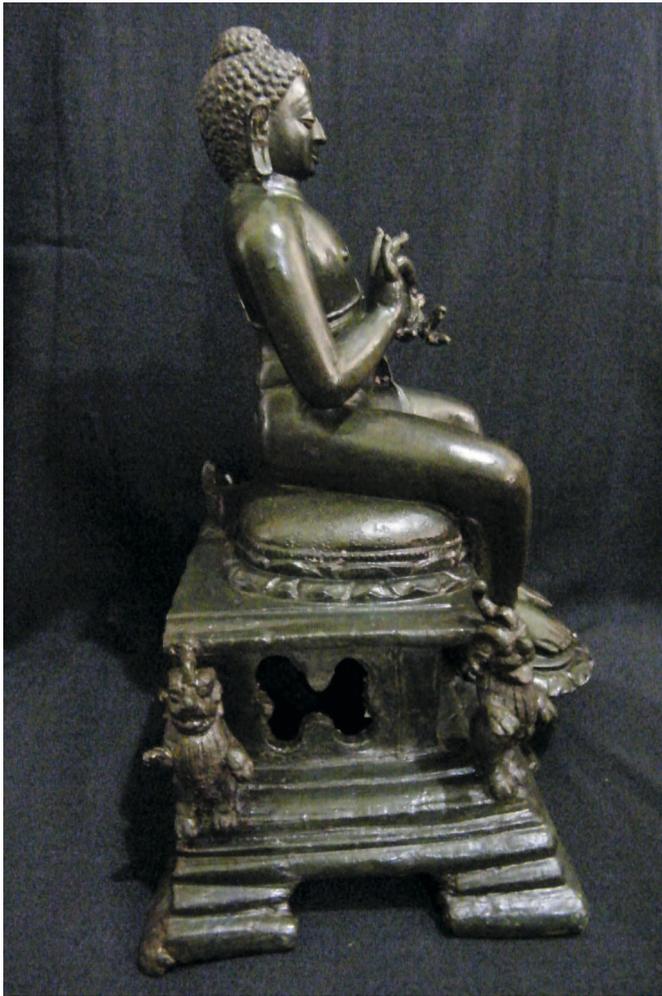


Figure 2. — Buddha of Rejoso (cf. fig. 1), side right view. Photograph by Nicolas Revire.

and review the textual sources mentioning the special *mantra jinajik*. Overall, we are concerned with the questions of provenance, dating, and the controversial issue of the identification of the Buddha represented. The fact that no other inscriptions containing the *mantra* are known in the entire Buddhist world helps to confirm the authenticity of the bronze.

Arlo Griffiths and Nicolas Revire were able to inspect the sculpture that concerns us here during several visits to Museum Ranggawarsita in Semarang between August and December 2011, and are happy to record on this occasion their gratitude to the museum's staff for facilitating and encouraging their research.⁷

7. For a study of the epigraphic collection of this museum, we refer to GRIFFITHS 2012. Most of the bronzes were kept in storage, but since our visits to the Museum, at least the Rejoso Buddha has been placed on display.

Iconographic and stylistic description

The cast bronze Buddha now in the Semarang Museum is seated on a cushion with both legs pendant, that is in *bhadrāsana*, the 'royal pose' with his feet resting on a single lotus pedestal.⁸ This posture or *āsana* is here combined with a teaching gesture holding both hands at chest level, a variant of the so-called 'Gesture of Turning the Wheel of the Law' (*dharmacakramudrā* or *dharmacakrapravartanamudrā*)⁹ (figs. 1–2). We must distinguish this iconographic type from another common group of Buddhas in *bhadrāsana* found in Southeast Asia showing the teaching gesture with only the raised right hand (*vitarkamudrā*) (e.g. fig. 3).¹⁰ Though we do not intend to present here a comprehensive study of such images, we will offer a few preliminary notes on the geographical spread, styles, dates, and identifications of this iconography.¹¹

The combination of this posture with the *dharmacakramudrā* occurs mostly during the 1st millennium CE in northern and western India as well as in Indonesia. South Asian antecedents are well known and are found in Gandhāra and Sārnāth as early as the 5th century CE. The iconography became a hallmark of the rock-cut caves of Ajañṭā, Ellorā, Kānherī and many other western Deccan sites in Maharashtra from the turn of the 6th century onwards; it was also adopted later in Nālandā and other Pāla sites of Bihar and Bengal.¹² Several images found in Java, dateable to approximately the late 8th through 9th century, share the same iconography. One is immediately reminded of the main icon in stone enshrined at Candi Mendut, Central Java, near Borobudur (fig. 4). Other stone, bronze or terracotta images of this iconographic type have also been found in Java, but their exact provenance is not always known and not all of them have been properly published (e.g. figs. 5–9). A map is added to show

8. This is what scholars have in general referred to as the 'European posture' or the *pralambapādāsana*. There are, however, good reasons to avoid using these terms (REVIRE 2011a, pp. 39–44; LOKESH CHANDRA 2012, pp. 361–362). It is commonly suggested that the '*bhadra*-posture' is strongly connected to the concept of royalty, and it seems that the element *bhadra* may indicate the same. See REVIRE 2011a, pp. 44–45, n. 21. It is also possible that the term *bhadrāsana* was initially conceived as an object, that is a 'good,' 'worthy,' 'auspicious,' i.e. 'elevated' or 'raised' seat such as the *bhadrapīṭha*. At any rate, both expressions sitting 'on a *bhadra*-seat' or 'in the *bhadra*-posture' imply that the legs are pendant.

9. For a review of the use of this *mudrā* in early Indian art, see WEINER 1977, pp. 57–62. For other variants, see SAUNDERS 1960, pp. 94–95; also HUNTINGTON and CHANDRASEKHAR 2000.

10. On this distinction, see REVIRE 2011a, p. 38; 2012a, pp. 127–130. For other illustrated examples from Indonesia, see for example FONTEIN 1990, cat. no. 39, and LUNGSINGH SCHEURLEER and KLOKKE 1988, cat. no. 57. For a comprehensive survey of such images from first-millennium Thailand, see REVIRE 2012b.

11. This part of our study is based on a more extensive doctoral research project on Buddhas in *bhadrāsana* from South and Southeast Asia, currently in progress, by Nicolas Revire at the University of Paris 3, Sorbonne nouvelle (France).

12. For illustrations, see for instance ROSENFELD 1967, figs. 166–167; WEINER 1977, pls. 35–37, 44–46, 53–55, 57–59, 90–92, 100–101, 103; HUNTINGTON S. 1984, pp. 7, 37, 132, 167; PAUL 1995, pls. 2–4, 15–16, 70.



Figure 3. — Enthroned Buddha (probably) in *vitarkamudrā* attended by two Bodhisattvas, late 8th–mid 9th century, Central Java (?). Bronze, H. 16.4 cm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. no. MAK 388. Courtesy of the Rijksmuseum.

the principal sites of provenance of the Javanese images presented in this article (**map. 1**, p. 23).¹³

In spite of a rough iconographic resemblance between the Rejoso bronze and other icons from India or Java, we may legitimately ask whether all of these images are stylistically related. In the present state of our knowledge, only some preliminary observations can be made. The bronze Buddha from Rejoso, while sharing the same iconography, is somewhat different in style from other Javanese or Indian images of this type. Its facial and head features in particular are more characteristic of northern Indian renderings with a prominently raised cranial protuberance (*uṣṇīṣa*), a broad forehead—but with no circular tuft of hair (*ūrṇā*)—, high arching eyebrows, and a rather pronounced nose which, viewed from the side, resembles a parrot’s beak. Overall, the fullness and proportions of the face and the treatment of the hair curls suggest stronger ties to northern Indian depictions than to Javanese counterparts. That said, there are certain other individual stylistic traits in this statue which are unmistakably Javanese, not Indian. Such traits, to which we now turn, are the local variant of the *dharmacakramudrā*, the special treatment of the drapery and the highly stylized ‘lions’ of the throne (**figs. 1–2**).

First of all, the Rejoso Buddha displays a local variant of the *dharmacakramudrā* in which the ring fingers, rather than the index fingers, are bent. This variety is consistent with other known Javanese icons of its kind, first and foremost at Candi Mendut. It is hardly ever found outside Central Java and may

13. For more published examples, see JUYNBOLL 1909, p. 90; KROM 1912, pp. 13–14; FONTEIN 1990, pp. 183, 187–188, cat. no. 41; LERNER and KOSSAK 1991, pp. 177–178, cat. no. 138; Ho *et al.* 2004, cat. nos. 63, 65; REVIRE 2012a, pp. 129–130, fig. 11.5.

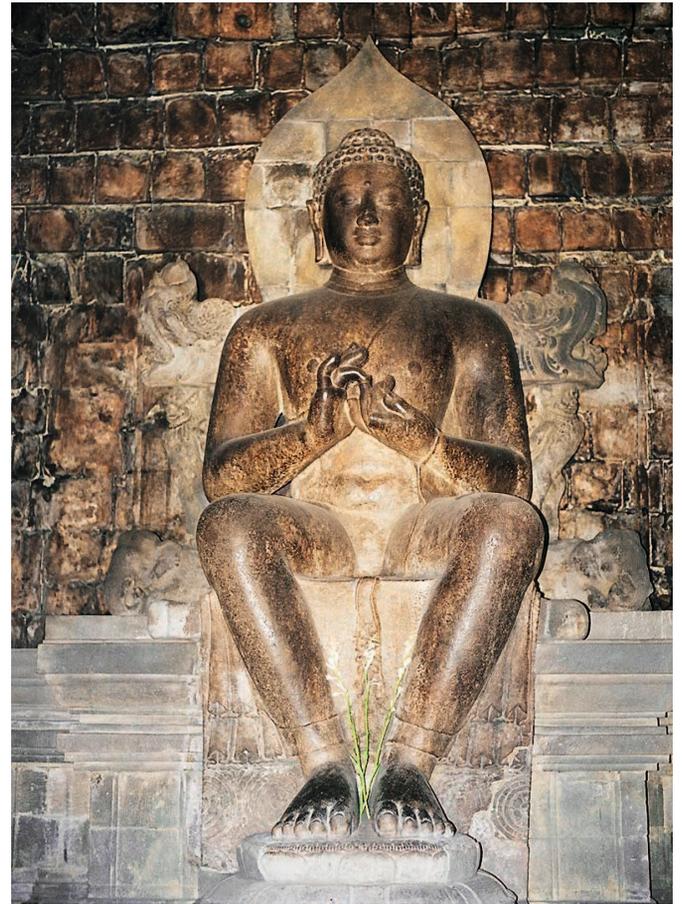


Figure 4. — Enthroned Buddha in *dharmacakramudrā*, late 8th–mid 9th century, Candi Mendut, Central Java. Stone, H. ca. 3 m. Photograph by Emmanuel Siron.

serve as a strong indicator of local production during the Central Javanese period (8th–10th century). In addition, the diaphanous robe of the Buddha is here worn leaving the right shoulder bare whereas both shoulders are nearly always covered in similar northern Indian Buddhas in *bhadrāsana*. The peculiar arrangement of the central pleat or fold of the lower garment, between the legs of the Buddha, is another typical feature of Javanese images, rarely observed in northern Indian imagery.¹⁴

The throne supporting the Rejoso Buddha is equally distinctive. It is not of the same type as that found in the central cella of Candi Mendut or Candi Kalasan, for instance, where the elaborate throne back is flanked by a symmetrical heraldic arrangement of crouching elephants, surmounted by prancing lions (*vyālakas*)

14. For an attempt to trace the origins of these Javanese Buddha images in *bhadrāsana* to Indian Gupta rather than Pāla art, see BISWAS 1991. In the western Deccan, at Ellorā, a few stone reliefs of Buddhas in *bhadrāsana* located on the third floor of cave 12 have the right shoulder bare and display the central pleat between the legs (*e.g.* HUNTINGTON S. 1985, p. 273, fig. 12.38).



