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A Review Article

Esoteric Buddhism in Southeast Asia in the Light of Recent Scholarship

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Indian esoteric Buddhism: A social history of the Tantric movement
By Ronald M. Davidson. New York: Columbia University Press, 2002. Pp. 475. Maps, Illustrations, Glossary, Bibliographies, Index.

The Indian setting

Ronald Davidson's ambitious study places the development of esoteric Buddhism in medieval India in a social context. A Buddhologist with extraordinary command of texts preserved in Sanskrit, Tibetan and (to a somewhat lesser extent) Chinese, Davidson writes smoothly and engagingly, demonstrates at many points that he is a translator of genius and provides new information that will be treasured even by those who may disagree with or have difficulty following some of his theses. Since from one point of view the materials that would allow a 'social history' of Tantrism to be written successfully do not exist, and because Davidson's history relies so heavily upon the evidence of the religious texts themselves, there will inevitably be disagreements about his methods and his interpretations.

Indian esoteric Buddhism is of interest to Southeast Asianists for several reasons. First, most of the kinds of Buddhism discussed by Davidson are also attested in Southeast Asia. Therefore, it ought to be asked whether the social and political settings are similar. Second, a Southeast Asianist might wonder what Davidson's book would have been like if it had considered the Southeast Asian evidence as a more integral part of the story: would that have been an equally valid approach, or even a better one? In the second part of this article, I shall review what is known about esoteric Buddhism in Java, Cambodia and certain other parts of Southeast Asia, touching on but not resolving these larger issues.

Esoteric Buddhism and Tantric Buddhism are both valid names, the first because it indicates a body of secret practices, necessarily passed down from master to pupil, and the second because it implies dependence upon a body of texts called *tantra*. Tantric teachings, however, fall into at least two major groups, which coexist, partially overlap and represent (almost certainly) two distinct historical strata. In making the division, Davidson uses the terms 'institutional esoterism', referring to a set of beliefs that arose

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within the monastery, and '*siddha* esoterism', in reference to texts for which a milieu of independent practitioners living on the margins of society must be held historically responsible. In the pages that follow, simplifying a good deal, I shall use the terms 'Mantrayāna' and 'Yoginī Tantra' respectively for the two groups, though these are inexact equivalents of Davidson's terms and a simplification of the later Tibetan system of classification.

Mantrayāna differs from the Perfection Path (*pāramitāyāna*) Mahāyāna Buddhism that historically preceded it in its emphasis on the ritual entering of a circle of divinities (a mandala) and on the recitation of sacred formulas (*mantra*) – the production of sounds whose wavelengths cause fundamental universal powers to resonate. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 in Davidson's book put the Mantrayāna in a social setting but do not really address ultimate origins. He sheds light on the spread but not the genesis of the *Mahāvairocana sūtra*, which describes a mandala, calls its teachings the *mantrayāna* and contains (in an English translation of the Chinese text of 725 CE) no fewer than 297 *mantra*s.[1] Mandalas and *mantra*s are also a part of Yoginī Tantra (the subject of chapters 5, 6 and 7), but the texts and the practices differ, now incorporating union with a female partner and a belief in a highly developed interior yogic anatomy, one shared with Hindu Tantrism. The chief deities of the new texts, at the centres of the mandalas that embody the teachings, are male gods of two sorts, one whose historical roots are in Bodhisattvas, the other in the angry (*krodha*) helpers of Bodhisattvas – though for Davidson the origins of these divinities were complex, involving rural, tribal and Shivaite sources (pp. 198, 213). It is also arguable, however, that the supreme position falls not to the male figures but to the females in their embrace, the males being mere means or conduits for the extraction of the transcendental wisdom of the females. Doctrinally the couples form a union that surpasses all dualisms.

Davidson begins his study by pointing out the analogous structures present within the many different feudal states of Medieval India, beginning in the sixth century or so: ritual mandalas that are symbolic kingdoms, a controlled system of ownership of these kingdoms that involves procedures imitating royal coronation, large monasteries that are living mandalas, kings that look like gods and gods that behave like kings. At the same time, the guild-based patronage and the support and participation of women that had sustained Perfection Path Buddhism weakened. Then a new class of Buddhist practitioner arose: the *siddha*, saint or perfected one, possessor of supernatural powers (*siddhi*) and master over sorcerers both human and divine; such practitioners survived outside both the monastic realm (which called for adherence to strict rules of discipline) and the codes of behaviour followed by the householder. These *siddha* existed in reality, but at the same time they were a mythical community, sustained by a sequence of texts which described transgressive conduct in a language that was deliberately marginal and provocative. By the end of the tenth century, interaction between *siddha* communities and monks dwelling in Buddhist monasteries had advanced to such a degree that the *siddha* texts were accepted as Buddhist scripture.

Social history defines one of Davidson's parameters. The language of the Yoginī Tantras is considered a social matter, for instance, but the specific meditative practices

1 *Mahāvairocana-sūtra*, tr. Chikyo Yamamoto, 2nd edn (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture and Aditya Prakashan, 2001).

are not, and are hence not discussed in any depth. Another parameter is chronological. A distinction must be made between a period of secrecy and one of semi-openness, with a crucial dividing line falling in about the second half of the tenth century. The period extending from the seventh through the tenth centuries was the crucible for the development of the Yoginī Tantras. Sculptures of the esoteric deities, if they were produced in this period, have not survived, and an elaborate web of deduction must establish a chronology, a task at which Davidson is a master.[2] It involves Tibetan traditions concerning the first period of transmission of texts, the language of certain Tibetan translations, statements in the Tibetan histories of Indian Buddhism regarding the dates of important teachers, internal quotations and references, conventions of textual analysis (the more difficult reading is supposed to be earlier than the improved, easier-to-understand reading) and internal consistency.

Davidson uses evidence from the period after about 1000 CE, by which time 'the complete incorporation [of the Yoginī Tantras] had already largely been effected' (p. 338), only when it is thought to have a bearing on our understanding of earlier events. Sometimes this is done to great effect, as in an eyewitness account of the 'great *siddha*' (*mahāsiddha*) Naropa, overweight and carried on a palanquin (p. 317). Still, only in the eleventh and twelfth centuries is the art-historical and epigraphical evidence sufficient to permit the presentation of a flourishing esoteric Buddhism in context, and this period falls outside the centuries of Davidson's primary concern. He does not, for instance, even make use of the lists of texts translated into Chinese in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. The translations attributed to an Indian monk known as Faxian (Chinese) and Hōken (Japanese), as an example, provide a kind of cross-section of what was considered important in northern India in the years before his arrival in China in about 980.[3]

Sometimes within the period of Davidson's focus, in the striking absence of epigraphical evidence, he extrapolates on the basis of other materials. When 'the Mantrayāna becomes culturally important outside India', he writes, 'it is principally through the agency of official patronage, either aristocratic or imperial. Given these circumstances, it would be extraordinary if the military and political culture of early medieval India had not shaped esoteric institutions, doctrines, literature, rituals, and iconography, at least to some degree' (p. 115). The term that has come to the fore to describe the situation in China is 'state-protection Buddhism'. Or, as Michel Strickmann wrote, 'One of the main functions of Tantrism was, always and everywhere, the protection of the State.'[4] This meant the performance of ceremonies that would strengthen the army and even produce rain. Somehow, within this system of mutual support, the practitioner of Yoginī Tantra won patrons and disciples because he could demonstrate superior control over both human and divine sorcerers and therefore enhance state

2 For sculptures and their dates, see Rob Linrothe, *Ruthless compassion: Wrathful deities in early Indo-Tibetan esoteric Buddhist art* (London: Serindia Publications, 1999).

3 A list of texts is in *Hôbôgirin: Fascicule annexe, tables du Taisho Issaikyô* (Tokyo:Maison Franco-Japonaise, 1931), p. 138. Another important translator was Dānapāla (Shihu, Sego) (p. 147).

4 Michel Strickmann, *Mantras et mandarins: le bouddhisme tantrique en Chine* (Paris: Gallimard, 1996), p. 41. 'State-protection Buddhism' is from Charles Orzech, *Politics and transcendent wisdom: The Scripture for Humane Kings in the creation of Chinese Buddhism* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), p. 150n.

power to an even greater degree. However, whether in a period of secrecy this practitioner was respected for his private vision or needed to validate himself through adherence to recognised texts is not altogether clear.

A succinct and easily graspable paradigm for the development of Hindu Yoginī Tantra has been put forward by Alexis Sanderson, an Oxford Sanskritist with an intimate knowledge of Kashmiri Shivaism, much of it studied in manuscripts that have never been edited or translated.[5] For Sanderson, there were two main phases. In the outsider phase, practised by Shivaite mendicants, sex with the human counterparts to divine female spirits had a single, narrow purpose: the production of sexual discharges which when offered to spirits will bring about the acquisition of occult powers. (This is the aspect seized upon by David Gordon White as the heart of the Tantric experience in another recent publication, *Kiss of the yoginī*, referring to the taking into the mouth of vaginal discharge, or of mixed semen and discharge.[6]) Sanderson's second phase culminated in the writings of the great Kashmiri philosopher and polymath, Abhinavagupta (*c.* 1000). In underground circles of Kashmiri Brahmans, sexual rites were recognised as bound up with normal human desires (not merely the production of substances), but they were the physical counterpart to mental exercises that would bring about liberation. Sanderson's model has the virtue of relating two rather different belief systems to two quite different social settings, that of wandering ascetics and that of married householders – upholders of traditional Brahman virtues by day, closet participants in forbidden practices at night.

In a very general sense, Davidson understands the growth of esoteric practices in a similar way, with the milieu of the Buddhist *siddha*s corresponding to that of the Shivaite mendicants. 'The earliest *siddha* literature [of the eighth century] speaks of a sexual ritual that is sacramental rather than yogic', he writes (p. 198). (He criticizes, on the other hand, what he views as Sanderson's position that the Buddhist texts were the result of 'a unilateral appropriation, without alternative sources or mutual influence' [p. 203].)[7] Such a model, however, presents obstacles for the understanding of both the beginnings and the final phases of the Yoginī Tantras. Yes, sexual rituals were performed, but did they not have a symbolic content from the beginning? To imply that they did not goes against the grain of our understanding of all Indian rituals, namely that they are the outer manifestation of mental processes.

As for the final phase, although Davidson does allude to monasteries divided into sections for married followers and for celibate upholders of the traditional discipline, he does not make a place for lay counterparts to Sanderson's Brahmans. As Rob Linrothe has pointed out, however, the *Saṃvarodaya tantra* makes an appeal to married householders, and lay practitioners would have provided a locus for mediation between

5 Alexis Sanderson, 'Purity and power among the Brahmans of Kashmir', in *The category of the person: Anthropology, philosophy, history*, ed. Michael Carrithers *et al.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 190–215; Sanderson, 'Śaivism and the Tantric traditions', in *The world's great religions*, ed. Stewart Sutherland *et al.* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1988), pp. 660–704.

