

Between men and gods

Small motifs in the Buddhist art of eastern India, an interpretation

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Categories of objects, categories of motifs

Although the stela is the medium most commonly met with in the art of Eastern India¹ images were also carved on other types of media, particularly on Buddhist sites. Beside the slabs included in the votive *caityas*, which are related to the stela through their structure, beside proper architectural elements, such as door-jambs or door-lintels, we must mention a fairly large number of rectangular slabs of unknown architectural context, which have remained unconsidered by art-historians up to now.² Many were discovered at Bodhgaya. These rectangular slabs show a series of motifs which were also included in the decoration of the pedestal of the stela. We cannot speculate about the exact architectural function of these slabs, but it is only probable that they did not support an image or a *caitya*. They usually consist of a rectangular, carved panel surrounded by a large unadorned border where a dedicatory inscription can be incised, revealing that these slabs were privately donated. Could they have been distributed over a brick-wall?

Various types of motifs can be carved on these slabs or on the pedestal of the stela. Each of them coincides with a particular ideological field. Three broad categories of motifs can be listed.

1. Motifs of general meaning are found in every representation, whatever the depicted iconography. These participate in the depiction of the ideal deity. Among them, the most commonly observed is the lotus which supports the seated or standing deity/ies (fig. 1).³ The flower is symbolically the cosmic support of the deity and illustrates simultaneously the emergence of the light out of the darkness, of the creation out of the chaos.

Another motif is related to the lotus, but appears more rarely, i.e. the pair of *nāgas*, more often depicted below Buddhist and Jain than Hindu images (fig. 21). These two *nāgas* can be either a couple or both male; they often support the *padma* above which sits or stands the deity which they venerate.

The third motif to be introduced in this category is the pair of lions, usually in profile. They belong to the theme of the 'royal throne' and are eventually related to motifs observed in the upper levels of the back-slab.⁴ Variations of the *simhāsana* are numerous: elephants can be introduced (fig.

4), a third lion can be seen in the centre of the composition, more lions or elephants can be combined, particularly in the style of Kurkihar, in profile or frontally depicted (fig. 17). A *yakṣa* appears more rarely, combined with elephants and lions (fig. 4). The architectural structure with niches containing animals and separated by pillars is related to this group of motifs, with which it shares the function of supporting the deity seen on the higher levels of the stela.

2. Motifs of the second category are related to the iconography of the depicted deity whom they contribute to identify. The most often encountered motif is the *vāhana* in Hindu art, the *cihna* in Jain art. The *vāhana*, through its specific function of supporting the deity, is evidently related to the first category of motifs. However, it does not imply the same cosmic value, since a *vāhana* is not attributed to every deity and since a specific *vāhana* is always related to a particular deity. The lotus supports the decorative structure of the upper part whereas the *vāhana* supports exclusively the main deity, even if the attending figures can also be carried or rather conveyed by it (in the case of Sūrya's chariot).

The *cihna* does not have a supporting function. Each one of the 24 *cihnas*, which are numbered, is related to one of the 24 Tīrthaṅkaras. Their function is evidently to identify, as is also partly the function of the *vāhana*: the lion belongs to Durgā, the bull to Śiva, etc.

In Buddhist art (i.e. letting aside the early and different aspect of the *vāhanas* supporting e.g. *yakṣas* or *yakṣis* at Bharhut), the *vāhana* is a rather late notion. A Hindu prototype might be recognized in some cases, e.g. the sows below Mārtī (prototype: Sūrya) or the lion below Mañjuśrī (prototype: Durgā).

3. Other motifs imply a *protective* meaning, or introduce the idea of distributing riches. Some are strictly related to specific iconographic types, such as the reversed jars below Vasudhārā or Jambhala (or on either side of his head as in fig. 2) (see also below), the *śaṅkha*- and *padmanidhis* below the latter, or Gaṇeśa below various Hindu deities (especially in south-east Bangladesh). Other examples are the Grahas, images of *yakṣa* and *yakṣī*; the image of Ambikā, a form of the mother-goddess, below the depiction of Tīrthaṅkaras; the *saptaratnas* below some depictions of various Buddhist deities. The seven jewels belong to the paraphernalia of the *cakravartin*, who is not exclusively a god, but can be a human

king;⁵ they show his richness and illustrate his power. The jars, the two treasures, the seven jewels betray a clear relation to material richness and power, even though their meaning may have evolved into a more spiritual or political (as concerns the *saptaratnas*) interpretation. The deities (in a broad meaning) who are depicted, are related to the earth, distribute riches under various forms, or they protect.

This categorization is only a possibility, other criteria exist for classifying the motifs, e.g. are they drawn from our experience of the material world or are they of a fantastic nature? The divine world penetrates more evidently into the decoration of the pedestal when images of gods or semi-gods are carved (*Ambikā*, *yakṣa*, *yakṣī*, *Gaṇeśa*). But these gods can offer material richness, which evidently belongs to the human world. Most of the remaining motifs belong indeed to this world even though they become fantastic through the symbolic function which they assume (supporting the divine realm e.g., which is the function of the elephants and lions or of the architectural frame noted on some images).⁶ The jars, the treasures, the jewels, all of them hint at material and precious riches. Various motifs betray an ambivalent nature: the lions and the elephants offer more than a simple reference to the royal throne; combined with the architectural frame, they reproduce the lower levels of the temple, and thus also here, illustrate the human-made basis of the divine universe, whereas the lotus, a real flower, constitutes the cosmic support of the divine universe.

A similarly ambivalent situation is exemplified by the *saptaratnas*. They illustrate the worldly richness distributed by the gods such as the *nidhis* or the reversed jars of *Jambhala* and *Vasudhāra*, which clearly pour jewels.⁷ In addition, they symbolize the power of the *cakravartin* who must conquer them.⁸ Belonging to the deity, they thus illustrate the divine royal nature. Moreover, the very same jewels are offered to the deity by the monk in the course of the ritual (see below). This offering becomes the sign of the human recognizance of the royal divine nature. Finding its origin in a human situation, this group of seven jewels is often depicted together with objects used during the ritual constituting the fourth category of items to be seen on the pedestal.

4. Of no divine nature and introducing no symbolism, the fourth category of motifs shows objects made by human beings, which are either offered to the deity or are used in the course of the liturgy. It also shows human characters, laypersons or monks. These motifs illustrate the human world turned toward the deity, worshipping him/her. They are essentially found in Buddhist art and one may suspect that the depiction of devotees on Hindu images was introduced under the influence of Buddhist art.⁹ Other objects are also observed on some specific Hindu images, e.g. below the reclining goddess with child in the *Sadyojāta* type.¹⁰ We shall here concentrate our attention firstly on the human charac-

ters and then on the objects which accompany them. The *saptaratnas* will be considered insofar as they are related to these motifs.

Human characters in pre-Pāla art

Already at Ajanta and Ellora, human devotees are figured around the Buddha. Although they cannot be properly identified, they can, none the less, be roughly classified, their detailed study being beyond the scope of this paper. It is, however, possible to underline how they differ from their counterparts in the art of Eastern India, or how they announce these ones. The large panels of cave 26 at Ajanta e.g. offer a basic ground for this study.

Pairs of *nāgas* are often carved below the image of the Buddha: they reappear on the pedestal of the stela in Eastern India. They are fundamental iconographic elements inasmuch as they contribute to the identification of the depicted scene of the Buddha's life.¹¹

However, most of the figures seen on the lower part of the panels are human. They are monks or layfolk. Further, small images of the Buddha himself can be introduced below the main image and some of the monks and layfolk are then related to these small depictions. These human figures are connected with events of the Buddha's life, more particularly, those where the Buddha teaches. They belong to a specific iconography, and can thus only be identified in relation to this iconography, they do not belong to here and now but testify to events which took place in the past. In a certain way, they are integrated within the representation of a historical event. At a more general level, they allude to the *saṃgha* and to the community of the layfolk. They listen to the Buddha, they worship Him when He is depicted in the lower level, but they can also kneel and offer flowers to the main image above them, and from now onwards, layfolk can appear in couples.¹²

The panels of Kanheri have a clear composition: the Buddha sits on a lotus supported by *nāgas*; he is venerated by monks or layfolk, who are all depicted in the lower part of the composition. No smaller depiction of the Buddha seems to be introduced at this level.¹³ At Ellora, human devotees are rarely depicted,¹⁴ but attention should be drawn to a large panel carved on the lower part of the left wall in the main cella of cave 6: the three main characters are evidently persons of importance, probably belonging to the nobility. Whoever they may be,¹⁵ they illustrate a turn in the depiction of layfolk worshipping the Buddha. They are not seen below Him, and thus in a depending position; they are not part of the panel either, which is going to be venerated. As a matter of fact, they are directed towards the Buddha as if coming from the outside world, like any worshipper who would enter the shrine.