Figure 5. — Enthroned Buddha (probably) in *dharmacakramudrā*, 9th century (?), Gua Gembyang, East Java. Stone, H. ca. 1 m. Photograph Claire Holt no. 375, 1935–1936, courtesy of the Leiden University Library, collection Kern Institute, call number P-045357.



Figure 7. — Enthroned Buddha in *dharmacakramudrā*, late 8th–mid 9th century, Central Java (?). Bronze, H. 17.1 cm. Asian Art Museum, San Francisco, inv. no. 1988.21. Courtesy of the Asian Art Museum.



Figure 6. — Enthroned Buddha in *dharmacakramudrā*, late 8th–mid 9th century, Central Java (?). Bronze, H. 11.5 cm. Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden, inv. no. 1403-2845. Courtesy of the Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde.



Figure 8. — Mould with a Buddhist triad, 9th century, Central or East Java (?). Bronze, Diam. ca. 6.9 cm; Th. ca. 3 cm. Private collection, Amsterdam. Photograph by Arlo Griffiths.



Figure 9. — Moulded tablet with a Buddhist triad, 9th century, Candi Gentong. Terracotta, Diam. ca. 6 cm. Majapahit Information Centre, Trowulan, East Java. Photograph by Nicolas Revire.



Figure 10. — Buddha of Rejoso (cf. fig. 1), detail of 'horned lion' on the throne. Photograph by Nicolas Revire.



Figure 11. — Buddha of Rejoso (cf. fig. 1), detail of lion throne, side right view. Photograph by Nicolas Revire.



Left:
Figure 12. — 'Horned lion' depicted at Candi Sewu, Central Java, late 8th–mid 9th century. Stone, H. ca. 50 cm. Photograph by Nicolas Revire.



Right:
Figure 13. — 'Horned lion' guarding the staircases of Candi Borobudur, Central Java, late 8th–mid 9th century. Stone H. ca. 40 cm. Photograph by Emmanuel Siron.

and two *makaras* turning outward.¹⁵ The combination of the *makaras*, lions and elephants adorning the back of the throne is commonly found in India, prominently in Maharashtra during the 6th–8th centuries and nearly always in association with a Buddha in *bhadrāsana* and *dharmacakramudrā*.¹⁶ But the throne of the Rejoso Buddha is different inasmuch as there is no back slab with *makaras*, etc. Rather, it is of the 'lion' type (*siṃhāsana*) with four animals decorating each corner of the base, almost represented in the round (figs. 10–11). These beasts are of unnatural appearance, however, and are most likely hybrid species: a mythical lion (*yāli* or *vyāla*), also referred to in scholarly literature as

leogryph, combined with some kind of horned creature. The two horns twisted behind the ears are like those of a ram or a goat. Such combinations of horned creatures with lions are frequently observed adorning thrones in India¹⁷ but in the Rejoso bronze, the middle curled horn, a peculiar feature, is protruding from the top of the head and is more reminiscent of the trunk of an elephant. Two of these 'horned lions' are prancing at the front of the base of the throne base, while two more are squatting at the rear, ready to bound forth and perform their duty as guardians at any moment. Comparable 'horned lions' in stone, albeit larger in size, are often seen in architectural decorations or guarding the staircases of several Central Javanese temples generally dated from the late 8th through the mid-9th century (figs. 12–13).

15. It has been suggested with good reasons that the original icon in the main chamber of Candi Kalasan, now empty, was a seated statue in *bhadrāsana* and about twice the size of that of Candi Mendut (BRANDES 1904, p. 162, pls. 64–70). The question remains whether the cult image was a colossal bronze Buddha, as some scholars have assumed (BERNET KEMPERS 1959, p. 50; FONTEIN 1990, p. 186), or a peculiar form of Tārā, namely Vaśya-Tārā (JORDAAN 1998, pp. 167–173; LONG 2011, pp. 6–8). 16. AUBOYER 1937, pp. 89, 94–95; 1949, p. 114.

17. See VOGEL 1948. According to Jeannine Auboyer, these 'horned lions' imply a strong royal and solar symbolism for the throne they adorn (AUBOYER 1937, pp. 96–98; 1949, pp. 125–129).

The Rejoso throne presently has no back-component, although it must once have been endowed with a detachable large, round flaming 'halo' or a type of 'mandorla' (*prabhāmaṇḍala*) attached to the base, as is evident from the pin and hole at the top-centre of the throne's rear, and have been surmounted by a parasol or canopy. An approximate idea of what it may have looked like is conveyed by other Javanese bronzes with such radiant and flaming auras as for example the Buddha in *bhadrāsana* said to come from the vicinity of Candi Sewu (**fig. 14**).¹⁸

In conclusion, the Rejoso sculpture is unique in several respects. As far as we can ascertain from our brief stylistic analysis, it is not an exact replica or a miniature of any larger icon in similar pose from India; nor is it a model or a prototype used for other Buddhas in *bhadrāsana* found in Java. While 'Indian influences' are still manifest in the head and facial features, the 'Javanese elements' are evident in the hand gesture, the special arrangement of the robe garment and the stylized 'horned lions' adorning the throne. These elements have been blended harmoniously and leave no doubt that the bronze was locally manufactured in Central Java some time between the late 8th and the first half of the 9th century. We would thus exclude the possibility that the metal piece was directly imported from India, despite its transportable size and what the inscription in a northeastern Indian script on the back of the image, to which we shall turn later, might suggest at first glance (**fig. 15**).¹⁹ The main problem to be tackled in the remaining part of this article is the question of the identity of this Buddha.

The problem of identification

There is a large variability of identifications of such Buddhas in *bhadrāsana* in the work of previous scholars, especially art historians. Maria-George Bourda²⁰ was the first to warn against a certain number of misconceptions regarding this posture which, for many decades, scholars tended to assign exclusively to Maitreya. A more careful examination indeed heavily undermines this fragile identification.²¹ There are numerous examples in India where Buddhas in *bhadrāsana* represent various moments in the life of Śākyamuni, prominently the preaching of the First Sermon at Sārnāth. This episode is magnificently

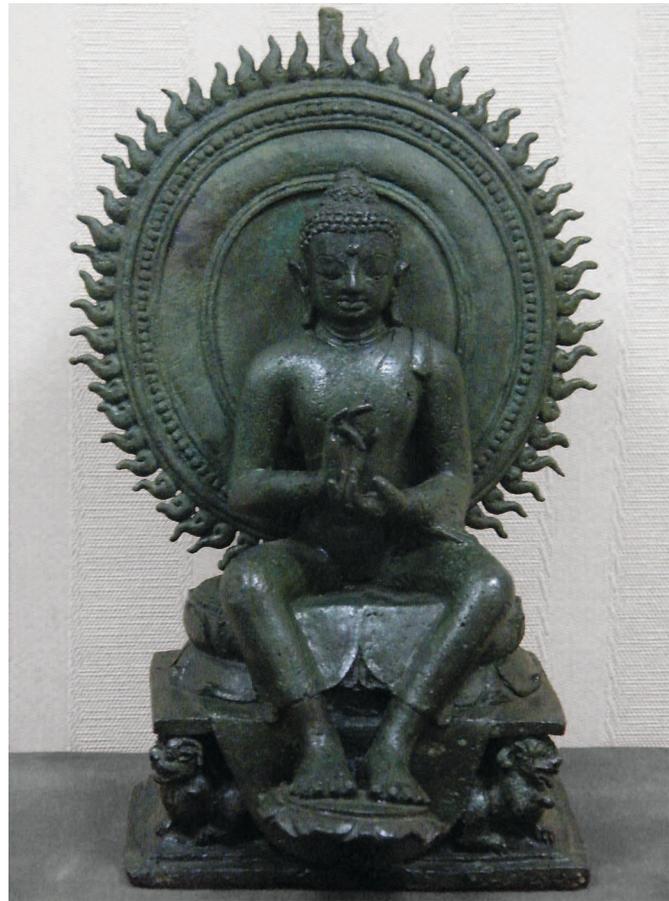


Figure 14. — Enthroned Buddha in *dharmacakramudrā*, late 8th–mid 9th century, Candi Sewu, Central Java. Bronze, H. 20 cm. National Museum of Indonesia, Jakarta, inv. no. 8216. Photograph by Nicolas Revire.

captured, for instance, in a sculpture in the British Museum.²² During the Pāla period (8th–12th century), it is also common to see this posture depicted as part of the scenes of the eight great sites (*aṣṭamahāsthāna*) such as the Great Miracle at Śrāvastī or the monkey's offering of the honey at Vaiśālī.²³ Because of the concomitant presence of the *mahāparinirvāṇa* episode represented on top of the steles in question, these Pāla narrative scenes can only relate to the life of Śākyamuni, not to Maitreya. It should be emphasized, however, that not a single image of the *bhadrāsana* type that remains in India is positively identified by an inscription. In China, by contrast, inscribed images are more common during the first millennium and reveal that Maitreya and other

18. BERNET KEMPERS 1959, p. 41, pl. 63, says it is "from" Candi Sewu; see also TOKYO NATIONAL MUSEUM 1997, p. 97, cat. no. 56. Jan Fontein, however, is more cautious, stating only that it was found "near" Candi Sewu (FONTEIN, SOEKMONO and SULEIMAN 1971, p. 149, no. 34).

19. For a similar view that Javanese metal images were not simply imports from India or copies of Indian prototypes, see HUNTINGTON S. 1994.

20. BOURDA 1949, p. 302.

21. The old arguments for Maitreya are seen for instance in GRÜNWEDEL 1901, p. 186; FOUCHER 1905, p. 49, n. 1; COOMARASWAMY 1926, p. 124; GETTY 1988 [1928], pp. 21–24; AUBOYER 1937, pp. 89–90; SAUNDERS 1960, p. 129. For more recent discussion about the iconography of Maitreya and the controversies about his identification, see KIM 1997, pp. 231–235, and REVIRE 2011b.