6 David Gordon White, *Kiss of the yoginī: 'Tantric sex' in its South Asian context* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

7 For these connections, see Alexis Sanderson, 'Vajrayāna: Origin and function', in *Buddhism into the year 2000: International conference proceedings* (Bangkok and Los Angeles: Dhammakaya Foundation, 1994), pp. 87–102.

the monks and the *siddha*s. It is easy to imagine the *Kāma sūtra*'s man-about-town, having fulfilled two of his three duties in life (worldly affairs and sexual activity), discovering that a circle of *yoginī* might be an appropriate means of fulfilling the third, religious obligation (*dharma*).[8] Once this possibility is acknowledged, however, serious questions arise about the nature of the *siddha* communities. One of Davidson's great achievements is to have given flesh and blood to the *siddha*s and established their historical reality. At the same time, if a community of lay practitioners is acknowledged, it becomes more difficult – based solely on the evidence of the sacred texts – to distinguish between actual *siddha* behaviour and the behaviour of householders pretending to be *siddha*s. Sometimes descriptions of *siddha* (or *siddha*-like) behaviour are obviously wild exaggeration, as in the Jain romance *Yaśastilaka* by Somadeva (959 CE), here summarised by K. K. Handiqui:

> The temple of Caṇḍamārī [also known as Mahābhairava] was a horrid place, frequented by the terrible female spirits known as the Mahāyoginīs, and a crowd of fanatical votaries, engaged in outrageous forms of self-torture. Certain devotees were burning Guggula incense on their heads; some extremely ferocious, were burning their arteries, like lights; while others, exceedingly bold, were trying to please Śiva by drinking their own blood. In one corner, Kāpālikas were selling for a price pieces of flesh cut from their own bodies, and at another place certain fanatics were worshipping the Mothers by swinging from their intestines extracted with their own hands.[9]

But in other cases, and especially in the case of the Yoginī Tantras themselves, we cannot be sure when we are dealing with a reality and when with a fiction.

This uncertainty brings us to the question of symbolic language in the Tantras, about which Davidson writes many illuminating pages. Sometimes, however, it seems that he does not quite hit the right note. He recognises that 'only in the modern public presentation has there developed the myth of uniform Tantric hermeneutics, a single key or approved method of interpretation for passages involving erotics or violence' (p. 247). Practices described in the texts were actually carried out, and therefore we are not dealing with meditation handbooks written in code; at the same time, not all practices were necessarily performed, and the text is subject to open-ended interpretation. Yet Davidson does not make a clear case for the view that overt and hidden meanings are easily accommodated in the mind simultaneously. He quotes the exegesis of one of the most scholastic of the Indian commentators, Munidatta, who provided an interpretation of the drinking song of the legendary *siddha* Virūpa. After entering a bar penniless, along with a companion, Virūpa told a barmaid that he would pay up when the sun's shadow reached a certain point – but then proceeded to halt the sun in its course. 'All alone the barmaid serves two at her home', begins Virupa's song. This has a secret meaning

8 Vatsyayana Mallanaga, *Kamasutra*, tr. Wendy Doniger and Sudhir Kakar (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). Linrothe's comment is in *Ruthless compassion*, p. 231. See also the brief but helpful discussion by Alexis Sanderson on differing attitudes towards the sexual elements in Yoginī Tantra ritual: whether they are to be practised by lay persons only or by both lay persons and monks or, instead, are to be understood only symbolically and therefore practiced in modified form (Sanderson, 'Vajrayāna', p. 97).

9 K. K. Handiqui, *Yaśastilaka and Indian culture* (Sholapur: Jaina Saṃskṛti Saṃrakshaka Sangha, 1968), p. 22.

for Munidatta, having to do with the inner channels of the yogic anatomy: 'the unique Central Channel brings together the two subsidiary channels'. Davidson comments that 'Munidatta would have us believe that the Virūpa of the drinking song in fact does not drink' (p. 259). Could we not also say, though, that there are two Virūpas – a could-be-real one and another here in the meditating consciousness? They are a linked pair. Exegesis makes claims for a true meaning, one that makes the text safe for the monastic establishment, but what it really provides is a higher meaning – or, better, an inner meaning – that does not cancel out the overt meaning of the text.

The earliest of the great temples at Khajuraho bearing erotic sculptures, the Lakṣmaṇa (954 CE), which is dedicated to the god Vishnu, provides a way of understanding such matters.[10] On the exterior are erotic scenes, in part borrowed from literature, that are statements of the place of lust in the natural order. The forces of this natural order must be called upon by the *yogin* to achieve liberation, and these forces are expressed in the interior of the temple through the depiction of Hindu myths. The temple is in fact a Tantric temple, promoting concepts like those found in the *Lakṣmī tantra*, and involving this same 'Central Channel and the two subsidiary channels', but the Tantric message is twice displaced, on the exterior by what could look to non-initiates like Tantric sex but is not, and on the interior by the appropriation of traditional myth. In other words, there is an elaborate game going on, and truth in one realm coexists with the same but differently appearing truth in another.

The Lakṣmaṇa Temple is an important monument not only because it brought sex into a public realm, and therefore bears a relationship to the public acceptance of Yoginī Tantra, but also because of its literary sophistication. Delight in the game, it ought to be recognised, was a key factor in the adoption of Yoginī Tantra Buddhism as an establishment religion. Exploration of this topic is possible in the later period but not the earlier. Once again, greater concentration upon the eleventh and twelfth centuries would have provided Davidson's book with a more secure anchor. As for the eighth, ninth, and much of the tenth centuries, we may never have a true social history of esoteric Buddhism, but we are fortunate to have a hypothetical history as learned and brilliant as Davidson's, based upon a profound knowledge of texts.

Southeast Asia

The precise place Southeast Asia should take in a history of esoteric Buddhism remains to be determined, but that there ought to be a place can hardly be denied. In the pages that follow, East Java is not discussed because it falls outside the chronological parameters of *Indian esoteric Buddhism*. Burma has also been set aside, in anticipation of more conclusive analyses of eleventh-century mural paintings in Pagan, which echo precisely the Pala painting styles taken at the same moment to Tibet. They are potentially

10 I am using my own interpretation, as presented in Hiram Woodward, 'The Lakṣmaṇa temple, Khajuraho, and its meanings', *Ars Orientalis*, 19 (1989): 27–48. I make a connection with Tantric Buddhist thought in Woodward, 'The Ford Collection and the interpretation of Tantric art', *Arts of Asia*, 31, 5 (Sept.–Oct. 2001): 77–88. For Khajuraho, see also Devangana Desai, *The religious imagery of Khajuraho* (Mumbai: Franco-Indian Research, 1996) and Michael Rabe, 'Sexual imagery on the "phantasmagorical castles" at Khajuraho', *International Journal of Tantric Studies*, 2, 2 (1996), viewable online at http://www.sxu/~rabe/khajuraho/index.html.

more significant for an understanding of Tantrism than the murals at the later, supposedly Tantric temples such as the Nandamannya.[11]

The seventh century: Srivijaya, Cambodia

In the kingdom of Srivijaya, stopping point for Yijing and many other Chinese pilgrims, the most revealing inscription is that of Tulang Tuwo, from the Palembang area of Sumatra, dating from 684. It is in Old Malay but consists primarily of Sanskrit loanwords, mostly terms with ties to Perfection Path Buddhism. Of the ten perfections the third (*kṣānti*, patience), the fourth (*virya*, energy) and the sixth (*prajñā*, wisdom) are specifically mentioned, along with such words as *bodhicitta* (thought of enlightenment) and *kalyānamitra* (good friend), the latter suggesting the possibility of acquaintance with the *Gaṇḍavyūha sūtra*, the text illustrated a century later on the second and third galleries of Chandi Borobudur in Java. Subsequently, terms appear in the inscription that seem to correspond to the six extraordinary knowledges (*abhijñā*, equivalent to the Pāli *abhiñña*, and sometimes melded together with the *siddhi*, or occult powers). Only one (*jātismara*, memory of previous lives) specifically matches up to the *abhijñā*, but others have meanings which are close: *anupamaśakti* (unequalled power) and *avikalendriya* (having full organs of sense, perhaps referring to clairvoyance and clairaudience).

Near the beginning of the latter sequence is the term *mahāsattva vajraśarīra*, which George Cœdès thought was clearly Tantric.[12] However, it is more likely that the term means something like 'having a physical body as diamondlike as that of a Bodhisattva such as Vajrapāṇi' (Bodhisattvas, unlike the Buddha, leaving no physical relics [*śarīra*]), a concept fully within the range of meaning of the Mahāyāna *abhijñā*. An early Mantrayāna text, the *Kāraṇḍavyūha sūtra* (about which more below), includes the term *vajrakāyaśarīra* ('having a body made of *vajra*'), however, and perhaps this sutra was known in Sumatra.[13] It may be that the terms in the inscription can all be found in texts; more probably, someone with a good knowledge of Sanskrit invented paraphrases. At any rate, the inscription leaves no doubt that Perfection Path Buddhism was well established in Sumatra in the seventh century.

Other Srivijayan inscriptions from Sumatra have less Buddhist content, though they are equally filled with Indic loanwords. The Kota Kapur inscription (686 CE, from the island of Bangka) links spells and poisons as instruments of war (*mantrā gada visaprayoga*). In the Telaga Batu inscription (south Sumatra), a magical diagram (*śrīyantra*) and a blood-filled bowl aid in the punishment of disloyalty. This inscription suggests that *siddha*-like magicians were present in Sumatra – though this does not mean that the term *siddhayātra* ('perfected trip'), which appears in a number of inscriptions,

11 The key eleventh-century monument is the Abeyadana. A recent careful analysis leaves open questions regarding sectarian affiliation: Claudine Bautze-Picron, *The Buddhist murals of Pagan: Timeless vistas of the cosmos* (Trumbull CT: Weatherhill, 2003), pp. 170–79. A helpful bibliography on Java is in Helen Creese, 'Old Javanese studies: a review of the field', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* [henceforth *BKI*], 157 (2001): 3–33.

12 His comment that 'ceci nous transporte en plein tantrisme' is in George Cœdès, 'Les inscriptions malaises de Çrīvijaya', *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* [henceforth *BEFEO*], 30 (1930): 55; this inscription is found on pp. 39–42.

13 Alexander Studholme, *The origins of* oṃ maṇipadme hūṃ*: A study of the Kāraṇḍavyūha sūtra* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), pp. 108, 140; the term characterises those who keep the wish-fulfilling jewel (that is, wear the spell *oṃ maṇipadme hūṃ* in written form on their body).

refers to such *siddha*s.[14] The Srivijayan inscriptions, when taken together, evoke a realm familiar with the teachings of Perfection Path Buddhism, the ancillary magical powers those at the end of the path acquire, and the use of *mantra* and *yantra* as instruments of war. If *mantra* and *yantra* could be used to defeat enemies, could they also not be used to help achieve Buddhist enlightenment? Sumatra, therefore, was fertile ground for Mantrayāna Buddhism.

