

SOUTH ASIA

GÉRARD FUSSMAN and ANNA MARIA QUAGLIOTTI:

The Early Iconography of Avalokiteśvara.

(Publications de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne, fasc. 80.) 152 pp.

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This co-authored book is in two distinct parts, the first by Gérard Fussman and the second by Anna Maria Quagliotti. The first part is the longest and deals with, broadly speaking, the cult and iconography of Avalokiteśvara in the early centuries CE, while the second deals with an iconographic form, the well-known “pensive Bodhisattva”, which shows the Bodhisattva seated with one hand either supporting his head or with a finger pointing to his temple. The book was prompted by two statues currently in the Pritzker Collection in America. How the book came to be written and published is explained by Fussman in his introduction.

Fussman’s opening part is elegantly written and a pleasure to read. It is full of insights into and masterful summaries of a number of salient issues in the history of Buddhism in northern Pakistan and Afghanistan, the area generally referred to as “Greater Gandhāra”, a term coined, as Fussman notes, by Richard Salomon. In dealing with the cult of Avalokiteśvara, Fussman touches on some key points, notably the emergence of Mahāyāna and its relation to Hīnayāna, the presence of Mahāyāna in the Gandhāra region in the early centuries CE, and the development of Mahāyāna literature. The origin of images and the creation of a new Bodhisattva iconography are necessarily dealt with, as is the question of chronology (the latter still not entirely settled). As Fussman states in his delightful and disarming introduction, he is not a young scholar seeking to show us how many books he has read. Although this might prompt us to anticipate that the result will have many gaps and simply rework old debates, the discussion is entirely up-to-date and authoritative. In characteristic style, but only more so, Fussman engages with what is worth engaging with, for example the writing of Juhyung Rhi, the best recent work on early Indian and Gandhāra art; Rhi’s “Reading Coomaraswamy on the origin of the Buddha image”, *Artibus Asiae* 70, 2010, seems to have come too late for inclusion. Fussman wears his learning lightly in this book to profound effect. We know exactly what he thinks, and we know it is based on a deep understanding of the historiography and the history of the period. His essay will, I think, have considerable effect. Fussman has extracted key themes from a huge corpus of data and a long series of tangled scholarly debates. We can only be thankful to him for that. And for those of us who know Gérard Fussman personally, I think we will find the book breathes his personality and presence: his great dedication to scholarship and his subject, his clear thinking, sharp wit and, above all, his incisive ability to go directly to the heart of the matter without making a fuss.

The second part of the book by Anna Maria Quagliotti has two sections. The first, entitled “Mahākāruṇika”, is reprinted without change from *Annali dell’Istituto Universitario Orientale*, 49, 1989, 337–70, while the second, entitled “‘Pensive’ Bodhisattvas on ‘Narrative’ Gandharan reliefs: a note on a recent study and related problems”, is reprinted without change from *East and West* 46, 1996, pp. 97–115. In these papers, Quagliotti shows that not every Bodhisattva in

the pensive pose should be identified as Avalokiteśvara. Fussman has drawn these papers into the volume because they are directly relevant and because, as he notes in his introduction, iconography "... is not, by far, my favourite subject". No doubt having the papers to hand in the volume is helpful, saving tedious cross-references and several trips to the library. Fussman concludes the book with a short note on a sculpture of a "pensive Bodhisattva" discovered in 2010 at Mes-e Aynak (in Afghanistan), the iconography of which supports Quagliotti's conclusions. A closely related sculpture, not illustrated in the volume, is the British Museum (number 1887,0717.45), acquired by Alexander Cunningham at Karamar Hill, Shahbazgarhi, Mardan District, Pakistan.

The book is beautifully produced with high-quality illustrations in colour and black-and-white. It will be essential reading for all historians and art historians of early Buddhism and should find a place in all libraries that seek to deal with these subjects.

Michael Willis
The British Museum

VESNA A. WALLACE:

The Kālacakra Tantra, The Chapter on Sādhanā, Together with the Vimalaprabhā Commentary. Translated from Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Mongolian, Introduced and Annotated.

xv, 379 pp. New York: The American Institute of Buddhist Studies, distributed by Columbia University Press, 2011. £38.

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The accurate and full title of the *Kālacakra Tantra* is *Laghukālacakra Tantrarāja, Abridged Time Cycle, Tantra Monarch*. The relevant sources maintain that the *Abridged Kālacakra* represents a shorter version of the root text (*Mūlatantra*), which is no longer extant.

The *Kālacakra* consists of five chapters, which are divided into three time-cycles: outer, inner, and other or alternative. Chapter 1 deals with the outer cycle, chapter 2 with the inner cycle, and the remaining three chapters with the alternative cycle. The outer and inner cycles of time encompass the inanimate and animate existence (*samsāra*), which evolves in conformity with the law of ethical retribution (karma). These two cycles are analogous and correspond to the outer universe or macrocosm and the human body or microcosm. The outer *Kālacakra* depicts the universe in terms of planetary constellations, astrological houses, and inner energies and permutations. The inner *Kālacakra* deals with the anatomy of the gross and subtle human body. The basic composition of the body consists of the five primary elements (earth, water, fire, wind, space) and consciousness. The innate character of consciousness or awareness is styled as luminosity or clear light (*prabhāsvara*). When stained by adventitious afflictions or defilements, this luminous awareness serves as the foundation from which the gross elements and the body emerge. In other words, when the forces of karma affect and flow together with the stream of consciousness, they determine the psychophysical composition of animate beings, and their passage through the outer cycle. Inside the gross body determined by the forces of karma, there flows the subtle body which consists of cosmic and