22. ROSENFELD 1967, fig. 167; ZWALF 1985, p. 97, cat. no. 131. On the grounds that all Buddhas are equivalent, insofar as the actual events in their lives on earth, such as the First Sermon, are virtually identical, it has been argued by some that this British Museum sculpture may in fact be Maitreya (LEE 1983, p. 177). Should one follow this line of reasoning, it could be easily objected that this sculpture may just as well represent any Buddha, whether past, present, or future, 'historical' or 'transcendental.' There are in fact some cases in Maharashtra where the seven past Buddhas are all represented in a row, seated in *bhadrāsana* and with the *dharmacakramudrā*, while Maitreya, as a Bodhisattva, is standing to the right end in princely garb (KIM 1997, fig. 121).

23. HUNTINGTON S. 1984, figs. 37, 54; PAUL 1995, pl. 70.



Figure 15. —
Buddha
of Rejoso
(cf. fig. 1),
back view.
Photograph
by Nicolas
Revire.

Buddha icons could be characterized in this attitude.²⁴ Therefore, when we are dealing with figures individually as free-standing cult icons, in the absence of an inscription and based solely on iconographic data, it often remains difficult to distinguish one Buddha from another.

Be that as it may, it has been argued by some²⁵ that a certain number of these Buddhas found in the narrow sanctuaries and caves of Maharashtra, western India, may reflect esoteric concepts. On many occasions, these Buddhas are arranged as the central figure in triads and are surrounded by two standing Bodhisattvas (fig. 16). Over and over again, the central Buddha is seated in *bhadrāsana*, and displays the *dharmacakramudrā*. In a ground-breaking article, John Huntington (1981), for instance, attempted to identify the Buddha of the main shrine in cave 6 at Aurāṅgābād, seated in the same posture, with the Jina Vairocana flanked by Padmapāṇi and Vajrapāṇi, as explained in the *garbhadhātumaṅḍala* of the “*Mahāvairocanasūtra*” i.e. the *Vairocanābhisambodhi*.²⁶ The similar iconographic program of the contiguous cave 7 would, according to the same author, be devoted to the *vajradhātumaṅḍala* as developed in the *Sarvatathāgatattvasaṅgraha*. For Huntington, in fact, most related Buddhas in the western caves of Maharashtra would reflect not only Vairocana but also at the same time Maitreya, who is reported by him to be the scion of the ‘Buddha family’ in several iconographic systems of the Shingon tradition.²⁷ While Japanese sources may indeed sometimes offer interesting insights into early South and Southeast Asian Buddhist iconography,²⁸ in this case there is no exact correspondence between the iconographic programs. In the two aforementioned Japanese *maṅḍalas*, Vairocana is never depicted seated in *bhadrāsana* and wearing monastic garb as he is in the western Deccan caves, but is always described as being in royal attire, cross-legged, and displaying the meditation gesture (*dhyānamudrā*) in the *garbhadhātumaṅḍala*, or the ‘enlightenment-tip’ gesture (*bodhyagrīmudrā*)²⁹ in the *vajradhātumaṅḍala*.³⁰ Moreover, to apply to western Deccan caves this reading of the “double *maṅḍala* tradition,” as found in modern-day Japan, may be perceived as an “anachronistic



Figure 16. — Enthroned Buddha in *dharmacakramudrā* attended by two Bodhisattvas, Kānherī (cave 67), Maharashtra (India), 6th century. High relief in stone, H. ca. 1 m; W. ca. 2 m. Photograph by Nicolas Revire.

Shingonization” of early Indian Buddhist practices with no historical validity.³¹ Huntington’s working hypothesis, therefore, remains unproven and largely speculative.

Should we want to identify the Buddha in monastic garb with the Jina Vairocana, a perhaps more convincing textual connection could be found in the relatively late *Niṣpannayogāvalī*. In Chapter 22, dealing with the *durgatipariśodhanamaṅḍala*, it is reported as an opinion that Mahāvairocana, the central Buddha of this *maṅḍala*, as well as the other Buddhas in it, may appear in monastic guise (*kaś cit tu mahāvairocanādayo nava tathāgatāḥ soṣṇīṣā bhikṣuveśadhāriṇaḥ*). In this *maṅḍala*, Mahāvairocana is called the ‘Lion of the Śākyas’ (*śrīśākyasiṃho bhagavān mahāvairocanaḥ*) which is traditionally an epithet reserved for Śākyamuni. Lastly, although the posture of the legs is not explicitly identified in this *maṅḍala*, the gesture of Mahāvairocana’s hands is exclusively that of preaching the Law (*dharmacakramudrā*) instead of the usual *bodhyagrīmudrā* which is found in many other *sādhanas* or iconographic treatises.³² We would thus have here striking textual evidence, albeit dating to the late 11th century, regarding the possible permutation of Śākyamuni and a form of Vairocana. It would also appear that both of these Buddhas can be depicted as sharing the monastic guise.³³ In this connection, an attempt may be made to explain the central shrine images—i.e. Buddhas in *bhadrāsana* and *dharmacakramudrā*—in western Deccan caves in the light of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhanatantra*,

24. See among others CHAPIN and SOPER 1970, pls. 29, 32; SASAGUCHI 1973; RHIE 2002, pp. 455–457, figs. 282a–d, pl. VIII; McNAIR 2007, pp. 100–104, fig. 5.3; and REVIRE 2012a, pp. 133–136.

25. HUNTINGTON J. 1981; MALANDRA 1996; BAUTZE-PICRON 2000, pp. 1215–1216, 1226.

26. Also known by commentator Buddhaguhya and later writers as the *Mahāvairocanābhisambodhitāntra* (HODGE 2003, p. 538, n. 1).

27. HUNTINGTON J. 1981, p. 54, n. 21; LEE 1983, pp. 165–166, 177–181.

28. They have been invoked recently in an effort to identify the Surocolo bronzes (SHARMA 2011).

29. Several other dubious reconstructed names from Sanskrit are given for this gesture (e.g. SAUNDERS 1960, pp. 102, 235, n. 1–3). The term *bodhyagrīmudrā*, however, is clearly attested in primary Sanskrit sources (DE MALLMANN 1975, p. 393, n. 4–5) although, oddly enough, it has never been observed in ancient South Asian sculptures.

30. GETTY 1988 [1928], pp. 32–33; TAJIMA 1959, pp. 64–65, 172–173; KANAOKA 1965, pp. 821–819.

31. Charles Orzech has similarly warned against such attempts made by several Japanese scholars to impose their views and traditions backward vis-à-vis Chinese esoteric Buddhism of the 8th century (ORZECH 1996, pp. 210, n. 3; 216, n. 18).

32. *Niṣpannayogāvalī* of Abhayākaragupta edited by BHATTACHARYA B. 1949, pp. 66, l. 5–6; 67, l. 6 from the bottom; 68, l. 4). See also DE MALLMANN 1975, pp. 62, n. 11; 130, n. 6; 242, n. 3; 331, n. 12; 386, n. 7; 392, n. 15; 393).

33. KANAOKA 1965, p. 814, concludes that, in line with the tenets of the *Tattvasaṅgraha* tradition, only the Tathāgata appearance of Mahāvairocana in monastic garb can be perceived as the ‘ultimate form’ of Buddhahood, as opposed to his Bodhisattva guise enjoined in the *Vairocanābhisambodhi*.



Figure 17. — Buddhist triad in stone, late 8th–mid 9th century, Candi Mendut, Central Java. Photograph by Nicolas Revire.

centred on Mahāvairocana/Śākyasiṃha. But the objection would have to be raised that in this *tantra* the five-Buddha system is well developed contrary to the overwhelming presence of triadic arrangements that can be observed *in situ* in the western caves. This situation, according to Geri Malandra, “may simply reflect an earlier teaching similar to what was classified in the Tibetan tradition as *kriyātantric* Buddhism (as reflected in a text like the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* [sic]),”³⁴ In texts of the so-called *kriyātantra* class, the promulgation of *mantras* and *sūtras* is often attributed to Śākyamuni as the main Buddha, but not yet to Vairocana, who starts to figure in this role only in subsequent strata of tantric literature. Several iconographic parallels and similarities with Maharashtra cave sites lead us to suggest that it is rather the triadic arrangement, probably based on texts later classified as *kriyātantras*, that was exported to Central Java, the prime instance being the triad at Candi Mendut (fig. 17).

The iconographic program of Candi Mendut and the identification of the triad sheltered in its cella has itself been a topic of considerable discussion. The triad is here centred on a colossal preaching Buddha in *bhadrāsana* and *dharmacakramudrā*, flanked by Avalokiteśvara-Padmapāṇi and an unidentified Bodhisattva, most likely Vajrapāṇi or Mañjuśrī, on his own right and left.³⁵ Most scholars argue today that the central Buddha represents either Śākyamuni or Vairocana displayed in the ‘phenomenal body’ (*nirmāṇakāya*). Certain authors have tentatively seen Candi Mendut as a three-dimensional architectonic version of the *garbhadhātumaṇḍala* based on the “*Mahāvairocanasūtra*,” where,

accordingly, the central Buddha is identified as Mahāvairocana.³⁶ But others claim that he is Maitreya, the future Buddha.³⁷ While the presence of a wheel and a pair of deer at the level of the Buddha’s feet, if this element is actually part of the original arrangement,³⁸ must have been intended to refer to the disciples (*śrāvakas*) and the episode of the ‘First Turning of the Wheel,’³⁹ the attendance of two contiguous Bodhisattvas makes it impossible to doubt the Mahāyāna context of this ensemble. Hence, as stated earlier by Bernet Kempers,⁴⁰ it would seem that it is not so much the ‘human’ Śākyamuni who is meant here but more likely a ‘transcendental’ form of Buddhahood as described in the *Saṅ Hyaṅ Kamahāyānikan*,

34. MALANDRA 1996, p. 202.

35. KROM 1918, pp. 421–422; 1923, pp. 317–319; SNELGROVE 1978, p. 135, pl. 112.

36. LOKESH CHANDRA 1980; SINGHAL 1991 [1985]. Lokesh Chandra initially saw a connection to the iconography of the *durgatipariśodhanamaṇḍala* based on his observation that the “Mahāvairocana at Mendut is in the dharmacakra mudrā” (LOKESH CHANDRA 1980, p. 316). As we have seen above, however, this attractive theory is not without its problems. For two divergent opinions on the iconographic program of Candi Mendut, see KLOCKE 1993, pp. 128–133, and WOODWARD 2004, pp. 337–338.

37. See for instance Lokesh Chandra’s foreword to Mark Long’s recent book on Candi Mendut (2009, p. xx, n. 15) stipulating that “the Mendut Buddha cannot be Śākyamuni-Vairocana according to the sitting posture. His *bhadrāsana* is not shared by any other Buddha.” This view clearly contradicts his earlier identification as Mahāvairocana (see note 36). From what precedes, however, the opinion that this posture (*bhadrāsana*) is unique to Maitreya can no longer be sustained.

38. Several scholars, among whom BERNET KEMPERS 1976, pp. 217–218, and after him LONG 2009, pp. xxxiv and 206, have raised doubts as to whether the wheel was originally placed here on the front face of the low platform supporting the Buddha’s throne or whether it may have been wrongly inserted there at the time of its reconstruction.