A similar step was taken at Ajanta with devotees carved in the round, at the feet of the main image and thus free from it; they are positioned in profile towards the vertical axis of the composition but are materially separated from it.¹⁶ This position is made possible because of the particular nature of the site. It is obviously more difficult, if not impossible, to separate the devotees from the main image when this image is carved on a separate slab, but it is a way of doing which some artists have managed to preserve when casting bronzes, one of the most achieved examples - if not the most achieved one - being the female deity from Sirpur preserved at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.¹⁷

These observations can be briefly summarized. At Ajanta, the monks and the layfolk are integrated within an iconographic scheme, although their exact relation to the Buddha cannot always be properly determined. At Kanheri, the motif develops the function of sustaining or worshipping the Buddha and at Ellora, the worshippers gain some independence and look from the outside towards the Buddha. This survey also shows the introduction of cult objects held by monks, already at Ajanta on the carved panels of cave 26 and in the wall-paintings, e.g. in the upper cave 6.¹⁸ These objects are also seen at Kanheri.¹⁹ The monk presents in the left hand a flower and in the right one the incense burner.

Human characters in the art of Eastern India, 'Pāla' period.

Introduction

In Eastern India, monks or/and layfolk are introduced below the deity in the second part of the 8th century. Their study implies the use of three paradigms. The first is chronological. Two phases can be distinguished: the first covers the 9th and 10th century, the second runs thereafter. The second is geographical. Specific motifs or groups of motifs are distributed in different regions. Three large areas are noted, centralized on 1. Bodhgaya (Bihar), 2. Vikramapura (south-east Bangladesh), and 3. Ratnagiri (Orissa). The third paradigm concerns the nature of the carved medium. The motifs which are considered here are carved on the pedestal of stelae in almost every region (but are rather rarely observed in North Bengal), but at Bodhgaya and some related sites they are depicted on the independent slabs mentioned above.

The monk

The depiction of the monk follows a certain evolution. In the early period, he sits or kneels, usually holding the incense brazier, or offering flowers to the deity.²⁰ This simple formula was probably first introduced in the region of Nalanda, at

Telhara e.g., from where it spread over different regions of Bihar and Bengal: at Tetravan, east from Nalanda,²¹ or at Kurkihar, south-west from Nalanda, on the road between Nalanda and Bodhgaya.²² Some images, which date back to the late 8th century or the early part of the following century, show that the monk with shaven head and wearing the robe, is not the only figure depicted on the pedestal, but is placed by the side of the *bodhisattva*, his size becoming proportionally larger and comparable to that of the divine assistant.²³

Large-sized monks are also introduced on bronze images from Kurkihar,²⁴ their personality being stressed through their position: they are not shown by the side of the Buddha, nor are they integrated within the pedestal, but are casted separately, in front of it. This particular treatment of the motif, which goes back to Ajanta and Ellora, is preserved up to the end of the 12th century. The devotees, monks or layfolk are of a proportionally large size. They kneel, being positioned in profile towards the centre of the composition with the hands folded in the gesture of veneration. They usually appear as a pair; when only one devotee is depicted, the rule of symmetry - which is extremely strong in the composition of the image - enjoins the introduction of another element, e.g. the *vāhana*.²⁵ The artists of Sirpur proved their real artistic abilities by having dared to introduce only the devotee, without any corresponding symmetric element; the devotee also shows finely chiselled features, which is far from being usual.²⁶ But usually the monk, alone or in a pair, has a reduced size and is integrated within the ornamentation of the pedestal. He holds the incense burner or worships the deity on images found at Tetravan, Nalanda or Kurkihar.²⁷

The striking change which occurred in the aspect of the monk around the 10th century, can probably be related to a doctrinal transformation. It might be that the religious person who is depicted after this period does not belong to the school of the monk encountered on the earlier stelae. Besides, at Bodhgaya the monk does not appear any more on the pedestal of stelae but is introduced on the rectangular slabs. How does this later depiction differ from the earlier representation of the monk?

The monk with long robe and shaven head appears on the earlier images, whereas in the second phase of the development, he wears a peaked cap and the dress apparently covers both shoulders. A change in the position occurs as well: while he kneels and turns slightly towards the deity, he is depicted in a three-quarter profile in the first case; sitting with crossed legs he faces the viewer in the second case. The attributes held by this figure are not the incense brazier or the flowers any more, but the *vajra* and the *ghanṭā* recognizable on detailed examples. The *vajra* stands on the open right hand in front of the breast, the *ghanṭā* is held by the left hand above the thigh. The monk is not only depicted in this position on slabs from Bodhgaya (figs. 5-7, 10-11, 17), but

also on the pedestal of stelae in south-east Bangladesh (fig. 21-22) and, but rarely, at Ratnagiri.²⁸

Variations in the treatment of the monk are of course to be noted, but they are minor: the left hand can be seen on the front leg, not on the thigh (fig. 11); the right shoulder can remain bare and the cap seems to be replaced by a pointed *jaṭā* (figs. 5 and 7), the *vajra* is not held in front of the breast but on the right leg (figs. 5 and 7).

A more important variation is observed on images from south-east Bangladesh, from Ratnagiri and on some slabs found at Bodhgaya (figs. 6, 7, 17).²⁹ The monk is there depicted by the side of the manuscript lying upon a low stand, an element to which we shall return.

This monk appears to be a person of importance: he can sit on a cushion or a low stool and be thus in a higher position than the eventual devotees who venerate him (fig. 7) or he can be larger than the other figures (fig. 6); he can be introduced in the group of the *saptaratnas*, or by the side of it (figs. 5: on the extreme right, 7: among the jewels and venerated by a couple; the three of them constitute a group which is symmetric to the group of the three human figures who belong to the *saptaratnas*). The Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa contains a description of the veneration paid to the disciple who is initiated: he sits below a baldachin, below a white umbrella, surrounded by banners and flags while a white fly-whisk is waved and music is played.³⁰

The panel illustrated in fig. 6 seems to introduce two representations of this monk, first on the extreme right, where he is depicted in a larger size than the other elements of the panel, with a round cutting of the edge above his head and with a devotee worshipping him below, by the side of a circle to which we shall return below. His hands lie above the thighs, holding apparently the two attributes. Within the group of the *ratnas*, the second male figure, who should be Jambhala or the chief of the treasures, has the position of the monk; moreover, the right hand is in front of the breast and the left one lies across the thigh. However, this is probably not a depiction of the monk who is indeed seen on the right side, which is also proved by the proximity of the manuscript. It is likely that the confusion between two pot-bellied characters provoked the presence of this figure who seems to appear twice on this slab. The cutting of the edge above the monk's head creates a kind of nimbus; on the pedestal illustrated in fig. 21, a real arch supported by two thin pillars is depicted behind the monk, thus accentuating the respect due to him.