Another piece of evidence regarding Tantric Buddhism in Southeast Asia in the seventh century is quite different in character: the Chinese account of the pilgrim Puṇyodaya. Born in central India, Puṇyodaya arrived in China in 655, but because the doctrines he espoused were not approved of by Xuancang, he was not treated with the respect to which he was entitled, and, in 656, he was asked by the emperor to travel to Southeast Asia (Kunlun). He returned to China, and among his two surviving translations is one of the Eightfold Mandala (T. 486, *Maṇḍalāsta sūtra*), describing the worship of the eight chief Bodhisattvas by constructing an altar in the form of a mandala, with eight circular thrones rising from a square base. In 663, he went back to Southeast Asia and was welcomed in Cambodia ('Zhenla'), which he had previously visited.[15]

The eight Bodhisattvas do not appear in the art of Cambodia, but the mid-century appearance of Puṇyodaya there does coincide with a period of increased support for Buddhism. More specifically, it is likely to be the time when a shrine-type with interior ambulatory path, archaeologically attested at Yarang in peninsular Thailand, was copied in Cambodia at Asram Maha Rosei.[16] These Bodhisattvas appear on votive tablets found in peninsular Thailand and Malaysia, and the subject later became important in Central Java, where it is found on the exterior walls of Chandi Mendut and in the interior of Chandi Plaosan. The votive tablets, which depict a central Buddha surrounded by the

14 Cœdès, 'Les inscriptions malaises', p. 48 (Kota Kapur) and J. G. de Casparis, *Selected inscriptions from the 7th to the 9th century A. D.*, Prasasti Indonesia, vol. II (Bandung: Masa Baru, 1956), pp. 34, 41 (line 12) (Telaga Batu). As for the term *siddhayātra*, Davidson (p. 106) observes that in seventh-century usage *siddha-* (in compounds) was used only adjectivally. '*Siddhayātra*' is rendered as '[one whose] journey has been well accomplished' in B. Ch. Chhabra, *Expansion of Indo-Aryan culture during Pallava rule* (Delhi: Munshi Ram Manohar Lal, 1965), p. 24. In reviewing the occurrences of the word in 1982, de Casparis concluded that it probably means no more than 'success' or 'successful' but should also be understood as the name of a ceremony: J. G. de Casparis, 'Some notes on the epigraphic heritage of Sriwijaya', Appendix 4h, in SEAMEO Project in Archaeology and Fine Arts, *Final report: Consultative workshop on archaeological and environmental studies on Srivijaya (I-W2A)* (Jakarta: SEAMEO, 1982) [henceforth cited as *Final report 1982*]. Hermann Kulke translates '*siddhayātra*' as 'royal procession' in his '"Kadātuan Śrīvijaya" – empire or kraton of Śrīvijaya? A reassessment of the epigraphical evidence', *BEFEO*, 80, 1 (1993): 162. Inscriptions containing the term *siddhayātra* (here interpreted in terms of 'success') 'were apparently inscribed in connection with ceremonies or prayers of a roughly Buddhist nature designed to ensure success in enterprises'; Jan Wisseman Christie, 'State formation in early maritime Southeast Asia: A consideration of the theories and the data', *BKI*, 151 (1995): 265. When Cœdès 'corrected' *siddhayātra* to *siddhiyātra* ('Les inscriptions malaises', pp. 34, 37, 58–59, 79), he was probably influenced by Monier-Williams's Sanskrit dictionary, which does not list either word, but takes *siddhayātrika* as a wrong reading for *siddhiyātrika*, 'one who makes pilgrimages to learn magical arts or to gain good luck or beatitude'; Monier Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English dictionary* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1979 reprint), pp. 1215–16.

15 Lin Li-kouang, 'Puṇyodaya (Na-t'i), un propagateur du tantrisme en Chine et au Cambodge à l'époque de Hiuan-tsang', *Journal Asiatique*, 227 (1935): 83–100; having overlooked this article, I am grateful to *Indian esoteric Buddhism* for having drawn it to my attention. The T. 486 text is listed in *Hôbôgirin*, p. 29.

16 Hiram Woodward, *The art and architecture of Thailand from prehistoric times through the thirteenth century* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2003), p. 62.

eight, predate the development of classical Javanese art in Java in the second half of the eighth century, but it is unlikely that they can be pushed back as far as the mid-seventh century (the time of Puṇyodaya), and only further research might reveal whether there are details that would make it possible to connect the tablets to his text rather than to the version translated by Amoghavajra in the mid-eighth century (T. 1167).[17]

Classical Java

Presuming the Buddhist traditions of Srivijaya either to have been shared with Java from the seventh century onwards or else transferred to Java in the eighth century, the evidence presented in the previous section provides a solid basis for the Buddhist art of the final decades of the eighth century in Central Java. Perfection Path Buddhism was the dominant current – the Buddhism, essentially, of Borobudur's narrative reliefs – but there were elements of a Mantrayāna, consisting at the very least of knowledge of an Eight Bodhisattva text. Founded around the same time as Borobudur, and aligned with it, is the temple Chandi Mendut, which bears these eight Bodhisattvas on its exterior walls. Inside, a central pendant-legged preaching Buddha is accompanied by a seated Avalokiteśvara (on his right) and by a generic Bodhisattva (on his left). The eight Bodhisattvas on the exterior walls are combined with three figures that occupy the centres of the walls – a standing eight-armed Avalokiteśvara on the rear wall (southeast), and a seated eight-armed and a seated four-armed goddess on the northeast and southwest walls. These goddesses are probably Cundā, a personification of a spell, and Prajñāpāramitā, the perfection of wisdom.[18] Since Cundā's spell is presented in the *Kāraṇḍavyūha sūtra* as a proclamation of the obtaining of wisdom, it is conceivable that this early (or proto-) Mantrayāna text, mentioned above, played a role at Chandi Mendut.[19] In fact, a plausible supporting argument can be made: the lotus pond from which the four-armed Prajñāpāramitā rises would be the pond into which Avalokiteśvara transforms the flaming stoves of hell in Chapter 2 of the sutra, while the eight-armed Avalokiteśvara on the

17 For an illustration of the peninsular eight-Bodhisattva tablet, see *The art of Śrīvijaya*, ed. M. C. Subhadradis Diskul (Kuala Lumpur and Paris: Oxford University Press and UNESCO, 1980), pl. 45, following p. 44. Studies include Hiram Woodward, 'Southeast Asian traces of the Buddhist pilgrims', *Muse, Annual of the Museum of Art and Archaeology, University of Missouri-Columbia*, 22 (1988): 75–91; Claudine Bautze-Picron, 'Le groupe des huit grands Bodhisatva en Inde: Genèse et développement', in *Living a life in accord with Dhamma: Papers in honor of Professor Jean Boisselier on his eightieth birthday*, ed. Natasha Eilenberg *et al.* (Bangkok: Silpakorn University, 1997), pp. 1–55; Michel Jacq-Hergoualc'h, *The Malay Peninsula: Crossroads of the maritime Silk Road* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), pp. 317–18. In identifying the Bodhisattvas at Candi Plaosan, Shōji Itō made use of the Amoghavajra translation: 'A tentative identification of Bodhisattva images in Chandi Plaosan', Appendix 7g, in SEAMEO Project in Archaeology and Fine Arts, *Final report: Consultative workshop on archaeological and environmental studies on Srivijaya (I-W2b)* (Jakarta: SEAMEO, 1985) [henceforth cited as *Final report* 1985].

18 A. J. Bernet Kempers, *Ageless Borobudur* (Wassenaar: Servire, 1976), p. 224; Bautze-Picron, 'Groupe des huit grands Bodhisatva', pp. 28–9; Sudarshana Devi Singhal, 'Caṇḍi Mĕndut and the Mahāvairocana-sūtra', *Bahasa-sastra-budaya ratna manikam untaian persembahan kepada Prof. Dr. P. J. Zoetmulder* [Language, literature, culture, a string of jewels offered to Prof. Dr P. J. Zoetmulder], ed. Sulastin Sutrismo (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1985), pp. 702–16, esp. pp. 712–13. The latter was also published in *Art and culture of South-East Asia*, ed. Lokesh Chandra (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture and Aditya Prakashan, 1991), pp. 373–84.

19 Studholme, *Origins of oṃ*, pp. 58 and 149 (part II, ch. 7). For additional evidence concerning the knowledge of the sutra in Java, see Max Nihom, *Studies in Indian and Indo-Indonesian Tantrism* (Vienna: Sammlung De Nobili , 1994), pp. 135–9.

southeast wall would be its saving, all-loving Avalokiteśvara and the Buddha inside the sanctuary would be Shakyamuni delivering the text.[20]

The question of what additional Mantrayāna texts were known has to be addressed on the basis of evidence of architectural remains, inscriptions and texts preserved in Java and Bali. What can first be remarked upon is the excellence of the fit between the Perfection Path and the Mantrayāna. This is especially apparent at Borobudur itself. The text featured in the topmost gallery, the *Vows of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra*, was the culminating section of the *Daśabhūmika sūtra* (incorporating the *Gaṇḍavyūha sūtra*, depicted just below) and at the same time a favourite text of Amoghavajra, who translated so many Mantrayāna texts into Chinese in the eighth century.[21] Secondly, the concept of the Dharmadhātu, or truth realm, where the fundamental elements of existence are perceived as Buddhas perceive them, was essential in the thinking of both Avataṃsaka Buddhists (those following the *Daśabhūmika sūtra*) and of followers of the Mantrayāna text, the *Mahāvairocana sūtra*. The upper terraces at Borobudur, as I have long argued, were intended to express the Dharmadhātu.[22] As such, they are an appropriate culmination of the Perfection Path pilgrimage as well as a strong statement of the understanding to which the Mantrayāna provided a shortcut. I shall return to these terraces shortly.

The *Mahāvairocana sūtra* was translated into Chinese in 723–4. Archaeological evidence that it was known in Java in the classical period rests largely on the interpretation of Chandi Mendut as a simpler statement of the Japanese womb mandala, the Garbhadhātu, which is based on the mandala described in the text.[23] Still, the mandala described in Chapter 2 of the *Mahāvairocana sūtra* is so much more complicated than anything preserved at Mendut that the argument is a weak one, especially when other texts – as suggested above – provide more plausible interpretations.

Another form of argument rests on assumptions that follow from the passage through Indonesia of the two great translators Vajrabodhi (670–741) and Amoghavajra (705–74). Vajrabodhi travelled extensively in Southeast Asia on his way from India, arriving in Canton in 719. Amoghavajra, Vajrabodhi's disciple, passed through Southeast Asia at least twice, to and from his trip to southern India and Sri Lanka from 741 to 749. One of Amoghavajra's disciples, Yuanzhao (719–800), believed that the 13-year-old Amoghavajra met Vajrabodhi in Java in 718 – a conclusion that can also be reached when

20 Studholme, *Origins of oṃ,* p. 122 (part I, ch. 2). The composition of the four-armed goddess panel is echoed by a Tibetan painting (ca. 1100) depicting Ṣaḍakṣarī Avalokiteśvara, the personification of the six-syllable *mantra* (*oṃ maṇipadme hūm*) proclaimed in the sutra. Both have two similarly proportioned attendant figures and a lotus pond below; Pratapaditya Pal, *Desire and devotion: Art from India, Nepal, and Tibet* (Baltimore: Walters Art Museum, 2001), pp. 228–9. Cf. also Bernet Kempers, *Ageless Borobudur*, p. 224.

21 Raffaello Orlando, 'A study of Chinese documents concerning the life of the Tantric Buddhist patriarch Amoghavajra (A. D. 705–774)' (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University 1981), pp. 133, 137. The transformation of Samantabhadra into Vajrapāṇi is also germane (Davidson, p. 150).

22 Hiram Woodward, 'On Borobudur's upper terraces', *Oriental Art*, 45, 3 (1999): 34–43. On the *Dharmadhātu* see also Alex Wayman and R. Tajima, *The enlightenment of Vairocana* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1998), pp. 52–6.

23 Singhal, 'Caṇḍi Mĕndut', makes a case for seventh-century knowledge of the sutra in Srivijaya (pp. 703–4). For a summary of Singhal's interpretation, see Lokesh Chandra, 'Chandi Mendut and Pavon', in Lokesh Chandra, *Cultural horizons of India*, vol. IV [henceforth *CH*] (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture and Aditya Prakashan, 1995), pp. 32–8.

reconciling the dates in the biographies of the two masters. Other apparently more reliable accounts, however, indicate that the young Amoghavajra, perhaps a native of Samarkand, travelled with his merchant uncle across Central Asia and met Vajrabodhi in China.[24] Even if either Amoghavajra or Vajrabodhi stayed long enough in Srivijaya or Java to have left a disciple – something the biographies fail to indicate – few conclusions can be reached without additional local evidence.