39. Certain Mahāyāna texts, such as the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* and the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*, or later tantric and exegetical systems, recount several turnings of the wheel each referring to a various stage of teaching the “*hinayāna*- and *mahāyāna-sūtras*” or even the “*yoga-tantras*” (SNELGROVE 2004 [1987], pp. 79–80, 94, 119, n. 4; WEINBERGER 2003, p. 93).

40. BERNET KEMPERS 1959, p. 40.



Figure 18. — Buddha of Rejoso (cf. fig. 1), detail of the back of the throne. Photograph by Nicolas Revire.

an Old Javanese treatise composed around the 10th century.⁴¹ We will return to this text in our conclusion.

From this brief iconological survey, it appears that the posture under study is not exclusively reserved for one Buddha or another. Positive identification of such Buddhas in *bhadrāsana* remains problematic, therefore, unless backed by inscriptions. Indeed, Vairocana preaching the universal truth on top of Mount Meru, like Maitreya governing the future realm of Ketumatī on earth, can be iconographically identical to Śākyamuni in the scene of the First Sermon at Sārnāth. After all, any ‘Buddha’ (or Jina/Tathāgata for that purpose) remains a ‘Buddha,’ conveying the ideals of his special characteristics (*lakṣaṇa*), no matter whether he is a figure of the past, the present or the future, ‘historical’ or ‘transcendental.’ But perhaps there is also an intentional plurality of meaning, allowing for various exoteric and esoteric interpretations.⁴² In the early *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra*,

for instance, Śākyamuni is reported as saying: “That Buddha (namely ‘Resplendent One, Adorned with Rays, Transformation-King’ [*Vairocana-raśmipratimaṅḍita-vikurvāṇarāja*]) is myself with a different name.”⁴³ Later tantric texts also use the names (Mahā)Vairocana and Śākyamuni interchangeably.⁴⁴ Paul Mus thus rightly concluded that, in due course, “Vairocana appears to have purely and simply substituted Śākyamuni on the seat of the Preaching of the Law.”⁴⁵ Accordingly, the esoteric principle that all Buddhas are related seems to be a profound truth that should be further explored on firmer ground. Keeping this possibility of multivalent symbolism in mind, let us now turn to the study of the inscription on the back of the present Buddha image and see whether it can shed light on its identification.

41. In this text (ed. LOKESH CHANDRA 1995, p. 411), the hybrid nature of the main ‘divinity’ (*bhaṭāra*) Śākyamuni is clearly suggested by granting him the *dhvajamudrā* or ‘banner-gesture’ (= *bodhyagrīmudrā*?) of Mahāvairocana (cf. LONG 2009, pp. 214–215). While the Mendut Buddha displays the *dharmacakramudrā*, not the *bodhyagrīmudrā*, many bronzes of (Mahā)Vairocana displaying the latter (‘enlightenment-tip’) gesture have been discovered in both central and eastern Java, thus attesting the significance of his cult throughout the region for several centuries (e.g. FONTEIN 1990, cat. no. 68; LUNSINGH SCHEURLEER and KLOKKE 1988, p. 33, cat. nos. 39, 41, 43, 47).

42. For a similar conclusion regarding the iconographic scheme of the four colossal Buddhas in *bhadrāsana* originating from Wat Phra Men in Nakhon Pathom, central Thailand, see REVIRE 2010, p. 97.

43. Cited in SNELGROVE 2004 [1987], pp. 78, n. 57; 196. SNELGROVE 1978, p. 135, also thinks that the identification of such icons may well depend on the intentions of those who set up the image, whether related to Mahāyāna interests or not.

44. In the *Sarvathāgatattvasaṃgraha* narrative, Siddhārtha, here known as Sarvārthasiddhi, the Bodhisattva who became enlightened or more precisely ‘consecrated’ as Vajradhātu/Vairocana, after having reached the fifth stage of supreme enlightenment (*pañcābhisambodhi*), taught rites and methods of the ‘first’ *yoga-tantra* to the attending gods on the summit of Mount Meru and then descended to the everyday world by taking possession of his ‘physical body’ as Śākyamuni (SNELGROVE 2004 [1987], pp. 120–121; WEINBERGER 2003, pp. 60–61, n. 159; 174–176).

45. “Vairocana [...] paraît s’être purement et simplement substitué à Çākyaṃuni sur le siège de l’Enseignement de la Loi” (MUS 1934, p. 182). In the same vein, see WAYMAN and TAJIMA 1992, p. 228, who stipulate that “Mahāvairocana is a deification of Śākyamuni.”

The inscription

The Sanskrit inscription on the back of the Rejoso Buddha comprises three short lines in Siddhamātṛkā⁴⁶ script that can be read almost without difficulty (figs. 18–19):⁴⁷

- (1) jinajik-
- (2) ☉ ye dharmā hetuprabhavā hetu teṣān tathāgato hy a(va)-
- (3) dat teṣāñ ca yo nirodha evamvādī mahāśramaṇaḥ

There is rather a wide gap between line 1, where we find the *mantra jinajik*, and lines 2–3, which show the well-known *ye dharmāḥ* formula.⁴⁸ This formula is introduced by a symbol that is very widespread throughout the Hindu and Buddhist worlds, and is observed particularly on several other Buddhist inscriptions of Central Java, namely the famous and much discussed Siddhamātṛkā inscriptions on stone associated with the Śailendra dynasty: the inscriptions of Kelurak,⁴⁹ Kalasan⁵⁰ (fig. 20), Abhayagirivihāra on the Ratu Baka plateau;⁵¹ it is only the Plaosan stone inscription, in this group, that lacks the upper left part where the sign would probably have been marked.⁵² While current scholarship regards it as denoting the auspicious word *siddham*, the editors of the aforementioned Sanskrit inscriptions have either ignored or misinterpreted this symbol,⁵³ which is also observed in the Siddhamātṛkā inscriptions on precious metal foils that have been excavated in more recent years at Candi Plaosan Lor.⁵⁴ The stone and metal foil inscriptions mentioned are the only extensive texts in Siddhamātṛkā script that have been preserved from ancient Java. We do, however, see this script used several times for short inscriptions on the backs

46. This term was introduced into the field of Indonesian epigraphy by Louis-Charles Damais (1955). For a general discussion of the term and the varieties of script that it denotes, see SIRCAR 1970–1971, pp. 115–116. Note especially his observation: “Scholars have given various names to this alphabet, two of them, often used, being Kuṭiḷa and ‘Early Nāgarī’. But the name Siddhamātṛkā is more authoritative since Al-Bīrūnī (eleventh century A.D.) uses this name for the alphabets of certain regions, and the Chinese applied the name Siddham to the same script.” See also SANDER 2007.

47. In our edition, the median dot · represents the *virāma* sign; uncertainty of reading is expressed by parentheses.

48. On this formula, and for translations, see the references in GRIFFITHS 2011; CRUIJSEN, GRIFFITHS and KLOKKE, forthcoming; GRIFFITHS, forthcoming.

49. BOSCH 1928, pl. I.

50. OD 7466; BOSCH 1928, pl. II.

51. OD 7945; BOSCH 1928, pl. III.

52. OD 7946; BOSCH 1928, pl. IV.

53. The sign was ignored or transliterated as double *danḍa* by Bosch, and this is reflected in the derivative editions of such scholars as Sarkar and Sircar. J.G. de Casparis noted the identity of the sign on the Abhayagirivihāra inscription with that on the Kalasan inscription, but interpreted it as equivalent to *om* (DE CASPARIS 1950, p. 22). This interpretation has been challenged by later research. For discussion of this sign in the epigraphy of Campā, and references to the scholarly debate on the interpretation of its meaning, we refer to GRIFFITHS and SOUTHWORTH 2007, p. 352, n. 10.

54. These are edited in GRIFFITHS, forthcoming. On fragments of the left side of the large Plaosan stone inscription in Siddhamātṛkā, discovered before 1976 at the same site, but as far as we know still unpublished, see BOECHARI 1976, p. 18, n. 13; and 1982, p. 21, n. 9 = 2012, p. 163, n. 13 and p. 405, n. 9.

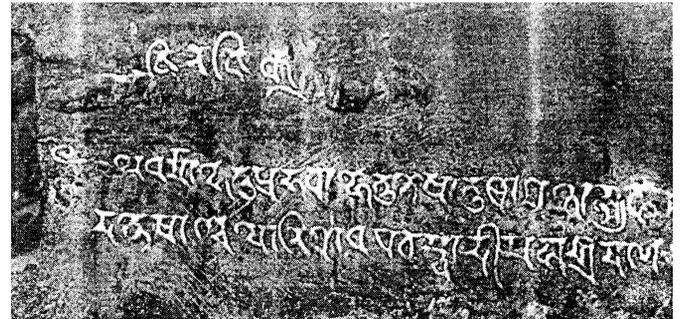


Figure 19. — Buddha of Rejoso (cf. fig. 1), detail of the inscription on the back of the throne. After NUGRAHANI et al. 1998, photo 16.

of metal sculptures, such as the Rejoso Buddha, and to our knowledge it is in these sculptural contexts exclusively used to engrave the *ye dharmāḥ* formula. We have not attempted to list such cases exhaustively, and cite here only a random selection of other cases of Siddhamātṛkā inscriptions on metal sculptures from Indonesia: a bronze image of Mañjuśrī found in Temanggung, a bronze image of Avalokiteśvara in the Museum für Asiatische Kunst in Berlin, a bronze image of Jambhala in the Musée Guimet in Paris, a silver image of Mahāpratisarā in the Ethnographic Museum in Leiden, a gilded bronze of Padmapāñi in the National Museum in Jakarta, and a bronze image, presumably representing Vairocana, in the same museum.⁵⁵ All in all, despite some recent discoveries, including the Rejoso bronze, the number of inscriptions using this form of writing, rather than the dominant Kawi script, remains very limited in Indonesia, and always figures in Buddhist (tantric) context.⁵⁶ Our inscription belongs to the very common category of *ye dharmāḥ* inscriptions on the backs of Buddhist sculptures, but is distinguished from the other members of this category by the unique addition of the word *jinajik*, to which we will turn in the next section.

The inscription is not internally dated. As far as the script is concerned, the rarity of Siddhamātṛkā in Javanese inscriptions is offset by the extremely numerous specimens of this writing in Indian epigraphy. For palaeographic comparison, it is advisable

55. See DAMAIS 1963, p. 580 for the Temanggung bronze, whose present whereabouts are unknown to us; see MÜLLER 1985, pp. 18–20 for the bronze Avalokiteśvara, MIK II 195 (Müller’s dating seems about two centuries too late); see LE BONHEUR 1971, pp. 184–187 for the bronze Jambhala, MG 3814; see JUYNBOLL 1909, p. 108, LE BONHEUR 1971, pp. 208–211, and MEVISSSEN 1999, pp. 104–105 for the silver Mahāpratisarā, RMV 1630-18; the Padmapāñi is MNI A28/7990, and we are not aware of any publication about it; the bronze Vairocana, MNI 554, was depicted with its inscription in FRIEDERICH 1850, pp. 1–8, with pls. 1–2; see also GROENEVELDT 1887, p. 163, n. 1. See LUNSINGH SCHEURLEER and KLOKKE 1988, p. 99, cat. no. 47 for an image bearing the inscription *verocana* (in Kawi script).