The particular seated position of the monk, known as *sattvaparyāṅkāśana*, is also the attitude of Vajrasattva. The same deity holds similarly the *vajra* and the *ghaṇṭā* in front of the breast and on the left thigh. Moreover, the god wears a very particular type of hair-dress, where the hair is knotted in different superimposed layers, the general outline of which reminds of what is observed in figs. 5 and 7 e.g.; moreover, the

vidyādhara, who is the main priest officiating in the *maṇḍala* described in the Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa, ties his hair above the head at the very beginning of the ritual, *śikhābandham kṛtvā or baddhoṣṇīsa*.³¹ This comparison is confirmed by some literary sources describing rituals of initiation or *vajrācāryābhīṣeka*:

‘Pour le voeu du *vajra*, le disciple doit se méditer en tant que Vajrasattva, puis après lui avoir expliqué la nature réelle du *vajra*, on le lui fait tenir. Pour le voeu de la clochette, on lui explique la nature réelle de la clochette et on la lui fait tenir.’³²

These two attributes are permanently held by the monk during the ritual, such as the one described in a short text like the Hevajrasekaprakriyā (see also below for the *vajra-ghaṇṭā*).³³ And we must here remember that:

‘Treated thus as a form of duality, the *vajra* represents the active principle, the means toward enlightenment and the means of conversion, thus the actual Buddha-manifestation, while the bell represents the Perfection of Wisdom, known as the Void (*śūnyatā*).’³⁴

These attributes are held by monks on later Tibetan paintings and bronzes; on the same images, the monks wear also the peaked cap which is seen here (examples given below). This element of the dress, which is commonly observed in Tibet, reminds us of an event which took place in a monastery called Piṇḍavihāra in the vicinity of Catighabo, probably Chittagong, a city in Bhamgala, i.e. Bengal, as Tāranātha relates it:

‘A number of *īrthika* debaters announced that they were going to have a debate there on the following morning. The monks felt uncertain about their own capacity. An old woman turned up at that time and said ‘While having the debate, put on caps with pointed tops like horns. And this will bring you victory.’ They acted accordingly and won victory. In other places also, they became victorious in a similar way. From then on, the *paṇḍitas* adopted the practice of wearing pointed caps. During the period of the seven Pālas and of the four Senas, all the Mahāyāna *paṇḍitas* used to wear pointed caps. Before this time, however, there was no such practice.’³⁵

The Layfolk

The depiction of layfolk was probably introduced in the early 9th century. It follows the same rules as already noted in the image of the monk. They can likewise be casted separately in front of the pedestal. But on stone images, they are proportionally smaller and are distributed within the decoration of the pedestal. Male and female devotees are seen, worshipping the deity with folded hands or offering a garland of flowers.

They can also kneel in front of the offering which they make to the deity, and which also stands in front of the monk: a cone is seen, supported by a small cup (fig. 9), a shape which strongly reminds of the Tibetan *tormas*.³⁶ In the 9th century, these devotees can be depicted in front of a tiny unadorned back-slab which introduces a separation between them and the pedestal. This treatment appears on images found in the region north of Gaya and west of Nalanda,³⁷ and has probably the function to indicate that the nature of the devotees differs from the divine essence. It introduces a distance while, at the same time, these tiny images pertain to the divine realm since they are depicted on the very same stela as the deity.

This treatment of the motif is related to the depiction of devotees on some bronzes noted above. Both of these formulas (isolated figure, half-isolated figure) announces one particular way of introducing the devotees in the Hindu and, more rarely, Buddhist art of north Bengal in the 11th and 12th centuries. The human figures kneel or stand on a low pedestal which protrudes from the front surface of the basis of the stela. They are not fully integrated in the pedestal but remind of cases observed in the caves of Western India: in both groups of examples, the independence of the devotees is stated.³⁸

Although it is impossible to assert that the craftsmen really carved portraits in the Western meaning of the word, it is evident that they took into consideration a number of features which contributed to the identification of the characters depicted, i.e. they were in fact portrayed. The range of variations in the constitution of the groups of devotees is large: one single female or male figure, one couple, one couple with children, or even two couples, which would indicate that the craftsmen took care of portraying a particular group of persons, probably the donators of the image. This family formula is found everywhere in Eastern India from the 9th up to the 12th century. The characters kneel with folded hands or present flower garlands (figs. 1, 5-9, 12, 14) or an offering (figs. 7 and 14). In all cases, the man holds the predominant position: he is closer to the centre of the composition (except on fig. 6), can be slightly taller than his wife and can even be seated with crossed legs on a cushion (figs. 13 and 15). He holds a garland and is depicted frontally, whereas human characters are usually carved in profile or in 'semi-profile', like in fig. 14 where the lower part of the female body is profiled and the upper part is frontal, or like in fig. 15 where the woman is turned towards her companion. This rendering of the devotees becomes a kind of 'micro-formula' within the depiction of devotees in general; it does appear on a number of images from Bihar and from south-east Bangladesh.³⁹

Various criteria were introduced for differentiating layfolk and monks. The monk, with his shaven head, wears his robe. The woman usually wears a shawl covering the head (fig. 13),

she can also be adorned by various pieces of jewellery, such as a necklace or armlets. The man can often be bearded (figs. 1 and 14) and is simply dressed with a skirt and a shawl crossing the breast; the long hair is usually knotted in the back. Monks or layfolk are usually seen on one of the edges of the pedestal, and are rarely introduced toward the centre of the composition. In some cases, the male devotee is depicted at the proper side of the deity - a place which, apparently, cannot be occupied by the female devotee.⁴⁰ This particular position is also restricted to the 9th century, for at a later period, the devotees, whoever they may be, are included in the structure of the pedestal. It might be that this privileged position, above the pedestal, is to be searched in earlier times at Ajanta or Kanheri e.g. where a monk could be carved or painted right at the feet of the Buddha or the *bodhisattva*, and not below him.⁴¹ This specific composition, which integrates the deity and the worshipper on the same level, is to be abandoned in Bihar: a more clear distinction is made between the higher plane of the god and the lower level of the human devotee. Simultaneously, the size of the worshipper is reduced. When he is carved at the side of the deity, the male devotee, monk or layman, has the size of the attending deity carved on the other side of the god's legs. When they are carved in the pedestal, the worshippers are seen on a smaller scale. They regain some importance when they stand or kneel on a semi-separate pedestal, which would, as we already mentioned above, really underline their personality, stress their will to venerate.⁴²

A single devotee, or a couple, or a family are all observed on rectangular slabs which were mainly found at Bodhgaya (figs. 5-7, 9, 12-14), where the artists were particularly careful in the rendering of the figures. Apart from the pedestal reproduced in fig. 1, where the two characters are identifiable as a couple, another similar piece from Bodhgaya was published by A. Cunningham:⁴³ two couples face each other on either side of the central panel where three objects are shown (see below), details differentiate the male figures, whose beards are cut differently and whose hair is dressed in a different way. In these isolated examples, it seems clear that the craftsmen had to carve some very specific human figures. The two couples or the only couple in fig. 1 are not just devotees, they are probably those who commissioned the stela.

A particular group of human characters must be mentioned: these are the dancers and musicians depicted in the central part of some pedestals; they play small cymbals and drums or dance (and probably also sing). The motif appears on various images found in south-east Bangladesh or eastern Bihar.⁴⁴ All those examples can be dated in the 11th or 12th century. The theme seems to have also been the subject of isolated rectangular slabs as is shown by two examples noticed at Itkhauri: the couple of devotees is depicted in one of the

angles of the composition, kneeling and worshipping, while in front of them four persons are dancing and playing music (fig. 15). Four goddesses are depicted on two images of Vajrasattva from Nalanda and on a third one belonging to the Kurkihar style.⁴⁵ The one in the upper left corner holds a garland which is apparently not made of flowers but of precious stones; hence, she could be Mālā. The second one holds with both hands an elongated object, perhaps a musical instrument, the *vīṇā* (?), which might indicate that the goddess is then Gītā. The deity in the lower left corner, holds her two fists on her thighs, holding what appears to be either two *vajras* or a *vajra* and a *ghaṇṭā*, which would indicate that she is Lāsya. The fourth goddess has either her two arms crossed and holds some indistinct objects, or stretches the right arm in a movement known as *gajahasta* in dance terminology, thus she would be Nṛtyā. These representations of the goddesses venerating the deity through their dance and singing, might throw light on the identification of the characters seen on the pedestals or the slabs. Moreover, the texts introduce four further deities who pay homage through their music to the main divinity and in a short text, the *Bāhyapūjāvidhi*, published and translated by L. Finot (1934), the *vidyādhara*, in the course of the ritual, 'rend hommage avec les déesses Vīṇā, etc. sorties de son coeur et offre les sept joyaux etc. provenant de la même source' and music could actually be played in ritual such as the one described in the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*.⁴⁶

Objects of ritual

We have had repeatedly the opportunity to mention that objects were held by the monk or by the layfolk, or could be introduced by their side. Already on a painted panel in the upper cave 6 at Ajanta, the monk offers flowers and holds an incense burner.⁴⁷ Similarly, he reappears on the Telhara image, datable in the early 9th century.⁴⁸ Thus, from an early period, the tradition of introducing in the image objects actually used by the monk when venerating the deity, is present.