Another key body of material consists of the 42 Sanskrit verses of the Old Javanese text the *Sang hyang kamahāyānan Mantranaya*. These verses were compiled for recitation in the course of a consecration (*abhiṣeka*) ritual, conferring on a disciple the privilege of teaching and transmitting secret doctrines. The compilation dates from the ninth, tenth or eleventh centuries, but the Sanskrit texts (in part preserved in Tibetan or Chinese translation but not in Sanskrit) could have been known in Java even before then. These texts include the *Mahāvairocana sūtra* (15 verses), the *Vajraśekhara* or the *Jāpa sūtra* (14 verses), the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana tantra*, the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, and the *150-verse (Adhyardhaśatikā) Prajñāpāramitā*.[25] The *Jāpa sūtra* is the recitation text that Vajrabodhi translated into Chinese in 723 (T. 866); it is a section of the longer *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha*, a text which was lost in the course of a terrible storm Vajrabodhi's ship encountered before reaching China.

All of these texts were circulating in the eighth century, although there are some questions regarding the *150-verse Prajñāpāramitā*. Verses 26–42 of the *Sang hyang kamahāyānan Mantranaya* do not have an equivalent in the *150-verse Prajñāpāramitā* that Amoghavajra took from Sri Lanka to China and translated (T. 243), only in the Chinese version (T. 244) by Faxian, dating from about 999. Yet there is nothing in the content of the verses that would demonstrate a necessarily later date of composition. The *150-verse Prajñāpāramitā* is also known as the *Naya sūtra*, the term *naya* ('led', 'guiding principle') linking the text known in China and Japan to the Javanese *Mantranaya*.[26] Since these texts in general have ties to the Mantrayāna promulgated by Vajrabodhi and Amoghavajra, there are excellent reasons for supposing the presence of the texts in Java in the eighth century. If they reached Java after that time, then there must have been an

24 On the meeting in Java, Chou Yi-liang, 'Tantrism in China', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 8 (1945), Appendix M, pp. 321–2; Orlando, 'Study of Chinese documents', p. 107, n. 5. The biographies of Amoghavajra are as follows: the lay disciple Zhao Qian's 'account of conduct' (T. 2056), translated in Orlando, pp. 132–58; the stele biography by Fei Xi (in T. 2120), translated in Orlando, pp. 159–71; the official Song Dynasty account, by Can Ning (T. 2061), translated by Chou Yi-liang, pp. 284–307. Yuan Zhao's statements are found in T. 2157, cited, for instance, by Orlando, p. 39.

25 Kazuko Ishii's chart, published in his 'The correlation of verses of the *Sang hyang kamahāyānan Mantranaya* with Vajrabodhi's *Jāpa-sūtra*' (*Area and Culture Studies*, 44 [1992]: 225–36) appears also in Lokesh Chandra, 'Sa'n hyaI kamahykikan 1. *Mantranaya*', *CH*, pp. 295–327, together with Tibetan texts and English translations.

26 Singhal, 'Caṇḍi Mĕnduṭ', p. 705; Ian Astley-Kristensen, *The* Rishukyō*: The Sino-Japanese Tantric* Prajñāpāramitā *in 150 verses (Amoghavajra's version)* (Tring: Institute of Buddhist Studies, 1991), p. 27; for the Chinese translations see pp. 16, 18. The sections of T. 244 that match up with the Amoghavajra version are found at pp. 786b21–797b20 (Astley-Kristensen, pp. 192–4). The sections that correspond to the *Mantranaya* are at pp. 815b13–c3 and 815c14–16; J. W. de Jong, 'Notes on the sources and the text of the *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānan Mantranaya*', *BKI*, 130 (1974): 465–82, esp. p. 469. I am taking issue with Kazuko Ishii's statement ('Correlation of verses', p. 232) that 'the fact that SHKM verses 26–42 were found in the Chinese translation of the AP in 999 sets aside the possibility that the SHKM was used around 8th–9th century when the Borobudur was constructed'.

Indian monastic centre that adhered largely to the doctrines earlier embraced in China. I shall turn again to this matter later in this article.

Putting aside the *Mahāvairocana sūtra*, let us address other evidence for the presence of esoteric Buddhism in Central Java. The bulk of the evidence comes from one temple complex (Chandi Sewu) and two inscriptions (Kelurak and Ratubaka), and the information they provide is interrelated. The inscription of Kelurak (782 CE) has been called 'the first inescapably "tantrist" inscription', but in fact the Tantrism is not easily characterised without an associated text. The inscription records the installation of an image of Mañjughoṣa, a form of the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, under the auspices of a guru from Gauḍī, a section of Bengal. The head of the reigning monarch was 'purified by the dust of the lotus feet' of this guru, whose name was Kumāraghoṣa. The first stanza names Lokeśvara (Avalokiteśvara) and three other *-iśvara*, the four being either epithets for Mañjughoṣa or manifestations of him. In the fifteenth stanza, Mañjughoṣa is called Vajradhara, the *vajra* (cudgel)-bearer, as well as Brahmā, Vishnu and Maheśvara (Shiva).[27]

J. E. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw has argued convincingly that the Kelurak inscription, which was discovered between Chandi Sewu and Chandi Lumbung, must belong to Chandi Sewu, in part because of the discovery there of an inscription of 792 CE, recording the enlargement of a Mañjuśrīgṛha.[28] Meanwhile, there is plenty of evidence of the stylistic impact of Bengali styles upon Java in what must have been just this period. This is especially apparent in bronze images, and images depicting Mañjuśrī tend strongly to reveal the connection.[29] Originally, the interior niches at Chandi Sewu must have been filled with bronzes of this sort, but it may never be possible to determine the specific configuration. The cruciform temple, with projecting halls in each of the four directions, has a circumambulation path around the central sanctuary that provides focal niches for the southern, western and northern halls (the sanctuary entrance being in the same position on the eastern side). These focal niches offer an opportunity for a triadic arrangement, suggested in the inscription by the invocation of Brahmā, Vishnu and Shiva. The four halls, at the same time, provide spaces for a fourfold division like that indicated by the mention of the four *īśvaras* at the beginning of the inscription. The theory proposed by F. D. K. Bosch that the niches in the halls once held images like those of the later Nganjuk bronzes, which form an elaborate Vajradhātu Mandala, is simply not credible. (In Japanese esoteric Buddhism, the Garbhadhātu [womb] Mandala and the Vajradhātu

27 Lokesh Chandra, 'The Śailendras of Java', *CH*, pp. 220 (lotus feet), 218 (Lokeśvara), 223 (Vajradhara). See also *Sutasoma: A study in Javanese Wajrayana*, tr. Soewito Santoso (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1975), p. 125. The 'inescapably tantrist' remark is in Nihom, *Studies in Indian and Indo-Indonesian*, p. 70.

28 J. E. van Lohuizen – de Leeuw, 'The Dvārapāla of Barabuḍur', in *Barabuḍur: History and significance of a Buddhist monument*, ed. Luis O. Gómez and Hiram W. Woodward, Jr. (Berkeley: Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series, 1981), p. 19; Machi Suhadi, 'Seven Old-Malay inscriptions found in Java', Appendix 4b, in SEAMEO Project in Archaeology and Fine Arts, *Final report: Consultative workshop. . . on Srivijaya (T-W3)* (Bangkok: SEAMEO, 1983) [henceforth cited as *Final report* 1983], p. 68.

29 Pauline Lunsingh Scheurleer and Marijke J. Klokke, *Divine bronze: Ancient Indonesian bronzes from A. D. 600 to 1600* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1988), pp. 27–30. For a Mañjuśrī, see *ibid.*, no. 21, p. 73 and the image found in Thailand and now in the Asia Society, New York, illustrated in Woodward, *Art and architecture*, pl. 21; this book uses the notion of influences from Bengal as a cornerstone in the creation of a chronology for Dvaravati art (pp. 92–6).

[diamond] Mandala form a pair.) If such images were being made in Java in the late eighth century, some would have survived; furthermore, the niches at Chandi Sewu do not accord well with the positioning of the images in the mandala.[30]

The Mañjuśrī text that formed the basis for the configuration of deities must be presumed either lost or unidentified, but there are two later texts that both Lokesh Chandra and Max Nihom have pointed to as representing the same tradition. One is the elaborate mandala focussed on a form of Mañjuśrī known as Dharmadhātuvāgīśvara, described in the late eleventh-century northern Indian *Niṣpannayogāvalī*; the other is the *sādhana* (invocation) to Dharmadhātuvāgīśvara included in a compilation of the same time, the *Sādhanamālā*. In an exploration of the sequence of seed syllables *āḥ hūṃ trāṃ hrīḥ āḥ*, found in Balinese texts, Max Nihom made a discovery that affirms a connection, namely that 'Sādhanamālā 61 [to Dharmadhātuvāgīśvara] is the only *sādhana* in the collection of 312 texts containing this pentad.' At the end of this *sādhana*, Dharmadhātuvāgīśvara is said to be the womb of the gnosis of the Dharmadhātu (*dharmadhātujñānagarbha*), which is then called all elements (*sarvadharma*) and the sky (*gagana*).[31]

The second inscription, that of Ratubaka (792 CE), provides evidence for another significant overseas connection, this one with the Abhayagiri monastery, the centre of Mahāyāna Buddhist activities in Sri Lanka. Chandra, whose English translation of the elaborate Sanskrit has more coherence than that of J. G. de Casparis, argues that Tantric traditions were strong at the Abhayagiri. Evidence within the inscription, on the other hand, although present, is slender. In the third stanza, the 'Ocean of Supreme Virtues' is said to be 'nourished-and-invigorated by the rushing flow of excellent rivers which are deliberations on esoteric concerns', the latter being *saṃgūḍārtha*.[32]

Nevertheless, when all is said and done, it is likely that the Mantrayāna – specifically the texts quoted in the *Sang hyang kamahāyānan Mantranaya* – was known in Java in 792, primarily through connections with the Abhayagiri Monastery. The reason is less because of the wording of the Ratubaka inscription than because of the relationship of these texts to the thinking of Amoghavajara. In other words, following this line of analysis, it was not Amoghavajra's passages through Southeast Asia that tie Javanese to Chinese traditions, but the connections of both Amoghavajra, who stayed there in the 740s, and central Javanese Buddhists to the Abhayagiri. To the texts incorporated in the *Mantranaya*, one that could be added would be the Balinese *Nāgabāyu sūtra*, which lists

30 F. D. K. Bosch, 'Buddhist data from Balinese texts', in Bosch, *Selected studies in Indonesian archaeology* (The Hague: KITLV, 1961), pp. 109–35. Lokesh Chandra favourably recapitulates Bosch's proposals in his 'Chandi Sevu as a steromorphic Vajradhātu Mandala', *CH*, pp. 22–31; originally published in *Indologica Taurinensia*, 7 (1979):159–69.