56. For a general study of the use of Nāgarī and its antecedent, Siddhamātṛkā script, in Indonesian epigraphy, we refer to DE CASPARIS 1982, where the term Siddhamātṛkā is however avoided, for reasons unknown to us. The only exceptions to the limitation, in Indonesian inscriptions, of the use of Siddhamātṛkā/Nāgarī to Buddhist contexts are significantly later than our sculpture: see DE CASPARIS 1982, pp. 133, 135–136; a grave printer’s error has here caused the notes to be displaced and misnumbered: see for numbers 33–34 the notes 35–36 on the next page.

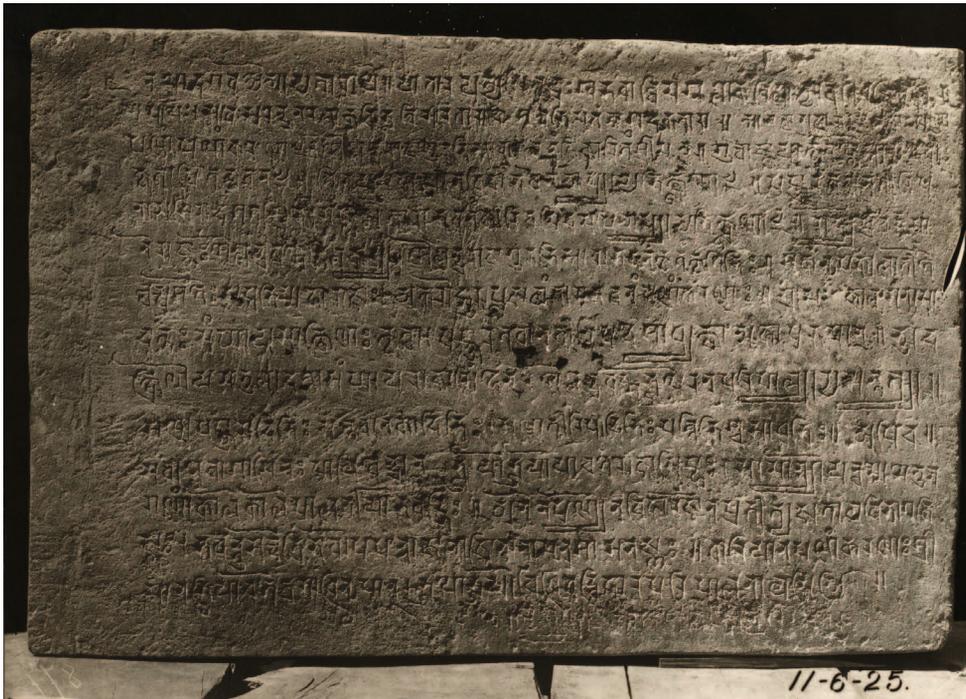


Figure 20. — The stone inscription of Kalasan, 778/779 CE, Central Java. National Museum of Indonesia, Jakarta, inv. no. D.147. Photo OD 7466, Kern Institute Collection, courtesy of Leiden University Library.

to make use of Indian material, keeping in mind, of course, the uncertainties involved in comparing scripts used in areas far removed from each other.⁵⁷ The present specimen is an example of mature Siddhamāṭṛkā script of the eastern Indian variety, prevalent in the greater Bengal-Bihar region between the late 8th and early 10th century CE. Before considering the individual palaeographic features, it is relevant to underline the system that governs the overall structure of the script. There are three systemic features of palaeographic development that characterize the mature version of this script in eastern India and are also observed in this inscription:

i. the formation of the top *mātrā* in the form of a solid triangular wedge (separate wedges in case of letters having more than one vertical element, such as the ligatures *rmā* and *pra* in line 2 of this inscription),⁵⁸

57. There may possibly be explicit written evidence for direct contacts between the Buddhists of ancient Java and ancient Bengal, in the stanzas VII and XI of the above-mentioned Siddhamāṭṛkā inscription of Kelurak, which speak of a *gaudīdivipaguru*, a *rājaguru* and Kumāraghoṣa. The relevant part of the inscription is somewhat damaged, so that we cannot be absolutely certain these elements all denote one and the same person, but it seems likely that they do (Bosch 1928, pp. 18–19, 29–30, 51). On this point, see also DE CASPARIS 1983, p. 10.

58. This solid triangular wedge developed from its 4th–5th century CE predecessor prevalent in the middle Ganges valley. Dani has shown how a number of head-marks developed by this time in different regional schools of writing (DANI 1986, p. 80). The solid triangular form, called ‘pendant’ by Georg Bühler, developed out of the middle Ganges valley variant. Bühler took these head-marks or pendant-like small *mātrās* to mean *mātrās* or ‘radical signs’ found in both acute-angled and Nāgarī scripts (BÜHLER 1904 [2004], p. 71). In the light of this distinct development of the *mātrā* and the name of the script recovered by Al-Bīrūnī, one may wonder whether the name of the script was really Siddhamāṭṛkā, or rather Siddhamātrikā, where *mātrikā* has to be taken to stand for a ‘smaller *mātrā*’ (that finally converts into a straight top stroke in Gauḍī about the middle of the 11th century), which is *siddha*, i.e. ‘justified’ in this script (cf. SANYAL 2010, contrast SANDER 2007, p. 127).

ii. the principal vertical element(s) (usually to the right) of each letter forming a concave outline towards the interior (and hence convex towards the exterior), and

iii. the terminal part of the right principal vertical at the bottom forming an acute angle with the horizontal plane.⁵⁹

In the early stages of the development of Siddhamāṭṛkā between the 6th–7th and the middle of the 8th century, the triangular head-mark remains indistinct, the vertical elements are yet to take a curve towards the left and do not form the acute angle. In the succeeding stage of development (known as Gauḍī), on the other hand, the triangular wedge is found replaced by a thickset straight *mātrā* and the right vertical bar again assumes a true vertical outline, although the lower end of the vertical still forms the acute angle, but in a more angular fashion.

In the case of the present inscription, it is very difficult to determine individual palaeographic peculiarities as the inscription contains only thirty-nine *akṣaras*. However, some of the salient features are noticeable. Firstly, the subjoined element *r* in ligatures such as *pra* and *śra* (line 2) is represented by a slanted stroke to the left instead of the earlier ornate convex hook spread along the base of the letter beyond the span of the head-mark.⁶⁰ In mature eastern Indian Siddhamāṭṛkā of the 9th century this ornamental flourish disappears because of the increasing currency of the cursive style; in the fully developed Gauḍī of the 11th–12th century, this is further modified to a tiny solid orthogonal triangle sometimes identical in

59. This feature led Bühler, quite rightly, to coin the term ‘acute-angled’ for this script (BÜHLER 1904 [2004], p. 68).

60. Cf. the Kailan copperplate of Śrīdhāraṇarāta dateable to the third quarter of the 7th century, edited by SIRCAR 1947; 1983, pp. 36–40.

shape to the vocalization *u*.⁶¹ Secondly, the form of the palatal sibilant *śa*, which is often used as the most dependable test letter in tracing the evolution of eastern Indian alphabets,⁶² shows an intermediate stage between the earlier looped form and the later form with two semi-circles joining at the top of the vertical to the right; here it is found to join with the vertical but the loop has been displaced. Thirdly, the vocalization *e* is still formed by a very small loop to the left extending down only as far as roughly the top third of the *akṣara* (e.g. *te*, *to* and *yo* in lines 2 and 3), thus predating the Gauḍī form with fully developed bracket-shape extending downwards at the left along the whole of the *akṣara*. Finally, the most crucial clue to its palaeographic dating is provided by the top *mātrā* in some of the *akṣaras*; while almost all hang from the triangular wedge, three forms, viz. the *śa*, the *ha* and the *ya*, with vocalizations (line 3) show a nascent stage of development of the straight horizontal *mātrā*,⁶³ though it is not as fully developed as those found in mature Gauḍī.

On the whole, the letters are almost identical to those of the Nālandā *stūpa* inscription of the reign of Mahendrapāla dateable to the middle of the 9th century, excepting the somewhat intermediate character of the *mātrā*.⁶⁴ We cite this inscription, however, only as an example of the script in use, without noteworthy developments, under consecutive Pāla kings in the 9th century, including the first half of the reign of Devapāladeva.⁶⁵ Thus, the inscription undoubtedly represents a set of letters characteristic of mature Siddhamātrkā, with some traces of slightly later developments and may, therefore, be palaeographically dated to the period 800–875 CE, but it is impossible to determine a more precise time frame on the basis of palaeography alone. In the effort to determine the dating of the sculpture, the inscription can at best be used only as complementary evidence to the stylistic evidence discussed above.⁶⁶ However, the fact that the inscription comprises the *mantra jinajik* could be relevant to the problem of iconographic identification.

61. Cf. the Deopara eulogy of Vijayasena, edited by MAJUMDAR 1929 [2003], pp. 42–56, pl. 5.

62. For discussions on the use of the palatal sibilant as a test letter, see BANERJĪ 1919; CHAKRAVARTI S.N. 1938, pp. 361–365; SIRCAR 1951, p. 85.

63. Cf. the Chittagong copper vase of Attākaraḍeva, early 10th century, edited by BHATTACHARYA G. 1993, pp. 323–336.

64. Edited by SHASTRI 1942, p. 106, pl. X, c—this plate, and several other reproductions of inscriptions issued under Mahendrapāla, are reproduced in SANYAL 2009, pls. 1–10. Until the late 1980s, the Mahendrapāla in question had been misidentified as a ruler of the Gurjara-Pratihāra dynasty. Subsequent discoveries have led to the identification of a Pāla ruler of this name, whose reign is to be dated about fifty years earlier than the period indicated for this inscription by Shastri in 1942. See SANYAL 2009, with further references.

65. See BHATTACHARYA S.C. 2005–2006, who presents on p. 65 a chronological table for the Pāla dynasty furnished by G. Bhattacharya.

66. This of course presumes contemporaneity of the inscription with the sculpture. We have considered the question whether it is possible to provide either (a) technical proof that the engraving would have been done in wax (and would hence be precisely contemporary with the sculpture produced with the lost wax method), or, conversely, (b) arguments that might support the idea of a certain time lag between sculpture and inscription. While it seems to us that this inscription was not engraved in the wax, and is hence at least a short period posterior to the production of the sculpture, we also believe that any additional argument is condemned to remain speculative, and we see no reasonable objection to the assumption that the inscription was engraved as soon as technically possible after the casting of the sculpture.