The incense brazier is known from actual excavated objects (fig. 20).⁴⁹ Its particular lotus shape is also reproduced on the panels under study here (figs. 7, 9, 12), though probably due to the small size of the depiction, this shape can be simplified (fig. 19). Besides, it can also be held by a devotee and thus seen as it was really used.⁵⁰

A lamp appears regularly by the side of the incense brazier; it is seen as a stand (figs. 5, 7, 9, 12, 14).

A large jar is shown, full with most probably flowers, some of which are seen above it (fig. 7). The flowers cannot always be properly identified (fig. 12); they might be replaced by fruits in some cases (figs. 10, 11). The offerings can also be

put on a plate (figs. 11 and 14) or a large stand from where garlands hang (fig. 9). The jar can also support the conch (figs. 5, 11). A ewer-like object is carved in the centre of a pedestal from Bodhgaya, supporting a large offering or below a depiction of Vajradharma from Nalanda; it is also seen at Ratnagiri, together with the offering or the conch.⁵¹ Such an object was discovered at Achutrajpur, in Orissa.⁵² The vase, named *kalaśa*, is a major object in some rituals, such as the one described by the Hevajrasekaprakriyā: different jars, of various shapes and colours are used, full of various elements like flowers, precious stones and metals, corns, perfumed waters; in the ritual of the *maṇḍala* described in the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*,⁵³ they are accompanied by other flowers, adorned by ribbons, standing on *kuśa* grass; eight *pūrṇakalaśas* contain precious materials.

Two or more cones are seen on practically every representation. These are clearly offerings put on small round plates (figs. 9 and 12); one single cone is rarely depicted (fig. 19). When the manuscript on its stand is carved, these two cones, or more, are either standing below it or on either side (figs. 6, 8, 10, 11). The modelling of these cones varies, due to the craftsman's skilfulness but also to the size of the depiction: parallel incised lines cross each other on the surface of the cones in fig. 9; a small square is incised on the cones of fig. 7; or the surface is plain; these are apparently the three ways of rendering this element, which can be pointed (figs. 7, 10) or round (figs. 6, 11, 12). These two cones represent the cakes offered during a ritual, their shape announcing the Tibetan *tormas*.⁵⁴

Another offering, probably food, is put on a three-legged stand; its shape varies then: it is round, large and does not always have the conic outline. Two such offerings are depicted on the pedestal of fig. 8 and appear on the large plate seen on the left side of the slab in fig. 11; the same large plate with an offering is carved in the middle of the pedestal below a Buddha image from Ratnagiri; it is surrounded by incense braziers and lamps, which accentuates its importance.⁵⁵ The same large offering can also be put on the ewer already mentioned.

The conch is introduced in some carved panels. It is seen on a small table which supports other unidentified objects (fig. 12), or is placed on the large jar (figs. 5, 11) or the tripod.⁵⁶

Special attention must be paid to the depiction of the manuscript. It is wrapped up in a piece of cloth which is sometimes clearly indicated through parallel incised lines (figs. 7, 10). The manuscript is put on a stand, which has a bulbous outline. The presence of garlands or of ribbons above it proves the respect and the veneration paid to this object (figs. 6, 7, 10, 11). As we mentioned above, cakes are also distributed on either side of the manuscript, as if they were offered to it. Moreover, we notice the presence of three

elements distributed above the manuscript. Their shape can be similar to the shape of the large food offerings (fig. 11), or it can be smaller and constituted by a tiny round part to which are attached petal-like elements (fig. 10).

These protruding elements can get a stylised form which reminds of the outline of the *maṇiratna* illustrated in some series of the *saptaratna* (figs. 5-7). These elements are also depicted above the manuscripts sustained by the *uṭṭalas* of Mañjuśrī.⁵⁷ It might thus well be that the triple motif, at least in some examples, might symbolize the *triratna*, i.e. the Buddha, the *dharma* and the *saṅgha*, in which the *sādhaka* was still taking refuge at a specific moment of some rituals, such as the one described by the *sādhana*s.⁵⁸ The manuscript is apparently related to the depiction of the monk, in whose vicinity it is introduced. Similarly, the monk and the manuscript are commonly met with together on the pedestal of stelae from south-east Bangladesh. There too, the three small elements are distributed over the manuscript.⁵⁹ Moreover, an umbrella protects the manuscript on some examples,⁶⁰ which is evidently a further sign of the respect paid to this object. It would be hazardous to propose any identification of the text which seems to be venerated; it is more likely that the depiction of the manuscript enhances the importance of the gnostic tradition. Moreover, texts were read during the ritual as we know from the Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa e.g.⁶¹

Two umbrellas are carved on the front part of the pedestal below a twelve-armed Avalokiteśvara:⁶² the *saptaratnas* are partially represented there (one male figure is missing), and the couple of devotees is introduced among the series. The incense brazier is the only object of ritual to be illustrated, on the front part and symmetrical to the *maṇiratna*; both of them are depicted between the two umbrellas. A brief mention must be made of the streamer observed in fig. 8; it is also carved in the centre of the pedestal and flies above the central offering.

Two objects carved on the Betagi image (fig. 19) are remarkable: the *caitya* and the mirror, both seen in the extreme left corner. Moreover, it is doubtful whether the object elongated on the right is a lamp. The outline of the upper part, supposed to depict flames, shows a similarity to the *caitya*, and such a high stand is usually used for supporting a votive *caitya* as we can see on Tibetan paintings. The mirror or water initiation is one of the five consecrations or *pañcābhiseka* given by the master to the disciple;⁶³ the *darpaṇa* is there 'to remind the mystic that the images before which the rite is performed are reflections to be burned by the fire of gnosis'.⁶⁴ Images from Ratnagiri introduce, moreover, a further ritualistic object, the *vajraghaṅṭā*.⁶⁵ This object was a fundamental element in the ritual; however, only very few real *vajraghaṅṭā* have been recovered in India, whereas a large number of them are known in Java e.g.⁶⁶ We observed above that the *ghaṅṭā* is permanently held by the monk in the left

hand, while the right one presents the *vajra*. The handle of the bell has usually the shape of a half-*vajra*, hence its name; *vajra* and (*vajra*)*ghaṅṭā* are attributes of Vajrasattva.⁶⁷ A further aspect of the iconography of this god deserves our attention: the text mentions the five Tathāgatas in his head-dress (*pañcabuddhamukuta*),⁶⁸ and the symbols of four of them are reproduced on bells from Java and from India. Moreover, in the ritual described in the Hevajrasekaprakriyā, the consecration of the disciple reaches its peak when the master gives him the *ghaṅṭā* and the *vajra*, and predicts that this newly initiated one will be the Tathāgata Vajrasattva - *eso 'ham tvām vyākāromi vajrasattva tathāgatah*.⁶⁹

Below the monk depicted in fig. 6, a square is incised within which a double circle is indicated. This representation remains isolated, but might be a depiction of a *maṇḍala*. The drawing of a cosmic diagram was a part of some rituals.⁷⁰ Moreover, some circular carvings are known, which were very probably used in some specific liturgy.⁷¹

The motifs which are carved either on the pedestal or on separated slabs are thus apparently depictions of objects which were used during the ritual. Not only because of his sitting posture but also because of his outward appearance, viz. his pointed headgear, the position of his arms and the attributes which he holds, the monk appears as a representation of Vajrasattva, as we know this deity in art. The presence of the large-sized manuscript by his side, testifies to the importance paid to the text; besides, offerings generally accompany this text, which would indicate that the worship, by the layfolk, is not only paid to the *sādhaka* but also to this very manuscript. The various objects coincide with the five offerings made in the course of the liturgy, i.e. the flowers *puṣpa*, the incense *dhūpa*, the light *dīpa*, the perfume *gandha* and the food *naivedya*.⁷²

Some are clearly identifiable, the flowers, the incense, the light and even the food (in the shape of fruits or cakes). The perfume evaporates from the conch, which is observed on some panels. This reminds us of the depiction of the four goddesses of offerings: Vajrapuṣpā, Vajradhūpā, Vajradīpā and Vajragandhā are shown, seated and holding, each of them, one of the offerings,⁷³ in some cases appearing together with the four goddesses who pay homage to the divinity through their dance and music (see above concerning representations of these ones).