31 Nihom, *Studies in Indian and Indo-Indonesian*, pp. 106, 105; Chandra, 'Śailendras', p. 220.

32 Lokesh Chandra, 'The contacts of Abhayagiri of Srilanka with Indonesia in the eighth century', *CH*, p. 14; this article first appeared in *Journal of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta* 28 (1986): 38–55. De Casparis's translation was published in his 'New evidence on cultural relations between Java and Ceylon in ancient times', *Artibus Asiae*, 24 (1961): 241–8; for three stanzas, see also de Casparis, 'The dual nature of Barabuur', in Gómez and Woodward ed., *Barabuḍur*, pp. 73–4. On the other hand, the proclivities of the Abhayagiri can only be dimly described on the basis of Pali and Tibetan texts; see, for example, Peter Skilling, 'A citation from the Buddhavaṃsa of the Abhayagiri School', *Journal of the Pali Text Society*, 18 (1993): 165–75.

five *krodha* ('angry ones') corresponding to the five Jinas (cosmic Buddhas), exactly in the manner of the *Sutra of benevolent kings* (T. 246), important in Japan.[33]

These 'esoteric concerns', then, really were kept secret. This puts the onus on the Borobudur terraces to prove or disprove that Mantrayāna thinking at some point became publicly manifest. Archaeological evidence indicates that there were changes in plans in the course of the construction of Borobudur.[34] The upper terraces were not a part of the original conception; initially, there was to be a crowning sanctuary. In the monument as it stands, there is little to indicate the absence of far-sighted planning, except for the repetition on the third gallery of *Gaṇḍavyūha* scenes already illustrated on the second gallery. This suggests that a change in plan may have had something to do with varying opinion about the conceptualisation of the Dharmadhātu. Originally, perhaps, the reliefs were intended to end with the depiction of the entrance of the pilgrim Sudhana into the Tower of Maitreya, which in the *Gaṇḍavyūha* symbolises the Dharmadhātu, and a crowning sanctuary was planned to stand for the tower. Then another kind of thinking won the day, resulting in additional galleries and in the extant terraces where, I have argued elsewhere, the pilgrim finds the perforated stupas standing simultaneously for the elements (*dharma*) of existence; the letters of the alphabet; and planets and stars, the moon and the sun, the numerology of these heavenly bodies having a source in Chinese Daoism (which also holds that they can be found inside the body). Identifying in turn with all of these phenomena and with the Buddhas within the perforated stupas, the Buddhist practitioner inhales and exhales with breaths that have the shape of the openings in the stupas.[35]

Was this re-conceptualisation due primarily to the influence of identifiable Sanskrit Mantrayāna texts? What was the relative role of the students of Kumāraghoṣa, on one hand, and the followers of the Abhayagiri traditions, on the other? (Leaving aside other monastic centres with which the Javanese Buddhists must have been in contact, such as those in Orissa and at Sirpur.) Lokesh Chandra described the two schools as being in

33 Bosch, *Selected studies*, pp. 131–2; for the question of an Indian counterpart, see Linrothe, *Wrathful compassion*, p. 208. Alex Wayman noted that the the Jina name Saṃkusumita (rather than Amoghasiddhi) found in the *Mahāvairocana sūtra* is echoed in a Balinese text as the name 'Kusumita' for Amoghasiddhi's heaven; Wayman and Tajima, *Enlightenment of Vairocana*, p. 11.

34 Jacques Dumarçay, *Borobudur* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1978), pp. 22–4. I do not see anything Tantric about the Buddhas overlooking the galleries; they are cosmic Buddhas from the zenith and the four directions of space, gathered on the monument to pay homage to the teaching. In terms of the *kāya* theory, they are the *sambhogakāya* (the Shakyamuni of the reliefs being the *nirmānakāya* and the Buddhas of the upper terraces being the *dharmakāya*).

35 Woodward, 'On Borobudur's upper terraces', where I argue that there is a Daoist element in the numerology (16-24-32). In an article posted on a Website (http:www.borobudur.tv/lanka_03.htm), pp. 11–13, Mark Long proposed a connection of the 16-24-32 sequence to a *mantra* in the *Laṅkāvatāra sūtra*, ch. 9; see Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, *The* Laṅkāvatāra sūtra: *A Mahāyāna text* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1999 reprint), p. 223. I did not address the matter of a change in plans in my article. The role of Mantrayāna influences on a change of plans is raised in Caesar Voûte, 'Religious, cultural and political developments during the Hindu-Buddhist period in Central and East Java–relations with India and Srilanka–human actors and geological process and events', in *Society and culture of Southeast Asia: Continuities and changes* (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture and Aditya Prakashan, 2000), ed. Lokesh Chandra, pp. 299–342, esp. p. 321. I have not had access to Hudaya Kandahjaya, *The master key for reading Borobudur symbolism / Kunci utama untuk membaca simbolisme Borobudur* (Bandung: Yayasan Penerbt Karaniya, 1995) or to the same author's *Borobudur: A case study of Indonesian responses to sea-route Buddhist transmission* (Columbo: W. E. Bastian and Co., 1998).

competition with each other, but in fact the evidence is slim.[36] From the Kumāraghoṣa viewpoint, the end of the *sādhana* referred to above provides the main elements of the figure: Dharmadhātuvāgīśvara, the womb of the gnosis of the Dharmadhātu, is both all the Dharmas and the sky. From the Abhayagiri viewpoint (assuming a connection with the *Mantranaya* texts), there are passages in the *Mahāvairocana sūtra* that could be the basis for the terraces. For instance, from Chapter 5: 'The yogin should meditate to be in the very pure moon circle. He should meditate on some letters in the moon in good order. Put letters in it and think to purify life. The life is so-called wind, so think of inhaling and exhaling breath.' At the same time, these two texts might be deeply intertwined, just as Alex Wayman maintained.[37]

Additional texts may or may not come to light that will help us understand how the terraces came into being. Prototypes for the texts describing *cakras* (circles) that stand at one and the same time for astronomical bodies and for nodes within the meditator's head and trunk would be especially significant. In Chapter 5 of the *Saṃvarodaya tantra*, 'Explanation of the course of the moon and the sun', connections are made between the moon and the sun and the left- and right-hand channels of the yogic anatomy, and the numbers 32, 24 and 16 (the numbers of the perforated stupas at Borobudur) all appear.[38] There might be a *Saṃvarodaya tantra* prototype, one that matches up better with the Borobudur terraces and forces a re-examination of their close Daoist parallels. If not, presumably Borobudur itself would have to be considered the model for this *tantra* – and perhaps for other aspects of the Yoginī Tantra as well.

The whole question of the presence or absence of Mantrayāna and still more advanced texts in Central Java cannot be laid to rest without a consideration of the evidence provided by a ritual deposit discovered at Chandi Gumpung at Muara Jambi in Sumatra and by two extensive groups of small bronzes from East Java dating from the tenth or eleventh centuries, one group from Surocolo and the other from Nganjuk. On the one hand, this material supports the possibility that the texts discussed so far reached Java in the eighth century; on the other, it raises doubt about this conclusion and lends support to a different one, namely that the introduction occurred later and was from northern India rather than Sri Lanka. Both bronze groups have been analysed by Lokesh Chandra. The Nganjuk bronzes, discovered in 1913 and now split between the National Museum in Jakarta and other collections and museums around the world belong – when identifiable – almost entirely to the Vajradhātu Mandala described in the eighth-century *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha* and *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana tantra*, as well as in mandala 19 in the later *Niṣpannayogāvalī*.[39] The central Vairocana and the four directional Jinas

36 Chandra, 'Śailendras', p. 219.

37 Wayman and Tajima, *Enlightenment of Vairocana*, p. 67; the translation is from Yamamoto, *Mahāvairocana-sūtra*, p. 71.

38 Shinichi Tsuda, *Saṁvarodaya-tantra: Selected chapters* (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1974); a tantalising but obscure sentence is 'Describing three concentric circles equipped with thirty-seven chequers, a man should write in the days of life and the wind of the breath of life, according to the order of the cipher' (p. 254). See also the section on 'Tantric teachings about the inner zodiac' in Alex Wayman, *The Buddhist tantras: Light on Indo-Tibetan esotericism* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1973), pp. 151–63.

39 *Niṣpannayogāvalī of Mahāpaṇḍita Abhayākaragupta*, ed. Benoytosh Bhattacharyya (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1972); Lokesh Chandra (in collaboration with Mrs Sudarshana Devi Singhal), 'Identification of the Ṅañjuk bronzes' and 'The Buddhist bronzes of Surocolo', *CH*, pp. 97–107 and 121–47 respectively.

are preserved, as well as many of the 16 Vajra Bodhisattvas, the eight offering goddesses, the four doorkeepers and the 16 Good Era Bodhisattvas.

The ritual deposits at Chandi Gumpung include 20 inscribed small sheets of gold, found in concentrically arranged square holes in the ground, beneath a pillar. The letters on the gold plates are written in a Kawi script used from the mid-ninth to the early tenth centuries, and so the deposit appears to date from the time of the original foundation of a monument later enlarged. On the sheets are written names of deities identifiable as those in the Vajradhātu Mandala (as in the case of the Nganjuk bronzes): one of the four *vajrī* surrounding the central Vairocana (Vajraratnā for Ratnavajrī); 12 of the 16 Vajra Bodhisattvas; one of the eight offering goddesses; and three of the four gatekeepers.[40]

Among the Nganjuk bronzes, however, there is at least one figure that does not appear in the Vajradhātu Mandala: the drummer Mukuṇḍā, incidentally now preserved in the Walters Art Museum.[41] The four heavenly musicians, of which she is one, appear in mandalas 3, 5, 6, 7 and 24 (mostly Yoginī Tantras) of the *Niṣpannayogāvalī* but not in mandala 19 (the Vajradhātu Mandala). If it were not for the presence of the drummer, the evidence would strongly support the assertion that the Vajradhātu Mandala was known in the eighth century and that subsequently each monk in the lineage did exactly what the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana tantra* (in which the Vajradhātu Mandala is decribed) instructs and did it secretly, until the point in time at which, for reasons unknown, it was decided to create a three-dimensional mandala: 'As for the rite of the image, he should act here in the following manner. He should just draw the image of the Lord Trailokyavijaya or he should draw him in the form of his maṇḍala. He should worship it with flowers and so forth.'[42] However, the mandalas with Mukuṇḍā fall outside the body of texts translated into Chinese in the eighth century.

The evidence of the Surocolo bronzes, discovered in 1976, puts the issue even more pointedly. Chandra and Mrs Sudarshana Devi Singhal assigned the 22 bronzes to two different mandalas. One – consisting of Vajrasattva surrounded by four female *vajriṇī* (standing for desire, touching, love and pride), eight offering goddesses and four female gatekeepers – is the mandala associated with one of the texts incorporated into the *Sang hyang kamahāyānan Mantranaya* mentioned above, the *150-verse Prajñāpārāmitā*, of which one version was circulating in the eighth century. The second mandala lacks its principal figure but has been identified as a mandala of Hevajra, on the basis of the survival of three of the eight encircling *yoginī*, the four heavenly musicians and two of the animal-headed female door guardians.[43]

40 Boechari, 'Ritual deposits of Candi Gumpung (Muara Jambi)', Appendix 7d, SEAMEO *Final report* 1985, pp. 229–38. A discussion of the Jambi monuments is in Satyawati Suleiman, 'Country report of Indonesia', Appendix 3a, SEAMEO *Final report*, 1982.

41 There are two drummers among the Four Heavenly Musicians, and Mukuṇḍā may be the one with the larger drum; Jan Fontein, *The sculpture of Indonesia* (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1990), pp. 226–7. The Walters image (54.2980, bequest of William G. Siedenburg, 2002) is evidently the one referred to by Fontein (p. 227). The importance of Mukuṇḍā is reiterated by Chandra, 'Buddhist bronzes', p. 135.

42 Tadeusz Skorupski, *The Sarvadurgatipariśodhana tantra: Elimination of all evil destinies* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983), p. 42; these sentences are present in the Tibetan but not the Sanskrit text, however.

43 Chandra, 'Buddhist bronzes', pp. 121–47. The terminology for the four *vajriṇī* is from Astley-Kristenson, *Rishukyō*, p. 120. For the Sanskrit, see Chandra, p. 125. A connection with the five arrows of passion is implied by Strickmann, *Mantras et mandarins*, pp. 286–7, but the terms do not match; see Wayman, *Buddhist tantras*, p. 206.