Textual occurrences of the *mantra jinajik*

We have quoted above Jeffrey Sundberg’s statement that the “slogan *jina jik* on the Rejoso Vairocana is explained by noting its frequent occurrence in tantric texts which treat Vairocana, and thus indicates the worship of this particular form of the deity during the Central Javanese period.” Leaving aside the fact that the term “slogan” seems inappropriate, and that the choice to divide *jinajik* into two words is questionable,⁶⁷ it must be pointed out that the only evidence adduced by Sundberg that directly links the *mantra jinajik* with Vairocana comes from the *Advayavajrasaṃgraha*, more particularly the text entitled *Pañcākāra*:⁶⁸

ataḥ pūrvadale candramaṇḍalopary oṃkārajaḥ śukla-
varṇavairocanaḥ śuklacakracihno bodhyagrīmudrādhāro
rūpaskandhasvabhāvo mohasvarūpo viḍviśuddhas
tathāgatakuly ādarśatvena pratiṣṭhito hemantartu-
viśuddho madhurarasaśārīraḥ kavargavyāpī prabhāta-
sandhyātmakāyasvabhāvaḥ | oṃ āḥ jinajik hūṃ | ity asya
jāpamantraḥ

“Then on the eastern petal on a disk appears Vairocana born of the syllable OM; he is white in colour a white disk as his symbol and makes the gesture indicating enlightenment. He embodies the skandha of form and the nature of delusion; he is symbolized by dung; he is of the Tathagata-family; he consists in the Mirror-like Knowledge, he represents Winter, sweetness, the KA-series of consonants and the morning watch. His *mantra* is: OM ĀḤ JINAJIK HŪṂ.”⁶⁹

As the title of the text indicates, the *maṇḍala* in which Vairocana takes place here is based on a five-fold division. Vairocana does not take centre stage. In any case, Advayavajra, the author of the works compiled in the *Advayavajrasaṃgraha*, was active only in the 11th century,⁷⁰ whereas our sculpture and inscription are likely to date to the early 9th century. Sundberg also mentions the Chinese-language commentary of the 8th-century author Amoghavajra on the ritual aspects of the ‘Scripture for humane kings,’ the *Instructions for the rites, chants, and meditations of the Prajñāpāramitā dhāraṇī Scripture for humane kings*

67. Stephen Hodge in his translation of Buddhaguhya’s commentary also spells it in two words as “*jina jik*” (HODGE 2003, pp. 130–131). Whether represented as one word or as two, the *mantra* cannot be parsed as normal Sanskrit. However, the parallelism with the *mantras* with which it is most often directly connected—*vajradhṛk* ‘Vajra-bearer’ (which can be parsed and must be one word) and *ārolīk* (which cannot be parsed but cannot obviously be split either, see below)—suggests that we have the *mantra* intended as one word, perhaps built on an underlying Sanskrit expression *jinajit* ‘conqueror (*jit*) among conquerors (*jina*).’

68. Ed. MIKKYŌ SEITEN KENKYŪKAI 1989, p. 126.

69. Translated by SNELGROVE 1954, p. 250.

70. On the date of Advayavajra, see TATZ 1987, pp. 697–698.

who wish to protect their states,⁷¹ citing the translation of Charles Orzech (1996, p. 234), which we repeat here, but using instead the same translator's version published a bit later (1998, p. 182):

'*Oṃ jina-jik svāhā*. Silently chant this *mantra* three times and release the [*mudrā*] above your head. Because of making this *mudrā* and chanting this Buddha department *samaya mantra*, all of the Buddhas of the *Dharmadhātu* of the ten directions will assemble like a cloud and totally fill the void. [They] empower the practitioner [who will thus] be freed from all obstacles, and your vow cultivating the purification of the triple karma will be swiftly accomplished.'

Since no association with Vairocana is evident here, the passage does not support Sundberg's claim. To further evaluate the proposed identification as Vairocana, we will present here a concise overview of the demonstrably pre-10th-century sources that deal with the *mantra jinajik* and its use.

For this purpose, we may start with the *Susiddhikarasūtra* which is preserved only in Tibetan and in Chinese, the translation into Chinese dating to 726 CE. The integral translation from the Chinese version, published by Rolf Giebel (2001), mentions this *mantra* several times, each time in association with 'white' (*śāntika*) magic rites. In Chapter 2 of this text, we read:

'He who is desirous of success must understand the higher, middling and lower rites of *mantras*. This scripture embraces the *maṇḍala* rites performed in all three families. The *mantras* of the Buddha Family are for *śāntika* (pacification) [rites], the *mantras* of Avalokiteśvara (Sound-Observer; *i.e.* the Lotus Family) are for *pauṣṭika* (prosperity) [rites], and the *mantras* of the Vajra [Family] are for *ābhicāruka* (subjugation) [rites];'

'Then again, if you wish to quickly accomplish the *śāntika* [rite], you should use *mantras* of the Buddha Family; if you wish to quickly accomplish the *pauṣṭika* [rite], you should use *mantras* of the Lotus Family; and if you wish to quickly accomplish the *ābhicāruka* [rite], you should use *mantras* of the Vajra Family.'⁷²

It is then explained in Chapter 7 that:

'When performing rites, you should also make a ring using cogongrass (*kuśa*) and put it on the ring finger of your right hand. You should recite the three-and-a-half-syllable heart-*mantra* of the corresponding family one hundred times

or one thousand times and then place [the ring] on your finger. The [three-and-a-half-syllable] heart-*mantra* of the Buddha Family is: *Jinajik*. The [three-and-a-half-syllable] heart-*mantra* of the Lotus Family is: *Ārolik*. The [three-and-a-half-syllable] heart-*mantra* of the Vajra Family is: *Vajradhṛk*.⁷³

A passage in Chapter 36 of the *Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa*,⁷⁴ a text that combines early and later parts and is hence difficult to date, seems to draw on a similar classification, but with further expansions up to seven *mantras*.⁷⁵

[...] sarvamantrāṅām mudrāṇi bhavanti || atha khalu bhagavāṃ śākyamuniḥ sarvabuddhadharmāṅām mudrālaṅkāratathāgataguṇamāhātmyasamudramudrā nāma samādhiṃ samāpadyate sma | samanantarasamāpannasya bhagavataḥ sarvatathāgatāḥ sarvamudrāsamayaṃ bhāṣante⁷⁶ sma | tasmāt samādher vyutthāya⁷⁷ sarvatathāgatamudrāmudritaṃ mahāmudrāpaṭalavisaram sarvamantrāṅām bhāṣate sma ||

ātau tāvat sarvamantrakuleṣu hṛdayāni bhavanti | pūrvam uccārayed dvisapta ekavārām | tato mudrā bandhitavyā, nānyathā-d-iti | katamaṃ ca tat | **sarvatathāgatānām hṛdayam | jinajik** | eṣa sa mārśāḥ sarvatathāgatānām hṛdayaḥ sarvakarmikaḥ | tathāgatakule sarvamudrā bandhitavyā | tataḥ karma samārabhet | ārolik⁷⁸ | avalokitasya hṛdayaḥ sarvakarmikaḥ padmakule sarvamudrābandhayatā ayaṃ japtavyaḥ sarvasādhanopayikaḥ sarvakarmasu | vajradhṛk | eṣa sa mārśā vajrapāṇeḥ hṛdayam | sarvavajrakuleṣu ca japatā mudrā bandhitavyā | surārak | eṣa sarvadevānām sarvamudrābandhayatā sarvakarmasu prayoktavyaḥ | sarvadevānām hṛdayaḥ | yakṣātak | sarvayakṣānām hṛdayaḥ | pinādhṛk | rudrasya hṛdayaḥ | ṣṭhoṃ | eṣa sa mārśā ekākṣaram nāma hṛdayam | [...] ayam ekākṣaro mantraḥ sarveṣāṃ hṛdayam bhavati | sarvakarmāṇi karoti | sarvamudrās⁷⁹ ca bandhitavyā | japaṃ kurvāṇa anenaiva hṛdayena japaḥ kartavyaḥ | satataṃ buddhādhiṣṭhito bhavati | mahāprabhāvo 'yaṃ mahānuśaṃsaḥ sarvakarmasu

73. GIEBEL 2001, p. 152.

74. See DELHEY 2012, pp. 70–71 for the argument in favor of the assumption that the original title of this text, more commonly cited as *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, in fact contained the element °śrīya°.

75. Ed. GAṆAPATI ŚĀSTRĪ 1922, pp. 384–385; ed. VAIDYA 1961, p. 300.

76. Emendation suggested to us by Peter Skilling. The editions read *bhāṣate*.

77. Emendation suggested to us by Martin Delhey, who informs us that the manuscript is somewhat difficult to decipher here but that it certainly does not show -r u-, as we see in the editions; that the *akṣara* can perhaps be interpreted as -r vyu-; and that the preconsonantal *r* is, at any rate, clearly identifiable.

78. Emended. The editions read *āroliku*, where *ku* is no doubt a misreading for *k* with *virāma*. Martin Delhey informs us: "Your emendation to *ārolik* is probably fine and seemingly also the MS reading. At any rate, the -k does not look different here than in the other occurrences in this paragraph" (personal communication, May 2013).

79. Emend this to *sarvamudrā*, or emend above to *sarvamudrā bandhayitavyāḥ*?

71. *Taishō*, no. 994, vol. 19, pp. 514a–519b.

72. GIEBEL 2001, pp. 130–131, 133.

mudrādikamaṅḍaluvidhānapāṭasādhanopayikeṣu sattvā-
nupūrvam prayoktavyaḥ | sarvaṃ sādhaṃ | yanmana-
sābhīrucitaṃ sādhaṃkeneti ||
tato mudrāṇi bhavanti śataṃ cāṣṭasādhikam | prathamam
kuryāc cakriṇe jine ||
tataḥ paramaloke sa padmamudreti kathyate ||
tṛtīyam vajramudraṃ tu vajrapāṇisamāviṣe |
caturtham devatāmudraṃ svastikaṃ tu vinirdiṣet || etc.

[...] All *mantras* have seals (*mudrā*). Then the Lord Śākyamuni attained the meditation called ‘Seal Ornament of The Teachings of All Buddhas, Seal of the Ocean of the Greatness of the Virtues of the Tathāgatas.’ The moment the Lord had attained [it], all Tathāgatas pronounced the pledge of all seals. Having emerged from that meditation, [the Lord] uttered the extensive ‘Chapter on the Great Seal’ of all *mantras*, which was [now] sealed by the seals of all Tathāgatas. To begin with, there are heart[-*mantras*] in all *mantra* families. First he should once pronounce [them] twice, sevenfold or once. Then the seal must be displayed. No other procedure should be adopted. Which one? **The heart of all Tathāgatas is JINAJIK.** This one, O venerable ones, is the all-purpose heart of all Tathāgatas. All of the seals in the Tathāgata family must be displayed. Then he should perform the ritual. ĀROLIK is the all-purpose heart of Avalokita (*i.e.* Avalokiteśvara). It serves to achieve all attainments (*sādhana*), in all rituals, and is to be uttered by [the adept] who displays all seals in the Lotus family. VAJRADHṚK. This, O venerable ones, is the heart of Vajrapāṇi, and the seal is to be displayed by [the adept] who utters [it] in all Vajra families. SURARĀK. This is to be applied for all gods by [the adept] who displays all seals. It is the heart of all gods. YAKṢĀTAK is the heart of all Yakṣas. PINĀDHṚK is the heart of Rudra. ṢṬHOM. This, O venerable ones, is the heart called monosyllable. [...] This monosyllabic *mantra* is the heart of all [*mantras*]. It serves all purposes. The seal of all [Tathāgatas] is to be displayed. When he is performing the incantation, the incantation should be done with none other than this heart[-*mantra*]. He becomes forever empowered by the Buddhas. This [heart] which is of great might, of great benefit, is to be used in all rituals that serve to achieve aims by means of seals, etc. the arranging of water-pots, and [drawings on] cloth, in regular succession of sentient beings (?). He achieves all aims. This means: by the adept [is attained] whatever his mind covets. Then there are the one hundred and eight seals. The first he should make for the Jina Cakrin. Then that Lotus-Seal is said to serve for otherworldly aims, while the third, the Vajra-Seal is for communion with Vajrapāṇi. The fourth, the Deity-Seal, he should apply for well-being, etc.’