Human characters in the 'Pāla' period, Conclusions and later developments

These panels have a semi-narrative value; they depict the veneration of a monk by the layfolk on the one hand, and allude to the execution of a ritual by the same monk on the other hand. The monk is shown as a person to be respected,

if not venerated by the layfolk, which paved the way to representations of *sādhakas* as main characters of a sculpture or painting. Already on the walls of the monastery of Vikramaśīla portraits of eminent *paṇḍitas* have been painted,⁷⁴ thus anticipating a tradition well established in Tibet (see below). In this way, whether in the pedestal or in a slab, the carving is centred on an icon, the depiction of the monk, who, as any iconic image, has to be shown frontally (whereas the devotees are profiled). The monk is, moreover, the person who, by acting in a ritual, relates the human realm to the divine world. The human reality is introduced by the presence of the devotee(s) and the divine nature creeps in through the very often encountered motif of the *saptaratnas*. These seven jewels are offered in the ritual described by the Bāhyapūjā-vidhi already quoted, or in the evocation of Tārā where the officiant gives them to the goddess.⁷⁵ They belong to Her, who is a goddess, and appear as the external and material sign of her divine nature; as such, they are returned to Her by the devotee through his act of donation and devotion, being thus at an intermediary position between the human and divine realms. The 'humanization' of the motif is observed as soon as Jambhala replaces the first minister, and is introduced in the centre of the composition, for, what seems to be stressed then, is the material richness which this god can distribute. The series bears within itself an ambivalence similar to the one testified by the entire carving: it belongs to the deity, who, as a *cakravartin*, had to conquer them. Thus, when represented, they partake of the divine nature of their owner, and this divine nature can be a source of richness, which is symbolized by the presence of Jambhala. On the other side, the very same seven jewels are in a certain way returned to the deity in the course of the ritual.

An example narrated by Tāranātha explains, better than we could do it, how those material richness given by the god can be redistributed to the gods after having been transformed by the devotees:

'He (i.e. the *mahācārya* Buddhajñānapāda) consecrated the Vikramaśīla (monastery) and was appointed the *Vajrācārya* there. Beginning with the time when this *ācārya* started working for the welfare of the living beings and up to the time of his passing away, he used to receive every night seven hundred golden *paṇas* from Ārya Jambhala and three hundred pearl necklaces from the goddess Vasudhārā. By the grace of these deities, a buyer turned up every morning. He used to spend before each evening all the money obtained therefrom in pious acts. He spent the time thus. He used to offer lamps as big as the chariot-wheel - seven each for the nineteen deities of the *Guhya-samāja* and three each for the eight *bodhisattvas* and the six Krodhas. He used to offer fifteen *naivedyas* to the fifteen guardians of the horizons, each *naivedya*

being raised by two men. He used similarly to offer many other articles of worship and to satisfy the disciples who listened to the Doctrine and the ordained monks and all sorts of supplicants. Thus he worked for the perpetual spread of the Law.⁷⁶

In another passage, the Tibetan author narrates how the worship of Vasudhārā by Yamārit, had as a result that 'the same year the king made a gift of a large property to him. He also received the highly distinguished *pātra* of Vikramaśīla'.⁷⁷

The art of portraiture has known a very high development in Tibet (see also Jane Casey Singer's article in this volume); numerous depictions of monks were painted or cast.⁷⁸ Besides, the painter can represent the *sādhaka* propitiating the deity: in the lower part of the painting showing the god, a rectangular space is reserved where the monk sits in front of a number of various objects used during the ritual.⁷⁹ While it is outside the present topic to study those representations, also encountered in Nepalese art, one can, however, surmise that they have their origin in the Buddhist art of India. On the representations which were considered here, like in Tibet, the monk wears his pointed cap and is fully dressed, he sits by the side of a stand supporting the manuscript, and this stand, like the small table which can support the objects (fig. 12), is also encountered in Tibet.⁸⁰

This survey of motifs carved in the pedestal remains incomplete; various aspects have been only shortly evoked or completely ignored, e.g. a detailed analysis of the *saptaratnas* is missing. We should only mention that the motifs can be organized differently: at Bodhgaya or at Itkhauri e.g. (or at Alchi at a later period), the *cakra* is the main jewel (figs. 16 and 17) although there are examples where Jambhala is depicted at the centre of the composition (figs. 2 and 7 - within the group of the *ratnas* on the left part of the sculpture).⁸¹ The link of the *ratnas* with the tree and Avalokiteśvara should deserve more consideration. Moreover, when looking at the development of Buddhist art, the existence of a permanent thread is evident: the musicians and dancers noticed on some examples are probably related to the tradition brilliantly illustrated at Aurangabad or on either side of the entrance to the temple of Ratnagiri. More attention should be devoted to the material discovered at Khara Khoto, to the paintings of Pagan or of Alchi where similarities with Indian motifs can be observed. A further iconographic aspect, completely left aside, is the group of Buddha images which are observed on various rectangular slabs: 24 are seen in fig. 5, and 26 in fig. 7 where all show the *dhyānamudrā*.

It has also become evident that the rectangular slabs or the pedestals of stelae include depictions of characters who either belong to the profane and uninitiated reality or who are spiritual masters and practise rituals. Therefore, one can rightly consider that those carvings evoke, through some of



1 Pedestal below a Tāvā image, Bodhgaya, Photo J. Bautze.



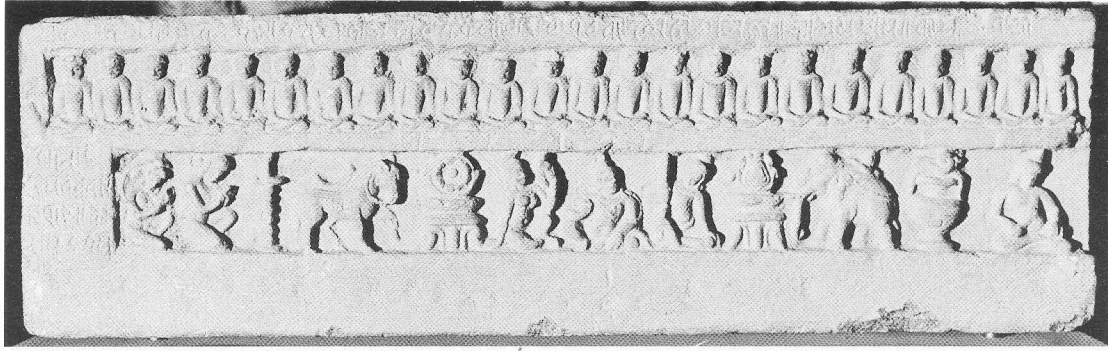
2 Free pedestal, Lakhi Sarai, Museum für Indische Kunst Berlin, I 580.



3 Pedestal, Bodhgaya, Museum für Indische Kunst Berlin, I 680.



4 Pedestal, Uren, Museum für Indische Kunst Berlin, I 560.



5 Slab of unknown origin (probably Bodhgaya), present location unknown; photographed by J. Bautze at Spink & Son Ltd., London.



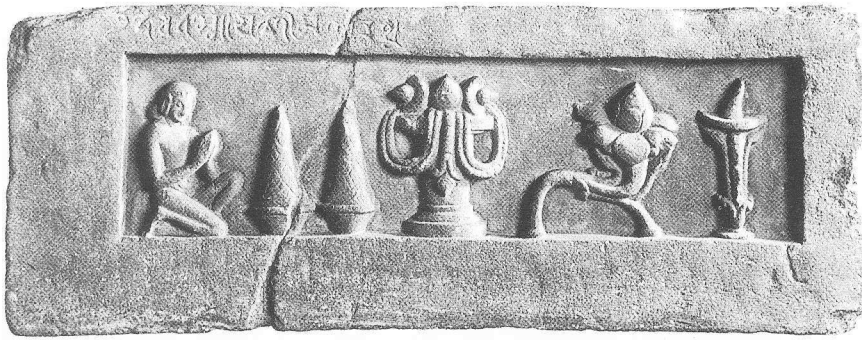
6 Slab, Bodhgaya, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, IS 699-1883.