It is one matter to accept the presence of the Vajradhātu Mandala in the eighth century, but something else entirely to suppose that the *Hevajra tantra*, a fundamental Yoginī *tantra*, was also known to the eighth-century Buddhists but remained secret and was eventually manifested in three dimensions. If the *Hevajra tantra* came to the archipelago somewhat later, then the early eleventh century is a possible moment. The famous monk Atīśa, who arrived in Srivijaya in 1012, had been initiated into the teachings of the *Hevajra tantra* before his departure; if he did not introduce the text himself, then maybe the intercourse that led him to decide to study in Srivijaya was reponsible.[44] (The earliest known bronze images of Hevajra, from Cambodia, are no older than the eleventh century.) Still, the question cannot yet be resolved. Stylistic evidence suggests that both the Surocolo and the Nganjuk bronzes date from some time after 900. The proportions of the triangular appendages on the diadems seen on the Surocolo images may point to a date in the eleventh rather than the tenth century, but there are too few signposts to make possible a narrow dating.[45] Chandra proposed the reign of Sindok (929–47) and believed that there was a link between the creation of the mandalas and the composition of the *Sang hyang kamahāyānan*. At any rate, contrary to the views of K. W. Lim, there seems to be no solid iconographical reason to date the Nganjuk bronzes to a period no earlier than the late tenth century.[46]

Most probably, one important inscription from mainland Southeast Asia can be understood within the framework of the texts discussed so far: the An Thái inscription from Champa, dating from 902 CE. Basically, the concepts in the inscription can be found in the *Mahāvairocana sūtra*. The three Buddha families of this text are in the inscription called *dhātu*, or realms, hence *Vajradhātu*, for the diamond family, and *Padmadhātu*, for the lotus family. The chief and central realm is called the *Cakradhātu*, or 'wheel realm', rather than a Buddha realm. Perhaps the term derives from the notion in the *Mahāvairocana sūtra* that the circular unrolling of the wheel (*cakra*) of syllables begins with the letter *a*, Mahāvairocana's letter (Chapter 10); or, it might just mean 'supreme realm'. The relationship of Buddha to Bodhisattva in the three realms does not derive directly from the *Mahāvairocana sūtra*, however. Shakyamuni and Vajradhara (the Bodhisattva, more frequently called Vajrapāṇi) are in the Vajradhātu, and Amitābha and Avalokiteśvara are in the Padmadhtu, as might be expected. In the Cakradhātu, the Buddha is Vairocana and the Bodhisattva Vajrasattva.[47]

44 George N. Roerich, *The blue annals* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1996 reprint), p. 242.

45 Somewhat later than the Locanā (Lunsingh Scheuleer and Klokke, *Divine bronze*, no. 40, p. 92) dated to *ca.* 900 on epigraphical grounds. Jan Fontein has dated the Surocolo bronzes to the 'early 10th century' and the Nganjuk bronzes to the '10th–11th' (*Sculpture of Indonesia*, pp. 223, 231). A dating for the latter from about the eleventh to twelfth centuries is in Nandana Chutiwongs, *Indonesian bronzes in the Domela Nieuwenhuis Collection* (Amsterdam: Christie's, 1990), p. 28. See also Susan L. Huntington and John C. Huntington, *Leaves from the Bodhi tree: The art of Pāla India (8th–12th centuries) and its international legacy* (Dayton, OH: Dayton Art Institute, 1990), p. 240: 'The style of the images seems to argue against an ongoing or current infusion from the Pāla lands during the late tenth or eleventh century.'

46 K. W. Lim, 'Studies in later Buddhist iconography', *BKI*, 120 (1964): 327–41. Chandra's dating is in his 'Buddhist bronzes', p. 124 and 'Saṅ hyaṅ', p. 325.

47 The inscription is in Ian Mabbett, 'Buddhism in Champa', in *Southeast Asia in the 9th to 14th centuries*, ed. David G. Marr and A. C. Milner (Singapore and Canberra: ISEAS and ANU,1986), pp. 300–2. For three families in the text, Yamamoto tr., *Mahāvairocana-sūtra*, ch. 10. The *cakrakāya* ('wheel body') is discussed in Orzech, *Politics and transcendent wisdom*, pp. 156–7 n 5. The thinking on the Buddha-Bodhisattva may possibly be dependent on the *150-verse Prajñāpāramitā*, as analyzed in Chandra, 'Buddhist bronzes', pp. 142–3.

Srivijayan Buddhism in India

There were occasions for the direct transfer of Southeast Asian Buddhist developments to India, and there is evidence of at least two specific moments when this occurred. Both instances provide opportunities for a range of interpretative analyses. In the 850s or 860s, Balaputra, an exiled Javanese prince, established a monastery at Nalanda in India, according to an inscription found there.[48] Gregory Schopen, writing in 1989, identified a verse inscribed on a small memorial stone stupa at Nalanda, dating from about the ninth century, as coming from the *Vows of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra*, which form the basis of the reliefs of the topmost gallery at Borobudur. This in turn led to the proposal that the stupa, together with this and other texts inscribed upon it, can be considered a kind of summary presentation of concepts embodied at Borobudur.[49] If such is the case, then either these concepts were widespread and long established at Nalanda or else the foundation of Balaputra's monastery brought the arrival of emphases developed elsewhere.

Which one of these possibilities is correct for the concepts present at Nalanda is not easily resolved. Take, for instance, the matter of the arrangement of deities in a circle – a characteristic, Davidson points out (p. 332), of the mandalas in the Yoginī Tantras.[50] The stupas on the upper terraces at Borobudur provide as strong an architectural prototype for such arrangements as can be found. However, if the source for the arrangement on the terraces was twofold – in circles (*cakra*) of stars and planets and in circles of letters – then the origins of the circular configurations of the Yoginī Tantras should be sought in exactly the same place, and Borobudur played no essential role in the development. On the other hand, details of numerology (as suggested above) might eventually demonstrate that the inner *cakra*s of the yogic anatomy described in the *Saṃvarodaya tantra* have no better prototype than Borobudur itself. This in turn could open the gates to seeing Daoist influences going far beyond the 32-24-16 configuration found on the Borobudur terraces. Broad speculations about Chinese influences upon Indian esoteric Buddhism have been made in the past but are not current today.[51]

48 George Cœdès, *Les états hindouisés d'Indochine et d'Indonésie*, rev. edn (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1964), pp. 203–4; Boechari, 'On the date of the inscription of "Ligor B"', Appendix 4a, in SEAMEO *Final report* 1982. For an attempt at reconciling the Javanese dynastic and genealogical data, see Jan Wisseman Christie, 'Revisiting early Mataram', in *The fruits of inspiration: Studies in honour of Prof. J. G. de Casparis*, ed. Marijke J. Klokke and Karel R. van Kooij (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 2001), pp. 25–55. For a reaction, see the review by Roy E. Jordaan, *BKI*, 158 (2002): 112–16.

49 Hiram W. Woodward, Jr., 'The life of the Buddha in the Pāla monastic environment', *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery*, 48 (1990): 15–17. See also Gregory Schopen, 'A verse from the Bhadracarīpraṇidhāna in a 10th century inscription found at Nālandā', *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 12 (1989): 149–57.

50 There is a connection with the Hindu open-air temples, but in what may be the earliest of these (at Khajuraho) the shrines are not arranged in a circle; Vidya Dehejia, *Yogini cult and temples: A Tantric tradition* (Delhi: National Museum, 1986).

51 The links between Indian and Chinese sexual mysticism are suggested by R. H. van Gulik, *Sexual life in ancient China* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974), pp. 339–59. For a partial assessment of the argument see Thomas McEvilley, 'The spinal serpent', in *The roots of Tantra*, ed. Katherine Anne Harper and Robert L. Brown (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), pp. 93–113. Davidson does not postulate any Chinese influences but raises questions (pp. 125, 127) in regard to the practice of visualisation, as found in the fifth-century *Consecration scripture* (T. 1331).

A second moment in which Southeast Asian Buddhism influenced India came later; more has been written about it, but the conclusions to be drawn are equally elusive. The monk Atīśa, who arrived in Tibet in 1042 and was the father of so much of the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, studied in a monastery in 'Srivijaya' from 1012 to 1024. 'Srivijaya' in this instance has been identified with Palembang, Kedah or, intriguingly, Jambi – site of the deposit at Chandi Gumpung discussed above. One commentary (surviving in Tibetan translation on a Perfection of Wisdom text) is the work of Atīśa's teacher Dharmakīrti. The colophon of the text states that it was 'composed in the city Śrīvijaya of Suvarṇadvīpa' and provides the name of a monarch, Cūḍāmaṇivarman, whose existence in turn is also attested in Tamil and Sanskrit inscriptions from southern India of 1044–46 and about 1089–90.[52]

Beside this text, what else of Srivijayan Buddhism did Atīśa take to Tibet? A Tibetan commentator wrote that 'among these [traditions concerning the goddess Tara], the most distinguished is the school of Atīśa; both he and his own teacher, Dharmakīrti of the Golden Isles, continually saw the tradition of the Holy Lady, and upon them was bestowed the tradition'. Alex Wayman argued that certain concepts regarding inner and outer mandalas were picked up by Atīśa in Srivijaya, but Max Nihom disputed this.[53] If, as proposed here, the *Kāraṇḍavyūha sūtra* was more important in Indonesia than has been hitherto recognised, then the Tibetan partiality to the *mantra oṃ maṇi padme huṃ* – proclaimed in the text – may have some connection with Atīśa's sojourn in Srivijaya.

A connection which is difficult to assess lies in the murals and sculptures at Tabo in Spiti (Himachal Pradesh), where there is a sequence of texts and depictions that echo Borobudur: the life of the Buddha according to the biography entitled the *Lalitavistara*, the pilgrim Sudhana's visits to good friends and a mandala centred on Mahāvairocana. This complex appears to date from 1042, the year of Atīśa's visit. If it was carried out under his direction, as has been thought, then the programme could well have been a result of the master's Srivijayan experiences. If, on the other hand, the chapel was finished before Atīśa's arrival, as is argued in the most thorough study of the complex (by Deborah Klimburg-Salter), then its roots need to be sought elsewhere.[54] There was once an analogous program at the bSam-yas in Tibet, said to have been founded in the eighth century, but it is considerably more complicated. The connections with Borobudur, if not due to Atīśa, have to be explained through recourse either to beliefs

52 Peter Skilling, 'Dharmakīrti's *Durbodhāloka* and the literature of Śrīvijaya', *Journal of the Siam Society* [henceforth *JSS*], 83 (1997): 187–94. Skilling places the site of Atīśa's sojourn in Kedah, the 'Kaḍāra' of the Indian inscriptions. For the alternative of Jambi (understanding 'Kaḍāra' and Srivijaya as two distinct places), see, for instance, Boechari, 'Report on research on Srīwijaya', Appendix 3a, in SEAMEO Project in Archaeology and Fine Arts, *Final report: Workshop on research on Srivijaya* (Jakarta: SEAMEO, 1979), pp. 6–7. See also Tatsuro Yamamoto, 'Reexamination of historical texts concerning Srivijaya', Appendix 5a, in SEAMEO *Final report* 1983, p. 175.

53 Alex Wayman, 'Reflections on the theory of Barabuḍur as a maṇḍala', in Gómez and Woodward ed., *Barabuḍur*, pp. 140–2; Nihom, *Studies in Indian and Indo-Indonesian Tantrism*, p. 72 n. 192. The Tibetan commentator's words are in Stephan Beyer, *The cult of Tārā: Magic and ritual in Tibet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), p. 418. I was led to this quotation by Roy E. Jordaan, 'The Tara temple of Kalasan in Central Java', *BEFEO*, 85 (1998): 166.