Again, we do not find any connection with Vairocana at all, and indeed this Buddha does not play a significant role in this text, although his name occurs a few times. Rather, the *mantra jinajik* seems here, as in the ‘Scripture for humane kings,’ to be associated with the totality of Tathāgatas, and also—in a way that we do not fully understand—with the Jina Cakrin, which is no doubt a short *alias* of the Ekākṣara Uṣṇīṣacakravartin who seems to play an important role in rituals for royal sponsors in the *Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa*.⁸⁰

Two other early scriptures already alluded to are centred on Vairocana. These are, on the one hand, the *Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi* (also transmitted under the title *Mahāvairocanābhisaṃbodhi-tantra*), that, like the *Susiddhikara*, is not preserved in Sanskrit, but which has been integrally translated both from its Tibetan and its Chinese versions;⁸¹ and, on the other hand, the *Sarvatathāgatasattvasaṃgraha*, which is preserved in Sanskrit and is considered by many scholars to have been important to ancient Javanese Buddhism. In neither of these two texts, the *terminus ante quem* of whose composition is furnished by the availability of Chinese translations made in the first half of the 8th century, do we find any trace of the *mantra jinajik*, despite the fact that Vairocana is the central figure in the *maṅḍalas* of both.⁸²

It is only in the *Guhyasamāyatantra*, composed in the course of the 8th century,⁸³ that we first encounter the association of the *mantra jinajik* with Vairocana. Here we read, in Matsunaga’s edition, at the opening of Chapter 1:⁸⁴

atha bhagavān sarvatathāgatasamayasaṃbhavavajraṃ nāma
samādhiṃ samāpadyedaṃ mohakulaparamasārahṛdayam
svakāyavācittavajrebhyaḥ niścārayāṃ āsa | **jinajik** | athāsmiṃ
bhāṣitamātre sa eva bhagavān sarvatathāgatakāyavācittavi-
dyāpuruṣo **vairocana** mahāmudrāsāmyogaparamapadaḥ
sitakṣṇaraktākāreṇa sarvatathāgatakāyavācittavajrasya
purato niṣīdayāṃ āsa

‘Then the Lord entered the meditation called ‘Vajra emanating from the pledge of [the Lord] Sarvatathāgata’ and brought forth from the Vajras which are his own body, speech and mind this heart[-*mantra*] which is the most sublime essence of the delusion family: JINAJIK. Then, as soon as this was uttered, that very Lord who is the *mantra*-personification of the body, speech and mind of all Tathāgatas, sat down to the east of the Vajra which is the

80. LOKESH CHANDRA 1980, p. 319, writes that Vairocana “is also known as the Ekākṣara Cakravartin” but fails to cite a source in support of this statement.

81. HODGE 2003; GIEBEL 2005.

82. The *mantra* does appear in Buddhaguhya’s commentary of ca. 760 CE on the *Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi* (HODGE 2003, pp. 130–131) but this commentary does not specifically connect it to Vairocana.

83. MATSUNAGA 1978, p. xxvi; SANDERSON 2009, p. 141.

84. MATSUNAGA, 1978, pp. 6–7.

body, speech and mind of all Tathāgatas, with white, black and red form, in the supreme state of union with the great Seal of Vairocana.’

The *mantra* and its associated Tathāgata do not here take pride of place in the centre, which is reserved for Akṣobhya (associated with the *mantra vajradhṛk*). We encounter the *mantra jinajik* again in Chapter 15:⁸⁵

tatremāni bāhyādhyātmikavyādhicikitsāvajrahṛdaya-
mantrākṣarapadāni | jinajik | ārolik | vajradhṛk |
yad evākṣarapadam iṣṭam bhaved bhaktyā guṇāvaham |
bhāvayet tādrśam bimbaṃ vyādhivajrapracodanaiḥ || 112 ||

‘For this there are the *mantra*-words that are the Vajra hearts to cure external and internal sickness: JINAJIK ĀROLIK VAJRADHṚK. Whichever *mantra*-words he chooses (from the above three), it will bring forth virtues (*i.e.* will bear fruit) through devotion (to its cultivation). He should visualize the corresponding form (*i.e.* the corresponding deity) with commands (uttered by the deity/yogin) for the illness-*vajra* (*i.e.* the illness, which is, like a *vajra*, difficult to handle) [to leave the patron’s body].’

This second passage rather seems to stand in some continuity with the contexts in which the *Susiddhikarasūtra* and the *Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa* use the *mantra jinajik*, that is, without any direct connection to Vairocana.⁸⁶

It is only in later texts that the association between Vairocana and the *mantra jinajik* seems to become standardized. Most of these texts seem to date from the 11th century (such as the text composed by Advayavajra cited by Sundberg), or later still. Lacking initiation into the complex world of Buddhist tantric literature, we do not dare go into further detail and limit ourselves to just one more citation, from the *Piṇḍikrama*, a work of the 9th or 10th century,⁸⁷ basing ourselves on the edition of La Vallée-Poussin (1896, p. 8).

85. Ed. MATSUNAGA 1978, p. 81, reading *bhaktiguṇāvaham* and ... *tādrśam vyādhiṃ viśvavajrapracodanaiḥ*. We cite the text here with slight modifications vis-à-vis Matsunaga proposed to us by Péter-Dániel Szántó on the basis of the commentary *Pradīpodyotana* (ed. CHAKRAVARTI C. 1984).

86. The translation was proposed to us by Péter-Dániel Szántó, who pointed out that there does seem to be an allusion to the *mantra* corresponding to a deity, which would perhaps most logically be Vairocana, although this is not explicitly stated here. In addition to the demonstrably pre-10th-century scriptural references presented above, the *mantra jinajik* also appears in the early ritual manuals for Ekākṣaroṣṇīṣacakravartin (*Taiśhō*, no. 951) translated into Chinese by the later Bodhiruci (*ca.* early 8th century), for Bhaiṣajyaguru (*Taiśhō*, no. 922) attributed to Yixing (*ca.* early 8th century), and for Cakravartin (*Taiśhō*, no. 948) translated by Amoghavajra (middle of the 8th century). But again, in these manuals, rather than being the *mantra* of Vairocana, *jinajik* is the *mantra* of the Buddha or Tathāgata family (personal communications from Rolf Giebel, Sept. 2011 and Dec. 2012).

87. MIMAKI and TOMABECHI 1994, pp. vii and ix.

jinajigmantraniṣpannaṃ sṛjed vairocanaṃ vibhum |
śaraccandrāṃśusaṅkāśaṃ jaṭāmukuṭamaṇḍitam || 116
sitaraktakṣṇavadanaṃ ṣaḍbhujam śāntarūpiṇam |
cakravajrasitāmbhojam dakṣiṇeṣu vicintayet || 117
ghaṇṭām cintāmaṇiṃ khaḍgam vāmeṣv asya vibhāvayet |

‘He should produce the Lord Vairocana, emanated from the *mantra* JINAJIK, who has the appearance of the autumnal moon, adorned by a crown of matted hair, of white, red and black face, with six arms, and of peaceful countenance. He should visualize a disc, a Vajra and a white lotus in his right [hands]; a bell, a wish-jewel and a sword in his left [hands].’

It may be noted that we see here a complex iconography of Vairocana that is not at all compatible with the iconography of our Buddha image from Rejoso, *i.e.* in *bhadṛāsana* and no more than two hands joined in *dharmacakramudrā*.

Buddhist triads from maritime Southeast Asia and a tentative conclusion

If the textual evidence is scrutinized with special attention to the texts that may actually have been known in Java at the time of the manufacture of the Rejoso image, the idea that the *mantra jinajik* indicates Vairocana can claim only limited support. We have had occasion to mention the fact that the texts which do associate Vairocana with the *mantra jinajik* never give Vairocana a central role, generally giving pride of place to the Jina Akṣobhya. Amongst pre-10th-century texts, the *mantra jinajik* does not appear in texts such as the *Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi* and the *Sarvatathāgatattvasaṃgraha*, where we would expect to find it should it have had an original connection with Vairocana. Conversely, the *Susiddhikarasūtra* and the *Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa* link this *mantra* to no specific Buddha or rather to all Buddhas, an idea which is most emblematically expressed in the latter text in the passage extensively quoted above: *sarvatathāgatānām hṛdayam | jinajik* ‘The heart of all Tathāgatas is JINAJIK.’ Since the *ye dharmāḥ* formula is the quintessence of the teachings of all Buddhas, we might stop our investigation here, with the negative conclusion that the *mantra jinajik* is of no special iconographic significance after all, and its engraving on our sculpture along with the *ye dharmāḥ* formula had no more than the general purpose of invoking the presence of all Jinās or Tathāgatas.

But let us attempt to approach the problem from one more angle. The Rejoso Buddha was found in a cache along with other Buddha and Bodhisattva images in bronze, but given the great disparity in their manufacture, style and size, it is doubtful that these various icons were originally intended to be arranged all together as a three-dimensional *maṇḍala*. However, given the relatively large size of the sculpture that concerns us here, it is



Figure 21. — Enthroned Buddha in *dharmacakramudrā* attended by two Bodhisattvas, 10th century, Central or East Java (?). Bronze, H. 29.2 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, inv. no. 2004.259. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

likely that it would have been the central image of a particular arrangement. This seems to us to be another argument against basing our iconographic identification on any sources which present a five-fold arrangement with Vairocana in a peripheral position, such as in Chapter 1 of the *Guhyasamājatantra*.