7 Slab of unknown origin (probably Bodhgaya), Victoria and Albert Museum, London, IS 659-1883.



8 Pedestal below the Tārā image of Ikhauri, photo J. Bautze.



9 Slab, Bodhgaya, Museum für Indische Kunst Berlin, I 606.



10 Slab, Bodhgaya, Museum für Indische Kunst Berlin, I 554.

cat.
188



11 Slab, Bodhgaya, Museum für Indische Kunst Berlin, I 595.

cat.
186



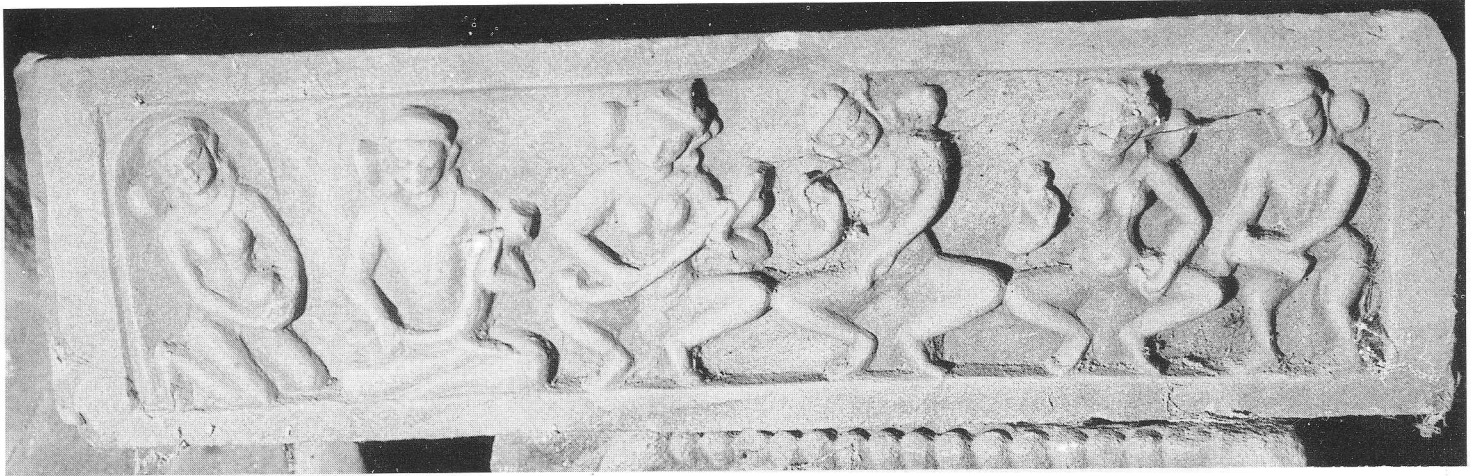
12 Slab, Bodhgaya, Museum für Indische Kunst Berlin, I 593.



13 Slab, Bodhgaya, Museum für Indische Kunst Berlin, IG 33723b (missing since 1945).



14 Slab, Bodhgaya, Museum für Indische Kunst Berlin, I 556.



15 Slab, Ilkhauri, photo J. Bautze.



16 'Slab-pedestal' Bodhgaya Museum, photo J. Bautze.



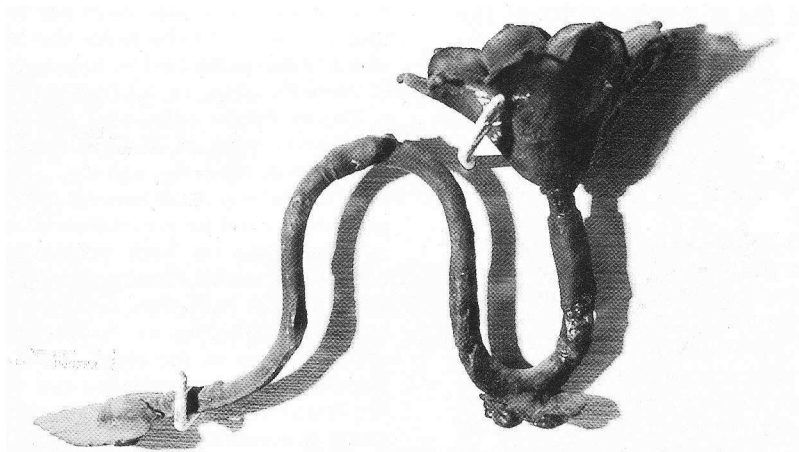
17 Free pedestal below a Buddha image, Bodhi Garden Bodhgaya, photo J. Bautze.



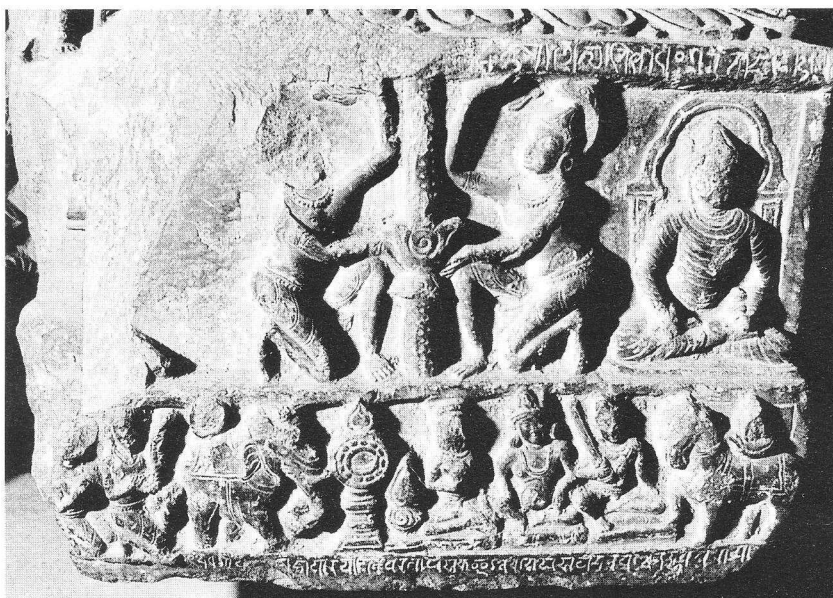
18 Fragment from the back of a stela, Nalanda Museum, photo J. Bautze.



19 Lower left part of the Buddha image of Betagi (Chittagong), photo J. Bautze.



20 *Incense-burner, Nalanda Museum, photo J. Bautze.*



21 *Pedestal showing an Avalokiteśvara image, National Museum of Bangladesh, photo J. Bautze.*



22 *Lower right part of the Buddha image of Betagi (Chittagong), photo J. Bautze.*

their motifs, the link between the human world and the divine reality.