54 Deborah Klimburg-Salter, *Tabo: A lamp for the kingdom* (Milan: Thames & Hudson, 1997), pp. 91, 105. For Tabo as a result of Atīśa's influence, see Raoul Birnbaum, *Studies on the mysteries of Mañjuśrī: A group of East Asian mandalas and their traditional symbolism* (Boulder, CO: Society for the Study of Chinese Religions, 1983), pp. 28–9.

brought to Nalanda in the ninth century or to a model (perhaps in India, perhaps in Tibet or Central Asia) that predates Borobudur.[55]

Cambodia

Contrary to the situation in Javanese studies, where scholars of the calibre of Lokesh Chandra and Max Nihom have in recent years analysed texts and inscriptions, the study of Buddhism in classical Cambodia has languished. The edited and translated inscriptions have not been scrutinised by scholars with technical knowledge; nevertheless, it is still possible to present a rough account. A text already singled out in the discussion of Java – the *Kāraṇḍavyūha sūtra* – came to the forefront in tenth-century Cambodia. For much of the eleventh and twelfth centuries its teachings were somewhat eclipsed by the rise of followers of the Yoginī Tantras, associated with the temple of Phimai (in northeastern Thailand) and the emergence of a new dynasty. Then, during the reign of Jayavarman VII (1181–mid 1210s), the *Kāraṇḍavyūha sūtra* teachings were again held in highest esteem, with the legacy of Phimai Tantrism playing a secondary role.

Buddhism became fashionable in Cambodia in the mid-tenth century, coexisting with the dominant Shivaism and (to a lesser extent) Vishnuism.[56] Of the many tenth-century Buddhist inscriptions, at least two can be specifically linked to the *Kāraṇḍavyūha*. One proclaims, 'May Lokeśvara [Avalokiteśvara] live, he of whom the best dust of his fingers aquified the enormous crackling fire which burns in the *avici* hell!' – a reference to the transformation of hell into a lotus pond.[57] Another is a stela bearing on one face the figure of an eight-armed Avalokiteśvara (as on the rear outside wall of Chandi Mendut), and on the other face an inscription that includes the words of the spell taught by the sutra, *oṃ maṇi padme huṃ* ('I in the jewel-lotus'), a spell found in Avalokiteśvara's innermost heart which promises rebirth upon a jewel-lotus in the Western Paradise of the Buddha Amitābha.[58]

Some of the Buddhist inscriptions record the foundation of Buddhist triads, the most important of which consist of the Buddha, Lokeśvara (Avalokiteśvara) and

55 Klimburg-Salter wrote (*Tabo*, p. 62), 'Still unresolved is the question of the origin of the total iconographic program. In its originality, consistency, and intellectual and artistic brilliance, the decoration of the renovation phase is certainly unparalleled. . . .' She makes the comparison with the bSam-yas on p. 105. The bSam-yas is described in Per K. Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist historiography: The mirror illuminating the royal genealogies* (Wiesbaden: Harassowitz, 1994), pp. 375–9. There is a curious coincidence. In Klimburg-Salter, *Tabo*, Christian Luczanits maintains that the programme is indebted to the commentary of Anandagarbha (pp. 108, 193–5). This is the same text invoked as the source for the Nganjuk bronzes in K. W. Lim, 'Studies', pp. 336–9, but I am sceptical about the necessity of the connection in both instances.

56 Tenth-century Buddhist inscriptions include the following: K. 872 (post 946 CE); K. 266–68, 948 (953 CE); K. 157 (953 CE); K. 417 (970 CE); K. 168 (972 CE); K. 240 (979 CE); K. 214 (982 CE); see George Cœdès, *Inscriptions du Cambodge* [henceforth *IC*], 8 volumes (Hanoi and Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1937–66), vol. VIII (index volume).

57 Inscription of Prasat Chikreng (K. 417), as translated by Nihom, *Studies in Indian and Indo-Indonesian*, p. 138. Jean Boisselier connected the passage to the sutra in his 'Précisions sur quelques images khmères d'Avalokiteśvara: Les bas-reliefs de Bantay-Chmàr', *Arts Asiatiques*, 11 (1964–65): 73–89.

58 K. 1154, in Saveros Pou, *Nouvelles inscriptions du Cambodge II & III* (Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 2001), p. 129 and pl. XIX. The inscription is now housed in the Walters Art Museum (25.194, gift of Yoshie Shinomoto, 1993). The spell is translated in Studholme, *Origins of Oṃ*, p. 117. For this stele, see also Nandana Chutiwongs, 'The iconography of Avalokiteśvara in mainland South East Asia' (Proefschrift, Rijksuniversiteit, Leiden, 1984), p. 380 and pl. 117.

Prajñāpāramitā (the Perfection of Wisdom, the personification of the Perfection of Wisdom texts and the mother of Buddhahood).[59] No specific text has been identified as the source for this triad, but the concept embodied is widespread, namely that wisdom and Avalokiteśvara's compassion together engender enlightenment. In the *Kāraṇḍavyūha sūtra*, the mandala that is identified with the six-syllable spell (*oṃ maṇi padme huṃ*) consists of a central Buddha (Amitābha), flanked by a Bodhisattva (Mahāmaṇidhara) and by the female personification of the spell (the 'six-syllable' Mahāvidyā). Given the pattern of Bodhisattva-Buddha-female divinity, it may be that the Khmer triad is an adaptation of the triad in the sutra (which also singles out Prajñāpāramitā, mother to the Buddhas, as worshipper of the spell).[60] Reinforcement of the triadic thinking could have come from the *Mahāvairocana sūtra*, as conveyed by the An Thái inscription.

Also recorded in Khmer epigraphy are gifts to an image of Trailokyavijaya, in 979 CE. Trailokyavijaya, a wrathful one (*krodha*), appears in the *Mahāvairocana sūtra*, where he is described as one 'who smashes all great obstacles', 'is like a summer storm cloud' and is 'awesomely surrounded by flames'.[61] In the *150-verse Prajñāpāramitā*, the Great Bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi takes the form of Trailokyavijaya, knits his eyebrows, bares his sword-like fangs, adopts the stance of conquest and explicates the meaning of the adamantine syllable *hūṃ*. He also appears in the *Sutra of benevolent kings*, the text that parallels the Balinese *Nāgabāyu sūtra*, in which each of the five cosmic Buddhas has a *krodha* counterpart. The texts in which he figures most prominently, however, are those in the circle of the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha* (the basis for the Japanese Diamond Mandala), where Trailokyavijaya, 'the conqueror of the three worlds', is the form taken by the Buddha Mahāvairocana in order to conquer Maheśvara (the Hindu god Shiva), who, in turn, is granted rebirth as a Buddha in another world as a result of his contact with Trailokyavijaya's foot.[62] No tenth-century Khmer representations of Trailokyavijaya have been identified, but Javanese bronze images of him do exist.[63]

An investigation of the social position of the tenth-century Buddhist patrons, if undertaken, could well lead to the conclusion that 'state-protection Buddhism' lay behind the growth of the religion, and that high officials benefited from the patronage of monks who could offer instant results by reciting *mantra*s and constructing magical diagrams. In the eleventh century, it is easier to propose connections between politics and religion because of the rise of a new dynasty in the second half of the century, that of Mahidharapura, which had many ties to a Buddhism that by then incorporated not only Mantrayāna texts but also Yoginī Tantras. The one Yoginī Tantra that is clearly attested is

59 Prasat Beng Vien (K. 872, after 946 CE), *IC*, vol. V, pp. 97–104; Prasat Chikreng East (K. 168, 972 CE), *IC*, vol. VI, pp. 168–9.

60 Studholme, *Origins of Oṃ*, p. 147.

61 In passages translated by Linrothe in *Ruthless compassion*, p. 154. See the Khmer inscription of Prasat Ta An (K. 240): *IC*, vol. III, pp. 76–8.

62 For the *150-verse Prajñāpāramitā* see Astley-Kristensen, *Rishukyō*, p. 136. Linrothe summarises the textual passages dealing with the subjugation (*Ruthless compassion)*, pp. 178–90. See also Nobumi Iyanaga, 'Récits de la soumission de Maheśvara par Trailokyavijaya d'après les sources chinoises et japonaises', in *Tantric and Taoist studies in honour of R. A. Stein*, ed. Michel Strickmann (Brussels: Institut Belge des Hautes Études Chinoises, 1985), vol. III, pp. 633–745.

63 J. L. Moens, 'Een Toornige buddhistische heiland', *Djawa*, 20 (1940): 265–71. Rob Linrothe has analyzed the Southeast Asian images in 'Compassionate malevolence: Wrathful deities in Esoteric Buddhist art' (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1992), pp. 414–26.

the *Hevajra tantra*. The earliest bronze images of Hevajra date from the eleventh century, and they continued to be made into the thirteenth century. Images depicting Hevajra embracing Nairtmya, his female partner, however, are extremely rare, and so it is uncertain how avidly the Khmers accepted the overtly sexual aspects of Yoginī Tantra practice.[64]

Knowledge of the *Hevajra tantra*, however, does not take one very far in the comprehension of eleventh-century Khmer Buddhism. There are also inscriptions and, most importantly, a great temple that has not yet revealed all its iconographic secrets, built at Phimai at the end of the eleventh century. There may have been two different strands in eleventh-century esoteric Buddhism: one from northern India, as the presence of Pala-type tasselled crowns on a few bronze sculptures indicates, and the other southern Indian, one that traversed the routes mentioned above, involving Srivijaya and the Chola realms. The position of the *Hevajra tantra*, given the proposed identification of Surocolo bronzes as being from a Hevajra mandala, may be more complicated: a Northern Indian text that travelled from Srivijaya to the Khmer kingdom. It is the southern connection, one that doubtless followed the paths of the centuries-old movement of Brahmanical families, that must be relied upon to explain the tendency towards Shivaite-Buddhist syncretism.[65] The principal image at Phimai – lost, but most likely an image of the naga-protected Buddha – was given the name Lord *vimāya* ('exempt from illusion'), yielding the place name Phimai in Thai. This name appears in a southern Indian text from around 1300 as an epithet of Shiva.[66] Philosophically, what linked Shivaism to Buddhism was the notion of unity in multiplicity, but this has not yet been analysed in a rigorous way.

At Phimai, the most significant Buddhist subjects appear on lintels in the interior, leading into the sanctuary from the four directions. These lintels may make up a system of one plus four if the inner southern lintel, depicting a naga-protected Buddha, replicates the image that once stood in the central sanctuary. (The temple faces south.) Two of these lintels depict figures that can be reconstructed into mandalas, with central deities and encircling *yoginī*s and Buddhas.[67] Since the figures match up poorly with those described in surviving Yoginī Tantras, the texts upon which they are based may have been lost Srivijayan or southern Indian versions. The central figure in the northern lintel appears to be akin to the 'Vajrasattva in the form of Mañjuvajra', the central deity in mandala number one in the late eleventh-century northern Indian compendium the *Niṣpannayogāvalī*. On the eastern lintel, the principal figure dances with an elephant hide behind him, and so therefore it makes sense to call him Saṃvara. But neither his

64 For an eleventh-century Hevajra, see Christie's, Amsterdam, 10 Dec. 2002, lot 163. For Hevajra with his partner, see Prachum Kānčhanawat / K. Prachoom, *Nangsū phāp Phraphuttharūp / Buddha images* (Bangkok: the author 1969), pp. 128–9. The prime Hevajra study is J. J. Boeles, 'Two yoginīs of Hevajra from Thailand', in Ba Shin *et al.*, ed., *Essays offered to G. H. Luce*, vol. II, pp. 14–29.

65 A recent instance may be the Hindu Tantric texts mentioned in the Sdok Kak Thom inscription (which are incidentally discussed by Davidson, pp. 204–6); on this inscription, see Hiram Woodward, 'Practice and belief in ancient Cambodia: Claude Jacques' *Angkor* and the *devarāja* question', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 32, 2 (2001): 249–61. Some references to the connection between Shivaism and Buddhism are found in Woodward, *Art and architecture of Thailand*, pp. 149–50. See also Jean Filliozat, 'Sur le çivaisme et le bouddhisme du Cambodge, à propos de deux livres récents', *BEFEO*, 70 (1981): 59–99.