Rather, we are inclined to take our cue from the fact that in the Indonesian images that we have collected, the Buddha in *bhadrāsana* and *dharmacakramudrā* is sometimes the central figure in a triad, being accompanied by two figures presumably identifiable as Avalokiteśvara-Padmapāṇi and Vajrapāṇi. This iconography, widespread in South and, to a lesser extent, in maritime Southeast Asia, is, in our opinion, most likely a reflection of the triadic arrangement that we have encountered in the *Susiddhikarasūtra* and the *Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa*. Admittedly, this triad is far more commonly depicted in the western Deccan caves of India and it is, in fact, the general rule there rather than the exception (e.g. fig. 16). Nevertheless we feel entitled to speculate that our sculpture was originally part of a triad like the few preserved Javanese miniature triads we can observe in several public or private collections (e.g. figs. 3, 8–9, 21)⁸⁸ or the colossal one still *in situ* at Candi Mendut (fig. 17). For besides this visual evidence, there is also written evidence from maritime Southeast Asia, nearly contemporary with our sculpture, not only showing that the triad was indeed well-known in this part of Buddhist Asia, but also providing names for the central Buddha. We may first cite in full the passage from the Old Javanese doctrinal text *San̄ Hyañ Kamahāyānikan* already mentioned above (nn. 3, 41), basing ourselves on Lokesh Chandra's edition (p. 411):

anakku kitañ tathāgatakula jinaputra, pahenak denta mañrəñö. tiga bhedaniñ jñāna: bāhyaka, sākāra, nirākāra. yan bhaṭāra divarūpa sira pinakāvāk bhaṭāra hyañ buddha, jñāna nirākāra kāraṇanira, mvañ grāhaka ri sira. pinūjā pva bhaṭāra buddha deni jñāna sākāra śrīmān akaləñka lvirnya: samañkana ta bhaṭāra hyañ buddha maśarīra devatārūpa, dadi deniñ kriḥkāra śvetavarṇa, dhvajamudrā, sira ta bhaṭāra śrī śākyamuni naranira, *sarvadevagurūcyate*, inajarakəñ guruniñ sarvadevatā. mijil tañ devatā sakeñ śarīra bhaṭāra śrī śākyamuni ri təñəñ, raktavarṇa, dhyānamudrā, makasañkan hriḥkāra sira ta bhaṭāra śrī lokeśvara naranira. mijil tañ devatā sake śarīra śrī śākyamuni kiva, nilavarṇa, bhūḥsparśamudrā, makasañkan brīḥkāra, sira ta bhaṭāra śrī vajrapāṇi naranira. sira ta katiga bhaṭāra ratnatraya naranira, sira sinaṅguh buddha, dharmma, saṅgha, sira makatattvañ kāya, vāk, citta, sira makaśilañ asih puṇya bhakti, ahyun pva sira pūrṇaniñ tribhuvana. mijil ta bhaṭāra śrī vairocana sake mukha śrī śākyamuni. mavibhāga ta bhaṭāra

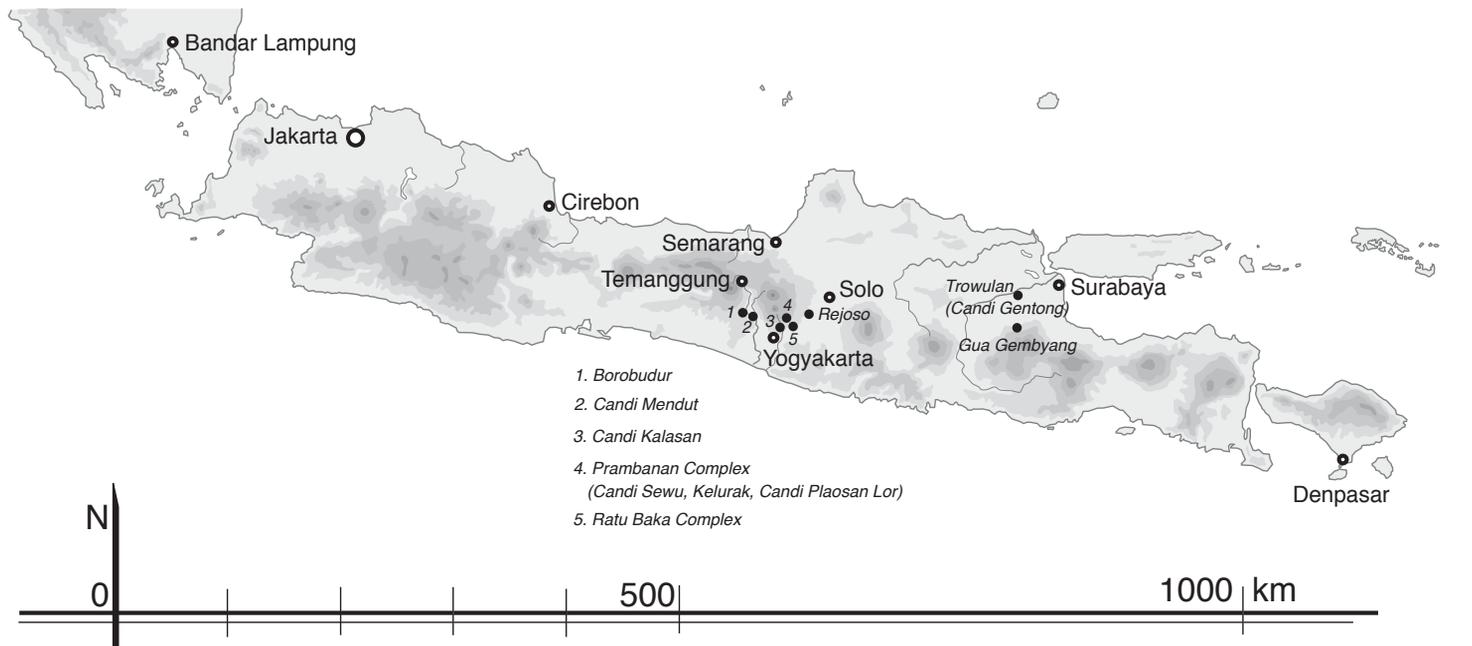
88. Another such bronze triad was recently sold at auction in New York City (SOTHEBY'S 2000, p. 135, lot 111).

śrī lokeśvara, mijil ta bhaṭāra akṣobhya mvañ bhaṭāra ratnasambhava. mavibhāga ta bhaṭāra śrī vajrapāṇi, mijil ta bhaṭāra amitābha mvañ bhaṭārāmoghasiddhi. sira ta kalima sira sinaṃjñān bhaṭāra pañcatathāgata mvañ bhaṭāra sarvajñāna naranira vaneh.

'My child, you who are the son of a Jina in the Tathāgata family, take ease and listen. There are three types of knowledge: external, with form, without form. Inasmuch as Lord Divarūpa is the embodiment of Lord Buddha, its cause and subject knowledge without form. The Lord Buddha is worshiped by knowledge with form. His form is illustrious and immaculate. In this way does the Lord Buddha take embodiment with divine form, emanating by means of the syllable क्री३, being of white complexion, [displaying] the *dhvajamudrā*. He is named Lord Śrī Śākyamuni, *he is called the master of all the gods*, [meaning] he is taught to be the master of all deities. A deity comes forth from the body of Lord Śrī Śākyamuni, on [his] right, of red complexion, [displaying] the *dhyānamudrā*, originating in the syllable ह्री३. He is called Lord Lokeśvara (i.e. Avalokiteśvara). A deity comes forth from the body of Lord Śrī Śākyamuni, [on his] left, of dark-blue complexion, [displaying] the *bhūmisparśamudrā*, originating in the syllable ब्री३. He is called Lord Śrī Vajrapāṇi. These three are called the Lord Jewel-Triad. They are held to be Buddha, Teachings and (monastic) Order. Their essence (*tattva*) is body, speech and mind. They are dedicated to affection, merit and devotion. They strive for the perfection of the three worlds. Lord Śrī Vairocana comes forth from the mouth of Śrī Śākyamuni. Lord Śrī Lokeśvara is divided, with Lord Akṣobhya and Lord Ratnasambhava coming forth (from him). Lord Śrī Vajrapāṇi is divided, with Lord Amitābha and Lord Amoghasiddhi coming forth (from him). These five are called the Lords Five Tathāgatas. They are also called Lord Omniscience.'

Here we see a fusion of the triad with the pentad, which seems to us to be evidence of slightly later developments: indeed this text is presumed to date from the transition between the central and east Javanese periods, in the middle of the 10th century. In any case, the name of the central Buddha is expressly indicated to be Śākyamuni, and, as was mentioned above, his *mudrā* betrays the fusion with Vairocana.

The second piece of written evidence we wish to mention here is the inscription of Chaiya or Nakhon Si Thammarat (known in earlier scholarly literature as 'the inscription of Ligor'), originating in what is now southern Thailand. This text, dating from 775 CE, was first published by George Coedès (1918). On face A, in stanza VI, the new edition prepared by Arlo Griffiths reads:



Map 1. — Ancient and modern sites in Java mentioned in the article. Map by Pierre Pichard and Nicolas Revire.

śrīvijayeśvarabhūpatir ema guṇoghaḥ⁸⁹
 kṣītilasarvvasamantanṛpottama ekaḥ
 sthāpita aiṣṭikagehavaratrayam etat
 kajakaramāranisūdanabajrinivāsaṃ ||

‘This king Śrīvijayeśvara, a flood of virtues, single most excellent king to all neighbors on the surface of the earth, has founded this triad of excellent brick monuments as dwelling for Kajakara (Padmapāṇi, *i.e.* Avalokiteśvara), Māranisūdana (*i.e.* Śākyamuni) and Vajrin (Vajrapāṇi).’⁹⁰

The inscription records the foundation of three brick shrines, dedicated to the respective members of the triad that concerns us here. The central figure is called Māranisūdana, which suggests a Śākyamuni depicted as ‘destroyer of Māra,’ *i.e.* in *bhūmisparśamudrā* also known as *māravijayamudrā*.

All in all, if a name has to be assigned to the Rejoso Buddha, we would on the basis of this evidence be inclined simply to name him Śākyamuni, freely admitting that this name may serve as a

substitute for Vairocana in certain texts and tantric traditions. Finally, it has become clear that the *mantra jinajik* was inscribed on this sculpture in the tantric Buddhist milieu of Central Java, probably in the first half of the 9th century, echoing trends in South Asian Buddhism. Accordingly, the Rejoso Buddha icon may perhaps be understood as a ‘tantric Śākyamuni’ embedding a universal and imperial form of Buddhahood reflected in the *bhadrāsana* and the *dharmacakrapravartanamudrā*.

Arlo Griffiths,
 EFEO, Jakarta
 arlo.griffiths@efeo.net

Nicolas Revire,
 Paris 3, Sorbonne nouvelle/Thammasat University
 nicolasrevire@hotmail.com

Rajat Sanyal,
 Department of Archaeology, University of Calcutta
 sanyal10@rediffmail.com

89. *ema guṇoghaḥ*: the edition by Cœdès reads *emaguṇo ghana*^o. An alternative reading of these *akṣaras* was proposed by CHHABRA 1935, p. 24 = 1965, p. 31: *eṣa guṇaughah*. This correctly represents the intended meaning but is not an acceptable transliteration. In other words, we must read *ema* but emend this to *eṣa* and *guṇoghaḥ* is intended as *guṇaughah* but shows the common representation of *au* by *o*.

90. Note the grammatical problem that the passive participle *sthāpita* must be translated here as though it were the active *sthāpitavān*.

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