Notes

1. Bautze-Picron 1986 and 1992a.
2. The slabs on which this study is based are preserved in the Museum für Indische Kunst Berlin (MIK), the Victoria and Albert Museum (VAM), and the British Museum (BM) in London. Beside those reproduced here, we can mention the following examples (very often damaged), classified according to a simple iconographic system, i.e. first come the slabs where the main topic is the priest or the manuscript, then come those showing the *saptaratnas*. 1. MIK I 596. 2. MIK I 652. 3. present whereabouts unknown, the slab is represented on a drawing in the M. Kittoe collection of the India Office Library and Records (IOLR), Prints and Drawings, inv. WD 2877, folio 17. 4. MIK I 601. 5. MIK I 609. 6. MIK I 623. 7. MIK I 625. 8. MIK I 662. 9. MIK I 632. 10. Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde Leiden Brl. 79-208 (Raven and van Kooij 1992, fig. 56 and p. 102). 11. MIK I 636. 12. MIK I 648. 13. MIK I 1130. 14. MIK I 555. 15. BM 1880-238. 16. MIK I 553. 17. MIK I 658. 18. BM 1942.4-16.25. 19. Patna Museum (Bhattacharya 1986, pl. XVI). 20. Indian Museum BG 83 (Banerji 1933, pl. XIV-e). All these images were discovered at Bodhgaya, except 3. which was noticed at Kurkihar; 15., 18. and 19. are of unknown provenance. The *saptaratnas* are also introduced on the basis of the votive *stūpas* at Bodhgaya (numerous illustrations in Bénisti 1981).
3. Bénisti 1952; Bosch 1948, 133-140; Auboyer 1949, 36-38.
4. Auboyer 1949.
5. Armelin 1975, 12. A particular turn in the development of the *saptaratnas* is noted with the introduction of the sword replacing one of the male figures. One of the earliest examples is probably the series at the bottom of the large Jagdispur stela, near Nalanda. It appears later among the scrolls of a fragmentary back-slab preserved at Nalanda (fig. 17); or on images from Bengal, also on a tree depicted behind an image of Avalokiteśvara (Huntington 1984, fig. 221; Saraswati 1977, ill. 91; Gupta 1983, pl. I) or carved below Mañjuśrī (1. Casey Singer 1986, cat. 33; 2. Metropolitan Museum of Art - New York, inv. 57.5.1.6; Bhattacharya 1929, pl. LXXI-c). The sword and the other *ratnas* are all seen among the scrolls of the tree on the images mentioned here; this reminds us that the *cakravartin* had to conquer a special tree which was included among the *ratnas* (Viennot 1954, 177). In those examples, one of the male figures, usually the chief of the army, has disappeared, and we can surmise that the sword replaces him (see also note 75). It is also very likely that the sword as 'sword of insight (*prajñākhaḍga*)' (Liebert 1976, 134) destroying the darkness of ignorance, is here to be seen; more research should be done about this attribute, which is also held by the *vidyādhara* (and this term refers also to the *sādhaka*). See also Bautze-Picron 1988b, 470-472.
6. Auboyer 1949, 34-35, 105-112.
7. Saraswati 1977, ill. 153 (Vasudhārā), ill. 140, 147, 149 (Jambhala). In those various examples, the jars are carved on the pedestal and are reversed, pouring jewels. Further Jambhala images include the *nidhis* pouring a string of pearls on either side of the god's head: Raven-van Kooij 1992, 96-97 no. 2 and fig. 53, or another similar stela from Nalanda (Nalanda Museum inv. 68) and an image in the Mahant's compound of Bodhgaya. The *nidhis* are perhaps presented by the two, male and female, characters painted on either side of Jambhala at the Sarai mound of Nalanda (Bhattacharya 1985, fig. 6); the oblong object lying on the hand of the male figure would be the conch whereas the one held by the woman would be the lotus: we do not think that it can be the mirror (Bhattacharya, 724), since the woman does not look into it - which is what she usually does when she holds this attribute (compare with fig. 2, which is also published by Bhattacharya, fig. 9).
8. Armelin 1975, 12, 44 (notes 40 and 41).
9. Bautze-Picron 1985, 125, 133 (notes 54 and 55).
10. Banerji 1933, pl. XLIX-b, L-a and b, Sharma 1981, fig. 2 and 3, Huntington 1984, fig. 248 e.g.
11. They belong to the iconography of the Sravasti miracle (but not exclusively) and help to differentiate this event from the Sarnath miracle, since on both occasions, the Buddha displayed the *dharmacakramudrā*. For the *nāgas* below the Buddha at Kanheri, see Mitterwallner 1986, figs. 8-10 and p. 236-239.
12. Spink 1981, fig. 11, Spink 1985, fig. 20, Spink 1986, fig. 10 showing three of the eight panels on the right wall where the Buddha sits in *pratambāsana* and displays the *dharmacakramudrā*. See Bautze-Picron 1985, note 52 which is devoted to the representation of devotees, monks and layfolk at Ajanta. Further depictions of devotees at the feet of the Buddha are published by Spink 1986, fig. 4-9.
13. Apart from the panels quoted in note 11, see the panels with an image of the Buddha standing (Weiner 1977, figs. 97-99).
14. Gupte 1964, pl. 10d where the devotee appears below a depiction of Jambhala, symmetric to a jar pouring out jewels.
15. Gupte-Mahajan 1962, pl. LVI below.
16. Spink 1975, fig. 26, Spink 1985, fig. 18.
17. Pal 1988, cat. 39 who gives, 106, further references.
18. Bautze-Picron 1985, 133 (end of note 52).
19. Mitterwallner 1986, fig. 8 (incense burner and flower presented by the monk), fig. 10 (layfolk holding garlands).
20. Bautze-Picron 1985, 123 no. A.2. Other images include the motifs at that place: *ib.*, no. A.4 and A.5 (monks) or A.3 (layman, reproduced as fig. 1).
21. Bautze-Picron 1989, 263 no. 10 (and pl. 32.11) where two further examples from Tetrawan are given.
22. Bautze-Picron 1985, 124 no. B.1-4 and 10.
23. See note 20.
24. Huntington 1984, figs. 177, 180, 181, 184.
25. Bautze-Picron 1990, fig. 9 (fig. 8 shows Garuḍa, also depicted on a separated basis).
26. See note 17.
27. See notes 21 and 22; further examples are given in our paper of 1985.
28. Here is a list of images including the representation of the monk: 1. Buddha, National Museum of Bangladesh inv. 75.8 (unpublished). 2. Buddha, National Museum of Bangladesh inv. 1117 (Majumdar 1971, pl. XXXI-fig. 77, Haque 1963, ill. p. 9, Saraswati 1976, pl. X-fig. 18). 3. Crowned Buddha, Varendra Research Museum-Rajshahi inv. A(a)14/245 (found in the Rajshahi district) (Saraswati 1977, ill. 200): with right arm directed upwards. 4. Buddha, in worship at Betagi (Bautze-Picron 1992b describes the image - see here fig. 22). 5. Buddha, Indian Museum inv. A22349 (Bautze-Picron 1992b, fig. 2, describes the image and gives further places of publication). 6. Buddha, in worship in the Kamalपुरi Monastery of Dacca (Bautze-Picron 1992b, fig. 3, describes the image and gives further places of publication). 7. Tārā, National Museum of Bangladesh inv. 15 (Gupta 1346, pl. facing p. 128, Bhattacharya 1929, pl. XXI and III-c for a detail of the priest, Shamsul Alam 1985, fig. 90): with manuscript on stand. 8. Tārā, present whereabouts unknown (Bhattacharya 1929, pl. XXII-b): on the left part of the pedestal. 9. Mārīcī, Varendra Research Museum-Rajshahi inv. A(d)2/137 (Saraswati 1977, ill. 118). 10. Avalokiteśvara, Asutosh Museum-Calcutta (found in the Hooghly District at Bhadrhati) (Saraswati 1977, ill. 91, Gupta 1983, pl. I - which is a paper devoted to this image, Huntington 1984, fig. 221): with both hands on hips. 11. Avalokiteśvara, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts-Richmond (precise origine unknown, presumably from south-east Bangladesh)

(Casey 1985, cat.30): with manuscript on stand. 12. Avalokiteśvara, Varendra Research Museum-Rajshahi inv. A(b)4/93: with manuscript on stand. 13. Avalokiteśvara, National Museum of Bangladesh inv. 1.A(ii)a/2 (Bhattachali 1929, pl. VI-a, here fig. 18). 14. Mañjuśrī, Metropolitan Museum of Art-New York inv. 57.51.6 (precise origin unknown), Bhattachali 1929, pl. LXXXI-c for a detail of the upper part): with manuscript on stand. 15. Mañjuśrī, Nalin collection (precise origin unknown) (Casey 1985, cat. 33): with manuscript on stand. 16. Heruka, present whereabouts unknown (Gupta 1346, pl. facing p. 112): on the left part of the pedestal, with manuscript on stand. All those images, unless it is stated, were discovered in Vikrampur or even more in the direction of Burma. Examples at Ratnagiri: Mitra 1981-83, pl. CCCXXV-B, CCCLI-a. 29. Mitra 1981-83, pl. CCCXXV-A (and p. 427), B, CCCXXXVII-A, CCCLI-A (and p. 463) at Ratnagiri, and in Bangladesh, see note 29: 7, 11, 12, 14-16. 30. MacDonald 1962, 138. 31. MacDonald 1962, 103 and 105. The Hevajrasekaprakriyā (Finot 1934, 22 and 35) also mentions the tied hair. Indian representations of Vajrasattva are illustrated by Saraswati 1977, ill. 156 to 161, Bhattachali 1929, pl. III top or Pal 1977, cat. 52 (also in Sotheby's New York, 5.10.1990, lot 61). It is also interesting to note that N.K. Bhattachali (1929, 24) identified the monk seen below a Tārā as being Vajrasattva (note 28: 4). The particular shape of the head-dress is inherited by the crowns worn by priests in Tibet or Nepal (Béguin 1984); it is also preserved in Tibetan representations of Vajrasattva (Huntington-Huntington 1990, fig. 60, 338). 32. MacDonald 1962, 69. 33. Finot 1934, 32. 34. Snellgrove 1987, 132. 35. Tārānātha 1980, 255. 36. Beyer 1968, 174, fig. 21, Macdonald 1962, 133, 142, the *homa* is made of 'riz mouillé de lait caillé, miel et beurre fondu'. This offering, made by the main priest who must first take a bath before doing it (130-132), is accompanied by a long recitation. Other offerings are made, named e.g. *bali* or *nivedya*, to the demons or the deities and the Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa contains long lists of them; these offerings are differentiated: eight *pūrnakalāśa* full of precious or less precious materials (gold, silver, jewels, rice, grains) are offered to Sākyamuni and other deities and to the *saṅgha*, a large number of various food offerings are then made, followed by the offering of different flowers to the gods, and to end, the priest offers incense of various perfumes to the family of the Tathāgatas, to the family of the Lotus and to the family of the *Vajra* (in the course of this part of the ritual, devoted to the offerings, incense is burnt at various places, but in the present case, the offering of three different incense perfumes is detailed - which is not otherwise the case). 37. Bautze-Picron 1985, 125 (B.43 to B.46) and 130 note 47 where an image of Viṣṇu is introduced. 38. One male figure holding a garland stands on a lotus attached to the front surface of a pedestal sustaining Mañjuśrī (Majumdar 1971, pl. XXII - fig. 57, Saraswati 1977, ill. 32). From that late period, the 12th century, independant figures of male devotees, holding garlands and seen in a three-quarter profile (thus, turned towards a deity), are known (Bhattacharya 1989, fig. 1, beside a similar stela which we saw in Gaya). 39. The use of this 'micro-formula' implies a change in the meaning of the motif or formula 'layfolk': the use of the cushion or stool and the quasi frontal position of the man enhance his function. On the contrary, the wife is smaller, the head covered by a shawl (the woman can be seen with head uncovered in other cases) and is turned towards her husband. See the following images, listed in note 29: 11, 12, 14 and 15. Further, see the Avalokiteśvara depiction in the National Museum of Bangladesh inv. 68.66 (Bhattachali 1929, pl. VII-a, Majumdar 1971, pl. XX - fig. 50, Banerji