66 David Smith, *The dance of Śiva: Religion, art and poetry in South India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 21, 243.

67 For horizontally arranged mandalas, see also Klimburg-Salter, *Tabo*, p. 118.

attributes nor the accompanying figures match up well with the description in the surviving *Saṃvarodaya tantra*.[68]

It has been proposed that the figures on the lintels can be interpreted in the light of an inscription found in the Phimai compound, dating from 1041 CE.[69] This inscription says that the Buddha has four bodies, 'as if in fear of the four Māra', namely the god Māra himself (the Buddhist devil), death, the aggregates that form the personality (*skandha*) and evil (*kleśa*). The outer southern lintel, depicting the Buddha's triumph on the night of his enlightenment, would represent the victory over the Māra of mythology; the western lintel, with a standing crowned Buddha, victory over death; and the Vajrasattva and Saṃvara lintels, victory over *skandha* and *kleśa*. This implies the existence of a cluster of mandalas and a systematising framework such as found in the Vajradhātu (in which nine different mandalas form a super mandala) and the *150-verse Prajñāpāramitā* traditions.

The presence of such a framework may help explain one of the most significant aspects of Phimai Buddhism: the presence of an inscription in the entrance gateway, erected in 1108 by Vīrendrādhipativarman, a local viceroy who later appears among King Suryavarman II's generals in the *bas-reliefs* of Angkor Wat. The inscription established an image of Trailokyavijaya, described as the *senāpati* (general) of the Lord Vimāya.[70] In other words, the general was to the king as the *krodha* Trailokyavijaya was to the Buddha. From the sociological point of view, this is almost too pat; it surely demonstrates the congruence between military concerns and Tantric Buddhism (and Davidson's observations about the connection). What is less easy to define is the relationship between the image of Trailokyavijaya and the lintels. In the systems that evolved in Tibet, the Yoginī Tantras acquired a supreme position, and a deity such as Trailokyavijaya – historically, a progenitor of Saṃvara – diminished in status. Perhaps at Phimai the overall structure more or less adhered to that of the older Mantrayāna traditions, and the newer Yoginī Tantras were fitted into this structure and assigned specific roles, such as conquering the *skandhas*.

During the reign of Suryavarman II (1113–after 1150), Buddhism went underground, at least to some extent, only to become, following the accession of Jayavarman VII in 1181, the state religion. Dominating the structure of Jayavarman's Buddhism was the Prajñāpāramitā-Buddha-Lokeśvara triad that had come to the fore in the tenth century.[71] Jayavarman identified the perfection of wisdom with his mother and loving kindness with his father, the two qualities that engender enlightenment also giving birth to the monarch. One significant element in the Tantric Buddhism of 100 years earlier

68 Tsuda, *Saṁvarodaya-tantra*, pp. 283–6. For an illustration, see Boeles, 'Two Yoginīs of Hevajra', fig. 7, and p. 28 for analysis. For the northern lintel see Benoytosh Bhattacharyya, *The Indian Buddhist iconography* (Calcutta: Mukhopadhyay, 1968), p. 119 and Chandra, 'Buddhist bronzes', p. 123. The lintel is illustrated in Smitthi Sribhadra and Elizabeth Moore, *Palaces of the gods* (Bangkok: River Books, 1992), p. 246. The type of figure is also akin to that promulgated by the *Guhyasamāja tantra*, and a Tantric Buddhist inscription from the Phimai region dated 1066 calls the local doctrine the *śrīsamāja*; Chirapat Prapandvidya, 'The Sab Bāk inscription: Evidence of an early Vajrayāna presence in Thailand', *JSS*, 78, 2 (1990): 11–14.

69 Woodward, *Art and architecture of Thailand*, p. 150; the inscription is K. 953.

70 The inscription (K. 397) was first published in George Cœdès, 'L'épigraphie du temple de Phimai', *BEFEO*, 24 (1924): 345–52.

71 Although eclipsed at Phimai, the triad is mentioned in an inscription with links to the Mahidharapura dynasty: Kuk Yay Hom (K. 86), *IC*, vol. V, p. 280.

remained much alive: this was the cult of Hevajra. Tantric beliefs may have been adapted and seen as an esoteric counterpart to the dominant and very public triad; either that, or Tantric priests formed an independent group of ritual specialists (hence the importance of Hevajra imagery on conch shells, for instance).[72] Soon the *Kāraṇḍavyūha sūtra* emerged as the primary Buddhist text, with reliefs at Banteay Chmar depicting the miracles of Part I, Chapters 4 and 5; the monument of Neak Pean illustrating the story of the escape from the island of demons (Part II, Chapter 1); and images of Avalokiteśvara distributed in the provinces in 1191 depicting the tour of Avalokiteśvara's body (Part II, Chapters 2 and 7).[73] Whether the small figures adhering to the Bodhisattva's skin in the 1191 sculptures can be understood entirely in terms of the text, or whether they simultaneously illustrate a Tantric yogic exercise involving nodes and channels within the body has not been determined. Somewhat similarly, the images of the seated Vajrasattva Buddha installed at Banteay Chmar must bear a relationship to the *Kāraṇḍavyūha sūtra*, but that has not been worked out, either.[74]

These elements in Jayavarman VII's Buddhism – which was constantly evolving – had long been present in Cambodia. Additional elements include the cult of the healing Buddha, Bhaiṣajyaguru, which was promulgated in inscriptions of 1186. Either there was an outside stimulus, or a version of the *Bhaiṣajyaguru sūtra* had long been known to Cambodian Buddhists.[75] At any rate, due in considerable part to outside forces originating in Thailand and Burma, in the early 1200s, probably within Jayavarman's lifetime, Cambodian beliefs underwent radical transformations, in the direction of a Buddhism that was essentially Hīnayāna.

This brief survey suggests that the dominant framework of Cambodian Buddhism was Mantrayāna. Specific circumstances could probably be proposed as to why the Yoginī Tantras did not take firmer hold, first at Phimai in the late eleventh century, then at Angkor in the late twelfth century. Whether these historical explanations could then be used comparatively for social contrast with northern India or Tibet is another matter, somewhat dependent on a tying-up of the loose ends left in the discussion of Davidson's *Indian esoteric Buddhism*. Nevertheless, the presence or absence of lay circles and of secret brotherhoods should undoubtedly have a place in any such discussion.

Concluding remarks

The points at which this survey actively invades ongoing discussions in Southeast Asian studies are not many. One, perhaps, involves disputes about Srivijaya as a political entity. From the seventh century onwards, writes Davidson (p. 106), Indian abbots and

72 Hiram W. Woodward, Jr., 'Tantric Buddhism at Angkor Thom', *Ars Orientalis*, 12 (1981): 57–71.
73 Boisselier, 'Précisions sur quelques images'; Boisselier, 'Pouvoir royal et symbolisme architectural: Neak Pean et son importance pour la royauté angkorienne', *Arts Asiatiques*, 21 (1970): 91–108; Victor Goloubew, 'Le cheval Balaha', *BEFEO*, 27 (1927): 223–37; Hiram W. Woodward, Jr., 'The Jayabuddhamahānātha images of Cambodia', *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery*, 52/53 (1994–5): 105–11.
74 One is in the National Museum, Phnom Penh; Nadine Dalsheimer, *Les collections du musée national de Phnom Penh: L'art du Cambodge ancien* (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 2001), pp. 176–77. Others have appeared on the art market in the past decade. See also Victor Goloubew, 'Sur quelques images khmères de Vajradhara', *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art* 5 (1937): 97–104.
75 For the Bhaiṣajyaguru texts, see Raoul Birnbaum, *The healing Buddha* (Boulder, CO: Shambhala, 1979).

monks 'administered their estates and established loyalties in a manner closely analogous to members of the circle of vassals (*sāmanta-maṇḍala*) of an overlord (*rājādhirāja*)'. Whether Srivijaya was a good example of a core under the direct control of the ruler, surrounded by a number of vassal mandalas and hence a political model for the mandala clusters of the Sino-Japanese Vajradhātu and the *150-verse Prajñāpārāmita*, is still uncertain and depends largely on the interpretation given to the phrase containing the compound *sakalamaṇḍala* ('all the mandalas') in the inscription of Telaga Batu. At any rate, although the religious usage of the word 'mandala' (a circle of deities) and the political usage (a neighbouring or vassal state) bear a relationship one to the other, the term has become so overworked in Southeast Asian historiography and has become so imprecise in meaning that it might best be avoided.[76]

It is preferable on the Southeast Asian side to be aware of the vast realms of potential study. The kind of survey presented here is not truly commensurate with *Indian esoteric Buddhism* because it takes archaeological and art-historical evidence as primary. Davidson's book would be quite different if he had done the same.[77] Nevertheless, the distinctiveness of the worlds of the Mantrayāna and of the Yoginī Tantras, an element in *Indian esoteric Buddhism*, applies well to Southeast Asia, though it metamorphoses into something rather different. A good argument can be made for treating Indonesia and India as an integral unit well into the ninth century. The case was made above for the possible influence of Borobudur Buddhism upon subsequent developments in India. Throwing Indonesia into the mix from the seventh century onwards, however, calls into question one of Davidson's assumptions. A factor in the rise of the Mantrayāna or of institutional esoterism, according to him, was the loss of mercantile support and the rise in official patronage (pp. 82–83, 167). However, the turn to Mantrayāna in Java in the 780s and 790s is hard to square with such a notion, as is ninth-century Southeast Asian support for a monastery in Nalanda. Only merchant networks could have sustained the contacts with Bengal and Sri Lanka that made possible the movement of monks and the transfer of texts. It is hard to see why the territorial and defensive aspects of the Mantrayāna, so connected in Davidson's mind with official patronage, need be thought incompatible with merchant values. Indeed, bonds among merchants in widely separated ports could well have been enhanced by beliefs in secret codes, despite differences in language and ethnicity, much as a cluster of mandalas exhibits alternate paths to a single unified goal.

In the subsequent period, Southeast Asian Buddhism might be seen more as a mere reflection of Indian developments, even though some iconic types made an early appearance. Forest hermits could be compared to *siddha*s, but there is little evidence of inhabitants of Southeast Asia participating in the creation of the Yoginī Tantras. Around the year 900, Buddhism does not appear to have been especially energetic either on the subcontinent or in Southeast Asia, despite apparent pockets of strength in such places as Kashmir and Champa. In understanding the resurgence of the religion in Cambodia

76 O. W. Wolters attempted to clarify the term 'mandala' in his *History, culture, and region in Southeast Asian perspectives*, rev. edn (Ithaca: Southeast Asia Program Publications, 1999), pp. 140–1. Differing interpretations of Srivijaya are in Kulke, '"Kadātuan Śrīvijaya"–empire or kraton of Śrīvijaya?' pp. 163, 169 and Christie, 'State formation', pp. 267–8.

77 As indicated above, the most important art-historical study is Linrothe, *Ruthless compassion*.

in the tenth and eleventh centuries, the problem is one of accurately characterising its relationship to the dominant Hinduism. If Buddhism was simply an alternative path to a goal – say, one of unity in multiplicity – that was also Hindu, then it was not an ideological threat, just a system that provided a distinct identity by juggling an alternative set of symbols. Such an observation has ramifications, in turn, for the study of Indian esoteric Buddhism, and for the question of how to place Buddhism in relationship to Hindu Tantra. Davidson has skillfully negotiated his own answer to this issue, but others will surely arise in coming years.