1933, pl. XXXIX-d, see note 59 in our paper on Lakhi Sarai (1991-92) for further references). 40. Bautze-Picron 1985, 123 (A). 41. Bautze-Picron 1985, 132-133 note 52. 42. Above note 37. 43. Pl. XXVIII- above. Another such example is published by Bautze-Picron 1985, fig. 4 (one couple is depicted on the left side, facing Sudhanakumāra). 44. Bautze-Picron 1991-92, notes 64-66. 45. One complete stela, in the Nalanda Museum, is published by Saraswati 1977, ill. 161 (also in the Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India for the Years 1930-1934, II, pl. CXLI-9); a second unpublished example, but broken and illustrating perhaps Dharmasāṅkha-samādhi Mañjuśrī, i.e. a transformation of Amitābha into Mañjuśrī (Mallmann 1964, 38), is preserved in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, inv. 3798. As to the Vajrasattva, most probably carved at Kurkihar, it is published in Pal 1977, cat. 52, where the four goddesses are identified with Lāsya, Nṛtyā, Mālyā and Gītā, an identification reproduced in the auction catalogue of Sotheby's New York, 5.10.1990, lot 61. 46. Finot 1934, 52 and 66. Besides, the Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa refers to the use of music at certain moments of the ritual (MacDonald 1962, 133, 138). 47. See note 18. 48. Beside the references given by Bautze-Picron 1985, note 2, see Leoshko 1988, fig. 9. 49. Banerji 1933, pl. LXXIII-a, Bosch 1948, pl. 43 (from Cambodia). 50. Notes 42, 46 and 47. See also Huntington-Huntington 1990, 316, fig. 45 showing a couple incised in the pavement of the Bodhi mandir. 51. Mitra 1981-1983, I, pl. CXXX-A, CXXXVIII-B, II, pl. CCXXXVIII. 52. Mitra 1978, ill. 142. Such a recipient is also depicted on the pedestal of the stela quoted in note 45, which is preserved in the Indian Museum inv. 3798. 53. Finot 1934, 19 and 32, MacDonald 1962, 130. 54. See note 35. Mitra 1981-1983, II, 429 writes, however, about the two cones seen on her plate CCCXXV: 'lamp and incense-burner?' In all the other cases, the authoress recognizes, nonetheless, the cones as depiction of the offerings. 55. Mitra 1981-1983, pl. CXXXVI-A. 56. Mitra 1981-1983, pl. CXXX-C, CCXXXVIII-C, CCLX, CCCXXXI-B for examples from Ratnagiri. 57. E.g. Casey 1985, cat. 22 or Bautze-Picron 1993, figs. 3 and 4. This motif appears also on a stela discovered in south-east Bangladesh and preserved at the Rammala Library of Comilla (reference in the same article on the bodhisattva, 144 note 15). 58. This is a part of this type of ritual, which is also repeated in the ritual of the large *maṇḍala* of the Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa (MacDonald 1962, 73 132, 137) or in a ritual of initiation such as the one described in the Hevajrasekaprakriyā (Finot 1934, 33). 59. Image 7 in note 28 above. 60. Images 14 and 15 in note 28 above. 61. MacDonald 1962, 102-103. 62. Saraswati 1977, ill. 78. 63. Finot 1934, 39 and 40, Snellgrove 1987, 229. 64. Tucci 1971, 65. 65. Mitra 1981-1983, I, pl. CLXIX-C par exemple. 66. Mitra 1978, ill. 141, Ray et alii 196, fig. 277 (the first example from Achutrajpur, the second found at Kurkihar). The symbols of the four Tathāgatas are also seen on Javanese bells, below four faces: van Lohuizen-De Leeuw 1984, cat. 61, 62, 64, Lunsingh Scheurleer-Klokke 1988, cat. 67 (also in Fontein 1990, cat. 71). 67. Mallmann 1986, 420. 68. Mallmann 1986, 419-420. 69. Finot 1934, 26, which echoes the *māṅ Vajrasattvo me aviśatv iti*

of the disciple (Finot 1934, 23). This particular moment when the two attributes are given to the newly initiated, is depicted at the bottom of the Tibetan painting in the Jucker collection (Casey Singer 1986, 43 and fig. 5).

70. The *mandala* holds a fundamental position in the ritual of initiation, as is shown by various texts such as the Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa or the Hevajrasekaprakriyā. See also Tucci 1971, chapters 2 and 4.

71. A large circular slab is enched in the groundfloor of the Vāgēsuarī mandir at Bodhgaya (Beglar 1966, pl. V). Another large circular stone slab bearing a long inscription around a central medallion where two figures are depicted on either side of a *vajra*, was found at Hasra Kol (Venis 1908) but it is impossible to determine the function of such a slab whereas the Bodhgaya stone is evidently a *mandala*.

72. MacDonald 1962, 129-131, Beyer 1978, 148-151, Mallmann 1964, 162-164.

73. Mallmann 1963, 165 and pl. XVI e.g.

74. The information on Vikramaśila is mentioned by Niyogi 1980, 105. The *ācārya* of the collection of Paul Walter was most probably produced in an atelier located at Lakhi Sarai (Bautze-Picron 1991-92, fig. 34).

75. Beyer 1978, 151-154: it is interesting to note that in the sanskrit *mantras* which accompany the offering of the *ratnas*, the 'precious general' is evoked as *khadgaratna* and it is also true that he usually carries a sword - but we also noted how the *khadga* can become, as such, one of the jewels in the artistic depictions (note 5). The offering is already mentioned in the Hevajrasekaprakriyā (above note 46).

76. Tārānātha 1980, 278.

77. Tārānātha 1980, 308.

78. The examples quoted in this note and in the following ones have not been systematically searched out, but it is obvious that the topic with which we are here concerned, has been inherited by the Tibetan tradition and would deserve a longer and more detailed attention. Portraits of hierarchs were painted or cast in bronze: Pal 1984, fig. 10, pl. 6, Casey Singer 1986, Rhie-Thurman 1991, cat. 61, 91, 95, Essen-Thingo 1989, cat. II-178 to II-277 show a collection of portraits dating to various periods (in particular, see II-222 where the monk presents *vajra* and *vajraghaṅṅā* on flowers seen at the level of his shoulders).

79. Rhie-Thurman 1991, cat. 6, 24, 69, 75, 95, 129, Pal et alii 1991, cat. 31, 33-37, Béguin 1990, cat. 2, 12, 14, 15, 22, Essen-Thingo 1989, cat. I-103.

80. Rhie-Thurman 1991, cat. 69, 129 e.g.

81. Note 2: 15, 18, 19. The *cakra* is in the same position on two further slabs at Bodhgaya (in the Bodhi Garden), and at Itkhauri which are similar to the one seen in fig. 16.

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